

Program of Study Learning Outcomes Assessment Report

Assessment Cycle	2020-2021
Program of Study	History
Department	HPSS
Date of Departmental Approval	10/11/21
Name of Submitter	Jay Case

Date of data distribution: ___9/29/21_____

PLO data from 2020-2021 (and existing data from the two previous academic years) for the program of study was distributed to departmental faculty on the date above

Date of meeting: _____9/29/21_____

The department met on the date above to discuss the data, identify key strengths and challenges, and to formulate action steps for responding to the challenges (i.e., for closing the loop over time).

The participants in the meeting were: Jay Case and Jacci Stuckey

Mission Statement: *The History program trains students to identify, describe, and analyze forces that have shaped societies over time, in order to serve the church, community and world.*

Program Goals (these are broad goals rather than specific, measurable learning outcomes)

Key Strengths and Challenges in Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

Key Strength #1

Wording of PLO: Students will identify the ways that historians see religious faith functioning during a particular historical era and explain how that view of faith shapes the interpretation of that period of history.

Brief summary of the evidence used to identify PLO as a key strength, including reference to the amount and quality of the evidence

In 2016, with the assistance of external reviewers, the history faculty decided that while we appear to be doing effective faith integration in our courses, we do not have formal assessments for this area. Because we believe that faith integration is a more important priority for our

program than periodization, we have decided to eliminate this particular learning outcome for future assessment and replace it with a learning outcome that assesses faith integration.

In 2017 and 2020 (one year the exam was not taken and data cannot be found for another) students took the exam and scored 3.1 and 3.25 (on a 4 point scale) respectively. Granted, the sample size here is small, for we only had three senior history majors in 2017 and four in 2020. However, students spent about an hour on this question on the senior comprehensive exam and typically typed out several pages in their reply, so the outcome involved extensive analysis. Their analysis was not only developed through specific assignments and activities in HIST 442, but a number of other activities and discussions in numerous history classes.

Key Strength #2

Wording of PLO: Students will demonstrate an ability to explain how historians' use of source material and intellectual assumptions produce particular historical narratives

Brief summary of the evidence used to identify PLO as a key strength, including reference to the amount and quality of the evidence

Since 2013, 39 students have answered this question on the senior comprehensive exam. 38 of those 39 students (97%) have reached the benchmark for this PLO in their first attempt at taking the exam. Again, this is a question that involves extensive analysis, with students working through numerous pages of documents, writing for about an hour and typing several pages in response.

Key Challenge

Wording of PLO: *Students will demonstrate an ability to examine primary historical sources, after learning skills in sourcing, contextualizing, corroborating, and close reading. Students will show the ability to evaluate the trustworthiness of multiple perspectives on historical issues and learn to make historical claims backed by documentary evidence.*

Brief summary of the evidence used to identify PLO as a key challenge, including reference to the amount and quality of the evidence

After reading national studies that indicate that history majors were very good at memorizing information but were poorly prepared to evaluate historical evidence for trustworthiness, history faculty implemented several pilot exercises with primary sources

in their classrooms. Initial results indicated that Malone students performed in similar ways to the national average. As a result, we are planning to address this

Proposed Action Steps

Implement primary source analysis exercises in HIST 111, HIST 211, HIST 212, several upper level elective courses and HIST 442 (the senior capstone course) to develop and assess these specific skills.

Implications for Planning and Budgeting

Enter your mapping information in the [Mapping PLOs to MU Educational Goals](#) Google sheet