



Online Assessment Tracking Database

Sam Houston State University (SHSU)
2013 - 2014

History MA

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Goal	<p>Advanced Knowledge And Skills In History DRAFT 🔑</p> <p>Successful study of history increases knowledge of human affairs but also skills in written/oral communication, logic, and critical thinking. Such outcomes improve students' performance in their present employment, continued advanced studies toward other degrees, or moves into other historical fields, such as teaching, public history, or writing.</p>
Objective (L)	<p>Research And Analysis DRAFT 🔑</p> <p>M. A. History students will demonstrate competence in applying research methodologies; qualitative and quantitative analysis; literature review; and use of traditional and digital resources.</p>
Indicator	<p>Comprehensive Exams DRAFT 🔑 🔑</p> <p>All M.A. History graduates will demonstrate depth and breadth of knowledge by successfully completing written and oral exams in three field areas. This will be assessed by written oral examinations.</p> <p>A panel of at least three graduate faculty will assess the quality of the written examinations to determine student mastery of the major historical themes and historiography within each of the three field areas. Students failing to demonstrate the required level of content mastery will be allowed, after consultation with the graduate committee and history chair, to retake the written exams. A second failure will result in termination from the program. Students successfully completing the written examinations will then take an oral examination before a panel of three graduate faculty members who will assess student mastery of the history and historiography in each of the three field areas. Students must pass or pass with distinction each content area. Students who fail to demonstrate sufficient competency in any of the three field areas will be allowed, after consultation with the examination committee and the departmental chair, to retake that portion of the oral examination that was not satisfactorily completed. A second failure will result in termination from the program.</p> <p>In 2013-14, the department developed a common assessment document for each examining professor in the comprehensives. This document is attached.</p>
Criterion	<p>Written And Oral Examinations DRAFT 🔑</p> <p>All M.A. graduates will achieve passing or passing with distinction ratings on a written and an oral examination covering three content areas. The department will direct special attention to evaluating comprehensive exam preparation and performance among on-line students.</p>
Finding	<p>Written And Oral Examinations DRAFT 🔑</p> <p>19 masters candidates took comprehensive exams, written and oral, and 18 passed.</p> <p>12 of these students were predominantly online students, 7 predominantly face-to-face. In all, 37 components of the comprehensive exam were completed. 11 of the 12 online students took and passed both the writtens and the orals, the 7 face-to-face passed both. One online student who failed the writtens and has just taken the second-chance exam, with one failing grade on that exam as well.</p> <p>The graduate director and the chair spoke with the faculty who taught this case of a double-comps-failure from our predominantly online cohort, and all are in agreement that termination is appropriate.</p> <p>We are aware that our master's program is one of the few that</p>

requires written and oral comprehensive exams for every non-thesis MA. We believe that these exams not only embed the experience and knowledge gained in the program of study in each student's mind, but provide an additional credential certifying the quality of each graduate and the program in general.

Finding

Example Of Written Comp DRAFT  

The attached are examples of oral and written exam questions, student responses, and faculty assessments in the case of a 2014 graduate.

Action

Developing Advanced Knowledge And Skills In History DRAFT 

As the program has grown, potential reforms of the comprehensive exams have become apparent. During the year, the department shall regularize the scheduling of comps such that students must apply for them at one of three times a year, for a date in the forthcoming term. In this way, we hope to apportion faculty most effectively across all the exams and provide the student the soundest basis for preparation.

We also plan to review the efficacy of having the oral exam at the end of the student's degree plan. We shall consider moving it to the 15th-hour mark, so as to assess the student's progress before a panel of history faculty and make recommendations for the best plan of completion of the degree.

We are also introducing forums that can aid in community-building on the online portion of the program, beginning with a historical film and discussion forum held on go-to-meeting once a month.

Goal

Gaining Skills In The Digital Himanities DRAFT 

Modern-day historians must be prepared to work and publish in the digital environment.

