

## History Major and Minor Programs

### ASSESSMENT REPORT ACADEMIC YEAR 2017 – 2018 REPORT DUE DATE: 10/26/2018

**Who should submit the report? – All majors, minors (including interdisciplinary minors), graduate and non-degree granting certificate programs of the College of Arts and Sciences. Programs can combine assessment reports for a major and a minor program into one aggregate report as long as the mission statements, program learning outcome(s) evaluated, methodology applied to each, and the results are clearly delineated.**

**Note:** Dear Colleagues: In an effort to produce a more streamlined and less repetitive assessment report format, we are piloting this modified template for the present annual assessment cycle. We are requesting an assessment report that would not exceed eight pages of text. Supporting materials may be appended. We will be soliciting your feedback on the report as we attempt to make it more user-friendly.

**Some useful contacts:**

1. Prof. Alexandra Amati, FDCD, Arts – [adamati@usfca.edu](mailto:adamati@usfca.edu)
2. Prof. John Lendvay, FDCD, Sciences – [lendvay@usfca.edu](mailto:lendvay@usfca.edu)
3. Prof. Mark Meritt, FDCD, Humanities – [meritt@usfca.edu](mailto:meritt@usfca.edu)
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5. Prof. Suparna Chakraborty, AD Academic Effectiveness – [schakraborty2@usfca.edu](mailto:schakraborty2@usfca.edu)
6. Ms. Corie Schwabenland, Academic Data & Assessment Specialist- [ceschwabenland@usfca.edu](mailto:ceschwabenland@usfca.edu)

**Academic Effectiveness Annual Assessment Resource Page:**

<https://myusf.usfca.edu/arts-sciences/faculty-resources/academic-effectiveness/assessment>

**Email to submit the report: [assessment\\_cas@usfca.edu](mailto:assessment_cas@usfca.edu)**

**Important: Please write the name of your program or department in the subject line.**

**For example: FineArts\_Major (if you decide to submit a separate report for major and minor); FineArts\_Aggregate (when submitting an aggregate report)**

## I. LOGISTICS & PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Please indicate the name and email of the program contact person to whom feedback should be sent (usually Chair, Program Director, or Faculty Assessment Coordinator).

Heather J. Hoag (Chair) [hjhoag@usfca.edu](mailto:hjhoag@usfca.edu)

2. Were any changes made to the program mission statement since the last assessment cycle in October 2017? Kindly state “Yes” or “No.” Please provide the current mission statement below. If you are submitting an aggregate report, please provide the current mission statements of both the major and the minor program.

No changes were made. We have the same mission statement for both programs.

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.”

3. Were any changes made to the program learning outcomes (PLOs) since the last assessment cycle in October 2017? Kindly state “Yes” or “No.” Please provide the current PLOs below. If you are submitting an aggregate report, please provide the current PLOs for both the major and the minor programs.

No changes were made.

The program learning outcomes for the History major 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 areas(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

The program learning outcomes for the History minor are a subset of those for the major:

1. Understand the breadth and diversity of human experience across time and space
3. Think critically and historically about the past
5. Craft and present persuasive historical arguments in both oral and written forms
6. Understand how the practice of history can establish a valuable framework for considering ethical issues in the past and present

**4. Which particular Program Learning Outcome(s) did you assess for the academic year 2017-2018?**

PLO #3: Think critically and historically about the past

As this PLO pertains to both the major and the minor and the fact that we have so few minors (only one graduating that we assessed), we are submitting an aggregate report.

## II. METHODOLOGY

**5. Describe the methodology that you used to assess the PLO(s).**

For example, “the department used questions that were inputted in the final examination pertaining directly to the <said PLO>. An independent group of faculty (not teaching the course) then evaluated the responses to the questions and gave the students a grade for responses to those questions.”

**Important Note** – WSCUC advises us to use “direct methods” which relate to a direct evaluation of a student work product. “Indirect methods” like exit interviews or student surveys can be used only as additional complements to a direct method.

For any program with fewer than 10 students: If you currently have fewer than 10 students in your program (rendering your statistical analysis biased due to too few data points), it is fine to describe a multi-year data collection strategy here. It would be important to remember that every 3 years, we would expect you to have enough data to conduct a meaningful analysis.

**Important: Please attach, at the end of this report, a copy of the rubric used for assessment.**

Our method was as follows:

1. In Spring 2018, the department selected an assessment committee comprised of two members (raters) and the chair (who would direct the process and write the report). PLO #3 (“Think critically and historically about the past”) was selected to assess.
2. For the major program assessment, the final papers from our senior seminar (HIST 410, offered in Fall 2017) were collected. For our minor program, we only had one graduating senior in a History course (HIST 379) and his/her final paper was also collected.
3. Next, the department chair created an appropriate rubric based on the competency chart the department created to articulate what skills each learning outcome refers to, basically, how we will know if students meet our expectations. The rubric was then reviewed by the two raters who corresponded as to their approach to the rating process. This rubric is attached.
4. Two faculty raters (Elliot Neaman and Mike Stanfield) were provided with the rubric and the scanned papers (numbered with names redacted).
5. The raters read each paper and scored them using the rubric provided.
6. Raters returned the rubrics to the chair who calculated the results and presented it to the department to discuss.
7. The department discussed the results and what we can learn from them at a department meeting (October 10, 2018).
8. The chair then wrote and submitted the assessment report.

