

2017-2018 Assessment Cycle

COLA_History MA

Mission (due 12/4/17)

University Mission

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette offers an exceptional education informed by diverse worldviews grounded in tradition, heritage, and culture. We develop leaders and innovators who advance knowledge, cultivate aesthetic sensibility, and improve the human condition.

University Values

We strive to create a community of leaders and innovators in an environment that fosters a desire to advance and disseminate knowledge. We support the mission of the university by actualizing our core values of equity, integrity, intellectual curiosity, creativity, tradition, transparency, respect, collaboration, pluralism, and sustainability.

University Vision

We strive to be included in the top 25% of our peer institutions by 2020, improving our national and international status and recognition.

College / VP and Program / Department Mission

Mission of College or VP-area

Provide the mission for the College or VP-area in the space provided. If none is available, write "None Available in 2017-2018."

The College of Liberal Arts is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The College teaches students to think critically, applying scientific principles and intellectual schema to understand human behavior and society in a diverse world, to express ideas and ideals in a variety of forms, and to understand themselves and others as members of regional and global communities. The intellectual and creative foundations of this enterprise are written and oral communication, analytical and reasoning skills, and the ability to solve problems creatively. Each departmental curriculum presents perspectives from the past, provides an understanding of the present and directs attention to the challenges of the future. As active researchers, faculty in the College work to advance the frontiers of knowledge and our understanding of humanity and the world we live in, and to use that knowledge and understanding to improve the human condition.

Mission of Program / Department

Provide the program / department mission in the space provided. The mission statement should concisely define the purpose, functions, and key constituents. If none is available, write "None Available in 2017-2018."

In accordance with the goals of the University, the MA Program in History looks to "develop scholars who will variously advance knowledge, cultivate aesthetic sensibility, and improve the material conditions of humankind." Graduate faculty in History teach students the knowledge of the past and the critical thinking skills necessary so that graduates can contribute independent research to the field and become engaged, active citizens in their communities. The Program is committed to traditional approaches to teaching, scholarship, and learning, but also strives for innovation. This combination is critical to the success of graduate students in History, who learn how to question and analyze sources, develop well grounded interpretive arguments, and communicate new ideas to the public.

Attachment (optional)

Upload any documents which support the program / department assessment process.

Assessment Plan (due 12/4/17)

Assessment Plan (Goals / Objectives, Assessment Measures and Criteria for Success)

Assessment List

Goal/Objective	Students will be able to identify and articulate an author's argument.(Imported)		
Legends	SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);		
Standards/Outcomes			
Assessment Measures			
	Assessment Measure	Criterion	Attachments
	Direct - Comprehensive Exam (graduate level)	MA students in History demonstrate that they can identify and articulate and author's argument in a primary and secondary field of study through the comprehensive examinations (both written and oral) that they take once the coursework for the degree program has been completed. A committee of three faculty members evaluates the comprehensive examinations (both written and oral) completed each year. Assessments use a 4-level rubric that rates student accomplishment as: Strong Pass, Pass, Weak Pass, Fails. This objective is considered "achieved" is 80 percent of assessed students receive a rating of Strong Pass, Pass, or Weak Pass.	Exam_Assessment_Form_2016_2017.pdf

Goal/Objective	Students will be able analyze how historical accounts are constructed.(Imported)		
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Program / Department Assessment Narrative

The primary purpose of assessment is to use data to inform decisions and improve programs (student learning) and departments (operations); this is an on-going process of defining goals and expectations, collecting results, analyzing data, comparing current and past results and initiatives, and making decisions based on these reflections. In the space below, describe the program's or department's overall plan for improving student learning and/or operations (the "assessment plan"). Consider the following:

- 1) What strategies exist to assess the outcomes?
- 2) What does the program/department expect to achieve with the goals and objectives identified above?
- 3) How might prior or current initiatives (improvements) influence the anticipated outcomes this year?
- 4) What is the plan for using data to improve student learning and/or operations?
- 5) How will data be shared within the Program/Department (and, where appropriate, the College/VP-area)?

Assessment Process

Results & Improvements (due 9/15/18)

Results and Improvement Narratives

Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Students will be able to identify and articulate an author's argument.(Imported)

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Reflection (Due 9/15/18)

Reflection

The primary purpose of assessment is to use data to inform decisions and improve programs and operations; this is an on-going process of defining goals and expectations, collecting results, analyzing data, comparing current and past results and initiatives, and making decisions based on these reflections. Recalling this purpose, respond to the questions below.

1) How were assessment results shared in the program / department?

Please select all that apply. If "other", please use the text box to elaborate.

- Distributed via email (selected)
- Presented formally at staff / department / committee meetings (selected)
- Discussed informally (selected)
- Other (explain in text box below)

2) How frequently were assessment results shared?

- Frequently (>4 times per cycle)
- Periodically (2-4 times per cycle)
- Once per cycle (selected)
- Results were not shared this cycle

3) With whom were assessment results shared?

Please select all that apply.

Department Head (selected)

Dean / Asst. or Assoc. Dean (selected)

Departmental assessment committee (selected)

Other faculty / staff (selected)

4) Consider the impact of prior applied changes. Specifically, compare current results to previous results to evaluate the impact of a previously reported change. Demonstrate how the use of results improved student learning and/or operations.

These results are not as good as they were last year, but both are small sample sizes. With the one student who failed the exam in the spring (and then retook it in the summer, with success), our assessment this year included two assessment from one student, one a failure and one a success. We will continue to discuss the need to emphasize historiography in our graduate program, and we expect that it will result in improved assessment results.

5) Over the past three assessment cycles, what has been the overall impact of "closing the loop"? Provide examples of improvements in student learning, program quality, or department operations that are directly linked to assessment data and follow-up analysis.

The Graduate Committee determined during the 2015-2016 academic year that it would begin the 2016-2017 academic year by implementing new assessment objectives and tools. Students were consistently and easily meeting previous goals related to understanding and constructing historical narratives and public history. There are important objectives for any MA program in History, but since we were successful in meeting them, we chose not to continue assessing them. Instead, we focused on where we were not meeting our objectives easily. These new goals related solely to students' understanding of historiography. We assessed these goals for the first time at the end of the 2016-2017 academic year, with good result. We met our objectives that year, but with a limited number of students. But, we hoped to see more students in the "high pass" range, rather than the "low pass" range. This year's assessment is disappointing in that we did not achieve our objectives or improve. If we look more broadly, however, at the two years since devising the new assessment, we are still meeting the threshold of 80 percent passing. This combined larger sample provides us a better gauge of the general understanding our students have of historiography. The fact that one student failed the exams, only to pass when they retook the exams, means that our numbers were lower than they would have been had everyone passed the exams. Without the failure, we would have achieved goals. (The failure numbers are included for that student for both the failed and passed exam. Effectively, we would have achieved our goals if assessing students, not exams).

The longer view is promising. We have tried to have students take more graduate-only seminars and have discussed among faculty the need to teach and assign historiographic essays. We hope that further emphasis on these skills will produce results.

Attachments (optional)

Upload any documents which support the program / department assessment process.

2017_2017_MA_Assessment_Data.pdf