

## Assessment Cycle 2024-2025

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

#### School of Social Sciences and Applied Programs

#### College: Arts and Sciences

Prepared by: Dr. Chris Gilson, Coordinator

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Approved by: Dr. Francene J. Lemoine

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**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.** 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.

**School of Social Sciences and Applied Programs.** The School of Social Sciences and Applied Programs at Northwestern State University is dedicated to the education of students for professional, leadership, academic, and research careers in the challenging fields of criminal justice, public safety, homeland security, public service, and the social sciences. The school provides instruction across a broad range of concepts, with the ultimate goals of student attainment of excellence in analytical and critical thinking abilities, effective interpersonal, communication, problem-solving skills, moral commitment, and the acquisition of substantive bases of knowledge, necessary to secure positions in criminal justice, all levels of government, public policy, and private organizations. Using active learning, participatory pedagogy, and a Global perspective, the school holds a generalist orientation, through innovative analyses, in a student-centered, nurturing environment, and emphasizing an occupational context.

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**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 undergraduate 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 identify key persons, events, terminology, and themes associated with World History and U.S. History.**

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

HIST 1010: Early World Civilization

HIST 1020: Modern World Civilization

HIST 2010: History of the United States to 1865

HIST 2020: History of the United States since 1865

HIST 4000: History Research Methods

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**Measure: 1.1.** All history majors are required to take HIST 1010 and HIST 1020, which provide an opportunity for students to acquire foundational knowledge and understanding of the major components of World History. The program assesses foundational knowledge of World History through two instruments administered to students enrolled in HIST 4000, a capstone course required for graduation. The target is that the students in all sections will earn a composite rating of 70% on each World History instrument. Measure 1.1 is assessed in Fall and Spring.

**Finding:** Target Met. On the first instrument, students achieved the target (82%). On the second instrument, students achieved the target (91%).

**Analysis:** In AC 2023-24, the target was met. On the first instrument, the students achieved the target (93%). On the second instrument, students also achieved the target (84%). Based on the analysis of the 2023-24 results, the following changes were implemented in 2024-25 according to the plan of action from 2023-24. Faculty focused on improving course development, design, and delivery in HIST 1010 and 1020. To drive improvement, one history faculty member participated in a LOUIS/Board of Regents program, including professional development that focused on increasing accessibility and lowering textbook barriers for students. Additional faculty implemented the new Board of Regents OER textbook and coursework in HIST 1010 sections. Two faculty members are now using the LOUIS OER materials. Students excelled with OER coursework; DFW rates in comparable re-designed sections remained lower than in previous years.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2024-2025, the target was met.

**Decision:** The target was met in AC 2024-2025. Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, faculty will focus on several components to drive improvement. Most importantly, at least one faculty member will continue implementing materials developed for the Board of Regents OER program, including materials developed for an associated podcast grant. One faculty member will begin the process of converting an additional introductory course to utilize OER. Faculty will continue to implement pre- and post-class surveys for all sections of HIST 1010 and 1020. Analysis of the results of these surveys and Board of Regents feedback regarding OER will guide faculty course development and help faculty coordinate curriculum strategies to drive improved results for the Measure 1.1 instruments.

**Measure: 1.2.** All history majors are required to take HIST 2010 and HIST 2020, which provide an opportunity for students to acquire foundational knowledge and understanding of the major components of U.S History. The program assesses foundational knowledge of U.S. History through two instruments administered to students enrolled in HIST 4000, a capstone course required for graduation. The target is that students in all sections will earn a composite rating of 70% on each U.S. History instrument. Measure 1.2 is assessed in Fall and Spring.

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**Finding:** Target Met. On the first instrument, students achieved the target (85%). On the second instrument, students achieved the target (81%).

**Analysis:** In 2023-24, the target was met. On the first instrument, students achieved the target (79%). On the second instrument, students achieved the target (76%). Based on the analysis of the 2023-24 results, the following changes were implemented in 2024-25 according to the plan of action from 2023-24. Faculty focused on improving course development, design, and delivery in HIST 2010 and 2020. To drive improvement, one history faculty member participated in a Board of Regents program, including professional development, that focused on increasing accessibility and lowering textbook barriers for students in history courses. Student achievement on each instrument increased substantially (5%+) over the previous year.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2024-2025, the target was met.

