

APPENDIX

Rubrics and Senior Comprehensive Exam Questions

(These documents are still in process and will be revised for Fall 2018, especially in terms of collecting quantifiable data.)

1. Rubric for assessing student outcomes across all history courses, in accordance with mission statement, goals, and objectives
2. Rubric for Measuring Basic Historical Thinking Skills
3. Rubric for Writing Papers (Composition and Style)
4. Rubric for Oral Presentations
5. Rubrics for grading papers that were prepared for debates, panels, role-playing, etc.
6. Senior Comprehensive Exam Questions for Spring 2018

	Mastery	Strength	Emerging	Needs Work	Absent
Critical Thinking (Goal 1 and 5): Develop analytical skills to enable students to interpret source material and to become well informed, critical and active citizens	Student addresses multiple points, demonstrates close critical reading and strong understanding, makes perceptive judgments, provides historical context, offers interesting interpretations, and develops ideas in detail	Student demonstrates good knowledge of the material, makes relevant judgments, provides appropriate historical context, poses relevant criticisms, and explains ideas adequately	Student addresses some points, demonstrates some engagement with material and partial understanding, makes some reference to historical context, makes some judgments, and develops some ideas	Student addresses few points, demonstrates limited engagement with material and only partial understanding, provides limited historical context, makes few judgments, or fails to develop ideas fully	Student fails to demonstrate thoughtful reading or meaningful understanding
Construction of Argument (Goal 2): Think creatively and critically to compose well-reasoned arguments and interpretations	Student elaborates a coherent, complex, and creative thesis that leaves no doubt as to the purpose of the writing	Student explicitly states a coherent thesis that conveys the purpose of the writing	Student states a thesis that, while somewhat incoherent or vague, conveys to the reader the purpose and direction of the writing	Student offers an implicit or unclear thesis, leaving the reader unsure of purpose of the writing	Student does not attempt to present a thesis to convey the purpose of the writing
Research Skills (Goal 3): Develop technological and research skills that enable students to access, critically evaluate, and utilize information effectively	Student finds historical, scholarly, and pertinent sources using library and other scholarly databases AND shows consistent awareness of the relationship between the nature of sources and conclusions that can be drawn from them	Student finds mostly scholarly, historical, and relevant sources using library and other scholarly databases AND shows some awareness of relationship between the nature of sources and conclusions that can be drawn from them	Student uses some sources that are scholarly, historical, and relevant using library and other scholarly databases AND, though treating superficially, identifies the nature of some sources (recognize difference primary and secondary)	Student uses few sources that are scholarly, historical, and relevant OR generally fails to identify the nature of sources	Student does not use appropriate historical and scholarly sources OR few or none of the sources are identified
Diversity (Goal 4): Develop an appreciation of difference and diversity by cultivating a sense of shared humanity	Student acknowledges and reflects critically upon diversity, identity, and discrimination and their complex relationship to place and time	Student acknowledges and reflects upon diversity, identity, and discrimination and their relationship to place and time	Student acknowledges diversity, identity, and discrimination and their relationship to place and time	Student alludes to diversity, identity, or discrimination and their relationship to place and time	Student does not acknowledge diversity, identity, or discrimination

Questionnaire (to be filled out by assessor to help find patterns in performance):

Major: history, non-history

Year: First, Second, Third, Fourth

Rubric for assessing student outcomes across all history courses, in accordance with mission statement, goals, and objectives

Measuring Historical Thinking Skills

Learning Objectives	Mastery	Strength	Met Expectations	Needs Work
Understands the nature of change over time				
Knows course content and can place it in historical context				
Understands the distinction between primary and secondary sources				
Uses content and sources effectively in historical analysis				
Understands how scholars' time and place influence how they ask questions or interpret past events [added after trial run]				
Writes well-organized, clear sentences				

