Assessment of Student Learning Plan (ASLP): **History**

2015-16 Academic Year

A. College, Department, Date

College   Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
Department   HISTORY
Date   *May 2016*

B. Contact Person for the Assessment Plan

Name and title: Libby Bischof, Associate Professor of History and Chair, Department of History and Political Science

C. Degree Program

Name of Degree Program: BA History, and BA History with 7-12 and K-8 Teacher Education Pathways

D. Assessment of Student Learning: Program Assessment

Step 1: Identify the Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's)

a. *Do you have your student learning outcomes published on your department's website?*   <mark>Yes</mark>/No

    i. *If yes, please indicate the url: https://usm.maine.edu/history*

    ii. *If no, please list 3-5 of the most important student learning outcomes for your program.* **What will students know by the end of your program?**

b. *Please identify* **which of your student learning outcome(s) were assessed this past academic year**. *(One or more of the outcomes and corresponding assessment plans could come from your department's CORE Course Blueprint(s).*

This AY (2015-2016) we have begun to engage in an assessment of our HTY 400: Senior Seminar class (also a Capstone) that all majors are required to take before

graduating. The course is taught (on a rotating basis) by all members of the History faculty, and topics vary according to who is teaching the course. This year, there were four sections of the course taught—two in the fall (Johnson and Rowe) and two in the spring (Bischof and Eagan). These four courses served a total of 37 students—the majority of whom were History majors (occasionally Liberal Studies Humanities majors also take the HTY 400 course to fulfill their LSH 440 requirement). One of the basic things we noticed was that, going forward, we would only likely need to offer three sections of the course during any academic year, as opposed to our traditional four sections/year. As part of the American Historical Association Tuning project, the program faculty decided upon the following four items to assess in regards to what our majors in the HTY 400 course should be able to do:

- •Identify existing and compelling questions about the subject.
- •Pose appropriate research questions and assess the range of materials necessary to answer them.
- •Identify and cite sources and points of evidence appropriate in number and type for exercises such as an annotated bibliography, paper proposals, a semester paper, or a capstone exercise.
- •Complete a substantial historical project autonomously.

These specific course-learning objectives are subsets of four of our program learning outcomes:

Students who study History at USM can:

*engage in historical inquiry, research, and analysis.

*understand the dynamics of change over time.

*explore multiple historical and theoretical viewpoints that provide perspective on the past, and recognize where they are in history.

*seek a variety of sources that provide evidence to support an argument about the past and develop a methodological practice for gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence.

In order to assess these outcomes, the faculty decided we would use the final research papers and research projects of the students enrolled in each of the four sections. Regardless of who teaches HTY 400, we all require a substantial research paper or project that is to be handed in at the end of the course. Professors Rowe, Johnson, Bischof, and Eagan each collected and kept copies of the final projects and papers. Now that we have compiled all of the examples (Professors Eagan and Bischof's courses just concluded on May 13th), we can begin the assessment. The five History program faculty are going to develop a common rubric (using examples from the American Historical Association Tuning Project reports in *Perspectives*) and blind read each project to determine to what extent students are meeting, not

meeting, or exceeding the learning objectives/outcomes we have set. This work will take place over the summer and conclude in September 2016.

c. *Do you have a **matrix or curriculum map** showing when your student learning outcomes are assessed and in which courses?*   ==Yes==/No

   i. *If yes, do you have this map published on your website? Please indicate url or attach a copy of the curriculum map.*

      We created a map for our 2015-2016 History Self Study for the Academic Program Review Process. A copy is attached.

Step 2: Assessment Methods Selected and Implemented

a. *Identify which direct measures (other than course grades), that were used to determine whether students achieved the stated learning outcomes for the degree.*

   See discussion in 1B. Additionally, we did a self-study and external review this year. Two student focus groups, comprised of around 12% of our majors (careful cross-section of Freshmen-Seniors, Male/Female, Education Pathway, Age diversity, etc.) were part of our external review and were conducted by the external reviewers. We will use this focus group data, as incorporated into the reviewer's report, to assist with our curriculum review.

b. *Briefly describe when you implemented the assessment activity, and if a scoring rubric was used to evaluate the expected level of student achievement. (This information may be shown on your curriculum map).*

   See discussion in 1B. Additionally, Professors Zhao and Bischof, at the behest of the CAHS Dean's Office, will be working on developing a common rubric and assessment for the research paper required as part of our HTY 200 Research Methods course. We will implement this assessment in fall/spring 2016-2017, in three sections of the course, taught by Professors Bischof and Zhao.

