**Annual Assessment Report for 2020-2021 AY**

Reports completed on assessment activities carried out during the 2020-21 AY will be due September 30th 2021 and must be e-mailed to the Director of Assessment, Dr. Douglas Fraleigh (douglasf@csufresno.edu).

Provide detailed responses for each of the following questions within this word document. Please do NOT insert an index or add formatting. Furthermore, only report on two or three student learning outcomes even if your external accreditor requires you to evaluate four or more outcomes each year. Also be sure to explain or omit specialized or discipline-specific terms.

Department/Program: History Degree BA

Assessment Coordinator: Dr. Julia Shatz

1. **Please list the learning outcomes you assessed this year.**

For the 2020-2021 Academic Year, the History Department assessed SLO 4a: “Students will demonstrate their ability to present information and interpretations.”

1. **What assignment or survey did you use to assess the outcomes and what method (criteria or rubric) did you use to evaluate the assignment**? **Please describe the assignment and the criteria or rubric used to evaluate the assignment in detail and, if possible, include copies of the assignment and criteria/rubric at the end of this report.**

To assess this learning outcome, I used a selection of student presentations of their own original research from two academic years (2019-2020 and 2020-2021). About half of the presentations analyzed were from lower-division courses and half were from upper-division courses, giving a good look at learning outcomes across our curriculum. All of the presentations were based on original primary and secondary source research conducted by the students and all presentations asked the students to make clear historical arguments based on that research. All presentations were between 5 and 10 minutes in length.

Because of the move to virtual instruction last year, the presentations from 2019-2020 were in-class, live presentations, while those from 2020-2021 were recorded (either audio-visual or audio-only). My analysis found that results were largely consistent across mediums.

In producing this report, I used a rubric that was specifically designed to assess learning outcome 4a (*see attached rubric).* This rubric evaluated each presentation on three criteria: clarity and sophistication of argument, quality of presentation structure, and engagement with the intended audience. Each presentation was assessed on a scale of 1-4: 1 – insufficient, 2 – developing, 3 – proficient, 4 – advanced.

1. **What did you learn from your analysis of the data? Please include sample size (how many students were evaluated) and indicate how many students (number or percentage instead of a median or mean) were designated as proficient.**

I assessed 74 student presentations. 38 presentations were from lower-division courses and 36 presentations were from upper-division courses. Of those presentations, 84% of presentations were proficient or advanced on the first measure (clarify of argument), 89% were proficient or advanced on the second measure (structure), and 95% were proficient or advanced on the third measure (engagement).

Furthermore, there was not a large difference between the lower-division class results and upper-division class results. The upper-division course presentations did have more scores in the “advanced” category in the second and third measures, indicating continuing skill development as the students move through our major curriculum.

Results Tables:

Lower-Division Course Presentations (38)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Measure** | **Advanced** | **Proficient** | **Developing** | **Insufficient** |
| **Argument/Clarity** | 50% | 34% | 16% | 0% |
| **Organization/Structure** | 34% | 56% | 8% | 0% |
| **Engagement** | 34% | 61% | 5% | 0% |

Upper-Division Course Presentations (36)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Measure** | **Advanced** | **Proficient** | **Developing** | **Insufficient** |
| **Argument/Clarity** | 44% | 39% | 17% | 0% |
| **Organization/Structure** | 53% | 33% | 14% | 0% |
| **Engagement** | 52% | 42% | 6% | 0% |

1. **What changes, if any, do you recommend based on the assessment data?**

As the Department continues to roll out its new capstone course (described in sections 5 and 7 below), I recommend that the Department Curriculum Committee consider standardizing the role of non-written presentations in that course to ensure equity across our major population.

1. **If you recommended any changes in your response to Question 4 in last year’s assessment report, what progress have you made in implementing these changes? If you did not recommend making any changes in last year’s report please write N/A as your answer to this question.**

Recommendation (2018-2019 AY Report): “I recommend a curricular review of the History 100W goals and requirements in order to standardize expectations across course sections and focus more explicitly on critical analysis skill development. I also recommend the revision of History 100W to create a greater connection with its pre-requisite, History 4, so that critical analysis skill development can consistently begin in History 4 and be built upon in History 100W. This recommendation follows the recommendations that the department received from its 2018-2019 AY program review (see below) and aligns with the current work of the department curriculum committee on revising these courses.”