**Decision:** The target was met in AC 2024-2025. Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, faculty will focus on several results to drive improvement. Most importantly, faculty will update courses to utilize a new edition of the textbook and its more accessible ancillary materials. Faculty will also implement pre- and post-class surveys for all sections of HIST 2010 and 2020. Analysis of the results of these surveys will help faculty improve lesson plans and coordinate curriculum strategies to drive improved results for the Measure 1.2 instruments.

### **SLO 2. Students will select and apply appropriate research methods and analytical skills.**

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

HIST 3000: The Historian's Craft

**Measure 2.1.** All history majors must take HIST 3000 as the first part of the program's two-course experiential learning capstone. Students enrolled in HIST 3000 must complete a citation instrument that directly assesses this SLO. The target is that 75% of students enrolled in the course will earn a rating of 70% on the instrument. Measure 2.1 is assessed in Fall.

**Finding:** Target Not Met. Fifty-four percent (54%) of students (7/13) achieved the target.

**Analysis:** In 2023-24, the target was not met with 38% of students (5/13) achieving the target of a rating of at least 70%. Based on the analysis of the 2023-24 results, the following changes were implemented in 2024-25 according to the plan of action from 2023-24. Instructors in all junior and senior-level history courses were encouraged to incorporate bibliographic citation assignments into their courses. Faculty were also encouraged to require students to use the same citation method: Turabian's / Chicago Manual of Style. This is the most common style used in the profession and is foundational

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for coursework in HIST 3000. Students struggled with this target. That said, students performed better on this measure in 2024-25 (54%) than they had in both 2022-23 (43%) and 2023-24 (38%).

As a result of these changes, in AC 2024-2025, the target was not met.

**Decision:** In AC 2024-2025, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, faculty will focus on several components to drive improvement in AC 2025-2026. Faculty will actively incorporate citation components into their assignments. At the next faculty meeting in August 2025, faculty will be encouraged to expand their use of citation exercises in junior and senior-level courses.

**Measure 2.2.** All history majors must take HIST 3000 as the first part of the program's two-course experiential learning capstone. Students enrolled in HIST 3000 must complete an annotation instrument that directly assesses this SLO. The target is that 75% of students enrolled in the course will earn a rating of 70% on the instrument. Measure 2.2 is assessed in Fall.

**Finding:** Target Met. Ninety-two percent (92%) of students (12/13) achieved the target.

**Analysis:** In AC 2023-2024, the target was met with 92% of students (12/13) achieving the target. This was the first time the instrument and measure were incorporated into the assessment process. Based on the analysis of the 2023-24 results, the following changes were implemented in 2024-25 according to the plan of action from 2023-24. Faculty were encouraged to incorporate annotation exercises in their classes if appropriate. Since most of the students who failed to achieve this target failed to complete the relevant instrument in the first place, faculty emphasized the importance of completing all work associated with History 3000.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2024-2025, the target was met.

**Decision:** In AC 2024-2025, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, faculty will focus on several components to drive improvement in 2025-2026. Faculty will be encouraged to maintain citation and annotation exercises in their classes. For the last few years, students who failed to achieve the target on this instrument failed to attempt or complete the instrument in the first place. Most importantly, then, advisors will emphasize the importance of completing all work associated with History 3000.

**SLO 3. Students will demonstrate the ability to develop and complete a research project based on primary and secondary sources.**

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 as the first part of the program's two-course experiential learning capstone. Students enrolled in HIST 3000 are required to distinguish between primary and secondary sources and must complete written assignments based on their understanding of historical text typology. The target is that 75% of students enrolled in the course will earn a rating of 70% on the instrument that specifically assesses this SLO. Measure 3.1 is assessed in the Fall.