Step 3: Using the Assessment results to Improve Student Learning

   a. *Briefly describe your unit's process of reviewing the program assessment results (i.e. annual process by faculty committee, etc).* We will be using the results of our assessment of HTY 200 and HTY 400 as part of a two-year curricular review process initiated by this year's self-study. The self-study, external reviewers report, and the results of the HTY 200 and HTY 400 assessments will all inform how we redefine our curriculum by 2018. We will have an all program faculty curricular retreat in August and then work on them throughout the year.

   b. *What changes have been or will be made to improve student learning, as a result of using the program assessment results?* As an example, it is clear, even in preliminary reviews of HTY 200 and HTY 400 assessments, that students are not consistently using the proper style and format for citations. This indicates that the program is not doing an adequate job of scaffolding this work throughout courses, and especially in HTY 200. We need to find a common manual that we require majors to purchase (likely in HTY 200) as well as create a department style guide that can be posted on the website and linked in classes. That work will begin in 2016-2017. As noted earlier, spending time reviewing and assessing these courses has also been helpful in terms of scheduling frequency—offering HTY 200 and HTY 400 each three times per AY as opposed to four times per AY for the foreseeable future.

   c. *Date of most recent program review/self-study?* 2015-2016. We have just (May 15) received the External Reviewers Report, and will be meeting with the Dean and the Provost to determine an action plan.

E. Course Assessment Activities: *Is your program able to report any assessment-related activities at the Course-Level... (i.e. created grading rubrics to use in required courses, examined student progress in entry-level courses, developed a new course, etc)? Please briefly explain any assessment projects.*

New Courses Developed: HTY 122: US History 1800-1900 (Bischof developed new version of the course that is taught hands-on through 14 archival experiences on and off campus—she is in the process of assessing the pedagogical shift via students' reflective essays from the end of the course; HTY 347: Race and the Politics of Mass Incarceration (Rowe); HTY 400: Senior Seminar—Visualizing History (Bischof); HTY 394: Rise and Fall of Modern Japan (Zhao). Professor Johnson has also converted two upper level courses—HTY 303: The Ancient Near East and Greece, and HTY 304: History of Rome—into online versions.

Libby Bischof, as Chair and advisor to K-8 and 7-12 Education pathway students within the History major, actively participated in a comprehensive assessment of the K-8 and 7- 12 History BA students who applied for candidacy and student teaching for the 2016-2017 academic year. This assessment included a review of each student's portfolio, qualifications, reference letters and other application materials in relation to College of Education and Human Development standards, as well as state and national standards and benchmarks. The assessment process also included interviewing students and assessing their readiness to engage in student teaching. This process is common to all undergraduate education pathways through various majors, and is ongoing—e.g. every year there will be a new cohort of K-8 and 7-12 students ready to enter into their professional internship year.

F. Community Engagement Activities in your departmental curriculum:

a. Does your department have a student learning outcome that is related to any community engagement activities?   If so, please state the outcome.

b. Please indicate what community engagement activities are included in your program's curriculum, and whether the activities are required or optional for students in your major.

Community Engagement Activity	*Included*	*Required/Optional*	
Student Research (related to a community-based problem)	_X__	R	O
Student-Faculty Community Research Project	_X__	R	O
Internship, or a Field Experience	_X__	R	O
Independent Study (community-related project)	_X__	R	O
Capstone Course (community-related project)	__X_	R	O
Service-Learning (course-based)	_X__	R	O
Study Abroad, or an International Program	_X__	R	O
Interdisciplinary Collaborative Project (community related)	___	R	O
Student Leadership Activities (related to a team project)	___	R	O
Students/Faculty Community Leadership (advisory boards, committees, conference presentations)	_X__	R	O
Other Activities (not mentioned above)			

c. Please list any courses (i.e. EDU 400) that have a community engagement activity in your program.

Entry-level courses: *HTY 141 and HTY 142, HTY 122 (Bischof Fall 2015 and Fall 2016 version)*

Mid-level courses: HTY 200 (depends on who teaches—included in Bischof and Eagan's HTY 200 courses)

Upper-level courses: *HTY 300: History Internship; HTY 346: Civil Rights Movement (Rowe), HTY 347: Race and the Politics of Mass Incarceration (Rowe), HTY 357: Gilded Age (Eagan), HTY 360: History of Maine (Bischof); HTY 364: History of Women in the United States (Eagan); HTY 394: The Great Depression and New Deal (Eagan); HTY 394: World War I—Culture Politics and Memory (Bischof); HTY 394/LSH 340: History of Maine through Art, Literature and Film (Bischof); HTY 398: Independent Study (Varies); HTY 400 (Senior Seminar— depending upon who teaches it and the topic, e.g. Bischof's Spring HTY 400 Visualizing History worked on a community mural project in Gorham and curated a public exhibition for Special Collections in Portland). Professor Johnson's COR 302: Religion and the Creation of the Human course also has a community engagement component (service learning), as does Professor Tuchinsky's COR 301: Thoughtful Giving: Philanthropy and American Culture (students work with and award grants to local non-profits). Professor Tuchinsky's EYE on Thoreau: Nature Society and Self also includes service learning and community engagement activities, as does Professor Bischof's Honors EYE: Outside Lies Magic—Exploring Maine Landscapes. Professor Bischof also teaches a fall section of the COR 101 lab that is wholly focused on community engagement with first year residential students. Students in the K-8 and 7-12 education pathways have a great deal of community engagement incorporated in their education courses, especially during their professional internship year.*