Progress: In 2019-2020, the Department Curriculum Committee undertook a total review and restructuring of our core methodology courses – History 4 and History 100W. This review was prompted by longstanding faculty concerns about student skill development, the results of the 2018-2019 Assessment Report, and our Department Program Review. The Curriculum Committee proposed major curricular changes to those courses, which were approved in Spring 2020. We have eliminated History 4, our former intro-level skills course, made History 100W the first skills core course, and created a new capstone course, History 198: Crafting History. The new courses are designed to build historical thinking skills sequentially. The learning outcomes for these courses are designed to explicitly connect to each other and the department has implemented a requirement that instructors of those courses must meet together throughout the year to ensure consistency between sections and connections between the introductory course and the capstone course. Because of COVID and the switch to virtual teaching last year, we delayed the rollout of the new course sequence and are teaching it for the first time in the 2021-2022 AY.

Recommendation (2018-2019 AY Report): “I also recommend that the department review and potentially revise PLO 2 and PLO 3 in its SOAP. SLOs 3a and 3b could be better articulated to distinguish them from SLO 2b. PLO 2 might also be broken into different PLOs in order to more directly and accurately assess them.”

Progress: Due to faculty leaves in 2019-2020 and the disruption of the pandemic, we have not yet been equipped to address SOAP revisions. The Department Curriculum Committee and Assessment Coordinator will review the Department SOAP this year.

1. **What assessment activities will you be conducting during the next academic year?**

During the next academic year, we will assess the following SLOs:

* SLO 1a: “Students will demonstrate sufficient and appropriate knowledge and understanding of specific historical issues and events.”
* SLO 3a: “Students will analyze evidence and sources to determine if they are valid and relevant.”

We will assess these through our indirect measure of senior exit surveys.

1. **Identify and discuss any major issues identified during your last Program Review and in what ways these issues have or have not been addressed.**

The History Department was reviewed during the 2018-2019 AY and received the team report at the end of the Spring 2019 semester. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department has not yet been able to address all the identified issues. The major issues and the Department’s progress are listed below.

* **Curriculum**:

Recommendation: First, the administration should continue to work toward smaller class sizes. Second, because of departures and gaps in their coverage by faculty, not all the courses students need are being taught (for more on this see the section on new hires). Third, students and faculty expressed their view that there doesn’t seem to be much of a connection between History 4, the introduction to historical skills course, and Hist 100W, the capstone research and writing course. We suggest the department explore ways to develop more consistency and connection between the two. Perhaps, standardizing further the goals and approach in History 4 and History 100W. Finally, students expressed a desire to have more classes offered later in the day as they found the majority of course offerings clustered in the middle of the day.

Departmental Progress: As described in section 5 of this report, we have overhauled our core methodology courses (formerly, History 4 and History 100W) to better align with our students’ graduation requirements and to produce more consistent skill development. Those new courses were approved in Spring 2020 and are being rolled out for the first time this year (2021-2022). The learning outcomes for those courses are designed to explicitly connect to each other and the department has implemented a requirement that instructors of those courses must meet together throughout the year to ensure consistency between sections and connections between the introductory course and the capstone course.

* **Advising**

Recommendation: The COSS Advising Center has clearly helped undergraduate students know what they need to do in-terms of general education advising and have provided some assistance with major advising. Students mentioned that COSS advisors don’t always have updated and accurate history major information. They would like to have history faculty designated to assist them with questions about taking courses in the major, guidance on the credential program, and post-collegiate employment opportunities. Thus, we believe the Department should take more of a lead in advising its majors. The Department website during our visit in April did not have recent information about courses offered, faculty office hours, and information about activities and opportunities for majors. While we are aware the Department recently hired an office staff member who will maintain the website, efforts should continue to be made to ensure information is current, easy to navigate, and useful for prospective majors as well as its undergraduate and graduate students. Another recommendation is to send majors an email at the beginning of each semester with the distribution of faculty advisors, as well as post that information on the department’s web page.

