

## Assessment Cycle 2021-2022

### Program - Bachelor of Arts (BA) in History (261)

#### School of Social Sciences and Applied Programs

#### College: Arts and Sciences

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Date: 5/31/2022

Approved by: Dr. Francene Lemoine, Dean

Date: 6/20/2022

**Northwestern Mission.** Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to acquiring, creating, and disseminating knowledge through innovative teaching, research, and service. With its certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs, Northwestern State University prepares its increasingly diverse student population to contribute to an inclusive global community with a steadfast dedication to improving our region, state, and nation.

**College of Arts and Sciences' Mission.** College of Arts and Sciences' Mission. The College of Arts & Sciences, the largest college at Northwestern State University, is a diverse community of scholars, teachers, and students, working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. The College strives to produce graduates who are productive members of society equipped with the capability to promote economic and social development and improve the overall quality of life in the region. The College provides unequalled undergraduate education in the social and behavioral sciences, English, communication, journalism, media arts, biological and physical sciences, and the creative and performing arts, and at the graduate level in the creative and performing arts, English, TESOL, and Homeland Security. Uniquely, the College houses the Louisiana Scholars' College (the State's designated Honors College), the Louisiana Folklife Center, and the Creole Center, demonstrating its commitment to community service, research, and preservation of Louisiana's precious resources.

**Department of Criminal Justice, History, and Social Sciences.** The Criminal Justice, History, and Social Sciences Department at Northwestern State University is dedicated to the development of students for roles in academic, leadership, professional, and research careers in the challenging fields of criminal justice, history, public safety, law, and public service. Utilizing transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service, the department produces graduates equipped to be productive members of society and a driving force in the economic development and improvement of the overall quality of life in the region. The department delivers Bachelor of Arts degrees in Criminal Justice and History and Bachelor of Science degrees in Unified Public Safety Administration with concentrations in Law Enforcement Administration, Fire and Emergency Medical Services Administration, Emergency Management Administration, and Public Facilities Management. Certificate programs in Pre-Law and Paralegal Studies and Public Policy and Administration are also available in addition to a Pre-law and Paralegal Studies concentration and minor. The department also delivers a Master of

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Science degree in Homeland Security, and a Post-Master's certificate in Global Security and Intelligence.

**History Program Mission Statement:** The students who complete the History curriculum will have developed an understanding of contemporary events and ideas as they affect the locality, region, nation, and the world. Most particularly within the democratic environment of the United States, students will be prepared to fulfill their civic obligations as citizens. Students will be prepared for entry-level positions in any number of areas including teaching in public schools, business, industry, and government. In addition, they will be prepared for continued academic work in graduate programs. The program uses evaluation of research paper assignments in the capstone class as part of the required Student Learning Outcomes. In addition, a Capstone exam testing student knowledge in four introductory classes is required in the capstone class. Additional SLO achievement is gathered by student performance and department benchmarks in the HIST 3000 Historians Craft class which measures completion of bibliography, archival, and primary source exercises.

**Methodology:** The assessment process for the BA in History program is as follows:

- (1) Data from assessment tools are collected and returned to the program coordinator.
- (2) The program coordinator will analyze the data to determine whether students have met measurable outcomes.
- (3) Results from the assessment will be discussed with the program faculty.
- (4) Individual meetings will be held with faculty teaching core graduate courses if required.
- (5) The Program Coordinator will propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment cycle, and where needed, curricula and program changes.

### Student Learning Outcomes:

**SLO 1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the complexities of historical development and resulting historical interpretations.**

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

HIST 4000: History Research Methods

**Measure 1.1.** Students enrolled in HIST 4000 (a required course for all history majors) must complete a 15-page research paper on a topic of their choice in either US or non-US history. The project requires an understanding and reading of primary and secondary sources. Students must demonstrate sufficient comprehension of the subject they research as well as the historiography of that subject. Eighty percent (80%) of students enrolled will earn a grade of C or better on the research paper assignment.

