

Department of History, Wells College
Assessment Report and Plan
Updated June 17, 2021

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Assessment Report

I. History Major Mission Statement

A cornerstone of a liberal arts education, history is the study of continuity and change over time. By learning about the past, we learn about ourselves. The history major at Wells College helps students to understand the richness, diversity, and complexity of the human experience over time and space. Students learn how to think historically and embrace new ways of knowing by recognizing connections between the past and the present. Historians think both critically and creatively. As students examine historical questions, they learn how historians have approached and interpreted the past, they gain an appreciation of the contested nature of historical knowledge, and they engage issues that raise ethical questions and provoke historical debate.

II. History Program Goals

The HIST program trains students to:

1. Develop analytical skills to enable students to become well informed, critical, and active citizens.
2. Think creatively and critically to compose well-reasoned arguments and interpretations.
3. Develop technological and research skills that enable students to access, critically evaluate, and utilize information effectively.
4. Develop an appreciation of difference and diversity by cultivating a sense of shared humanity.
5. Develop expertise in the discipline of history.

III. History Program Learning Objectives

1. Development of analytical skills

- Students will read primary and secondary sources actively and critically.
- 2. Thinking creatively and critically to construct arguments
 - Students will interpret source material to compose written arguments.
 - Students will reflect on the contingency of knowledge and consider what can and can't be known.
 - Students will develop oral communication skills.
- 3. Development of technological and research skills
 - Students will learn how to engage in original research.
 - Students will learn how to navigate library and digital resources for research.
 - Students will learn how to assess the authenticity & veracity of source material.
 - Students will learn how to properly recognize and cite source material.
- 4. Development of an appreciation of difference & shared humanity
 - Students will demonstrate empathy, or an ability to connect with and appreciate the experience of others.
 - Students will be able to see themselves in history without feeling pigeonholed by its theoretical constructs.
 - Students will reflect critically on systems of power, privilege, and oppression in the past and their lingering legacies in the present.
- 5. Development of expertise in the discipline of history
 - Students will learn how to think historically through the “five C’s” of history: change over time, causality, context, complexity, and contingency.
 - Students will learn about the interpretative and contested nature of historical inquiry.

IV. History Assessment Meetings

Members of the History Department met informally numerous times throughout the academic year. In meetings, faculty members discussed assessment, course offerings, senior theses, and other matters. In assessment meetings, faculty members primarily discussed data collected from first-year questionnaires, adjustments to the standard assessment rubric, and strategies to implement the assessment rubric.

V. Examination of First-Year Questionnaires Assessment Data

Explanation

This past academic year, 2020-2021, we collected data from 29 individuals, 15 in the Fall of 2020 and 14 in the Spring of 2021. The data comes from HIST 101, World History to 1650, and HIST 103, World History from 1650. This two-part course, in addition to engaging students in critical thinking and exploring critical historical events, introduces majors and non-majors to technology and writing skills. This is a 100-level course that fulfills a general education requirement and attracts many first- and second-year students. History majors are required to take either HIST 101 or HIST 103 in order to graduate. The questionnaires are not comprehensive, but they provide a snapshot into potential trouble areas for students in our courses.

The questionnaire asks students to state how confident they are.

5. Locating a peer-reviewed secondary source using the library databases
6. Incorporating a quote or piece of evidence to support an argument

7. Citing, using Chicago-style citations, a source that you reference
8. Drafting a thesis statement
9. Identifying the biases or (hidden) motivations of an author

The questionnaire gives students four options to choose from:

1. Very confident
2. Confident
3. Somewhat confident
4. Not confident

The questionnaire also collects anecdotal evidence through written question prompts about the five objectives of the History Department here at Wells and how we might update or alter them. This is our first year distributing the surveys and reflecting on their results, but we hope to isolate patterns in future assessment reports by comparing changes over the years.

Data

Below you will find the raw data for the two surveys. The lower the number, the more confident students feel. Higher numbers imply that we need to address these skills.

