

**2016-2017 Yearly Assessment Report Template  
College of Arts and Sciences (CAS)**

**1. Identifying Information**

Name of Program: History Department

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

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

Name/Title/Email Address of Submitter: Heather J. Hoag (Chair) [hjhoag@usfca.edu](mailto:hjhoag@usfca.edu)

Name/Email Address of Additional Individuals Who Should Receive Feedback: Heather J. Hoag, [hjhoag@usfca.edu](mailto:hjhoag@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?**

No, but as we have revised our curriculum and Program Learning Goals we have revisited it. During the 2017-2018 academic year, the department will be reviewing it and revising it to reflect our new major curriculum that launches Fall 2018.

### **3. 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 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

#### **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 became clear that the department needed to revisit this plan. As will be shown below, in response to feedback received from the Academic Effectiveness office we have revised our assessment methods for this review. We also continue to discuss and review assessment methods and foresee that this will be addressed during our upcoming APR (AY 2018-2019).

## **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 5, 2017

After three years of work, in June 2017 the department submitted and subsequently received approval for a new curriculum for our major. The date listed is the last meeting to discuss this new curriculum.

The Action Plan stemming from our 2013 APR focused on two main areas: curriculum and student needs. In relation to curriculum issues, we have spent three years discussing the different levels of courses, revising our major and minor Program Learning Outcomes, revising our major requirements, further developing our assessment methods, and reviewing course syllabi.

These activities also relate to the second category, student needs. Our curriculum revision process has been driven in part by the desire to offer students the opportunity to pursue their interests while guaranteeing they receive a broad history education. For example, the new curriculum allows students to choose either a global or a regional concentration, thus allowing students more flexibility in course selection. It also requires they take at least one 200-level or above pre-modern course and at least two 200-level or above non-western courses. We have also worked to make information about the department and major more accessible by improving our webpage, establishing a student council, and publishing a student-produced newsletter twice a year. Additionally, we have begun requiring students to attend a group advising session each semester to assist in keeping them on track to graduate and to share pertinent information.

Our next APR is scheduled for AY 2018-2019.

## **7. Methods**

**What did you do with regard to assessment of your program/department in 2016-2017?**

The Academic Effectiveness office provided the following feedback regarding our AY 2015-2016 assessment report:

“Overall, History should be commended for engaging in direct assessment of student work. Perhaps in future assessments, similar outcomes can be assessed across multiple courses at upper levels so that student achievement upon completion of the program can be measured (see above). Also, if feasible, History can explore the option of evaluation of student work by multiple faculty readers and/or by readers other than faculty teaching the students evaluated.”

In response to this, we selected student work product from our required methods course (HIST 210) and from our required senior seminar (HIST 410). Also, for the first time we had faculty that were not the course instructors evaluate and rate the student work.

Our method was as follows:

1. The department decided which PLO we wanted to assess and which courses would be best. PLO #5 (“Craft and present persuasive historical arguments in both oral and written forms”) was selected. We decided to pull student papers from HIST 210 Historical Methods and HIST 410 Undergraduate Seminar in European History, both courses required of History majors. As HIST 410 is the required senior seminar, the course allowed us to assess student learning at the time of completion of the major.
2. We collected final papers from History majors in the following courses: HIST 210 (F16) and HIST 410 (F16).
3. Next, the department chair met with the course instructors to devise an appropriate rubric that would allow non-course faculty to assess the papers. A general rubric was written based on the approach the department uses to evaluate submissions for our best paper prize (Herlihy Prize). This rubric is attached.
4. Two faculty raters (Marty Claussen and Candice Harrison) were selected and provided with the rubric, the papers (numbered with names redacted), and the paper assignment prompts.
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 6, 2017).

### **What were your questions?**

PLO assessed: Craft and present historical arguments in both oral and written forms.

Learning goals on rubric:

- Choose the appropriate sources and methods to address the topic and questions at hand.
- Recognize that the practice of history entails building on and citing other scholars' work.
- Produce written work that is well organized and well written.
- Format written work in either Chicago or MLA style.

Each paper was rated on the following scale: Sophisticated Work, Strong Work, Adequate Work, Marginal Work, and Inadequate Work.

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

All of these questions (measures) were 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?**

Questions derive from rubrics developed by the department as part of our curriculum revision. See attached.

**8. Student Work Products Assessed**

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

Direct: Evaluation of Term Papers for two courses.

No indirect methods were employed.