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**Finding:** In AC 2021-2022, the target was met with 86% (12/14) students earning a C or better.

**Analysis:** In AC 2020-2021 the target was met. The program, which successfully drove improvement and kept with the university goals of implementing QEP experiential learning, implemented changes to the degree program beginning in academic year 2020-2021. HIST 3000 replaced SST 1030 as a new junior level “Historian’s Craft” class. HIST 4000, entitled “History Research Methods”, replaced the senior capstone class HIST 3990. Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021 results, the faculty implemented the following changes in AC 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. Students in HIST 4000 were required to conduct a research consultation with NSU Watson Library staff as part of the requirements for the class. In addition, each student was assigned a “faculty mentor” in the department who engaged in regular face to face or virtual meetings to discuss the ongoing research and writing process during the course of the semester. The mentoring process ensured continued achievement of the department’s benchmark as well as ensured a higher completer rate for each cohort of the Capstone class.

**Decision:** In AC 2021-2022 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. Students will be given the choice to complete either a significant research paper or an internship for completion of the History Capstone class requirements. The NSU History Program will partner with both local representatives in the historical community as well as partners in the community of the enrolled student to establish guidelines for completion of the internship project. Much like students who need instructor permission to take HIST 4000, students will have to have an agreement of an internship before admission into the alternative Capstone track. In addition, the faculty will request permission to offer a new Capstone Internship class along with the required program curriculum change through the NSU CRC in the Fall semester. Students will be expected to meet the same requirements as the research paper cohort which includes 80% of students earning a C or better on the completed internship.

Changes for the HIST 4000 class will improve the student’s ability to understand the nature and methodology of history. Instructors will demonstrate to students how to master the process of historical research. Students will understand how historians think about and do history, specifically theoretical perspectives, practice, and the writing of history. The overall objective of the methods course is to provide students with the information, the skills, and the tools they will need to be active members of the history profession. Data collected from HIST 4000 will continue to push the cycle of improvement forward.

**SLO 2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of major historical issues and their impact upon the US and the world.**

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.  
HIST 1010: Early World Civilization

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HIST 1020: Modern World Civilization

HIST 2010: History of the United States to 1865

HIST 2020: History of the United States since 1865

HIST 3990: Historical Methods

**Measure: 2.1.** All history majors are required to take HIST 1010, 1020, 2010, and 2020, which provide an opportunity for students to acquire foundational knowledge and understanding of the major events and developments that have shaped US and world history. Beginning in Fall of 2017, the program assessed foundational knowledge of major historical events through a capstone exam required of all students enrolled in History 3990, a course that is required for graduation. The target is that 75% of students enrolled in each course will earn a composite grade of C (70%) or higher on each of the four sections of the capstone exam specifically related to this measure.

**Finding:** In AC 2021-2022, the target was not met with 70% (10/14) students achieving target in Part One, met with 93% (13/14) students achieving target in Part Two, met with 86% (12/14) students achieving target in Part Three, and not met with 70% (10/14) students achieving target in Part Four.

**Analysis:** In AC 2020-2021, the target was met. To successfully drive improvement, the faculty redrafted questions in underperforming sections of the Capstone exam. Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021 results, the faculty implemented the following changes in AC 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. The faculty amended questions in current underperforming sections of the capstone exam. Faculty members replaced redundant or extraneous questions in the capstone exam to streamline the studying process.

**Decision:** In AC 2021-2022, the target was partially met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. The faculty will initiate pre- and post-class surveys for all sections of HIST 1010, 1020, 2010, and 2020. The surveys will identify areas where students are lacking in historical knowledge in the World Civilization and American History survey classes. Instructors will compare results and address lesson plans to coordinate curriculum strategies which will then lead to improved results in all four sections of the Capstone exam.

