



Academic Learning Compact

History

Program Mission Statement

The Department of History is dedicated to teaching, research, and the intellectual development of students, faculty, the university, and the community. We are committed to recruit and support a diverse community of students, faculty, and staff; to provide educational opportunities and professional service that benefit the university and the wider community; to nurture research as an essential component of our teaching mission; and to engage in self-reflection to assure that we carry out our responsibilities in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

Informed by those commitments, the mission of the Department of History is to graduate individuals who can view the world with historical perspective, think critically about historical issues and evidence, appreciate the traditions of many cultures, communicate effectively, and recognize that education is a never-ending process.

Achieving this mission obliges the department to:

- (1), provide a challenging and diverse curriculum for majors and minors, one that emphasizes evaluating change over time, critical thinking, effective communication, and an appreciation for different cultures;
- (2), provide a challenging and diverse curriculum for students in majors and/or minors besides history, and for students seeking General Education credit. This curriculum should emphasize evaluating change over time, critical thinking, effective communication, and an appreciation for different cultures;
- (3), recruit and retain an excellent faculty who are committed to the department's mission;
- (4) encourage faculty research, travel, and professional development in order to enhance teaching, expand the base of historical knowledge, and foster historical awareness;
- (5), provide a curriculum that builds upon faculty scholarship;
- (6), provide transformational learning opportunities for students, particularly through study abroad courses, internships, faculty-directed research projects, and, for majors, capstone senior seminars;
- (7), provide external partnerships with local historical agencies, state and national parks, school districts, and other entities;
- (8), assess the department's progress in meeting its goals.

Student Learning Outcomes

Graduates will be able

Content/Discipline-Specific Knowledge/Skills

- Demonstrate knowledge of the factual content of history - that is, the ability to answer who, what, when and where questions about human society in the past.
- Research essays should demonstrate proper referencing in the appropriate style (eg., Chicago Manual of Style, MLA, etc.).
- Analyze historiography with respect to the subject at hand. Students should be able to place their own research approach, questions and conclusions within the context of other scholars' work on the same subject.
- Conduct research, appraising the types and limitations of source materials, and choosing appropriate library finding aids (both print and electronic data bases).

Communication Skills

- Write extended research papers, expressed in clear, precise, and effective prose.

Critical Thinking Skills

- Create a logical argument in support of a thesis about an historical question. Argument should be supported by historical evidence.
- Analyze primary and secondary sources.

Assessment Approaches

The Department of History uses two basic approaches to assessment at the undergraduate level. First, we use direct measures to assess the degree to which the History program enhances students' Content/Discipline Specific Knowledge/Skills; their Communication Skills; and their Critical Thinking Skills. Specifically, we read a sample of research papers from students' final capstone seminars, using a rubric that measure student achievement of various outcomes on a scale of "1" to "5," with "5" being the highest level of achievement. We also assess each of the three outcome categories noted above using an indirect measure. Specifically, we read the Graduating Senior Survey and determine what percentage of students believed that they had achieved each learning outcomes under the three categories noted above.