**9. Direct Data Results**

<b>Reviewer #1 HIST 210</b>	<b>Sophisticated</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Marginal</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Goal #1	2 (25%)	4 (50%)	0	2 (25%)	0
Goal #2	4 (50%)	2 (25%)	1 (12.5%)	1 (12.5%)	0
Goal #3	1 (12.5%)	6 (75%)	1 (12.5%)	0	0
Goal #4	2 (25%)	2 (25%)	1 (12.5%)	3 (37.5%)	0

<b>Reviewer #2 HIST 210</b>	<b>Sophisticated</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Marginal</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Goal #1	2 (25%)	3 (37.5%)	3 (37.5%)	0	0
Goal #2	2 (25%)	1 (12.5%)	5 (62.5%)	0	0
Goal #3	1 (12.5%)	4 (50%)	3 (37.5%)	0	0
Goal #4	2 (25%)	1 (12.5%)	5 (62.5%)	0	0

<b>Cumulative HIST 210</b>	<b>Sophisticated</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Marginal</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Goal #1	4 (25%)	7 (43.7%)	3 (18.8%)	2 (12.5%)	0
Goal #2	6 (37.5%)	3 (18.8%)	6 (37.5%)	1 (6.2%)	0
Goal #3	2 (12.5%)	10 (62.5%)	4 (25%)	0	0
Goal #4	4 (25%)	3 (18.8%)	6 (37.5%)	3 (18.8%)	0

**Analysis:** HIST 210 Historical Methods is our required methods course. Most students take it during their second year in the major. The goal of the course is to introduce students to historical methods and historiography, namely the analysis of primary and secondary sources, the crafting of historical arguments and use of evidence, citation of sources, and development of written and oral skills. As this is the introductory course—students later take another 200-level methods course and complete research projects in most of their 300-level courses—the department was pleased with the results of this assessment. Eight student papers were evaluated by the raters and no paper scored inadequate on any of the learning goals. Moreover, very few received marginal ratings, while the majority received sophisticated or strong ratings: goal # 1 (68.7%), goal #2 (56.3%), and goal #3 (75%). The exception to this was goal #4 (43.8%) which focused on formatting of citations.

<b>Reviewer #1 HIST 410</b>	<b>Sophisticated</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Marginal</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Goal #1	4 (33.3%)	4 (33.3%)	4 (33.3%)	0	0
Goal #2	9 (75%)	2 (16.6%)	1 (8.3%)	0	0
Goal #3	4 (33.3%)	7 (58.3%)	1 (8.3%)	0	0
Goal #4	5 (41.7%)	7 (58.3)	0	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	6 (50%)	5 (4.7%)	1 (8.3%)	0	0
Goal #2	4 (33.3%)	7 (58.3%)	1 (8.3%)	0	0
Goal #3	8 (66.7%)	3 (25%)	1 (8.3%)	0	0
Goal #4	8 (66.7%)	4 (33.3%)	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	10 (41.7%)	9 (37.5%)	5 (20.8%)	0	0
Goal #2	13 (54.2%)	9 (37.5%)	2 (8.3%)	0	0
Goal #3	12 (50%)	10 (41.7%)	2 (8.3%)	0	0
Goal #4	13 (54.2%)	11 (45.8%)	0	0	0

**Analysis:** 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 (described elsewhere in this report). 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.

Twelve seminar papers were collected and rated using the same rubric as HIST 210 (above). 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.

### **What were the indirect results?**

There were no indirect results reported.

### **What surprised you? What aligned with your expectations?**

The department was not very surprised by the results. We were pleased to see that our students are achieving high standards. Although the raters results are rather similar (with slightly more variation in HIST 210), our discussion brought up the need to better refine our rubric next time. The raters and majority of the department was not part of the process, nor did they meet to discuss what would be meant by the terms sophisticated, strong, adequate, marginal, and inadequate. Next time the department decided we should perhaps come up with the rubric as a group and undergo a calibration exercise to see if our standards are aligned. The raters also shared concerns about how long the process took, especially when evaluating papers outside of one's area of expertise. As students can use either Chicago or MLA citation systems, it was suggested that a cheat sheet be shared with raters less familiar with one of the systems. Our hope is that by doing these measures the time demanded of faculty raters can be decreased, thus making volunteering as a rater less onerous.

### **What are the implications of the data?**

That the department is achieving its goal of teaching students how to craft and write historical research.

### **Next Course of Action**

For our next assessment cycle we plan to develop the rubric as a department and to work with raters to better calibrate their assessments (define what is meant by rubric ratings).



## **History Department Assessment Plan, fall 2015-spring 2018**

The History Department will continue to build assessment evidence in the next three years and plans on using assessment results to evaluate and, if necessary, revamp our program in order to assure that student learning aligns with the professional training a USF History degree certifies.