**Measure: 2.2.** Students enrolled in HIST 4000 (a required course for all history majors) must complete a 15-page research paper on a topic of their choice in either US or non-US history. The project requires an understanding and reading of primary and secondary sources. Students must demonstrate sufficient comprehension of the subject they research as well as the historiography of that subject. Eighty percent (80%) of students enrolled will earn a grade of C or better on the research paper assignment.

**Finding:** In AC 2021-22, the target was met with 86% (12/14) of students earning a C or better.

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**Analysis:** In AC 2020-2021, the target was met. The program, which successfully drove improvement and kept with the university goals of implementing QEP experiential learning, implemented changes to the degree program beginning in academic year 2020-2021. HIST 3000 replaced SST 1030 as a new junior level “Historian’s Craft” class. HIST 4000 entitled “History Research Methods” replaced the senior capstone class HIST 3990.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021 results, the faculty implemented the following changes in AC 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. Students in HIST 4000 were required to conduct a research consultation with NSU Watson Library staff as part of the requirements for the class. In addition, each student was assigned a “faculty mentor” in the department who engaged in regular face to face or virtual meetings to discuss the ongoing research and writing process during the course of the semester. The mentoring process ensured continued achievement of the department’s benchmark as well as ensured a higher completer rate for each cohort of the Capstone class.

**Decision:** In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. Students will be given the choice to complete either a significant research paper or an internship for completion of the History Capstone class. The NSU History Program will partner with both local representatives in the historical community as well as partners in the community of the enrolled student to establish guidelines for completion of the internship project. Much like students who need instructor permission to take HIST 4000, students will have to have an agreement of an internship before admission to the alternative Capstone track. In addition, the faculty will request permission to offer a new Capstone Internship class along with the required program curriculum change through the NSU CRC in the Fall semester. Students will be expected to meet the same requirements as the research paper cohort which includes 80% of students earning a C or better on the completed internship.

Changes for the HIST 4000 class will improve the students’ ability to understand the nature and methodology of history. Instructors will demonstrate to students how to master the process of historical research. Students will understand how historians think about and do history, specifically theoretical perspectives, practice, and the writing of history. The overall objective of the methods course is to provide students with the information, the skills, and the tools they will need to be active members of the history profession. Data collected from HIST 4000 will continue to push the cycle of improvement forward.

**SLO 3. Students will distinguish between historical knowledge and historical understanding.**

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.  
HIST 3000: The Historian’s Craft  
HIST 4000: History Research Methods

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**Measure 3.1.** All history majors must take HIST 3000 after completing four (4) required intro history classes. Students enrolled in this course are required to distinguish between primary and secondary sources and must complete written assignments based on their understanding of these kinds of historical texts. Seventy-five percent (75%) of students enrolled will earn a grade of C or better on the written exam which specifically assesses this SLO.

**Finding:** In AC 2021-22, the target was not met with 64% (9/14) students earning a grade of C or better.

**Analysis:** In AC 2020-2021, the target was not met. In Fall of 2020, the department reorganized the curriculum to comply with the QEP experiential learning requirements. One change replaced the SST 1030 class with HIST 3000. HIST 3000 has been moved to the third year of study to allow students to complete each of the 4 introductory History classes. Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021 results, the faculty implemented the following changes in AC 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. The instructor added a new text that focuses on citation and annotation methods as an introduction to the research and writing process. The new style guide textbook was a part of a re-tooled class which spends an entire five-week module on citation and archival assignments along with reading and writing specifically geared to the history degree.

**Decision:** In AC 2021-2022, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. Instructors in sections of all 3000 and 4000 classes will institute a pre- and post-class bibliography assignment. The assignment will require students to both identify the differences between a primary and secondary source and complete a bibliography exercise where students will be required to write a bibliography reference according to the style guidelines of the Chicago Manual of Style. The changes will require students to be able to complete primary and secondary source requirements and correct references before enrolling in the HIST 3000 Historian's Craft class and improve department benchmarks for learning outcomes.

