



FROM: Laura S. Hodgman
TO: Edward Slack, History Chair
RE: Assessment in HIST 490
DATE: 16 June 2014

This assessment was conducted for HIST 490, Fall 2013, with five students enrolled. Evaluation of student learning is made on the basis of the paper evaluation rubric attached; the rubric criteria are applied to the students' final papers for the course.

Three History SLOs are assessed:

1. An ability to do original research in library, archival and electronic resources

This SLO is best measured with the rubric criteria "Use of Evidence." On a scale of 5 to 1, with 5 being excellent and 1 being poor, the average score for all students is 4.8.

2. Writing proficiency on historical topics

This SLO is best measured with the rubric criteria "Thesis," "Structure," "Mechanics." ("Logic and Argumentation is also relevant, but already used to assess the third SLO below).

For "Thesis," the average score for all students is 4.6.

For "Structure," the average score for all students is 4.8

For "Mechanics," the average score for all students was 4.6.

3. Analyze and interpret a wide spectrum of historical source materials.

This SLO is best measured with the rubric criteria "Logic and Argumentation." The average score for all students was 4.6.

Conclusions: Graduating History students are generally meeting departmental expectations for learning, i.e., achieving at least 4.0 in all areas.

Last year's report for this class concluded that students "could use more help with basic writing mechanics, argumentation, and effective use of primary sources." The scores in these particular areas, as well as the scores in general, show significant improvement (usually .5 or more) over the scores for the same instructor and course last year.

The improvement can be attributed, I believe, to greater focus on writing mechanics and use of sources, some very good students who were enrolled in the class, and the limited number of enrolled students, which allowed for greater personal attention and positive peer interaction.

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