**Finding:** Target Not Met. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of students (9/13) achieved the target.

**Analysis:** In AC 2023-2024, the target was met with 92% percent of students (12/13) achieving the target. Based on the analysis of the 2023-24 results, the following changes were implemented in 2024-25 according to the plan of action from 2023-24. Faculty were encouraged to incorporate bibliographic citation exercises in their junior and senior level courses to ensure students reflected on the difference between primary and secondary sources. Student success on this measure declined from 2023-24, from 92% achievement to 69% achievement, though this is similar to the level of achievement in 2022-23.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2024-2025, the target was not met.

**Decision:** In 2024-2025, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, faculty will focus on several components to drive improvement in 2025-2026. Most importantly, faculty will be encouraged to incorporate primary/secondary source exercises (including bibliographic citation exercises) in upper-level classes to encourage familiarity and reflection. This helped drive improvement in previous years, but it will need to be maintained to ensure future success.

**Measure 3.2.** All history majors must take HIST 4000 as the second part of the program's two-course experiential learning capstone. Students enrolled in HIST 4000 must complete a 15-page research paper on a topic of their choice in either U.S. History or World History. Students must demonstrate sufficient comprehension of the subject they research as well as the historiography of that subject. The target is that 80% of students enrolled in the course will earn a rating of 70% on the assessment of this component of the research paper. Measure 3.2 is assessed in Fall and Spring.

**Finding:** Target Met. All (100%) of students (5/5, 6/6) enrolled in the course earned a rating of 70% on the assessment of this component of the research process.

**Analysis:** In 2023-24, the target was met. In 2023-2024, 100% of students enrolled in the course earned a rating of 70% on the assessment of this component of the research process. Based on the analysis of the 2023-24 results, the following changes were implemented in 2024-25 according to the plan of action from 2023-24. Most importantly, faculty revised the curriculum to formally include the revived Public History Internship class (HIST 4990). By offering an internship pathway to completing the degree, the

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History program better serves students planning for public history careers rather than research programs in graduate and professional schools. This should result in better performance in HIST 4000 and fewer “re-take” semesters. Additionally, faculty encouraged students to complete all required elements of the research process in a timely manner, with careful attention to deadlines.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2024-2025, the target was met.

**Decision:** In 2024-2025, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, faculty will focus on several components to drive improvement. The History Program will encourage advisors to communicate with students about the importance of completing all enrolled courses, and they will encourage students to consider the opportunity provided by the HIST 4990 internship pilot. The internship class will be an official option in the 2025-26 curriculum. The History Program will build on its curricular revisions to develop a Public History concentration that will improve the program’s accessibility, utility, and time-to-completion. Most importantly, the program will implement the University’s new, standardized Academic Map to improve advising communication and time-to-completion.

### **SLO 4. Students will model the knowledge, skills, and disposition appropriate for professionals in Public History.**

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

HIST 4990: Public History Internship

**Measure 4.1.** Beginning in Spring 2023, all history majors will have the option to complete an internship in Public History (with an agency or host approved by the course instructor). Students may take the class as an elective or as part of the capstone requirement for the program. Site supervisors will be required to complete a standardized form to evaluate the knowledge, skills, and disposition for each intern that they supervise. The target is that 80% of students enrolled in the course will earn a rating of 70% (35 out of 50 possible marks) on the evaluation form. Measure 4.1 will be assessed in all semesters that HIST 4990 is offered.

**Finding:** Target Met. All (100%) of students (1/1; 2/2) achieved the target.

**Analysis:** In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. All students (5/5; 1/1) achieved the target. More iterations of assessment are needed to draw meaningful conclusions. Based on the analysis of the 2023-24 results, the following changes were implemented in 2024-25 according to the plan of action from 2022-23. The program maintained the implementation of the internship-based capstone course for students interested in public history career fields and resume-building work experience. Efforts to promote the internship program have been successful. Program faculty completed the process of revising the curriculum to formally include the internship class as a capstone option.

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As a result of these changes, in AC 2024-2025, the target was met.