Q05_#5	Q06_#6	Q07_#7	Q08_#8	Q09_#9
2 : confident	2 : confident	2 : confident	3 : somewhat confident	2 : confident
1 : very confident	1 : very confident	1 : very confident	2 : confident	2 : confident
2 : confident	2 : confident	3 : somewhat confident	3 : somewhat confident	1 : very confident
1 : very confident	1 : very confident	1 : very confident	2 : confident	2 : confident
1 : very confident				
3 : somewhat confident				
2 : confident	1 : very confident	1 : very confident	1 : very confident	2 : confident
1 : very confident				
3 : somewhat confident	3 : somewhat confident	2 : confident	2 : confident	2 : confident
2 : confident	1 : very confident	3 : somewhat confident	2 : confident	1 : very confident
1 : very confident				
3 : somewhat confident	1 : very confident	4 : not confident	3 : somewhat confident	2 : confident
2 : confident	2 : confident	3 : somewhat confident	3 : somewhat confident	3 : somewhat confident

2 : confident	2 : confident	2 : confident	3 : somewhat confident	3 : somewhat confident
3 : somewhat confident	1 : very confident	4 : not confident	4 : not confident	2 : confident
1.9333	1.5333	2.1333	2.2667	1.8667

* Raw data collected from HIST 101 Fall 2020, averages tabulated in the final row

Q05_#5	Q06_#6	Q07_#7	Q08_#8	Q09_#9
2 : confident				
2 : confident	2 : confident	3 : somewhat confident	3 : somewhat confident	3 : somewhat confident
3 : somewhat confident	3 : somewhat confident	3 : somewhat confident	2 : confident	2 : confident
1 : very confident				
3 : somewhat confident	2 : confident	2 : confident	2 : confident	3 : somewhat confident
2 : confident	1 : very confident	3 : somewhat confident	2 : confident	1 : very confident
1 : very confident				
3 : somewhat confident	2 : confident	2 : confident	2 : confident	3 : somewhat confident
3 : somewhat confident	2 : confident	2 : confident	3 : somewhat confident	2 : confident
2 : confident	2 : confident	2 : confident	2 : confident	1 : very confident
2 : confident	2 : confident	2 : confident	2 : confident	3 : somewhat confident
2 : confident	3 : somewhat confident	3 : somewhat confident	3 : somewhat confident	1 : very confident
3 : somewhat confident	1 : very confident	3 : somewhat confident	4 : not confident	2 : confident
3 : somewhat confident	2 : confident	3 : somewhat confident	3 : somewhat confident	3 : somewhat confident
2.2857	1.8571	2.2857	2.2857	2.0000

* Raw data collected from HIST 103 Spring 2021, averages tabulated in the final row.

Findings

Generally, students identified themselves as more confident in the Fall of 2020 than the Spring of 2021, which appears to mirror the HIST101 and HIST103 professor’s anecdotal assessment of students in the courses over the past year. Students struggled in the Spring. Several students had to quarantine or were sick, several others had family or medical emergencies, several received significant sports injuries, others missed multiple classes for other reasons, unplanned “rejuvenation days” impacted planning, and Covid fatigue impacted our class. As a result,

students in the Spring were on average less confident in the skills identified in the questionnaires. Of course, if this pattern persists in the future, the professor of the course will revisit strategies used in both classes to search for potential causes.

On the whole, students appear to struggle most with using proper Chicago-style citations and drafting thesis statements. Anecdotal evidence corroborates these difficulties. The professor devotes several class periods to teaching these skills. The professor also recently incorporated a video tutorial to help students review Chicago-style citations. In the future, the professor plans to “flip” the classroom to devote more class time to practicing these two skills. The question asking about citations seems to have the most discrepancy in responses suggesting that some students are fully comprehending the task while others are not. A flipped classroom should allow for more personalized attention to address issues such as these. The professors in the Department will also explore peer review activities and other means to address these issues.

Changes

In the future, we plan to add more granular demographics data that includes information on race and gender. Currently we only ask for major and amount of history classes taken before the course for which they filled out the survey. Although it will take a while to collect enough data to isolate patterns, it is important to measure how well the history program is serving students of various identities. Including this demographic information in our data collection will allow us to isolate potential race- or gender-related discrepancies in achievement and success and craft appropriate strategies to address those gaps.

VI. Examination of Student Essay and Other Assessment Data

Because we are in the process of implementing new rubrics, our assessment of student essay data this year is incomplete and anecdotal, but other measures, such as enrollments, attendance, and final marks, suggest significant student achievement and overall fulfilment of our learning goals. We fully intended to implement our new rubric this year, but the time required to update and refine those rubrics didn’t allow us to complete the task by the deadline. However, we have set aside a sample pool of essays to assess retroactively next year, and we agreed to a system of assessing different goals in alternative years. On even years, we will assess Goals 1 and 2, and on odd years, we will assess Goals 3, 4, and 5.

Seven history majors graduated from the program this year, including one with distinction, and a further four minors graduated this year. The professors in the Department have repeatedly attested to the growth of these students over their years in the History Program at Wells.

Goal 1. Develop analytical skills to enable students to become well informed, critical, and active citizens

All history courses require students to demonstrate critical reading skills through reflection papers, discussion questions, quizzes, or short response papers. Faculty members have formalized assignment-specific rubrics to measure such assignments.