	ARGUMENTATION	EVIDENCE	ANALYSIS	STYLE	MECHANICS
	The paper includes:	The paper:	The paper:	Language is:	The paper:
5	All of the following: a clear thesis statement; Intro, Body, Conclusion, and Transitions; multiple points supporting the thesis; a clear call to action. There is no extraneous information.	Makes multiple claims; each claim is supported by one or more pieces of evidence; evidence is mined from 3+ different sources; all types of evidence (logos-ethos-pathos) are used; evidence is not distorted or misrepresented.	Brilliantly synthesizes evidence; avoids logical fallacies; makes its relevance clear to its audience, and rebuts two or more likely arguments.	Precise, creative, and elegant; avoids cliché, jargon, and generalization; and gracefully integrates the use of quotes and other types of evidence.	Demonstrates complete command of the standards of written English spelling and grammar and the conventions of academic writing. Cites its sources accurately; includes a correctly-formatted Works Cited or bibliography.
4	All but a few of the following: a clear thesis statement; Intro, Body, Conclusion, and Transitions; multiple points supporting the thesis; a clear call to action.	Makes at least two claims; claims are backed up, but aren't drawn from sufficient or sufficiently legitimate sources, or distorts some evidence.	Combines evidence skillfully to build its argument; avoids logical fallacies; makes its relevance clear to its audience; rebuts at least one possible argument.	Clear and effective; integrates the use of quotes and other types of evidence reasonably well; and avoids cliché, jargon, and generalization.	Includes minimal errors in spelling and grammar; may demonstrate inconsistency with source citation or bibliographic reporting.
3	Only about half of the following: a clear thesis statement; Intro, Body, Conclusion, and Transitions; multiple points supporting the thesis; a clear call to action. There may be extraneous information.	Makes only two claims; claims are only weakly supported with evidence; uses no more than two sources or two types of evidence; may distort evidence.	Presents or summarizes facts, but doesn't synthesize, draw conclusions, or rebut any likely arguments; offers only weak relevance, relies on one or more logical fallacies.	Mostly clear and effective, but lapses into cliché or generalities. Integration of evidence may be occasionally awkward.	Includes multiple errors in spelling and grammar and/or a poorly formatted or incomplete citation and bibliography.
2	Fewer than half of the following: a clear thesis statement; Intro, Body, Conclusion, and Transitions; multiple points supporting the thesis; a clear call to action.	Makes a single claim; fails to support claims with evidence; uses poor or an inadequate number of sources; relies on only one type of evidence.	Strings evidence together in weak or sloppy fashion; its relevance is not articulated; it relies primarily on fallacious logic.	Intelligible but basic, lacking precision or flair. Sources are integrated awkwardly or incompletely.	Includes regular errors in spelling or grammar; includes multiple uses of inaccurate citations and bibliography.
1	Lacks an argument and/or basic logical structures that make it intelligible to the average reader.	Lacks any but the most basic evidence for its claims, or misuses or misrepresents evidence to support its points.	Makes no analysis of the evidence beyond stringing together quotations / references.	Simplistic, or barely intelligible, based on cliché and generalizations. Evidence is poorly integrated, if at all.	Is riddled with errors in spelling and grammar; fails to cite sources or include a bibliography.

Rubric for Writing Papers (Composition and Style)