### **Assessment and review as guiding principles of our program**

The History Department has spent the last couple of years, 2013-2015, revising its program based on recommendations outlined in the 2012 Program Review. The first phase of this process centered on research and discussion of our mission, areas of competency in our program, learning outcomes, and assessment rubrics. Besides revising our mission statement, we outlined much of the work that went into this phase in chart A, "History Department: Areas of Competency, Learning Outcomes, and Assessment Rubrics." These documents are our guiding principles and illustrate our commitment to student excellence by:

1. Clearly defining the areas of competency we, as professional historians, consider critical for History Majors
2. Carefully reviewing and extending the learning outcomes for a degree in History
3. Crafting assessment rubrics that allow the department to effectively evaluate student learning based on our program learning outcomes.

Using our mission statement and the principles we outline in chart A, we have started to revise our curriculum. The course assessment plan we outline below, as well as conditions in History and the Humanities in a rapidly changing environment, will certainly inform our decision-making process in curriculum changes.

**Chart A--- History Department: Areas of Competency, Learning Outcomes, and Assessment Rubrics**

<p><b>Program Goals</b></p>	<p><b>Program Learning Outcomes</b></p> <p>USF History Majors will:</p>	<p><b>Assessment Rubric</b></p> <p>The History Department will evaluate learning outcomes by determining if history majors meet the following:</p>
<p><b>I. Historical knowledge</b>  <b>i.e., what students know about the past</b>  <b>(aka, the content piece)</b></p>	<p>1. Understand the breadth and diversity of human experience across time and space</p> <p>2. Develop a substantive knowledge of range and depth in their area(s) of concentration, whether regional and/or topical-thematic</p>	<p>A. Have a knowledge that spans premodern, modern, and contemporary societies and times</p> <p>B. Understand the social, political, economic, religious, and cultural forces that shape societies</p> <p>C. Understand the role that people of various races, ethnicities, genders, sexualities, religions, socioeconomic backgrounds, and other identities have played in shaping the past</p> <p>D. Understand major historical periods, ideas, people, and events in their area(s) of concentration</p>
<p><b>II. Historical thinking</b>  <b>i.e., being able to think about the past as historians do</b></p>	<p>3. Think critically and historically about the past</p>	<p>A. Be able to trace and explain change and continuity over time</p> <p>B. Understand contingency, complexity, and power in history</p> <p>C. Appreciate the interaction of human agency and broader forces in shaping history</p> <p>D. Cultivate the ability to perceive the world from the point of view of historical actors</p> <p>E. Understand the provisional nature of historical knowledge</p>

<p><b>III. The historical method</b>  <b>i.e., mastering the research skills of a historian</b></p>	<p>4. Understand and appropriately apply historical research methods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Formulate historical questions</li> <li>B. Distinguish between primary and secondary sources and know when and how to use each</li> <li>C. Evaluate historical interpretations and arguments in secondary sources by identifying the underlying theories, assumptions, perspectives, and values of the authors</li> <li>D. Apply a variety of historical research methods</li> <li>E. Trace the historiography on a subject</li> <li>F. Define academic honesty and avoid plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty</li> </ul>
<p><b>IV. The presentation of history</b>  <b>i.e., being able to express knowledge of history orally and in writing</b></p>	<p>5. Craft and present persuasive historical arguments in both oral and written forms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Choose the appropriate sources and methods to address the topic and questions at hand</li> <li>B. Recognize that the practice of history entails building on and citing other scholars' work</li> <li>C. Engage a diversity of viewpoints in a civil and constructive fashion</li> <li>D. Work both individually and cooperatively with others to develop historical interpretations that reflect deliberation and differing perspectives</li> <li>E. Produce written work that is well organized and well written</li> <li>F. Format written work in either Chicago or MLA style.</li> </ul>

<b>V. Ethics and history</b> <b>i.e., being able to connect the practice of history to ethical questions</b>	6. Understand how the practice of history can establish a valuable framework for considering ethical issues in the past and present	A. Demonstrate an understanding of how what is considered ethical and moral has changed over time B. Identify the causes of major ethical conflicts between historical actors and groups and how they were resolved or failed to be resolved C. Apply historical knowledge and historical thinking to the analysis of contemporary social issues and problems
---	---	---

### **Class Assessment Method, fall 2015-spring 2018**

Beginning fall 2015, the department will conduct assessment of four classes per semester. Selected classes represent each level in our major and will therefore come from courses in the 100s or 200s if classified as lower division. Upper division classes will come from the 300s and 400s. For a detailed list of selected classes, please see chart B, but note that the plan we outline in this chart may change based on an annual review of our assessment process.