**Decision:** In 2024-2025, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, faculty will focus on several components to drive improvement in 2025-2026. Most importantly, faculty will work to ensure students understand the importance of completing weekly response assignments in a timely manner, both for their own benefit and for the benefit of the site supervisor and community partner. The program coordinator will also work to promote the internship course so that all students know about the opportunity. Program faculty will publish a map of locations where students have completed internships to improve marketing and communication. More than two years will be needed to gather enough data for formal analysis and decision-making.

**Measure 4.2.** Beginning in Spring 2023, all history majors will have the option to complete an internship in Public History (with an agency or host approved by the course instructor). Students may take the class as an elective or as part of the capstone requirement for the program. All interns will be required to complete a reflection exercise assessing strengths, weaknesses, and professional development over the course of the internship. These exercises will be evaluated using a standardized rubric. The target is that 80% of students enrolled in the course will earn a rating of 70% (70 out of 100 possible marks) on the evaluation form.

**Finding:** Target Met. All (100%) of students (1/1; 2/2) achieved the target.

**Analysis:** In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. All students (5/5; 1/1) achieved the target. More iterations of assessment are needed to draw meaningful conclusions. Based on the analysis of the 2023-24 results, the following changes were implemented in 2024-25 according to the plan of action from 2023-24. The program continued the implementation of the internship-based capstone course for students interested in public history career fields and resume-building work experience. Efforts to promote the internship program have been successful. Program faculty completed the process of revising the curriculum to formally include the internship class as a capstone option.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2024-2025, the target was met.

**Decision:** In 2024-2025, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, faculty will focus on several components to drive improvement in 2025-2026. Most importantly, faculty will work to ensure students understand the importance of completing weekly response assignments in a timely manner, both for their own benefit and for the benefit of the site supervisor and community partner. The program coordinator will also work to promote the internship course so that all students know about the opportunity. Program faculty will publish a map of locations where students have completed internships to improve marketing and communication. More than two years will be needed to gather enough data for formal analysis and decision-making.



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**SLO 5. The program will provide a balanced rotation of advanced World History and U.S. History courses delivered in face-to-face and online modalities.**

Course Map:

HIST 3010-4980 (excluding HIST 4000): Advanced history coursework.

**Measure: 5.1.** This administrative outcome is designed to provide structure, predictability, and appraisal of the program's balanced course offering imperative. Each semester the program will offer, at a minimum, the following distribution of courses: 2 U.S. History (Face-to-Face); 2 World History (Face-to-Face); 2 U.S. History (Online); 2 World History (Online). The target is that the Program will meet 100% (8/8) of this requirement each semester.

**Finding:** Target Met.

*In Fall 2024, the History Program offered the following advanced courses:*

Face-to-Face US History (4): HIST 3040; HIST 3510; HIST 4320; HIST 4450

Face-to-Face World History (2): HIST 3090; HIST 4390

Online US History (2): HIST 3040; HIST 3140

Online World History (3): HIST 3110; HIST 4140; HIST 4980

*In Spring 2025, the History Program offered the following advanced courses:*

Face-to-Face US History (3): HIST 3040; HIST 3520; HIST 4330

Face-to-Face World History (3): HIST 3100; HIST 4400; HIST 4980

Online US History (2): HIST 3240; HIST 3600\*

Online World History (3): HIST 3600;\* HIST 4150; HIST 4440

*\*HIST 3600 satisfies the requirements for both categories*

**Analysis:** In AC 2023-2024, the target was met for each semester (8/8 and 8/8). Based on the analysis of the 2023-24 results, the following changes were implemented in 2024-25 according to the plan of action from 2023-24. The History Program maintained a balanced course offering imperative, which this administrative outcome reflects. The program was successful this year in adjusting to enrollment changes, offering a balanced array of classes, and using special topics sections to meet individual student needs. Good communication between faculty and regular curricular meetings helped the program achieve this target. Future semesters will likely require some balancing to ensure sufficient online options are available.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2024-2025, the target was met.

