

**Department Name: History**

**COLLEGE: College of Social Sciences**

**Student Outcomes Assessment Plan (Soap)**

**I. Mission Statement**

The mission of the Department of History is to provide rigorous, deliberate and directed study that increases the knowledge of students and prepares them for careers in the discipline of history and the social sciences. The department has four specific goals or aims that are the focus of the undergraduate curriculum 1) providing quality educational that enhances the teaching and learning experiences of both faculty and students 2) offering specific courses to meet the needs of those students who plan to also obtain a credential and become teachers in California 3) preparing students who plan to pursue a graduate degree 4) graduating students with specific critical thinking and writing skills that will enable them to pursue a diverse array of careers . Our department’s undergraduate mission will complement the missions of the College of Social Sciences and those of California State University, Fresno.

**II. Goals and Student Learning Outcomes**

**Goal 1:** Students will acquire in-depth historical knowledge that increases their understanding and prepares them for careers in history related fields and/or the pursuit of advanced academic degrees

**Student Learning Outcome 1:** Students will demonstrate sufficient and appropriate knowledge and understanding of specific historical issues and events.

**BENCHMARKS:**

- A. G.E. courses (lower division courses taken primarily by non-majors) – Students will demonstrate basic knowledge of historical events. For example, students would be able to identify the key factors that led to the outbreak of the American Revolution, or they would be able to identify and explain the causes of the Civil War, or they would be able to explain the key aspects of Buddhism. Students will be able to identify and accurately different points of view in regard to historical events.
- B. Lower-division courses: Students will demonstrate more than a basic knowledge of historical events. Students will be able to identify the causes, key aspects, and consequences of specific events such as the American Revolution, the collapse of the Han Dynasty, and the First World War. Students will be able to identify and assess scholarly arguments.
- C. Upper-division courses: Students will demonstrate in-depth knowledge of specific historical events as well as intellectual and social movements and will be able to assess the causes, key

aspects, and influence of these events/movements. Students would be able to explain the causes of the Civil War and explain the views and actions on each side that led to war in 1861 (as opposed to earlier or later). Students will be able to make significant connections between different events and will be able to identify different views and analyze and compare these views.

\*\*\*For benchmarks A, B, and C the criteria will be a score of 3 out of 4 on the appropriate content knowledge rubric.

**Goal 2:** Students will demonstrate their ability to identify and utilize appropriate sources and will demonstrate basic writing proficiency by writing papers and evidence based arguments that meet the minimum requirement for these kinds of arguments.

**Definition of writing proficiency:** In order to demonstrate basic writing proficiency students must be able to write a well-organized essay with a thesis if appropriate, and with clearly stated points. Students must demonstrate their ability to write sentences that are clear and relatively free of grammatical errors, to choose the correct words or terms and to avoid plagiarism.

**Student Learning Outcome 2:** Students will demonstrate basic writing proficiency.

**Student Learning Outcome 3:** Students will identify, locate and utilize information from appropriate sources and will create and include citations and a bibliography in correct Turabian or Chicago style in their papers.

BENCHMARKS:

**Even students in lower-division G.E. courses must demonstrate a basic proficiency in English in all written work. However, first-year students and non-majors will not be held to exactly the same standard, especially in regard to appropriate word choice and citation format, as upper-division history majors.**

- A. G.E. courses (non-majors): Students will write papers that demonstrate basic writing proficiency utilizing a relatively small number of appropriate sources.
- B. Lower-division courses: Students will demonstrate basic writing proficiency construct evidence based arguments and utilize a sufficient number of relevant primary and secondary sources.
- C. Upper-division courses: Students will demonstrate a level of writing that exceeds basic proficiency, will construct sophisticated evidence based arguments, and will use a diverse array of examples and quotes from primary and secondary sources that they have identified and evaluated for accuracy and relevancy.
- D. Capstone Writing Assessment (**History 100W**): Students will identify relevant sources and write a research based paper, using appropriate historical methodology, that includes a valid thesis, evidence from primary and secondary sources, and citations in Turabian or Chicago format.  
**Rubrics are used to assess History 100W papers and it is expected that at every student will earn a 3 out of 4 on the writing rubric.**

\*\*\*For benchmark A, at least 70% of students are expected to earn a 3 out of 4 on the rubric used to assess this work. For benchmark B and C, at least 85% of students are expected to earn a 3 out of 4 on the rubric used to assess assignments submitted by History Majors.