Departmental Progress: Majors are now sent an email at the beginning of the semester with their faculty advisor. We plan to work on updating the website and adding information (like current and future course offerings) this year.

* **Future Hires**

Recommendation: Ideally, the department would hire in three key areas – Asia, Ancient History, and Africa. After conversations with students and faculty, we believe the number one priority should be the hiring of an Asian historian as a replacement hire for the abrupt departure of their Asian historian in summer 2018. The Asian historian had developed a series of new courses and built interest in Asian history among a cohort of students, but now no one in the History Department let alone the San Joaquin Valley can cover these courses. We trust the administration will approve the Department’s request for a replacement line in Asian History. World History without Asia, leaves out the history of 60 percent of the world’s population. Second, the Department is also in need of a scholar of Ancient History. Given limited budgets, we suggest the History Department explore the possibility of a split hire with Classics. The benefit is clear: each department would get to expand their curriculum, but split the costs of a full-time position. History faculty are in favor of proceeding with this plan. In an ideal world, the Department would hire one more faculty member in either European History or African History as the majority of the European historians are in administrative positions outside the department and they do not have a full or part-time faculty that can teach the African History courses.

Departmental Progress: We hired a new assistant professor in Asian History in Spring 2021 and he began this semester (Fall 2021). We are now able to offer courses in East Asian history as well as reinforce our World History teaching faculty. However, we also lost two European historians from our faculty at the end of 2020. The Department is actively pursuing opportunities to hire in African, Ancient, and European History.

* **Protecting GE American History**

Recommendation: As a committee, we believe that History 11 and 12 are critical to the education of all Fresno State students and for preparing future engaged and informed citizens of the state and the nation. We implore the university administration to do everything in its power to reject the recommendations of a General Education Task Force appointed by the CSU Senate that would reduce the American Institutions General Education requirement from two courses to one, thus making it possible for a student to graduate without an American history or American government course, a requirement of all CSU students since the 1960s.

Departmental Progress: N/A

* **Assessment**

Recommendation: The Department has requested portfolios from a cohort of the same students in History 4, the introduction to historical skills and again when they are at the end of their studies and enrolled in History 100W, the major’s capstone research and writing course. We applaud their efforts. We do suggest, however, that the Department work on providing a centralized and clear process to collect their SOAP materials. There seemed to be some confusion among students about exactly what they needed to submit and whether submitting these materials were required for graduation.

Departmental Progress: In 2019-2020, we created a Canvas site to collect portfolio information. The combination of the departure of Dr. Melissa Jordine (who previously did a lot of work on assessment for the Department) in Spring 2020, faculty leaves, and the pandemic has slowed our progress in systematizing this process. This will be a focus of the Assessment Coordinator this year.

**Appendix A: Rubric for SLO 4a**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Measure** | **4- Advanced** | **3- Proficient** | **2-Developing** | **1-Insufficient** |
| **Clarity of argument** | Historical argument is clearly articulated and sustained throughout the presentation. | Historical argument is adequately articulated and mostly sustained throughout presentation. | Historical argument is present, but inconsistent or not obvious to the audience. | Total absence of historical argument. |
| **Organization** | Presentation structure is easy to follow and guides audience through argument. | Presentation structure is mostly clear to the audience. | Presentation structure is inconsistent at times, leading to some narrative confusion. | There is no discernible structure and presentation is difficult to follow. |
| **Engagement** | Presenter directly engages their audience, communicates in a clear manner, and demonstrates consideration of the audience. | Presenter adequately engages the audience in the presentation and communication is mostly understandable. | Presenter makes effort to consider the audience, but presentation is at times confusing or difficult to understand. | Presentation is very difficult to understand and/or presenter demonstrates no consideration of audience. |