2017-2018 Assessment Cycle COLA_History BA

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 BA Program in History looks to "develop scholars who will variously advance knowledge, cultivate aesthetic sensibility, and improve the material conditions of humankind." Faculty in History teach students knowledge of the past and the critical thinking skills necessary so that graduates can become informed and engaged 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 undergraduate students in History, who learn how to question and analyze sources, develop well-grounded interpretive arguments, and communicate complex ideas in writing 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	Distinguish Sources: distinguish between primary and secondary sources(Imported)
Legends	
Standards/Outcomes	
Assessment Measures	

Assessment Measure	Criterion	Attachments
Direct - Capstone Assignment	80 percent of the papers must earn evaluations of "Outstanding," "Satisfactory," or "Passable, with Reservations" in order to demonstrate that the department "achieved" the goal of Distinguish Sources.	

Goal/Objective	Research: Research and conduct an investigation, consulting appropriate works for developing a bibliography.(Imported)
Legends	SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);
Standards/Outcomes	
Assessment Measures	

Assessment Measure	Criterion	Attachments
Direct - Capstone Assignment	80 percent of the papers must earn evaluations of "Outstanding," "Satisfactory," or "Passable, with Reservations" in order to demonstrate that the department "achieved" the goal of Research.	

Goal/Objective	Interpret & Analyze: interpret and analyze evidence found in primary sources and develop an historical argument based on and sustained by the evidence available(Imported)
Legends	SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);
Standards/Outcomes	
Assessment Measures	

	Assessment Measure	Criterion	Attachments
	Direct - Capstone Assignment	80 percent of the papers must earn evaluations of "Outstanding," "Satisfactory," or "Passable, with Reservations" in order to demonstrate that the department "achieved" the goal of Interpret & Analyze.	

Goal/Objective	Communicate: Produce historical essays that are coherent, cogent, grammatically correct, and which properly cite information through bibliography and footnotes.(Imported)
Legends	
Standards/Outcomes	
Assessment Measures	

	Assessment Measure	Criterion	Attachments
	Direct - Capstone Assignment	80 percent of the papers must earn evaluations of "Outstanding," "Satisfactory," or "Passable, with Reservations" in order to demonstrate that the department "achieved" the goal of Communicate.	

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

1) Our current strategies are as follows: A committee of five UL Lafayette historians, both assistant and associate professors, evaluate a random sampling of research papers from two 2016-2017 sections of the department's capstone course, HIST 490: Historical Research and Writing. In this course, students produce a significant research paper focusing on a historical topic and using primary and secondary sources. The Outcomes Assessment Committee uses our expansive rubric to evaluate the student success rate in achieving the four student learning goals/objectives by breaking those goals down into further subcategories for more detailed analysis. This expansive rubric allows the committee to determine not simply whether or not the department's goals are achieved, but to what degree those goals are met.

2)We hope to achieve the following learning goals: Students should be able produce significant research paper focusing on a historical topic and using primary and secondary sources. For the Research goal, students had to demonstrate their ability to conduct extensive research in the library, in online databases, and/or other archival collections. Students had to demonstrate an ability to evaluate the validity and value of source material. For the Distinguish Sources goal, students had to properly determine the categories of the sources materials they were working with. For the Interpret and Analyze goal, students had demonstrate the to ability to clearly articulate an argument and to engage their sources (whatever they may be) as evidence. For the Communicate goal, students had to demonstrate their ability to express ideas with proficient technical writing skills.

3 and 4) We believe that results from our recent curriculum improvements (primarily, topical specificity for the HIST490 course, establishing a prerequisite HIST390 course, both described below) will be successful, but that they have been too recently implemented to see beneficial results. Similar to the results in 2016, about a quarter (24%) of our students in 2017 were unable to find quality primary and secondary sources for their research paper. However, the 2015 Assessment demonstrated greater success with 490 sections organized by topic than those that were not organized in such fashion. In order to improve our results, we have recommended to our HIST 490 faculty to organize the class according to specific topics that best align with their specializations. We also plan to circulate more thoroughly the responsibility for teaching 490 among our faculty. However, our Fall 2016 courses were scheduled before implementation of these improvements, and thus only five of the seventeen assessed papers were in a topically-themed HIST490 course. The good news is that among these five papers, we achieved a 100% success rate in "research." While the small sample size of the topically-themed papers begs caution (along with other variables such as the small size of the class, resulting in a low student to faculty ratio), we do believe that our recent improvements, which will be more fully implemented in 2017-2018, will move us closer to achieving our goals next year.