W

	ARGUMENTATION	PREPARATION	CHARISMA/DECORUM	BODY	VOICE
5	The speech includes: Intro-Body-Conclusion; transitions, and citations; a strong and clear thesis; all parts of the speech are consistent and coherent	The speaker appears: Clearly well-prepared; not reliant on notes; makes effective use of eye contact.	The speaker appears: Confident, passionate, and in command of her delivery; she captures her audience with her presentation.	The speaker appears: In command of gesture, movement, and stillness; the speaker's physicality strengthens the message of the speech.	The speaker appears: In control of volume, diction, pitch and rhythmic variation; avoids vocal pauses and filler words.
4	Nearly all of the required parts, but may lack transitions, a clear call to action, or incomplete citations.	Rehearsed and ready; relatively independent of notes; able to maintain eye contact with her audience.	Certain and earnest in her delivery. She relates issues directly to her audience, and they respond.	Reasonably deft in gesture, movement, and stillness, using her body to support her message.	Reasonably deft in using volume, diction, and pitch and rhythmic variation; vocal pauses and filler words are minimal.
3	Most required parts, but lacks clarity or wholeness; a weak or muddy thesis; vague information; sloppy citations.	Reasonably prepared; her use of notes doesn't prevent connection with her audience.	Adequate in her presentation, but lacking conviction or passion. The speaker seems disengaged or merely "going through the motions."	Somewhat able to use gesture, movement, and stillness without distracting from the message of the speech.	Somewhat able to use volume, diction, pitch and rhythmic variation. Vocal pauses and filler words aren't overly distracting.
2	Fewer than half of the necessary parts; an insufficient thesis; irrelevant information; few citations	Under-prepared: uncertain, reliant on notes, or distracted; unable to maintain effective eye- contact.	Awkward or ill-at-ease with the audience, topic, or her own position.	Haphazard in utilizing gesture, movement, and stillness.	Haphazard in utilizing volume, diction, pitch and rhythmic variation effectively. Vocal pauses and filler words are frequent.
1	Little in the way of argument and/or basic logical structures that make it intelligible to the average listener	Clearly unprepared, avoids eye contact, and struggles throughout to deliver her message.	Clearly uncomfortable with herself and/or her subject; undermined by her self-presentation.	Out of control in utilizing gesture, movement, and stillness. Use of the body interferes with the message.	Out of control in utilizing volume, diction, pitch and rhythmic variation. Vocality interferes with understanding.

Rubric for Oral Presentations

5

Rubric for grading papers that were prepared for debates, panels, role-playing, etc.

	Outstanding (5 points)	Exceeds Expectations (4 points)	Acceptable (3 points)	Poor (2 points)	Dreadful (1 point)
Effort	Your writing was submitted before the deadline and perfectly matched the requested format.	Your writing was submitted before the deadline but did not quite match the requested format.	Your writing was submitted within 24 hours of the deadline or had multiple errors with the format.	Your writing was over 24 hours late.	Your writing was not submitted until the instructor asked for it.
Claim	You make a powerful claim that is both obvious to the reader and well-situated in the opening of the piece.	You make a clear and concise claim in the first or second paragraph.	You make a claim in the first or second paragraph but it is not clear and concise.	You make a claim, but it is difficult for the reader to find it within the paper.	Your claim is unclear to the reader.
Organization	Your writing has a compelling opening , an informative middle, and a satisfying conclusion.	Your opening outlines the points you make in the middle of the paper. You also summarize these in the conclusion.	Your writing has a beginning, a middle, and end. However, you don't really outline your points early on or summarize them at the end.	Your writing is somewhat organized but sometimes gets off topic.	Your writing is aimless and disorganized.
Arguments	You give clear reasons in support of your claim, discuss the reasons against your claim, and explain why it is valid anyway.	You give reasons both for and against your claim, but overlook some important reasons and/or don't explain why the claim still stands.	You give reasons in support of your claim. You also say that there are reasons against the claim but don't describe them adequately.	You give 1 or 2 weak reasons attempting to support your claim. However these are irrelevant and/or confusing.	You do not give any convincing reasons in support of your claim.
Sources	You include multiple appropriate quotations from multiple assigned sources that strongly support your claim.	You include multiple appropriate quotations from at least one of the assigned sources to support your claim.	You included at least one appropriate quotation from one of the assigned readings to support your claim.	You included a quotation from the assigned readings, but it was marginally valuable in supporting your claim.	You did not include quotations from the assigned readings to support your claim.
Accuracy	The facts in your paper are accurate within the context of the game and you include extra, real details from outside of the game.	The facts in your paper are accurate within the context of the game.	Your paper is mostly correct, but you was mistaken about at least one fact.	You had notable misconceptions about some minor facts in your paper.	You had serious misconceptions about major facts in your paper.
Originality	Your paper stands out as one of the most memorable in the class.	This paper presents some unique ideas and a fresh approach to the topic.	This paper presents a unique idea or approach to the topic beyond what was in the role sheet.	This paper is very similar to the other papers or the instructor-provided materials in its ideas and approach.	This paper could have been written by someone not taking this particular class.
Voice	Your paper sounds like a realistic character that cares about this topic.	Your paper clearly has the appropriate voice of your character.	Your paper has the voice of your character. However, that character comes across as either too bland or too phony.	Your paper lacks a voice of your character or it is so weak as to be imperceptible.	Your writing is too informal. It appears that you did not take this assignment seriously.
Sentences	Your sentences are clear, complete, and of varying lengths.	You have well-constructed sentences and appropriate punctuation.	The sentence structure is somewhat monotonous.	Your sentences are sometimes awkward with run-ons or fragments.	Many run-ons, fragments, and awkward phrasing make your essay hard to read. You use the same words over and over.
Words	The words you use are vivid, meaningful, and appropriate.	You generally use correct spelling and routine word choices.	You word choice is often fine, but you have a few places where your word choice was inappropriate.	Your words are sometimes confusing or you have multiple spelling errors.	Numerous errors in word choice or spelling make your paper hard to read.