### **SLO 4. Select and apply appropriate research methods and analytical skills.**

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

HIST 3000: The Historian's Craft

HIST 4000: History Research Methods

**Measure 4.1.** All history majors must take HIST 3000 after completing four (4) required introductory history classes. Students enrolled in this course are required to distinguish between primary and secondary sources and must complete written assignments based on their understanding of these kinds of historical texts. Seventy-five percent (75%) of students enrolled will earn a grade of C or better on the written exam which specifically assesses this SLO.

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**Finding:** In AC 2021-22, the target was not met with 64 % (9/14) students earning a C or better.

**Analysis:** In AC 2020-2021, the target was not met. In Fall of 2020, the department reorganized the curriculum to comply with the QEP experiential learning requirements. One change replaced the SST 1030 class with HIST 3000. HIST 3000 has been moved to the third year of study to allow students to complete 4 of the introductory History classes. Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021 results, the faculty implemented the following changes in AC 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. The instructor added a new text that focuses on citation and annotation methods as an introduction to the research and writing process. The new style guide textbook was a part of a re-tooled class which spends an entire five-week module on citation and archival assignments along with reading and writing specifically geared to the history degree.

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### **SLO 5. Students will demonstrate effective written and oral communication skills.**

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

HIST 3000: The Historian's Craft

HIST 4000: History Research Methods

**Measure 5.1.** Students enrolled in HIST 3000 must complete a Thesis and Citation assignment that directly assesses this SLO. Seventy-five percent (75%) of students enrolled will earn a grade of C or higher on the assignment.

**Finding:** In AC 2021-22, the target was met with 100% (13/13) students earning a C or better.

**Analysis:** In AC 2020-2021, the target was met. In Fall of 2020, the department reorganized the curriculum to comply with the QEP experiential learning requirements. One change replaced the SST 1030 class with HIST 3000. HIST 3000 has been moved to the third year of study to allow students to complete 4 of the introductory History classes. Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021 results the faculty implemented the following changes in AC 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. The instructor added a new text that focuses on citation and annotation methods as an introduction to

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**Measure 5.2.** Students enrolled in HIST 4000 (a required course for all history majors) must complete a 15-page research paper on a topic of their choice in either US or non-US history. The project requires an understanding and reading of primary and secondary sources. Students must demonstrate sufficient comprehension of the subject they research as well as the historiography of that subject. Eighty percent (80%) of students enrolled will earn a grade of C or better on the research paper assignment.

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**Comprehensive Summary of key evidence of improvements based on analysis of results:** The following reflects all the changes implemented to drive the continuous process of seeking improvement in AC 2021-2022. These changes are based on the knowledge gained through the analysis of AC 2020-2021 results.

- Students in HIST 4000 were required to conduct a research consultation with NSU Watson Library staff as part of the requirements for the class.
- Each student was assigned a "faculty mentor" in the department who engaged in regular face to face or virtual meetings to discuss the ongoing research and writing process during the course of the semester.
- The faculty amended questions in current underperforming sections of the capstone exam.
- Faculty members replaced redundant or extraneous questions in the capstone exam to streamline the studying process.
- The instructor added a new text that focuses on citation and annotation methods as an introduction to the research and writing process.

### **Plan of Action Moving Forward:**

- Students in HIST 4000 will have the option to take an internship OR complete a research paper assignment.
- Each student who chooses an internship will be assigned a "community mentor" who will supervise the agreed upon assignments for the internship project.

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- The faculty will amend questions in current underperforming sections of the capstone exam.
- The faculty will administer pre- and post-class surveys for all sections of HIST 1010, 1020, 2010, and 2020 which will seek to improve performance on the HIST 4000 Capstone Exam.
- Faculty in all 3000 and 4000 classes will administer pre- and post-class primary source assignments in order to drive improvement for SLO measures in the HIST 3000 class.
- Faculty in all 3000 and 4000 classes will administer pre- and post-class citations assignments in order to drive improvement for SLO measures in both HIST 3000 and HIST 4000.