Individual rubrics reveal that the majority of students engage critically with the readings to some extent. When students do not succeed, it is usually because they do not attend class or complete work. Professors in the Department have noted a pattern of student attendance and participation

in class, as well as engagement with readings and groupwork, but a failure to submit assignments and receive credit for the course. We continue to discuss methods to create more contact points with students who miss classes or fail to complete their assignments, including flipping classes, adopting “redo” policies for various assignments, and requiring office-hours visits.

Goal 2. Think creatively and critically to compose well-reasoned arguments and interpretations.

The history program remains writing intensive, from short critical response papers to interpretive essays and longer research papers. Faculty have been deliberate and conscientious in providing feedback on written work. Furthermore, faculty have been careful to properly scaffold assignments with research proposals, annotated bibliographies, and peer review activities. We continue to rethink, revise, and improve our rubrics to be more detailed and helpful.

The overwhelming majority of students demonstrate development in their writing skills. However, the number of students who fail to complete assignments remains a concern.

Students consistently evaluate the in-class experience in history courses very highly in class evaluations. Classes remain student-centered and discussion- and activity-based. Students regularly engage in classroom debate, role-playing activities, and in-class group work and presentations. History faculty have developed several rubrics to assess daily participation and formal oral presentations. Most students improve their skills in oral presentation and discussion over the course of the semester and over the years of their college career.

All history seniors give formal public presentations of their senior essays. Our history students are also routinely hired as interns and docents at regional museums and historical societies, further testifying to their oral presentation skills.

Goal 3. Develop technological and research skills that enable students to access, critically evaluate, and utilize information effectively.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, eleven history courses and seminars required students to complete a substantial research paper/project:

Fall 2020

HIST 201: History of Asia to 1650, 13 students

HIST 357: Modern America, 6 students

HIST 375: Writing History, 10 students

HIST401/402: Senior Essay and Senior Seminar, 7 students

Spring 2021

HIST 285: History of Sports and Recreation, 10 students

HIST/WTQS 304: Women, Gender, and Sexuality in Asia, 10 students

HIST 325: The African-American Experience, 6 students

A total of 62 students enrolled in those courses, and their grades on those assignments were as follows:

- 29% (18/62) in the A range
- 35% (22/62) in the B range
- 23% (14/62) in the C range
- 3% (2/62) in the D range
- 10% (6/62) in the F range

Class	As	Bs	Cs	DFW
HIST 201	3 A, 1 A-	1 B+, 2 B, 2 B-	2 C	1 D, 1 F
HIST 357	2 A-	1 B+	2 C+, 1 C	
HIST 375	3 A+, 2 A	1 B+, 1 B, 1 B-	2 C+	
HIST 401/402	1 A, 1 A-	2 B+, 1 B	1 C+, 1 C-	
HIST 285	1 A-	1 B+, 2 B	2 C+	1 D, 3 F
HIST/WTQS 304	1 A+, 1 A, 2 A-	1 B+, 1 B-	3 C	1 W
HIST 325		1 B+, 4 B		1 F

* Raw data for history research paper grades 2020-2021

By comparison, for the 2018-2019 academic year, out of 83 students enrolled, 83% were in the A or B range. See below.

- 37% (31/83) in the A range
- 46% (38/83) in the B range
- 12% (10/83) in the C range
- 5% (4/83) in the D range

Students struggled more than usual in history classes this year. While 29% and 35% achieved A and B grades in research assignments respectively, that pales in comparison to the 37% and 46% who received those grades respectively in the 2018-2019 academic year. The largest increases in the past academic year (2020-2021) came in the C and F range. This partially reflects a pattern of failure to submit assignments and general underachievement during the global pandemic. One pattern that jumps out for Professor Guingona's courses is potentially inflated grades in hist 300-level courses. He will consider readjusting rubrics and expectations to make assignments in those courses appropriately difficult.

The world history courses, HIST 101 and HIST 103, and the US History survey, HIST 241 and 242, do not include original research papers. However, they include digital technology-training and library visits as well as short research assignments or literature reviews. In HIST 101 and HIST 103 library sessions, students learn to use Discovery Service, JSTOR, and Google Scholar, and learn how to use Boolean searching and access online digital databases with the assistance of research library Tiffany Raymond.

Goal 4. Develop an appreciation of difference and diversity by cultivating a sense of shared humanity.

In recent years, the history program has been able to offer a variety of courses that focus on diversity and difference in various settings, including geographical (American, world, and Asian courses), chronological (ancient, medieval, early modern, and modern), as well as thematic (gender, religion, race, and class).