5) The assessment coordinator will share data via email and in person with the department head and undergraduate coordinator. A member of the assessment committee will then share results with the entire faculty in a department-wide meeting. The assessment coordinator will keep a copy of results to be shared with whomever else necessary.

Results & Improvements (due 9/15/18)
Results and Improvement Narratives

Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Distinguish Sources: distinguish between primary and secondary sources(Imported)

Goal/Objective	Distinguish Sources: distinguish between primary and secondary sources(Imported)	
Legends		
Standards/Outcomes		
Assessment Measures		
	Assessment Measure	**Criterion**
	Direct - Capstone Assignment	80 percent of the papers must earn evaluations of "Outstanding," "Satisfactory," or "Passable, with Reservations" in order to demonstrate that the department "achieved" the goal of Distinguish Sources.
Assessment Findings		

Assessment Measure	Criterion	Summary	Attachments of the Assessments	Improvement Narratives
Direct - Capstone Assignment	Has the criterion 80 percent of the papers must earn evaluations of "Outstanding," "Satisfactory," or "Passable, with Reservations" in order to demonstrate that the department "achieved" the goal of Distinguish Sources. been met yet? Met	A committee of five UL Lafayette historians, both assistant and associate professors, evaluated all passing research papers from two 2017-2018 sections of the department's capstone course, HIST 490: Historical Research and Writing. In this course, students produce a significant research paper focusing on a historical topic and using primary and secondary sources. For the Research goal, students had to demonstrate their ability to conduct extensive research in the library, in online databases, and/or other archival collections and evaluate the validity of source material. The working criteria this year for earning a rank of outstanding, satisfactory, passable with reservations, or unsatisfactory in this category is included in this report as an attachment. Number of papers assessed = 23. This year the Outcomes Assessment Committee used our expansive rubric to evaluate the student success rate in achieving the four		- Assessment Process: Continuous monitoring: Although we cannot determine the exact factor, multiple initiatives might have contributed improvements in meeting this goal. These initiatives, described more fully in the "Reflections" tab, include topical specificity in HIST490 courses, rotating instructors of HIST490, integrating HIST490 instruction and assessment, implementing a HIST390 prerequisite, and requiring more 400-level courses in our curriculum. As we predicted last year, these initiatives needed to be fully implemented for at least a full academic year to bear noticeable results. As the percentage of improvement was quite steep, we plan to continuously monitor our progress to see if these results are sustainable over time or if they are an aberration. In 2018-2019, we will do this by

			student learning goals/objectives by breaking those goals down into further subcategories for more detailed analysis. This expansive rubric allows the committee to determine not simply whether or not the department's goals are achieved, but to what degree those goals are met. This year, the evaluation team consisted of five faculty members, all of whom had formed part of the assessment committee in the previous year. This year, the evaluation team used the same rubric from the previous year with no major changes to the language of the criteria. The committee determined to maintain the goal that 80 percent of the papers must earn evaluations of "Outstanding," "Satisfactory," or "Passable, with Reservations" in order to demonstrate that the department "achieved" each particular goal. Two evaluators read each paper. To achieve a goal, the paper could not receive a mark of "Unsatisfactory," by either evaluator, in the measurable		consistently implementing the recent changes to our curriculum. We will assess the BA program with the same method and rubric for continuity to determine if we have sustained this improvement. In future years, we may raise our goals to increase the percentage of students passing at a rate of "satisfactory," but for 2018-2019, our focus will be on consistent implementation and monitoring of recent improvements.