**Goal 3:** Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills and quantitative reasoning skills appropriate for individuals required to use historical method while conducting research and writing exams and papers.

**Student Learning Outcome 4:** Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills by analyzing sources, evaluating information and sources for accuracy, and by identifying appropriate and inappropriate interpretations and conclusions based on specific sources or information.

**Student Learning Outcome 5:** Students will develop an in-depth understand of and be able to create, analyze, and interpret charts, graphs, and statistics relevant to historical events and interpretations.

**BENCHMARKS:**

It is expected that at least two-thirds of the students in G.E. courses will earn a 3 or better on the critical thinking rubric used to assess the specific assignment completed. For lower and upper-division major courses it is expected that at least 85% of students will earn a 3 out of 4 on the critical thinking rubric used to assess the specific assignment.

**Goal 4:** Students will analyze a historical event, apply their knowledge to draw conclusions and be able to clearly present their conclusions orally and/or visually. Examples of assignments demonstrating this outcome include power point presentations, participation in class discussions, group presentations, et c.

**Student Learning Outcome 6:** Students will give a verbal presentation (either by commenting during class discussions or by giving a formal presentation) or create a power point or a visual representation that presents complex historical information clearly and accurately.

**BENCHMARKS:**

For G.E. courses, it is expected that at least 70% of students will receive a 3 out of 4 on the rubric used to assess their oral or visual presentation. For major courses, it is expected that at least 80% of students will receive a 3 out of 4 on the rubric used to assess their oral or visual presentation.

**Goal 5:** Students will be able to explain, evaluate, and distinguish between the aims and specific skills that they utilize for different assignments completed as they progress through the major. Students can assess and draw conclusions based upon their performance over time and judge the influence of specific aspects of their major field of study on their ability to understand and adhere to professional standards and values as well as their ability to successfully master the skills necessary to succeed in their chosen career.

**Student Learning Outcome 7:** Students will evaluate their own work in order to determine the extent to which they are able to adhere to professional and academic standards and have acquired or improved specific skills necessary for a careers pursued by those with degrees in History.

### III. Curriculum Map (Matrix of Courses X Learning Outcomes)

History Courses	Outcome 1 Knowledge	Outcome 2 Writing Skills	Outcome 3 Information Literacy	Outcome 4 Critical Thinking	Outcome 5 Quantitative Reasoning	Outcome 6 Oral Com.	Outcome 7 Self-Evaluation
G.E.							
History 11, 12, 20, 21	I	I	I	I		I	I
Lower Division:							
History 4	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
History 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Upper-Division: 27 units							
U.S. Field (6 units)							
101, 156, 158, 159, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 177, 178, 180, 182, 186, 187, 188, 194	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
Europe Field							

(6 units)							
103, 104, 110, 111, 112, 115, 116, 117, 118, 121, 122, 125, 126, 127, 132, 133, 134, 135, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 150, 151, 152	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
World Regions Field  (6 units)							
160, 162, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 176, 183, 192	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
Required Capstone Course  History 100 W	M	M	M	M	M	M	M