**Decision:** In 2024-2025, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, faculty will focus on several components to drive improvement in 2025-2026. The History Program will ensure that the course rotation will address the four categories of advanced coursework included in this measure. This will require careful attention due to

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lower University enrollment, which results in fewer students taking advanced history courses as electives. Additional refinement of this measure may be necessary since some advanced classes are offered more frequently than others due to curriculum requirements for other programs. In 2025, program faculty will pilot a new Academic Map and 5-year course rotation. This should improve faculty and student planning and communication.

**Comprehensive Summary of Key evidence of improvement based on analysis of results.** The following reflects all the changes implemented to drive the continuous process of seeking improvement in AC 2024-2025. These changes are based on the knowledge gained through analyzing the AC 2023-2024 results and lessons learned.

SLO	Measure	Key Evidence
1	1.1	Faculty focused on improving course development, design, and delivery in World History coursework; one history faculty member participated in a Board of Regents grant program that focused on increasing accessibility and affordability through the adoption of OER materials.
1	1.1	Faculty continued implementation of the new Board of Regents OER textbook and coursework in multiple HIST 1010 sections and began incorporating new BOR OER podcast materials.
1	1.1	The number of faculty using OER course materials for HIST 1010 increased from 1 to 2.
1	1.2	Faculty focused on improving course development, design, and delivery in American History coursework; one history faculty member participated in a Board of Regents grant program that focused on increasing accessibility and affordability through the adoption of OER materials.
2	2.1	Instructors in all junior and senior-level history courses were encouraged to incorporate bibliographic citation assignments into their courses.
2	2.1	Faculty were also encouraged to require students to use the same citation method: Turabian's / Chicago Manual of Style.
2	2.2	Efforts to maintain improvement (+14%) in the achievement of Measure 2.2 were successful.
3	3.2	Efforts to maintain improvement (+25%) in the achievement of Measure 3.2 were successful.
4	4.1	The new Public History Internship class completed its second full-year of delivery, providing an alternate pathway to completion of the degree. The course is now a capstone option in the degree curriculum.
4	4.2	The new Public History Internship class completed its second full-year of delivery, providing an alternate pathway to completion of the degree. The course is now a capstone option in the degree curriculum.
5	5.1	The program maintained a balanced course offering imperative. In Fall 2024 and Spring 2025, the program offered (at a minimum) the following distribution of advanced courses: 2 U.S. History (Face-to-Face); 2 World History (Face-to-Face); 2 U.S. History (Online); 2 World History (Online).

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### Plan of Action moving forward.

SO	Measure	Plan
1	1.1	At least one faculty member will maintain implementation of relevant Open Educational Resources and associated course materials, including new materials developed for an associated podcast grant.
1	1.1	One faculty member will begin the process of developing an additional OER-based introductory course.
1	1.1	Faculty will continue to implement pre- and post-class surveys for all sections of HIST 1010 and 1020.
1	1.2	Faculty will update courses to utilize a new edition of the textbook and its more accessible ancillary materials.
1	1.2	Faculty will maintain pre- and post-class surveys for all sections of HIST 2010 and 2020.
2	2.1	Faculty will need to do more to ensure students understand professional citation methods. They will be encouraged to expand their use of citation exercises in junior and senior-level courses.
2	2.2	Faculty will be encouraged to incorporate annotation exercises in their classes if appropriate.
3	3.1	Faculty will be encouraged to incorporate primary/secondary source exercises (including bibliographic citation exercises) in their classes to encourage familiarity and reflection.
3	3.2	Using the new Academic Map, the History faculty will encourage students to complete courses promptly and consider the HIST 4990 internship.
3	3.2	The History Program will pilot a new curriculum that includes an internship opportunity while also developing a Public History concentration, both improving accessibility and time-to-completion.
4	4.1	Faculty will encourage internship students to complete weekly response assignments in a timely manner. More than one year will be needed to gather enough data for formal analysis and decision-making processes.
4	4.2	Using the new curriculum and Academic Map, the program will encourage students to participate in internship opportunities.
5	5.1	Program faculty will develop a new 5-year course rotation in 2025.