

**2015-2016 Yearly Assessment Report Template**  
**College of Arts and Sciences (CAS)**

NOTES:

- Yearly Assessment Reports for all CAS Majors and Graduate Programs are due by 07/01/16; early submissions are welcome.
- Reports, as well as two Curriculum Maps (one that maps Program Learning Outcomes to Institutional Learning Outcomes and one that maps Courses to Program Learning Outcomes) should be submitted as three separate documents to the Program Assistant; he/she will upload these three documents to Gnosis.
- This template is intended to be an outline for the Yearly Assessment Report; it is in word format so that faculty can modify and delete as needed, and use whatever space is necessary to respond to the questions

**1. Identifying Information**

Name of Program: History Department

Type of Program (Major, Minor, Graduate Program, Non-Degree Granting): Major and Minor, undergraduate only

College of Arts and Sciences Division (Arts, Humanities, Sciences, or Social Sciences): Humanities

Name/Title/Email Address of Submitter: Kathryn Nasstrom, Chair (AY 2016-2017), History Department, nasstromk@usfca.edu

Name/Email Address of Additional Individuals Who Should Receive Feedback: Kathryn Nasstrom, nasstromk@usfca.edu

**2. Mission Statement:**

The essence of historical inquiry is, simply put, to study and understand the past. The History Department at the University of San Francisco is a community of scholars and students who seek an informed and critical sense of the past and an awareness of the role of the past in shaping the present. Such an understanding is, we believe, the basis for effective and engaged citizenship in the contemporary world.

We seek to educate our students about the variety of past human experience within a global setting. Toward that end, we offer six regional emphases within the history major, and students elect a single or a double emphasis in the histories of Africa, Asia, Europe, the Islamic World, Latin America, and the United States. Our courses similarly cover the span of human history from antiquity to modern times and utilize a range of methodological approaches. History at USF offers both breadth and depth into fields and specializations that reveal the complexity of human societies, past and present.

While we hope to impart a love of history and an appreciation of its value, we also aim to prepare our students for further study and professional development in the many areas in which history majors find employment, including (but not limited to) teaching, law, business, and the public sector. The study of history—with the training it provides in close reading, logical reasoning, careful argumentation, and persuasive writing—is an ideal major to prepare for “the real world.”

Has this statement been revised in the last few years?

It has been revisited, in that we referred to it as we worked on revising our learning goals and outcomes over the last three years, but it has not been revised.

### **3. (Optional) Program Goals:**

The program goals, which we formerly referred to as “areas of competency,” are as follows (the wording reflects areas-of-competency logic):

- 1- historical knowledge; that is, what students know about the past
- 2- historical thinking; that is, being able to think about the past as historians do
- 3- the historical method; that is, mastering the research skills of a historian
- 4- the presentation of history; that is, being able to express knowledge of history orally and in writing
- 5- ethics and history; that is, being able to connect the practice of history to ethical questions.

Have these goals been revised in the last few years?

Yes. In the years since the History Department’s last APR (2012-2013), the department has been revising our curriculum. These program goals came out of that process.

### **4. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)**

The program learning outcomes are as follows:

- 1- Understand the breadth and diversity of human experience across time and space
- 2- Develop a substantive knowledge of range and depth in their area(s) of concentration, whether regional and/or topical/thematic
- 3- Think critically and historically about the past
- 4- Understand and appropriately apply historical research methods
- 5- Craft and present persuasive historical arguments in both oral and written form
- 6- Understand how the practice of history can establish a valuable framework for considering ethical issues in the past and present

Have these PLOs been revised in the last few years?

Yes. In the years since the History Department's last APR (AY 2012-2013), the department has been revising our curriculum. These program learning outcomes came out of that process.

## **5. Brief Summary of Most Recent Assessment Plan**

The most recent History Department Assessment Plan is attached in a file titled "HistAssessmentrevisedPlanDec2015". Based on feedback received from June Clausen and Mark Meritt in spring 2016, it is now clear the department will need to make changes to this plan. Specifically, I expect that we will be moving away from an assessment mode that focuses on individual courses, which is the way we have conducted assessment to date. We will do so in AY 2016-2017, but I am submitting the attached now as the "most recent assessment plan".

## **6. Academic Program Review**

Date of most recent Academic Program Review's External Reviewer Visit: May 1-3, 2013

Date of most recent Action Plan Meeting: May 6, 2016. Since the department has been working steadily on curricular revisions (for multiple reasons, including input from the last APR) for the last three years, I have entered the date of the last department meeting at which curricular matters were discussed.

Brief Summary of the most recent Action Plan: In terms of action plan items that pertain to assessment, a brief summary would be, as noted above, that the department has been working steadily on curriculum revision for the last three years. We have a few more decisions to make at our fall 2016 department meetings, after which we will be submitting a curriculum revision to the Curriculum Committee.

## **7. Methods**

What did you do with regard to assessment of your program/department in 2015-2016?

As noted above, in AY 2015-2016, the department was still in the mode of conducting assessment through individual courses. Three courses were assessed (History 210, History 240, and History 386). The reports submitted by those faculty members are attached to this report.