**IV. Assessment Methods**

### **A. Direct Measures (at least three)**

1. Critical Thinking Assignments: History 4, G.E., Lower-Division Courses, Upper-Division Courses
  - a) Discussion papers requiring students to analyze sources, critical book reviews, papers focused on class discussions readings, library exercises, statistic and film analysis papers
2. Writing Assignments: G.E., Lower-Division Courses, Upper-Division Courses.
  - a) Research papers, critical book reviews, précisés and discussion papers or essays written for exams
3. Oral or Visual Presentations: History 4, G.E., Lower-Division courses, Upper-Division Courses
  - a) Holocaust Exhibit Projects, Power point presentations, Group Presentations, Book Review Presentations, Class Discussion Presentations
4. Quantitative reasoning assignments including charts, maps, or graphs created by students using historical data. Interpretations of quantitative data related to a historical event or a problem set that is directly relevant to the understanding of a historical event. For example, students might be asked to calculate what percentage of the total population is represented by the number of casualties a specific country sustained in the Second World War.
5. Capstone: The Research Paper which constitutes the main requirement for History 100W will be used to assess the skills of students who are about to graduate. In order to assess the extent to which students have improved their skills, while majoring in history and working toward their degree, the final paper in History 4 (taken during the first or second semester as a history major) will be compared to the research paper submitted for History 100W (taken during the year in the program).
6. Exit Survey or Reflection Paper: Student analysis of their own learning experiences and improvement will be assessed in multiple ways including a question on the senior exit survey, and reflection essays written by students in upper-division courses or History 100W.

If the History department adopts an E-portfolio requirement then one artifact submitted to the e-portfolio will assess learning experiences.

### **B. Indirect Measures**

1. Senior Exit Surveys or reflections
2. Alumni Survey: Alumni will be surveyed in order to determine whether they went into a credential program, graduate program, or obtained a job in history or a related field. Alumni will also be asked how well they feel they were prepared for their continued education or current employment.

### V. Student Learning Outcomes X Assessment Methods Matrix

Measures	Outcome 1 Knowledge	Outcome 2 Writing Skills	Outcome 3 Information Literacy	Outcome 4 Critical Thinking	Outcome 5 Quant. Reasoning	Outcome 6 Oral Com.	Outcome 7 Self-Eval.
Critical Thinking Assignm.	X			X			
Writing Assignm.	X		X	X			X
Oral or Visual Present.	X			X		X	
Quant. Reasoning Assignm.	X				X		
History 100W Research Paper	X	X	X	X	X		
Senior Exit Survey	X			X			X
Alumni Survey	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

### VI. Timeline for Implementation of Assessment Methods and Summary Evaluations

#### Year 2013-2014

History 21 Critical Thinking Quiz

History 100W Capstone Research Papers

Pathbrite e-portfolio Holocaust Exhibit Projects

Alumni Survey

**Year 2014 to 2015**

Writing Assignment in History 12 and/or History 21

Critical Thinking Assignments in History 4

Alumni Survey

**Year 2015-2016**

Oral or Visual Presentation in Upper –Division course

History 4 Papers and History 100W Research Paper Comparison

Critical Thinking Multiple Choice and Short Answer (G.E. Assessment)

**2016-2017**

Writing Assignment in G.E. course (assessed for information literacy)

Quantitative Reasoning Assignments

**2017-2018**

History 100W Papers (assessed for writing and information literacy)

Critical Thinking Test (G.E. Assessment)

**2018-2019**

Oral or Visual Presentations

Writing Assignments (G.E.)

**VII. Closing the Loop - Summary Evaluation, Curriculum Adjustment, and Reporting**

**Closing the Loop: Year 2012-2013**

The Department of History has altered its assessment plan in order to reduce the number of outcomes it is measuring and to more effectively assess the fundamental aspects of the program that prepare students for their post B.A. pursuits. The department has also included, for the first time, a direct measure of the extent to which students are exposed to professional development knowledge and opportunities during the program. The department has also revised its assessment measures, in part