Objective (L)

Teaching Skills DRAFT 

M. A. students indicating career interests in teaching and other positions emphasizing digital content will demonstrate enhanced abilities in this area.

Indicator

Teaching Skills Preparation DRAFT 

Creation of a successfully faculty-reviewed historical website made available for the internet public will demonstrate successful digital historical skills.

Criterion

In-Class Teaching Workshops DRAFT 

History faculty will run seminar classes whose purpose is to populate a major historical website and smartphone app with appropriate graduate-level historical literature and resources. The MA students will prepare and deliver content for the site and app in concert with the other course requirements. The instructor will assess these products by means of an assessment document and either judge them acceptable or lead the student through a remediation/editorial process.

100% student success will achieve this indicator.

Finding

Site And App Product DRAFT  

Students provided content for easttexashistory.org, a website, with an attendant smartphone app. Students developed 17 major content areas for this site in 2013-14. Examples of the work may be

found at the site, especially under "Stories," and examples of the instructor's assessments are attached.

All students participating in the 2014 digital history seminar successfully completed the preparation of digitally published materials.


Action

Gaining Skills In Digital Humanities DRAFT 

The East Texas History app should grow in size and extent and become a regional if not national model. We also are considering launching another historical app for a different region of the country.

Spring term, we shall for the first time offer two methods seminars (HIST 6394), one of them a seminar in collating, archiving, hosting, and making collection-level descriptions of a major trove of unique of primary source documents that were bequested to the department. (These documents concern the history of economic policy.) Thus we expect our students to acquire not only research skills, but those associated with supplying historically usable sources on the web.

Goal

Enhancing Student Experience DRAFT 

M.A. students will regard the graduate program in History as stimulating, rewarding, and useful.

Objective (P)

Student Satisfaction And Usefulness Of The Degree DRAFT 

M.A. students will be satisfied with their program and have confidence in the usefulness of their degree.

**KPI
Performance
Indicator**

End-of-program Student Views DRAFT 

M.A. students will demonstrate satisfaction in the program and the usefulness of the degree as they exit the program, as determined by an interview scaled to a common form developed by the department.

Result

Assessment Outcomes DRAFT  

We have interviewed with our instrument the cohort of students graduating in the summer of 2014. In the previous fall and spring, graduating M.A.'s were interviewed without the instrument. The finding is that students are generally pleased with their experience and confident about their prospects with the degree.

One way, a major one, in which predominantly online students differ is that they expressed an interest in there being more of a sense of community in their experience of the graduate program.

Samples of the completed innstrument are attached.

Action

Enhancing Student Experience DRAFT 

We shall have several rounds' worth of exit interviews and shall take steps toward refinements according to these interviews' good suggestions. One action will be hosting a virtual monthly historical and documentary film night.

Previous Cycle's "Plan for Continuous Improvement"

The plan for 2013-14 is to begin the judicious application of the findings of our 2012-13 comprehensive review.

Please detail the elements of your previous "Plan for Continuous Improvement" that were implemented. If elements were not implemented please explain why, along with any contextual challenges you may have faced that prevented their implementation.

The following steps were taken in 20113-14 to address action items in the program review:

1. Three new tenure-track line hires.
2. Regular meetings between the departmental graduate director and the university graduate studies office
3. The formulation of a needs committee, whose recommendations guided the three successful tenure-track searches.
4. The formalization of graduate-student exit interviews.
5. The compensation of the graduate director with a stipend.
6. The extended use of embedded librarians in courses
7. Mentorship of new graduate faculty.

Plan for Continuous Improvement - Please detail your plan for improvement that you have developed based on what you learned from your 2013 - 2014 Cycle Findings.

We shall:

1. Review the processes of the comprehensive exam, assessing the efficacy of the exams and their timing within the program
2. Assemble and analyze data from our exam forms and exit interviews
3. Implement an enrollment management plan
4. Take efforts to improve the sense of community in the online cohort

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