			category. Outcome This year we made a significant improvement in the learning objective of "Research," which we had struggled with in past years. We achieved a 91% pass rate in this competency, a steep improvement from the 76% pass rate of the previous year. Although we cannot isolate one sole factor, the department implemented multiple initiatives that might have contributed to the improvements in this competency. 2017-2018 represents the first year in which we were able to teach HIST490 with topical specificity in both sections. Guiding students more directly to appropriate, topic-specific primary source collections may have contributed to this vast improvement. Although we surpassed our overall goal of an 80% passing rate, according to the multi-tiered rubric, only 71% of students passed at a level of "satisfactory" or "outstanding," while 20% "passed with reservations." This represents a potential area for growth in the future.		

Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Research: Research and conduct an investigation, consulting appropriate works for developing a bibliography.(Imported)

Goal/Objective	Research: Research and conduct an investigation, consulting appropriate works for developing a bibliography.(Imported)
Legends	SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);
Standards/Outcomes	
Assessment Measures	
Assessment Findings	

Assessment Measures:

Assessment Measure	Criterion
Direct - Capstone Assignment	80 percent of the papers must earn evaluations of "Outstanding," "Satisfactory," or "Passable, with Reservations" in order to demonstrate that the department "achieved" the goal of Research.

Assessment Findings:

Assessment Measure	Criterion	Summary	Attachments of the Assessments	Improvement Narratives
Direct - Capstone Assignment	Has the criterion 80 percent of the papers must earn evaluations of "Outstanding," "Satisfactory," or "Passable, with Reservations" in order to demonstrate that the department "achieved" the goal of Research. been met yet? Met	A committee of five UL Lafayette historians, both assistant and associate professors, evaluated all passing research papers from two 2017-2018 sections of the department's capstone course, HIST 490: Historical Research and Writing. In this course, students produce a significant research paper focusing on a historical topic and using primary and secondary sources. For the Distinguish Sources goal, students had to properly determine the categories of the source materials they were working with, and whether		- Assessment Process: Continuous monitoring: Although we cannot determine the exact factor, multiple initiatives might have contributed improvements in meeting this goal. These initiatives, described more fully in the "Reflections" tab, include topical specificity in HIST490 courses, rotating instructors of HIST490, integrating HIST490 instruction and assessment, implementing a HIST390 prerequisite, and requiring more 400-level courses

			they were primary and secondary. Students also had to demonstrate that they understood the distinct ways in which historians use primary and secondary sources. The working criteria this year for earning a rank of satisfactory or unsatisfactory is included in this report as an attachment. Number of papers assessed = 23. Although we use an expansive rubric to determine the precise degree of success in other competencies, the assessment committee determine that this competency merited a direct rating of satisfactory or unsatisfactory. This year, the evaluation team consisted of five faculty members, all of whom had formed part of the assessment committee in the previous year. This year, the evaluation team also used the same rubric from the previous year with no major changes to the language of the criteria. The committee determined to maintain the goal that 80 percent of the papers must earn evaluations of "Satisfactory" in order to demonstrate that the department "achieved" each particular goal. Two		in our curriculum. As we predicted last year, these initiatives needed to be fully implemented for at least a full academic year to bear noticeable results. As the percentage of improvement was quite steep, we plan to continuously monitor our progress to see if these results are sustainable over time or if they are an aberration. In 2018-2019, we will do this by consistently implementing the recent changes to our curriculum. We will assess the BA program with the same method and rubric for continuity to determine if we have sustained this improvement.

			evaluators read each paper. To achieve a goal, the paper could not receive a mark of "Unsatisfactory," by either evaluator, in the measurable category. Outcome This year we achieved a success rate of 87% in the category of "Distinguish Sources," meeting our goal in this category. This is a steep improvement from the 67% pass rate in the 2016-2017 assessment cycle. Although we cannot isolate one sole factor, the department implemented multiple initiatives that might have contributed to the improvements in this competency. For example, 2017-2018 represents the first year in which we were able to teach HIST490 with topical specificity in both sections. Guiding students more directly to appropriate, topic-specific primary source collections may have contributed to this vast improvement.		

Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Interpret & Analyze: interpret and analyze evidence found in primary sources and develop an historical argument based on and sustained by the evidence available(Imported)

Goal/Objective	Interpret & Analyze: interpret and analyze evidence found in primary sources and develop an historical argument based on and sustained by the evidence available(Imported)
Legends	SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);

Standards/Outcomes	
Assessment Measures	

Assessment Measure	Criterion
Direct - Capstone Assignment	80 percent of the papers must earn evaluations of "Outstanding," "Satisfactory," or "Passable, with Reservations" in order to demonstrate that the department "achieved" the goal of Interpret & Analyze.

Assessment Findings	

Assessment Measure	Criterion	Summary	Attachments of the Assessments	Improvement Narratives
Direct - Capstone Assignment	Has the criterion 80 percent of the papers must earn evaluations of "Outstanding," "Satisfactory," or "Passable, with Reservations" in order to demonstrate that the department "achieved" the goal of Interpret & Analyze. been met yet? Not met	A committee of five UL Lafayette historians, both assistant and associate professors, evaluated all passing research papers from two 2017-2018 sections of the department's capstone course, HIST 490: Historical Research and Writing. In this course, students produce a significant research paper focusing on a historical topic and using primary and secondary sources. For the Interpret and Analyze goal, students had move to clearly articulate an argument ("Presentation of Thesis"), to engage their sources as evidence ("Evidence in Support of Thesis") and engage with these sources, analyzing and identifying bias/perspective and		- Assessment Process: Results Discussed / Shared: Although we cannot determine the exact factor, multiple initiatives might have contributed improvements in two categories of this goal. As we predicted last year, these initiatives needed to be fully implemented for at least a full academic year to bear noticeable results. As the percentage of improvement was quite steep for "Analysis of Sources," we plan to continuously monitor our progress to see if these results are sustainable over time or if they are an aberration. The initiatives that we have gradually implemented over the years,

			audience, as well contextualizing their broader significance ("Analysis of Sources"). The working criteria this year for earning a rank of outstanding, satisfactory, passable with reservations, or unsatisfactory in this category is included in this report as an attachment. Number of papers assessed = 23. This year the Outcomes Assessment Committee used our expansive rubric to evaluate the student success rate in achieving the four student learning goals/objectives by breaking those goals down into further subcategories for more detailed analysis. This expansive rubric allows the committee to determine not simply whether or not the department's goals are achieved, but to what degree those goals are met. This year, the evaluation team consisted of five faculty members, all of whom had formed part of the assessment committee in the previous year. This year, the evaluation team also used the same rubric from the previous year with no major changes to the language of the criteria. The		described below, will consistently form a part of our curriculum. In 2018-2019, we will assess the BA program with the same method and rubric for continuity to determine if we have sustained this improvement. Although we are disappointed that our success rate in "Presentation of Thesis" decreased from the year before, we will improve this by sharing assessment results and emphasizing this competency among faculty. While in the previous year, we emphasized the need to improve the "Evidence" and "Analysis" sub-categories, we will also advise the instructors of HIST390 and HIST490 that they should not lose focus of "Presentation of Thesis" while they continue to work on teaching the other competencies.

			committee determined to maintain the goal that 80 percent of the papers must earn evaluations of "Outstanding," "Satisfactory," or "Passable, with Reservations" in order to demonstrate that the department "achieved" each particular goal. Two evaluators read each paper. To achieve a goal, the paper could not receive a mark of "Unsatisfactory," by either evaluator, in the measurable category. Outcome This year we achieved a success rate of 70% in "Presentation of Thesis", 91% in "Evidence in Support of Thesis", and 91% in "Analysis of Sources" in the three categories of "Interpret and Analyze," demonstrating that we only partially attained our goals in this category. We are pleased with our students' competency in "Evidence in Support of Thesis", which improved from 88% to 91% and "Analysis of Sources," which improved from 74% to 91% (from failing to surpassing this goal). However, students achieved only 70% success in "Presentation of Thesis," which		

		represents a decrease from an 82% passing rate the previous year. It appears that about 30% of our students seemed to struggle with articulating a clear argument. We believe that we should continue to maintain a high threshold of 80% for declaring success in each of our goals.		

Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Communicate: Produce historical essays that are coherent, cogent, grammatically correct, and which properly cite information through bibliography and footnotes.(Imported)

Goal/Objective	Communicate: Produce historical essays that are coherent, cogent, grammatically correct, and which properly cite information through bibliography and footnotes.(Imported)
Legends	
Standards/Outcomes	

Assessment Measures		
	Assessment Measure	**Criterion**
	Direct - Capstone Assignment	80 percent of the papers must earn evaluations of "Outstanding," "Satisfactory," or "Passable, with Reservations" in order to demonstrate that the department "achieved" the goal of Communicate.

Assessment Findings					
	Assessment Measure	**Criterion**	**Summary**	**Attachments of the Assessments**	**Improvement Narratives**
	Direct - Capstone Assignment	Has the criterion 80 percent of the papers must earn evaluations of "Outstanding," "Satisfactory," or "Passable, with Reservations" in order to demonstrate that	A committee of five UL Lafayette historians, both assistant and associate professors, evaluated all passing research papers from two 2017-2018 sections		- Assessment Process: Continuous monitoring: We will continue to monitor the communication skills of our students to ensure high success rates and meet our

		the department "achieved" the goal of Communicate. been met yet? Met	of the department's capstone course, HIST 490: Historical Research and Writing. In this course, students produce a significant research paper focusing on a historical topic and using primary and secondary sources. For the Communicate goal, students had to demonstrate their ability to communicate effectively and properly through the writing of a research paper. There were several competencies in this category, technical writing skills ("Grammar"), the ability to structure and organize a paper ("Organization"), and properly cite sources in Chicago Style ("Proper Citation"). The working criteria this year for earning a rank of outstanding, satisfactory, passable with reservations, or unsatisfactory in this category is included in this report as an attachment. Number of papers assessed = 23. This year the Outcomes Assessment Committee used our expansive rubric to evaluate the student success rate in achieving the four student learning goals/objectives by		goals. However, we have now surpassed our goals in this category for several years in a row. In committee and departmental meetings during the Fall 2018 semester, we will discuss options of either raising the numerical standard for achieving access, adjusting the criterion, or replacing this learning outcome with another so that we can continue to work towards meaningful improvement targets.

			breaking those goals down into further subcategories for more detailed analysis. This expansive rubric allows the committee to determine not simply whether or not the department's goals are achieved, but to what degree those goals are met. This year, the evaluation team consisted of five faculty members, all of whom had formed part of the assessment committee in the previous year. This year, the evaluation team also used the same rubric from the previous year with no major changes to the language of the criteria. The committee determined to maintain the goal that 80 percent of the papers must earn evaluations of "Outstanding," "Satisfactory," or "Passable, with Reservations" in order to demonstrate that the department "achieved" each particular goal. Two evaluators read each paper. To achieve a goal, the paper could not receive a mark of "Unsatisfactory," by either evaluator, in the measurable category.		

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) (selected)

We will discuss the assessment results in committee and department-wide meetings in Fall 2018

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
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.

The 2017-2018 academic year represented a significant shift in our program. In 2017-2018, we were able to implement many of the initiatives that we had been suggesting for the past several years. We saw direct, even dramatic, improvement in this year's assessment cycle. We cannot isolate one single factor, and some changes (such as HIST390 as a pre-requisite for all majors; currently only students who declared their major after 2016 must take it) are still not completely integrated into our curriculum. However, we achieved our goals in "Research," "Distinguish Sources," and "Communication." We went from a 76% to 91% passing rate in "Research," from a 67% to 87% passing rate in "Distinguish Sources," and in the sub-categories of "Evidence," and "Analysis" (within the Objective of "Interpret and Analyze") we went from 88% to 91% and 74% to 91% respectively. Although our rate of passing decreased in "Presentation of Thesis," from 82% to 70%, this was the only sub-category in which we did not achieve our goals. We used results from previous assessment cycles to target the learning objectives in which we were failing. In 2017-2018, we were able to see the direct results and improvements from these changes.