because of the changes to the student learning outcomes and in part due to our examination of previous assessments which suggested ways in which they could be improved. We have revised the Senior Exit Survey because the responses, although valuable, were extremely broad and diverse and so we have more narrowly focused our questions in order to obtain more specific information on particular aspects of the program. We have also created an alumni survey and two of the questions in the exit survey were revised and incorporated into the alumni survey. During the last academic year, 2011-2012, the department evaluated the pre and post tests given in History 12 and History 20. These evaluations demonstrate that despite the fact that most students in these courses are non-majors, that they have gained a relatively small but significant amount of content knowledge. The department reviewed senior exit surveys for several years and based upon these surveys it was clear that students felt that the professors in the department were extremely qualified and were providing in-depth content knowledge. It was also clear that students had been exposed to historical method, historical theory, and required to write papers in a number of courses that required them to demonstrate their ability to utilize historical method and historiography. It was also clear from these surveys that a very large number of our majors were either in the credential program while completing a degree in history or intended to enter the program upon completing their B.A. in History . As a result of the information from these surveys, the department has proposed a change to the major. Instead of requiring majors to take Hist 1 and 2 (Western Civilization), the department is proposing requiring majors to take Hist 20 and 21 (World History) which is one of the requirements of the Social Science Credential program. This would effectively reduce the number of units required for credential students by 6 units and it would enhance the educational experience of non-credential history majors by providing them with a much broader perspective. Students will still gain knowledge in regard to Europe but will simultaneously gain knowledge about all areas of the world and about the global interactions that shaped the development of specific areas.

During the 2012-2013 academic year, the department will carry out three assessment activities. The department has already revised the senior exit survey and will give it to graduating seniors at the end of the semester and the department also developed an alumni survey that it will give, as a pilot activity, to between 10 and 20 alumni this semester, and then will be formally sent out to alumni next year. The department also continued to give pre and post tests in History 20 and will compare the results of the tests for this year with the results from previous years. Finally, the department will assess the two papers from upper-division classes submitted by about 40 students this semester and will analyze these papers in order to determine the content knowledge, research and writing abilities of students who are in the process of completing the program. Although the department expects to gain valuable insight from assessing these papers using a common rubric, we have realized that in order to really measure the level and range of students that we need to collect papers from all students in the same upper-division course and will begin to collect and analyze papers from individual upper-division courses instead of having students select two of the papers they have written for upper-division classes and submit them to the Blackboard portfolio site.

The department will keep more detailed records, including examples of student work beginning this semester and will continue to conduct multiple assessments per year as indicated on our time-line.

**Closing the Loop 2013-2014:**

The History Department coordinator made copies of assessment reports by different professors and examples of student work and put these in a binder and also wrote a supplemental report on assessment (attached to the annual report) that provided an in-depth summary of its 2012-2013 assessment activities. During the summer of 2013, the History Department further revised its SLO's and assessment measures in order to align them more closely and to utilize more effective ways to measure students skills. The department will discuss the results of the 2012-2013 assessment activities, the revised SOAP and planned assessment activities for 2013-2014 at a History Department Meeting in August of 2013.

#### E-portfolio Initiative:

The History Department will require students in at least one section of History 4 and in at least one upper-division course to submit their assignments that will be used for assessment purposes via an e-portfolio they create. The History Department will determine whether or not students utilizing the e-portfolio seem to be more engaged in their learning and whether or not the e-portfolio makes assessment more efficient and manageable and will determine the methods to be used for assessment after a department meeting at the end of 2013 to consider these issues.

#### Assessment 2013-214

The department carried out previously planned assessment activities and piloted the use of e-portfolios by having students submit a few specific assignments via Pathbrite. Students in History 100W submitted their capstone research papers and these will be evaluated using a rubric. Students in Dr. Jordine's Holocaust course created their Exhibit Projects using Pathbrite and Dr. Jordine and two other faculty will evaluate these projects, using a rubric, during Final's Week.

#### Closing the Loop 2013-2014

The undergraduate assessment results suggested that many students have one or more weaknesses in their writing and the department will address this issue by discussing the implementation of a signature writing assignment in upper-division courses. The department will also encourage students to wait until their Senior year to take the Capstone research and writing class so they will have more experience prior to completing this assignment. The assessment results suggested that students are proficient in the level of critical thinking we expected and the e-portfolio exhibit projects clearly engaged students and demonstrated that they were able to apply their knowledge and to visually represent one significant aspect of the Holocaust utilizing diverse sources including both primary and multimedia materials. The department also made significant revisions to the SOAP to focus each outcome on one specific area or skill and will revise the rubrics used to assess writing and critical thinking.