Faculty in selected classes will collect student assignments and evaluate whether students are indeed meeting one of the six learning outcomes using the assessment rubric outlined in chart A. Overall student performance will be evaluated using the following numerical scale:

Student performance	Numerical scale
Does not meet expectations	0
Meets minimum expectations	1
Exceeds expectations	2
Excellent	3

The department does not require record keeping of student progress throughout the semester, but classes where faculty choose to track the degree of student improvement throughout the semester will use the following scale:

Degree of improvement throughout the semester	Numerical scale
None	0
Little	1
Moderate	2
Significant	3

Faculty in selected classes will submit an assessment report at the end of the semester. The report will summarize assessment results, briefly describe assignments, report significant trends and findings, and note additional observations or insights on assessment.

Faculty will also collect student assignments. Those assignments, along with the faculty assessment report, will be scanned and stored in the History Department Class Assessment Folder.

Every fall semester, the department will review previously assessed classes during its first department meeting and, if necessary, alter the assessment plan for the new academic year. This annual review of the assessment plan will allow the department to make adjustments to the curriculum and the assessment process every year.



### **Assessment evidence and collaborative work with the Dean of Arts and Science and the Provost Office**

The Department Chair and Program Assistant will store assessment evidence and make it available—upon request—to faculty, the Dean of Arts and Science, and the Provost Office.

**Assessment Rubric: History 210 and History 410 Final Papers, Fall 2016**

Course (210 or 410) and paper number: \_\_\_\_\_

	Sophisticated Work	Strong Work	Adequate Work	Marginal Work	Inadequate Work
Choose the appropriate sources and methods to address the topic and questions at hand					
Recognize that the practice of history entails building on and citing other scholars' work					
Produce written work that is well organized and well written					
Format written work in either Chicago or MLA style.					



	PLO1	PLO2	PLO3	PLO4	PLO5	PLO6
Program Learning Outcomes X Courses	Understand the breadth and diversity of human experience across time and space.	Develop a substantive knowledge of range and depth in their area(s) of concentration, whether regional and/or topical-thematic.	Thinking critically and historically about the past.	Understand and appropriately apply historical research methods.	Craft and present historical arguments in both oral and written form.	Understand how the practice of history can establish a valuable framework for considering ethical issues in the past and present.
Courses or Program Requirement						
100-level survey courses	D	I	I		I	I, D
200-level methods courses	D		D	D	D	I, D
300-level major electives	D, M	M	D	D	D	D
400-level senior seminar		M	M	M	M	M
Note: We have sometimes listed two letters when we felt that our response fell halfway between the two measures.						
Key:						
I = Introductory						
D = Developing						
M = Mastery						

	PLO1	PLO2	PLO3	PLO4	PLO5	PLO6
Institutional Learning Outcomes X Program Learning Outcomes	Understand the breadth and diversity of human experience across time and space.	Develop a substantive knowledge of range and depth in their area(s) of concentration, whether regional and/or topical-thematic.	Thinking critically and historically about the past.	Understand and appropriately apply historical research methods.	Craft and present historical arguments in both oral and written form.	Understand how the practice of history can establish a valuable framework for considering ethical issues in the past and present.
<b>Institutional Learning Outcomes</b>						
1. Students reflect on and analyze their attitudes, beliefs, values, and assumptions about diverse communities and cultures and contribute to the common good.	strongly correlated	strongly correlated	strongly correlated			strongly correlated
2. Students explain and apply disciplinary concepts, practices, and ethics of their chosen academic discipline in diverse communities.		strongly correlated	strongly correlated	strongly correlated	strongly correlated	strongly correlated
3. Students construct, interpret, analyze, and evaluate information and ideas derived from a multitude of sources.	somewhat correlated	strongly correlated	strongly correlated	strongly correlated	somewhat correlated	somewhat correlated
4. Students communicate effectively in written and oral forms to interact within their personal and professional communities.		somewhat correlated		somewhat correlated	strongly correlated	
5. Students use technology to access and communicate information in their personal and professional lives.				somewhat correlated	somewhat correlated	
6. Students use multiple methods of inquiry and research processes to answer questions and solve problems.		strongly correlated	somewhat correlated	strongly correlated	strongly correlated	
7. Students describe, analyze, and evaluate global interconnectedness in social, economic, environmental and political systems that shape diverse groups within the San Francisco Bay Area and the world.	strongly correlated		somewhat correlated	somewhat correlated		strongly correlated

Note: In the History Department, we found it most helpful to think in terms of how strongly our program learning outcomes correlate with institutional learning outcomes. Hence we used this measure rather than the I, D, and M designations.