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.

Recent and Planned Improvements to HIST490:
• In past years, we recommended our HIST 490 faculty organize the class according to specific topics that best align with their specializations. In 2017-2018, both instructors of HIST490 did so with improved results. We will continue to encourage our faculty to design topically-specific HIST490 courses for their students.
• We had also recommended that the department circulate more thoroughly the responsibility for teaching 490 among our faculty. In 2017-2018, both sections of HIST490 were taught by instructors who were teaching the course for the first time. We will continue to rotate HIST490 among various faculty to encourage all of our faculty to be prepared to teach this course.
• We also integrated instruction and assessment by having current or future HIST490 instructors form part of the assessment committee. Beginning in the 2017-2018 cycle, various instructors of HIST490 have formed part of the assessment committee and can use their familiarity with our assessment rubric and previous HIST490 papers to specifically target competencies where we have underperformed in the past. We will continue to ensure that HSIT490 instructors are fully aware of the assessment rubric.

Recent and Planned Improvements to BA Curriculum
• We recently created a new prerequisite to the BA program, HIST390: The Historian's Craft, a skills-based course that explicitly targets our four goals of Research, Interpret & Analyze, Communicate, and Distinguish Sources by requiring students to complete exercises and projects related to analyzing and distinguishing primary and secondary sources, and to develop skills in assessing historiography. We have now HIST390 for four consecutive semesters. However, only students who declared a History major after Fall 2016 are required to take it. Therefore, while some have, not every student who took HIST490 in AY2018-2019 has taken HIST390. According to informal discussions among faculty, teaching HIST390 prepares both instructors and students for HIST490. Teaching HIST390 allows instructors to develop their teaching methods with primary sources and research and it allows students to work with primary sources and plan a research project before entering HIST490. We plan to continue teaching HIST390 and will monitor results more precisely in 2018-2019.
• We expanded the number of required 400 level seminars in order for students to continue rigorous skill development in assessing and critiquing secondary sources through discussion, book reviews, and historiographical papers. This expansion of the senior seminar courses also fits the needs of the students, expressed in recent senior surveys, to offer more courses at this level. We will continue to offer 400-level courses to our students in order to hone these skills.
• We have successfully hired new faculty members in exciting new areas, but we are still dealing with faculty retention. Our searches for a historian of Africa and of Public History were successful and we look forward to fulfilling student demand for more courses in these areas. However, we are still struggling with departures in African-American and European history, as well as the continued lack of tenure-track faculty in subjects such as Asian history and Ancient history. We hope that we will be able to fill these positions in future in order to meet both faculty and student demand for varied course offerings that cover diverse geographic areas and time periods.
• We developed a new HIST100 course that allows faculty to teach their subject of specialty at an introductory, survey level to encourage student engagement and increase flexibility in the curriculum.
• Finally, the department has embarked on numerous ambitious projects to integrate experiential learning in our undergraduate courses. For example, students in one section of HIST490 attended an overnight research field trip to visit archives in New Orleans, LA. Students in 300-level courses also attended field trips, visited public history monuments, and participated in discussion and debates about history, memory, and contemporary social issues. We continued our revival of the annual Guilbeau lecture series so that students could interact with distinguished scholars. Experiential learning activities such as these allow our undergraduates to think about sophisticated real-world applications of their historical knowledge and skills. Students visiting plantation museums, for example, discuss the ways in which tourist sites interpret and memorialize slavery in Louisiana, building on-the-ground skills to analyze and critique non-traditional primary and secondary sources. We will continue to encourage our faculty to engage in experiential learning so that students entering HIST490 have a multi-dimensional understanding of the various ways in which historians interpret, analyze, and communicate their research.

Attachments (optional)
Upload any documents which support the program / department assessment process.

RubricExplanation.doc