

History MA

Advanced Knowledge And Skills In History

Goal Description:

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.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS-----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Research And Analysis

Learning Objective Description:

M. A. History students will demonstrate competence in applying research methodologies; qualitative and quantitative analysis; literature review; and use of traditional and digital resources.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Comprehensive Exams

Indicator Description:

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.

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.

In 2013-14, the department developed a common assessment document for each examining professor in the comprehensives. This document is attached.

Criterion Description:

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.

Findings Description:

In 2015-16, 23 MA History graduate students took written and oral comps. There was one failure, which to date has not resulted in termination from the program.

Attached Files

-  [Written](#)
-  [Oral](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Comprehensive exams

Action Description:

The graduate committee shall review the comprehensive exam process and present a plan to the faculty to make the exam more useful.

Enhancing Student Experience

Goal Description:

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

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS-----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Student Satisfaction And Usefulness Of The Degree

Performance Objective Description:

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

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

End-of-program Student Views

KPI Description:

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.

Results Description:

The interviews conducted related, as a rule, student self-perception of success. There was one review that was demonstrably negative. It concerned the department's inability to develop a sub-specialty in a particular area.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Program cap

Action Description:

Since we capped admissions to our graduate program two years ago, our students experiences perhaps changed in terms of attention with professors etc. We shall modify our assessment mechanisms in view of this change.

Gaining Skills In The Digital Humanities

Goal Description:

Modern-day historians must be prepared to work and publish in the digital environment. Historians assess and present evidence, and the body of evidence that is digital has grown recently by an enormous proportion. Therefore, we must, as disseminators of the historian's craft, see to it that our students are more than literate in digital history.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Teaching Skills

Learning Objective Description:

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

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Teaching Skills Preparation

Indicator Description:

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

Criterion Description:

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. The Graduate Committee will then review all the apps and all the assessments of the apps and report on the progress of the project.

100% student success will achieve this indicator.

Findings Description:

In 2015-16, the East Texas History app increased in size across all categories of its content by a factor of about 110%. In the year, in other words, slightly more than half the content (the significant majority of which was created by graduate students), content including 144 entries, 72,000 words of text, 720 images, and 110 audio files, was created and made available to the public. Every entry was vetted for accuracy and professionalism, achieving the success criterion of 100%. The website is <http://easttexashistory.org/>.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

PACE

Action Description:

The committee shall encourage all on-campus students to make research presentations and gain teaching assistant certification from the PACE center, and shall track progress on this action.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

- 1. We shall evaluate the cap to our graduate program. We have reduced our enrollments by about 5%, to a still most very strong level. We shall endeavor to discover a way to determine if our students are able to take the courses they need to in proper sequence for a timely graduation.
- 2. We shall strive to expand our survey techniques to determine alumni achievement.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

1. We have introduced new course numbers, 5097 and 5098, to enable students to both take content-courses they need as well as hold their enrollment in the program while they prepare for comprehensive exams. We are still graduating great many students; the full effect of the admissions cap will be felt this coming year.

2. Alumni achievement remains an elusive goal to fulfill. We were not able to bring in a panel of recent successful graduates as we had hope, and shall try again this year.

Graduate development

Closing Summary:

1. We shall review and probably reform our comprehensive exam process.

2. We shall develop a mechanism of assessing if we should move beyond our admissions cap.

3. We shall strive to increase our collection of information about post-graduate careers.