Quizzes, reflection papers, research papers, and interpretive essays reveal that the overwhelming majority of students demonstrate proficiency in at least one of the geographic areas and familiarity with at least two chronological periods. Enrollment patterns suggest that students are particularly interested in courses that provide comparative perspectives and focus on race and gender.

Students often choose research topics dealing with the global south, the subaltern, race, gender, and sexuality, and peoples of earlier eras. Senior theses this year included topics such as women’s participation in the Rwandan Genocide, a comparative history of the Spanish Flu and Covid-19, Japanese mythology, and the anti-suffrage movement in New York.

Goal 5. Develop expertise in the discipline of history.

While all Wells history courses introduce historical thinking, HIST 375 (Writing History: Theory and Practice, usually taken in the junior year) remains a central course for preparing majors and minors seeking to gain a more sophisticated understanding of method and historiography that will prepare them for writing their senior theses.

This year all ten students (7 history majors and 3 minors) who enrolled in HIST 375 produced solid research papers. They followed the process of developing a proposal, locating sources sources, designing research questions and a thesis statement, writing rough drafts, participating in peer editing, and writing a final paper. Their topics ranged widely: students wrote about the Tulsa Race Massacre and its absence in history; race and the “War on Drugs”; Montesquieu’s influence on democratic thought; Mutually Assured Destruction; and popular music during the Vietnam-American War, among others.

A history major’s experience culminates in a capstone experience that includes HIST 401, HIST 402, and comprehensive examinations whereby graduating seniors review their academic career at Wells and reflect more seriously about their educational experience as a whole.

Academic Year	Graduating Seniors, Distinctions	Grade breakdown
2018-2019	2, 2 distinction in major	2 As (A, A)
2019-2020	5	2 As (A-, A-), 3 Bs (B+, B, B-)
2020-2021	7, 1 distinction in major	2 As (A, A-), 3 Bs (B+, B+, B), 2 Cs (C+, C-)

* Raw Data on 401/402 Senior Thesis Grades.

Over the past two years, the number of graduating history majors has increased, but the quality of theses has deteriorated. This appears to reflect random fluctuations and the impact of major events, such as the global pandemic, but no doubt the departure of Professor C. J. Koeppe in 2019 impacted the diversity of courses and types of instruction students in the program receive.

Looking forward over the next couple of years, the number of graduating seniors will decrease on average (estimated 2 in 2021-2022 and 2 in 2022-2023), which reflects general enrollment and retention trends at Wells. Anecdotally, however, these students appear to have a better grasp of the five goals of our program. Faculty in the Department have discussed ways to increase the quality of theses, including starting the process over the summer.

VII. Program Changes for the Coming Year

Over the past couple of years, faculty in the Department have piloted a history speaker series aimed at enhancing the profile of the Department and fostering conversations about history careers and the many uses of a history degree. The pandemic unfortunately sidetracked this project, but this year we hope to revive and institutionalize this semiannual speaker series with the help of a student history assistant.

With Professor Growth on sabbatical in the Spring of 2022, the Department will need to hire an adjunct to support the program. Considering the recent lacuna of any European history courses in the Department and the complete absence of history courses that cover South America and the Caribbean, this could be an opportunity to offer a few different types of courses.

VIII. Assessment Action Plan for the Coming Year

We have three main assessment objectives over the coming academic year. First, we plan to finalize and implement a rubric to measure achievement in first-year and senior history courses. Second, we plan to update the demographic information questions and continue to distribute questionnaires to first-year students and graduating seniors to gain valuable qualitative evidence. Finally, we plan to update our master list of history alums and continue our outreach efforts to compile career information and solicit feedback regarding how the program has helped alumnae/alumni in their careers. We will describe in more detail below each aspect of our three-tiered assessment plan.

1. *Adjust and implement a rubric to measure achievement in first-year and senior courses.* We continue to develop and hone our rubric. After a long email thread, we decided to make significant alterations to Goal 1 and Goal 2 of the assessment rubric. See Appendix A for the updated rubric. See Appendix B for the old Goal 1 and Goal 2 rubrics. We plan to test the rubric at the end of the Fall semester (2021) retroactively for the 2020-2021 academic year the 2021-2022 academic year next Spring (2022) using papers submitted by HIST 101 (World History), HIST 103 (World History), and HIST 401 (Senior Capstone) students. Before implementing the rubric, we will hold a norming session during the last week of the semester. We expect that the goals will be somewhere in the ballpark of 70% or more in “Emerging” or above for HIST 101 and HIST 103 students and 70% or more in “Mastery” or above for HIST 401 students.
2. *Prepare and distribute questionnaires to HIST101 and HIST103 students and graduating seniors.* We plan to continue to implement the questionnaires to first-year students and graduating seniors, but we plan to include more granular demographic information to help isolate patterns and potential issues in our instruction. The questions largely address adherence to learning goals and means of improvement. We took the Psychology Exit survey as our model. The survey is short and to the point. For our questionnaires, see