### **III. RESULTS & MAJOR FINDINGS**

**6. What are the major takeaways from your assessment exercise?**

**This section is for you to highlight the results of the exercise. Pertinent information here would include:**

- a. **how well students mastered the outcome at the level they were intended to,**
- b. **any trends noticed over the past few assessment cycles, and**
- c. **the levels at which students mastered the outcome based on the rubric used.**

Eighteen papers were scanned and sent to raters to evaluate. One was thrown out as it was duplicated. A total of seventeen papers were rated.

<b>Reviewer #1 HIST 410</b>	<b>Sophisticated</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Marginal</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Goal #1	8 (47%)	5 (29%)	4 (24%)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)
Goal #2	5 (29%)	6 (35%)	5 (29%)	1 (6%)	0 (0 %)
Goal #3	2 (12%)	10 (59%)	5 (29%)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)
Goal #4	7 (41%)	6 (35%)	3 (18%)	1 (6%)	0 (0 %)
Goal #5	4 (24%)	9 (53%)	3 (18%)	1 (6%)	0 (0 %)

<b>Reviewer #2 HIST 410</b>	<b>Sophisticated</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Marginal</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Goal #1	1 (6%)	9 (53%)	7 (41%)	0 (0%)	0 (0 %)
Goal #2	4 (24%)	9 (53%)	3 (18%)	1 (6%)	0 (0 %)
Goal #3	6 (35%)	9 (53%)	2 (12%)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)
Goal #4	5 (29%)	9 (53%)	3(18%)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)
Goal #5	2 (12%)	7 (41%)	8 (47%)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)

<b>Cumulative HIST 410</b>	<b>Sophisticated</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Marginal</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Goal #1	9 (26%)	14 (41%)	11 (32%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Goal #2	9 (26%)	15 (44%)	8 (24%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)
Goal #3	8 (24%)	19 (59%)	7 (21%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Goal #4	12 (35%)	15 (44%)	6 (18%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)
Goal #5	6 (18%)	16 (47%)	11 (32%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)

HIST 410 Undergraduate in European History is one of our senior seminars. Seniors take it the fall of their graduating year. The goal of the course is to help students integrate the History six Program Learning Outcomes. Through intensive reading on a subject (varies by instructor) and the completion of a research paper and presentation, students demonstrate their ability to meet the major's learning outcomes.

We are pleased to see that no papers were scored as Inadequate for any of the five goals (rubric is attached).

For Goal #1, all papers were scored Adequate or better. 67% were either Sophisticated or Strong.

For Goal #2, 94% of the papers were scored Adequate or better; only 2 papers (6%) were deemed Marginal. 70% were either Sophisticated or Strong.

For Goal #3, all papers were scored Adequate or better. 83% either Sophisticated or Strong.

For Goal #4, 97% of papers were scored Adequate or better; only 1 paper (3%) was deemed marginal. 50% were either Sophisticated or Strong.

For Goal #5, 97% of papers were scored Adequate or better; only 1 paper (3%) was deemed marginal. 65% were either Sophisticated or Strong.

For AY 2016-2017, we evaluated papers from both HIST 210 and HIST 410. As we have been told that the goal is to evaluate student learning at the end of the program and the fact that many of the same students were in a 200-level course and the senior seminar, for AY 2017-2018 we only evaluated senior seminar papers (HIST 410).

The results for our assessment of senior seminar papers from AY 2016-17 (previous year) was as follows: “Twelve seminar papers were collected and rated... Again, the department was pleased with the results of this assessment. No papers received a marginal or inadequate rating. The majority received sophisticated or strong ratings: goal # 1 (79.2%), goal #2 (91.7%), and goal #3 (91.7%). For goal #4, the lowest rated goal in the HIST 210 assessment, all 12 papers rate sophisticated or strong.”

For AY 17-18, we again found that the majority of our students were more than exceeding our minimum expectations (Adequate). This suggests that the vast majority of History majors are meeting the department’s PLOs (at least the ones we have evaluated thus far).

Last year (AY 2016-17), we chose raters who were not the instructors of the courses evaluated. What we learned was that this meant the task was extremely time-consuming for non-specialists in the field, but even considering this, our reviewers did have very similar ratings for each paper. For the major assessment, this year we decided to have the instructor be one of the raters. Our hope is that this will help us to evaluate if an instructor and non-instructor assess student work similarly or if there are wide fluctuations in their assessments.