HISTORY MAJOR COMPREHENSIVE EXAM
WELLS COLLEGE
Spring 2018

The senior comprehensive exam provides an opportunity for students to evaluate their experience as a history major and a student of the liberal arts at Wells College. The purpose of the exam is to assess not only what you have learned about the past, but also what you have learned about the nature of historical inquiry and historical understanding. Do you think like an historian? Can you demonstrate that you have both acquired knowledge of the past and gained insight into the historical enterprise itself?

Respond to **two** of the following four questions, choosing from the pairs listed below. Each essay should **be 4 to 7 typed, double-spaced pages in length**. The exam is **not** a research assignment. In composing your essays, you should survey and critically assess your past coursework, including readings, essays, exams, research projects, and other work you have completed over the past four years. **Be as precise and detailed as possible in developing your answers, explaining your interpretations fully, including specific examples, footnotes, and bibliographic references as appropriate.**

Choose to write on two questions from one of these pairs. Indicate your choice on your exam.

- A and B**
- A and C**
- A and D**
- D and B**
- D and C**

- A. Analyze how a particular text, approach, concept, historian, or course made a significant impression on your thinking. How did the book, method, idea, or class inspire you and lead you to a deeper comprehension of an event and/or provide insight into historical interpretation and the nature of "doing history?"
- B. Imagine yourself a college professor or high school teacher. Design a history course (or part of a course), identifying the specific topics, themes, course readings, and assignments. Provide reasoning for your choices, **and** explain the goals and objectives of the course. What would you hope to accomplish, and why is that important?
- C. Design your **own** comprehensive examination based on your particular coursework, interests, and experiences as a student. Your exam should include several components, including important IDs (identifications), short essay questions, and longer essay questions. After composing your exam, identify your reasons for selecting the IDs and questions you have, and explain what the exam would demonstrate.

- D. Historians often argue for divergent views of the causes, meanings and significance of particular events (especially major events such as political, economic, and social revolutions, wars, and the rise and fall of nations and empires). Reflecting on one or more historiographical controversies, explain (1) how historians can arrive at different conclusions of the same event, and (2) how historians can disagree but still be respected as responsible scholars. What factors or conditions account for their different explanations and interpretations? What criteria or processes would you use to determine which interpretations might have more validity?

Due Date: Students should submit their completed exams **electronically** to Professors Groth, Guingona and Koepf no later than, **12:00 noon, Friday, May 4th**. Earlier submissions will be very welcome.

GOOD LUCK!