Program Mission

Department of History Mission Statement

Program Mission Statement:

The Department of History believes the study of liberal arts to be a critical part of forming an informed public that celebrates the diversity of human experience. As part of both our undergraduate and graduate degrees we provide a wide array of courses, internships, and community engagement opportunities. We aim to create not only a community of interdisciplinary scholars actively engaged in original historical scholarship, but also one that shares our research widely to inspire greater understanding of the global past and the past's continuing legacies in our everyday lives.

Program Goal (add a minimum of 3 program goal "plan items")

Goal #1: Further Develop a Robust Online Program

Goal Statement:

The Department of History seeks to further improve its online BA/BS major for undergraduates.

Alignment to UI Strategic Plan Goals: Transform (Goal 3): Increase our educational impact.

Indicators/Metrics to Evaluate Progress:

Increased course offerings (ensuring that a minimum of 1 lower-division and 2 upper-division courses are offered every semester).

Increased regularity for when courses are offered (ensuring that our courses are spaced appropriately, not offered too often, and include our methods and capstone courses).

Increased enrollments in online courses and in the online major.

List of Actions the Program Will Take to Achieve Goals :

The Department of History will invest in this goal by offering summer funding for faculty to develop online courses and to refresh current offerings. We will also develop a larger curriculum plan that will ensure a standardized number of offerings are available to students regularly.

Goal Achievement Level: Not Met

Goal #2: Increase Community Engagement Opportunities for Students

Goal Statement:

The Department of History seeks to increase opportunities for students to work in hands-on historical settings through internships and community partnerships.

Alignment to UI Strategic Plan Goals:

 Transform (Goal 3): Increase our educational impact.
Cultivate (Goal 4): Foster an inclusive, diverse community of students, faculty, and staff and improve cohesion and morale.

Indicators/Metrics to Evaluate Progress:

Secure permanent sources of funding for current internships.

Investigate potential new internship opportunities.

List of Actions the Program Will Take to Achieve Goals :

Our action plan includes assessing our current financial resources and developing relationships with community partners, including both donors and historical organizations.

Goal Achievement Level: Not Met

Goal #3: Increase Support for Faculty Research

Goal Statement:

The Department of History will seek to support the research needs, including materials and travel, for its faculty, so that they may continue to provide award-winning scholarship on behalf of the university community.

Alignment to UI Strategic Plan Goals:

Innovate (Goal 1): Scholarly and creative products of the highest quality and scope, resulting in significant positive impact for the region and the world.

Indicators/Metrics to Evaluate Progress:

Increased dependability of research funding for faculty.

List of Actions the Program Will Take to Achieve Goals :

The department will assess current financial resources to ensure these are being used in the most responsible way possible. The department will also seek out potential donors with the help of the development office in CLASS.

Goal Achievement Level: Not Met

Student Learning Assessment Report (add one "plan item" for each major, degree, and/or certificate offered by dept)

History BA/BS

Assessment Report Contact: Rebecca Scofield

Program Changes in Past Year:

In Fall 2020, we moved to streamline our BA/BS in History by eliminating the emphasis areas that allowed students to specialize in either American or European history. Combining them into a single general emphasis in History both better reflects the current staffing capabilities of the department and also allows students to progress at a quicker pace through their degree programs. We also streamlined the minor by removing requirements on specific regional courses, allowing students to complete their minors more efficiently by taking the required credits in any lower or upper division history courses.

Learning Outcomes are Communicated to All Students in Program (check box if true): true

Learning Outcomes are Communicated to All Faculty (check box if true): true

Optional: Framework Alignment:

The Learning Outcomes for History are not aligned with a specific industry or professional organization, although they are well within the typical skills history majors around the nation are taught.

Import Outcomes Data (from Anthology Outcomes):

Outcome: Interpretation Skills (Students should understand historical evidence and interpretation, assess their strengths and weaknesses, and situate both in broader scholarly debate.)

HIST 290 and 343 were included with 57 students assessed.

Exceeded Expectations: 22.81%; 13 students

Met Expectations: 61.4%; 25 students

Partially Met Expectations: 5.26%; 3 students

Expectations Not Met: 10.53%; 6 students

Outcome: Evidentiary Skills (Students should recognize the rich diversity of human artifacts, reflect upon how they illuminate the historical past, and use them to make meaning of the human experience.)

HIST 318 was included with 27 students assessed

Exceeded Expectations: 18.52%; 5 students

Met Expectations: 51.85%; 14 students

Partially Met Expectations: 22.22%; 6 students

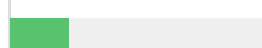Expectations Not Met: 7.41%; 2 students

3.