We found that there was more discrepancy this year in terms of how the raters distinguished between Sophisticated and Strong work. We discussed that this might mean that there was a slight instructor bias (which we could expect) or that there might be divergence in our interpretations of the difference between a Sophisticated and Strong paper. Collectively we think this is to be expected in humanities/qualitative fields as it is sometimes difficult to assess the intangible and/or creative elements of a paper using a rubric.

### Minor Program Assessment

As there was only one graduating History minor in any History courses this spring, the raters only assessed one paper.

<b>Reviewer #1 HIST 379</b>	<b>Sophisticated</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Marginal</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Goal #1			X		
Goal #2			X		
Goal #3		X			
Goal #4		X			
Goal #5			X		

<b>Reviewer #2 HIST 379</b>	<b>Sophisticated</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Marginal</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Goal #1			X		
Goal #2				X	
Goal #3			X		
Goal #4			X		
Goal #5				X	

AY 2016-2017 was the first time we were asked to assess the History minor. To begin to address this, the department began to collect basic information about our minor students. We sent out a student survey to our ten History minors asking questions about why they chose to become a minor, what they like about History, and how they think the History minor relates to their career choice. Out of the ten students surveyed, we received two responses. For direct assessment, one student paper was rated as part of the assessment of majors we did. We followed up this assessment with a discussion at a department meeting as to whether we wanted to revise the minor curriculum. We decided against this at this time as we are under review AY 2018-2019 and were beginning a new major curriculum.

For AY 2017-2018, we had only one graduating History minor in a History course, so we do not have enough data to make any sort of a statement.

Assessing the minor continues to be difficult as we have few students and many complete the minor long before their senior year. This is a topic that will we envision will be discussed during our APR and we will continue to attempt direct assessment methods in conjunction with our major assessment process.

#### **IV. CLOSING THE LOOP**

7. Based on your results, what changes/modifications are you planning in order to achieve the desired level of mastery in the assessed learning outcome? This section could also address more long-term planning that your department/program is considering and does not require that any changes need to be implemented in the next academic year itself.

The department discussed the findings of this year's assessment at our October 2018 meeting. We discussed revising our rubrics in the future to perhaps have few categories (such as merging Sophisticated and Strong). We could also have the raters provide a general final score—separate from the individual goal scores—that would perhaps allow for us to comment on the overall success of the paper (intangible qualities).

The department also discussed how much time and effort we have been devoting to assessment. If the goal is to have us constantly assessing something, we are doing it. For this year alone, we have the yearly assessment reports (now for major and minor), our Annual Program Review (APR), and Core C2 (the History requirement that we oversee and teach) is being reviewed by the Core Advisory Working Group of the Core Advisory Committee. This has added to the workload of the chair and department in general (even those not on the Assessment Committee).

8. What were the most important suggestions/feedback from the FDCD on your last assessment report (for academic year 2016-2017, submitted in October 2017)? How did you incorporate or address the suggestion(s) in this report?

Feedback for AY 2016-2017:

We were an Honorable Mention for Assessment Stars (we got a certificate!)

*“Mission Statement:* The History major mission statement is well written, clearly identifying the purpose and values of the program. Ideally, the statement should be condensed to a single paragraph of roughly 75 words (perhaps during the revision process planned for the current academic year).”

*“Program Learning Outcomes:* The History major Program Learning Outcomes succinctly and clearly present the skills, knowledge, and values students should attain upon completion of the program. As indicated in last year’s feedback on these outcomes, History might consider revisions to make some outcomes more clearly measurable with changes to wording emphasizing action verbs.”

“These possible modifications, however, may not reflect the intentions and goals of faculty in the program, and the current outcomes overall are concise and understandable to lay readers.”

Department Response: The suggestions are minor—mostly language rather than substance. Since the History Department is up for Program Review (APR) during AY 2018-2019 (this year), we do not plan to revise our mission statement or program learning outcomes until we complete the APR.

*General Comments from AY 2016-2017:* “History has thus developed and implemented an effective method for assessing the success of students in the major in presenting written historical arguments. The program could also develop methods for assessing oral presentation of historical arguments.”

Department Response: For AY 2017-2018 we again focused on written work, the cornerstone of historical study. At our October 2018 meeting, we have discussed evaluating oral presentations for AY 2018-2019 assessment. This might be an exercise that all the full-time faculty participate in as raters so we can a) decrease the workload of individual raters, and b) use it as an opportunity to see if our expectations are aligned in terms of what we expect from oral presentations.



## ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

### Assessment Rubric: Fall 2017

Class number: \_\_\_\_\_ Paper number: \_\_\_\_\_

History PLO #3: Think critically and historically about the past.

Goal	Sophisticated Work	Strong Work	Adequate Work	Marginal Work	Inadequate Work
#1 Able to trace and explain change over time					
#2 Demonstrates an understanding of the role of contingency, complexity, and power in history					
#3 Demonstrates the interaction of human agency and broader forces in shaping history					
#4 Demonstrates the ability to perceive the world from the point of view of historical actors					
#5 Demonstrates an understanding of the provisional nature of historical knowledge					

**Attachments: Curricular map.**