What were your questions?

For History 210, the questions (or, more accurately put, measures) were:

- formulate historical questions
- distinguish primary and secondary sources
- evaluate historical interpretations

For History 240, the questions (measures) were the same as for History 210.  
(Both courses are methodology courses for the major.)

For History 386, the question (measure) was: develop a substantive knowledge of range and depth in their areas(s) of concentration, whether regional and/or topical/thematic.

How are these questions related to your most recent Academic Program Review and/or Action Plan?

All of these questions (measures) came from the list of program PLO's and the attendant rubrics we designed over the last three years of curricular revision. The PLO's are listed in question 4 above; the rubrics for each PLO are contained in Chart A of the attached file titled "HistAssessmentrevisedPlanDec2015".

What PLOs are these questions related to?

For the two methods courses (210 and 240): Think critically and historically about the past.

For History 386, an upper-division course largely for majors: Develop a substantive knowledge of range and depth in their areas(s) of concentration, whether regional and/or topical/theme.

What direct (most important) and/or indirect methods did you employ?

The direct methods (from the list below) that most closely match the methods used were: "b" (in the case of History 386 it was final exams) and "g" (in the case of History 210 and 240 it was course papers). No indirect methods were used.

Some Possible Direct Methods (pick  $\geq 1$  and *briefly describe*):

- a. Published (Standardized) Test (e.g., Major Field Test)
- b. Class Tests & Quizzes with Embedded Questions
- c. Class Presentations
- d. Off-Campus Presentations (NGOs, clients, agencies, etc.)
- e. Research Projects Reports
- f. Case Studies
- g. Term Papers
- h. Portfolio
- i. Artistic Performances, Recitals & Products
- j. Capstone Projects
- k. Poster Presentations
- l. Comprehensive Exams
- m. Thesis, Dissertation
- n. Pass Rates on Certification or Licensure Exams

- o. Group Projects
- p. In/Out-of Class Presentations
- q. Competency Interviews (e.g., oral exams)
- r. Simulations
- s. Juried Presentations
- t. Other

Some Possible Indirect Methods (*briefly describe*):

- a. Student Survey
- b. Student Interview
- c. Focus Groups
- d. Reflection Sessions
- e. Reflection Essays
- f. Faculty Survey
- g. Exit (end of program) Survey
- h. Exit (end of program) Interview
- i. Alumni Survey
- j. Employer Survey
- k. Diaries or Journals
- l. Data from Institutional Surveys (e.g., NSSE, SSI, GSS)
- m. Curriculum/Syllabus Analysis
- n. Other

## 8. Results

What were the direct data results?

The direct data results are contained in the attached reports for the three courses that were assessed. Additionally, the reports for History 210 and History 240 contain a summary statement of results at the end.

What were the indirect results?

There were no indirect results reported.

What surprised you?

None of the reports indicate any surprises on the part of the faculty member, and reading them I am also not surprised by the results.

What aligned with your expectations?

None of the reports indicate an alignment (or misalignment, for that matter) with expectations on the part of the faculty member, and reading them I also conclude that nothing stands out in this regard. More generally, however, I would observe that we are not yet in the habit of thinking about expectations (or, above, surprises), which is perhaps a new way we will need to think about assessment.

What do you understand these results to mean?

Considering these three individual course reports together, the results suggest that history majors (all the students involved in the assessment process in these reports were history majors) fall on a spectrum from those doing barely adequate work, through those doing competent work, to those doing excellent work, with far more students falling on the good and excellent end of the spectrum.

Beyond that, the data in the reports is different enough (different students, different instructors, different assignments), that it would be hard to generalize. As the department moves away from doing course-based assessment, our assessment methods will hopefully generate results that are more generalizable.

What are the implications of the data?

I do not believe there is enough data to draw clear implications.

## 9. Closing the Loop

What might you do as a result of these assessment results? What curricular or programmatic changes might you implement?

I do not believe there is enough data to suggest curricular or programmatic changes. However, the methods and results indicate a need along the lines of “g” below—that is, to fine tune our assessment methods.

Possible Closing(s) of the Loop(s) (pick  $\geq 1$  and *briefly describe*):

- a. Revision of PLOs
- b. Changes in pedagogical practices
- c. Revision of program course sequence
- d. Revision of course(s) content
- e. Curriculum Changes (e.g., addition and/or deletion of courses)
- f. Modified program policies or procedures
- g. Designed measurement tools more aptly suited for the task
- h. Improved within and across school/college collaboration
- i. Improved within and across school/college communication
- j. Revised student learning outcomes in one or more courses
- k. Modified rubric
- l. Developed new rubric
- m. Developed more stringent measures (key assessments)
- n. Modified course offering schedules
- o. Changes to faculty and/or staff
- p. Changes in program modality of delivery
- q. Other

Have you or will you submit any course or program change proposals as a result of these results?

Not directly as a result of these results; however, as noted above, the History Department will be submitting a revised curriculum to the Curriculum Committee.