Interpretation Skills

Students should understand historical evidence and interpretation, assess their strengths and weaknesses, and situate both in broader scholarly debate.

Academic Year 2020-2021: History (B.A.,B.S.)

Term: Overview

Exceeded	22.81%	13

Met		**61.4%**	**35**
Partially Met		**5.26%**	**3**
Not Met		**10.53%**	**6**

6.

Evidentiary Skills

Students should recognize the rich diversity of human artifacts, reflect upon how they illuminate the historical past, and use them to make meaning of the human experience.

Academic Year 2020-2021: **History (B.A.,B.S.)**

Term: **Overview**

Exceeded		**18.52%**	**5**
Met		**51.85%**	**14**
Partially Met		**22.22%**	**6**
Not Met		**7.41%**	**2**

Summary of Student Learning:

Faculty input data into Anthology for the first time, beginning a new Assessment practice and establishing a baseline for future assessment cycles. Faculty were free to choose which outcomes and which assignments to use. The data for courses is limited to three courses and two learning outcomes. (Other data from History courses were submitted for various General Education Learning Outcomes but were unavailable in Anthology for the History bachelor's degrees.)

The data confirm that students overwhelmingly are meeting or exceeding expectations. The number of students who are not meeting or only partially meeting expectations are a minority within all three of the courses. Narrative data suggests that most of those cases were students who did not complete course requirements, and we note that COVID19 remained a disruptive force during this semester. More data of more students and courses collected in the future will help confirm if these data are trends or outliers.

Summary of Faculty Discussion:

Based on our numbers, faculty felt that we are doing well hitting our benchmarks. However, there was a general sense that because assessment processes have changed, we need to develop new strategies for gathering our data. Faculty were supportive of maintaining 290 and 495 as our main courses for our direct assessment measures and agreed to continue to use supporting materials such as the graduating senior survey for Annual Program Review as indirect measures. As a final note, we all acknowledged that COVID disrupted both faculty and student performance.

Summary of Changes/Improvements Being Considered:

History is looking at a range of curriculum changes, particularly in its offerings of online courses and the development of a pipeline of Honors courses. Taking into account assessment data, we are striving to adapt what works in-person to what might work online. Similarly, we are asking how Honors sections might work towards the same learning outcomes but with different benchmarks for meeting expectations.

Inter-rater Reliability:

The Department of History has developed a consensus around Learning Outcomes. The department respects faculty autonomy, experience, and expertise and accepts the data provided by each faculty in assessing student learning. Prior to submitting data, faculty shared grade ranges they felt were appropriate for each category.

Closing the Loop:

In the previous Assessment program, the Department of History used HIST 290 and 495 as benchmark courses, as these are the only two courses that all History majors must take in common. The way this Assessment cycle was deployed did not lead to gathering data for HIST 495. In the future, it will be important to ensure we continue to capture data from these courses. In addition, we expect more data from more courses will be useful in seeing patterns over time that will raise either red flags or kudos.

The curriculum in History embraces maximum freedom for students to choose their way through the course work. There are multiple ways to acquire sufficient lower division and upper division credits. Lower division courses introduce concepts and historical methods, while upper division courses allow students to practice those skills in multiple ways given each professor's expertise and approach all the while maintaining the Learning Outcomes as guidelines for applicable skills. Compared with more prescriptive majors, History values introduction, exploration, and repeated practice of critical thinking skills through the curriculum.

History MA

Assessment Report Contact: Rebecca Scofield

Program Changes in Past Year:

No major graduate level curricular changes happened this year.

Learning Outcomes are Communicated to All Students in Program (check box if true): true

Learning Outcomes are Communicated to All Faculty (check box if true): true

Optional: Framework Alignment:

The Learning Outcomes for History are not aligned with a specific industry or professional organization, although they are well within the typical skills history majors around the nation are taught.

Import Outcomes Data (from Anthology Outcomes):

Outcome: Analysis Skills: graduate students will examine a broad variety of source materials as part of in-depth research to answer historical questions using rigorous critical analysis.

Exceeded Expectations: 40%; 2

Met Expectations: 40%; 2

Partially Met Expectations: 20%; 1

Expectations Not Met: 0; 0

Summary of Student Learning:

Faculty input data into Anthology for the first time, beginning a new Assessment practice and establishing a baseline for future assessment cycles. Faculty were free to choose which outcomes and which assignments to use. Our data for Spring 2021 is limited to our one dedicated graduate course.

Based on the numbers, we felt that students were largely hitting our targets, though also acknowledge that our graduate students should rarely be failing to meet expectations.

Summary of Faculty Discussion:

Faculty noted that our PhD and MA students take the same courses and therefore were assessed together. As we continue to develop our assessment process, we will try to be more attentive to separating the two programs. The program was also made aware that only a single learning outcome was added for the PhD program and that we need to standardize those outcomes for our graduate students.

Summary of Changes/Improvements Being Considered:

As explained by the faculty member, this assignment was the culmination of a scaffolded assignment that asked graduate students to read and synthesize major scholarly debates about visual culture. Students who completed all of the scaffolding assignments all met or exceeded expectations. This has supported the practice of creating a set of research-based assignments to help graduate students meet the department's expectations.

Inter-rater Reliability:

The Department of History has developed a consensus around Learning Outcomes. The department respects faculty autonomy, experience, and expertise and accepts the data provided by each faculty in assessing student learning. With graduate students, we acknowledge that unsatisfactory work is anything less than 80%.

Closing the Loop:

In the previous Assessment program, the graduate curriculum was assessed based more on indirect measures, such as our exit survey. Based on that information, we tried to move away from 400/500 cross-listed courses and provide a dependable number of graduate-only courses per year. We especially attempted to provide a sense of a graduate community in the program. That progress was strained by COVID 19. So we must try to find ways to build community for our graduate students in an increasingly digital world. Also, as we move forward, we are asking specific questions about how to apply more direct measure assessment data to our course designs.

History PhD

Assessment Report Contact: Rebecca Scofield

Program Changes in Past Year:

No major graduate level curricular changes happened this year.

Learning Outcomes are Communicated to All Students in Program (check box if true): true

Learning Outcomes are Communicated to All Faculty (check box if true): true

Optional: Framework Alignment:

The Learning Outcomes for History are not aligned with a specific industry or professional organization, although they are well within the typical skills history majors around the nation are taught.

Import Outcomes Data (from Anthology Outcomes):

Outcome: Analysis Skills: graduate students will examine a broad variety of source materials as part of in-depth research to answer historical questions using rigorous critical analysis.

Exceeded Expectations: 40%; 2

Met Expectations: 40%; 2

Partially Met Expectations: 20%; 1

Expectations Not Met: 0; 0

Summary of Student Learning:
Faculty input data into Anthology for the first time, beginning a new Assessment practice and establishing a baseline for future assessment cycles. Faculty were free to choose which outcomes and which assignments to use. Our data for Spring 2021 is limited to our one dedicated graduate course.

Based on the numbers, we felt that students were largely hitting our targets, though also acknowledge that our graduate students should rarely be failing to meet expectations.

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As explained by the faculty member, this assignment was the culmination of a scaffolded assignment that asked graduate students to read and synthesize major scholarly debates about visual culture. Students who completed all of the scaffolding assignments all met or exceeded expectations. This has supported the practice of creating a set of research-based assignments to help graduate students meet the department's expectations.

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Student Achievement

New Student Achievement Item

Student Retention:
Previously, the department has not systematically monitored retention rates except in informal ways. As we serve as our students' advisors, we always work to retain students on an individual basis. Additionally, we have focused on streamlining our curriculum design by eliminating prerequisites and emphases, and by requiring only two specific courses. This has been aimed at providing students the maximum amount of freedom to chose their own path to graduation. In this past year, with the increase in financial hardships due to COVID 19, we also tried to help our students by providing small need-based scholarships as we were able. Overall, we achieved a 89.33% retention rate between Fall 2020 and Spring 2021. As we move forward, we will be using data supplied by this dashboard, as well as Slate to track recruitment more closely.

One of our goals in the upcoming year is to also try to re-establish some of our community building events that helped retain students. Our honors society, Phi Alpha Theta, is in a moment of rebuilding and we are hoping to have that organization providing events for students again soon. We are also organizing events around career options and graduate school, and creating support networks for specific groups in our major, such as distance learners and women.

Student Persistence:
In terms of persistence, we have 87.5% of our students persist at the University of Idaho, according to our dashboard data. These numbers are not broken down by identity markers. Again, the department has not tracked this ourselves, beyond being supportive advisors and encouraging students to find the major that is right for them, even if it is not History. Like retention, we are attempting to create a more formal monitoring system based on the data provided by the department.

Student Completion:

Based on data we received, our graduation rate of both undergraduate and graduate students in the past year was consistent with the past several years. This is remarkable in that 2020-2021 was an extremely difficult year for students. In the future, we will be tracking these numbers in comparison to our enrolled students, so that we have a clearer sense of the rate of timely progress.

Academic Year	Degree_Level_1	Degree Count
2015-16		19
2015-16	Bachelors	15
2015-16	Masters	3
2015-16	Doctoral	1
2016-17		22
2016-17	Bachelors	17
2016-17	Masters	5
2016-17	Doctoral	
2017-18		26
2017-18	Bachelors	26
2017-18	Masters	
2017-18	Doctoral	
2018-19		15
2018-19	Bachelors	13
2018-19	Masters	1
2018-19	Doctoral	1
2019-20		21
2019-20	Bachelors	17
2019-20	Masters	4
2019-20	Doctoral	
2020-21		21
2020-21	Bachelors	18
2020-21	Masters	3

2020-21   Doctoral

Student Postgraduate Success:

Currently, our program monitors postgraduate success in an informal way--through letters of recommendation, continued communication with alumni, and invitations to speak at events. We conduct exit surveys with our graduates that help us remain in contact with them. Additionally, we do monitor a list of past financial donors, many of whom are alumni.

Identify Equity Gaps:

We have twice as many non first-generation students as first-generation students, and those students see their GPAs drop between high school and college much more rapidly than their peers. While we are participants and promoters of the many tutoring services on campus, we need to do a better job connecting our students to these services.

Similarly, we have a 60/40 split with more students identifying as men than women. This has resulted in many of women majors discussing how they feel less confident in course settings that are dominated by men. We have taken steps to address this culture in the past, but need to continue to do more.

Our department is overwhelmingly white. We have an overrepresentation of white students in our major (over 90%) in comparison with national, state, and UI demographics. We must take strides to both educate our students more about world history and the histories of marginalized populations within the United States, and find ways to be more welcoming to students from historically marginalized groups. As a completely white faculty, we need more representation in two particular areas to help support specific populations in our state: Indigenous faculty and Latinx faculty. The Hispanic population of Idaho is almost 20% but Hispanic students make up less than 3% of our majors. As a land grant university built on Native land, we must do better recruiting faculty or community partners from local tribes, particularly the Nimiipuu, whose traditional homeland we are on. The histories of these groups are central to teaching state and national history and to providing culturally-informed pedagogies to our students.

Finally, over 70% of our majors are not Pell-grant eligible, meaning they come from more economically stable backgrounds. We must make sure that our courses remain accessible to anyone by keeping course costs to a minimum and providing as much scholarship support as possible.

Effective Learning Environment and Closing Equity Gaps:

The program has often struggled with issues surrounding gender and race. Some of the steps we have taken to make students feel supported is an annual focus group with our women majors to discuss how we can make them feel more confident in classrooms. Faculty and unit-administrators have also attended professional development series on inclusive classrooms and teaching difficult topics. This is a goal that we intend to further by working with campus resources such as the Indigenous Mentorship Program and providing networking events for our students who identify as women.

Demand and Productivity

New Demand and Productivity Item

External Demand:

We have seen an increase in demand for our major in the past two years. We saw a 30% increase in our enrollments between Fall 2020 and Fall 2021, growing our major from roughly 60 to 80 majors. These numbers increased again into Fall 2021, in which we now have roughly 100 majors. Additionally, we have about 20 graduate students split between the MA and the PhD. Specifically, we saw a dramatic increase in our undergraduate online program due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

Internal Demand:

Demand for our courses, particularly lower division general education courses, was strong last year. Enrollments in 100-level courses were between 68 and 109 students. Our upper division courses generally enrolled over 20 students, though some remained in the 12 to 20 range. These smaller courses provide our students with a quality discussion-based, research-centered experience in their upper division courses, crucial for a liberal arts education.

Credit Productivity:

With six permanent faculty, one graduate instructor, and two additional professors teaching single courses, the Department of History provided 2,148 credit hours between Fall 2020 and Spring 2021. That equates to 238.67 credit hours per instructor.

Financial Health and Resources

New Financial Health and Resources Item

Financial Health:

The department is in a healthy financial position this year. This stability, however, is the result of an accumulation of funds due to cancelled travel and events from the past two years. This accumulation amount will be spent down this year on an increase in faculty travel, students events, and additional need-based scholarships for our students affected by the pandemic. Next year, therefore, we will not have a steady funding source for faculty travel and research support. Finding a permanent funding source for this support has become a goal of the department.

Efficient Use of Resources:

Our budget includes a significant amount of endowment funds dedicated to student scholarships and support. The Scholarship Committee manages the allocation of those funds. As some funds are restricted, we are working to identify any scholarships that are not being awarded regularly. Additionally, the department has access to our operating budget and gift funds. The chair of the department presents a budget plan to the dean's office for our operating budget. As we lost a significant number of faculty in the past two years, with more people also take sabbaticals and leaves, we have increased our requests from the dean's office for temporary help to cover our curriculum.

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