Appendix C and Appendix D. We will continue to distribute HIST101 and HIST103 questionnaires to students in the last week of class. We plan to distribute the exit survey and senior questionnaire to graduating seniors as a part of their senior comprehensive exams.

3. *Create a master list of history alums and begin an outreach program.* As the senior member of the Department, Michael Groth, working with helpful colleagues at Admissions, will continue to build our database of alumni and prepare a survey to distribute to those alumni. The goal of the survey is to gauge the success of history graduates and ask them to attest to the utility of the program post-graduation. We might potentially invite alumni to speak at our biannual speaker series to highlight history research and history careers.

Appendices

A. History Assessment Rubric (New)

Last updated June 16, 2021

“Emerging” represents the benchmark for first-year students, “Strength” for second-year and juniors, and “Mastery” the benchmark for seniors

Goal #1: Analytical Skills	Mastery	Strength	Emerging	Needs Work
Engage with sources actively & critically	Demonstrates detailed familiarity with material & keen creative thought; makes perceptive judgments & conclusions	Demonstrates good knowledge & makes relevant critical judgments	Demonstrates only general knowledge & familiarity with material; makes only basic critical judgments	Demonstrates little knowledge & offers few critical judgments & interpretations
Analyze the biases of sources & the veracity of evidence	Thoughtfully diagnoses the biases and motives of sources; demonstrates an advanced understanding of the limitations & utility of different types of evidence	Recognizes the biases of a source; demonstrates consistent understanding that evidence has limits & specific applications	Demonstrates some awareness of the biases of a document or its author & only a basic understanding that all evidence is not equal	Fails to recognize the bias of a source; accepts evidence without questioning its veracity
Understand the nature of sources & recognize their uses	Demonstrates expert knowledge of the uses and limitations of primary & secondary sources; shows consistent awareness of the relationship between the nature of sources and conclusions that can be drawn from them	Demonstrates an understanding of the uses and limitations of primary & secondary sources; shows awareness of the nature of sources and conclusions that can be drawn from them	Can define the difference between a primary and secondary source; treats sources superficially, but identifies the nature of at least one source	Fails to demonstrate an understanding of primary & secondary sources or an appreciation for the limitations of sources or an awareness of what can't be known or determined

Goal #2: Creative Critical Thought & Argument	Mastery	Strength	Emerging	Needs Work
Pose interpretive questions &	Research question is precise & contestable;	Research question, while not as specific as it could be, is	Research question is limited in scope but	Research question is not debatable or does not exist

compose hypotheses	hypothesis can to be answered with available sources	contestable and can be answered with available sources	provides some room for debate	
Craft a thesis statement	Thesis is precise, creative, & sophisticated in thought and conveys the purpose of the writing or presentation clearly	Thesis states a coherent argument that conveys the purpose of the writing or presentation	Thesis states a basic or vague argument but conveys the general purpose and direction of the writing or presentation	Thesis ambiguous, indiscernible, or absent, leaving the reader or audience uncertain about the purpose of the writing or presentation
Construct, develop, and support arguments	Advances a complex & creative argument; provides detailed evidence from multiple sources;	Pursues arguable thesis and provides evidence from relevant sources	Partially develops a general argument; analysis somewhat superficial; supports ideas with limited evidence	Engages in limited analysis & fails to develop an argument; evidence absent or insufficient
Communicate interpretations effectively	Develops well organized argument; employs persuasive reasoning; demonstrates strong command of language & grammar	Develops a coherent and organized argument; demonstrates appropriate use of language & grammar	Expresses ideas, but argument not clear or well organized; contains some grammatical or mechanical errors	Disorganization, inappropriate use of language, and grammatical errors hinder comprehension

Goal #3: Technical and Research Skills	Mastery	Strength	Emerging	Needs Work
Identify and locate peer-reviewed research articles by using library and specialized search engines	Shows confidence navigating JSTOR, Discovery, WorldCat, and other databases, including advanced search options, to locate credible and relevant peer-reviewed sources	Able to fully navigate basic search functions of JSTOR, Discovery, WorldCat, and other databases to locate reliable peer-reviewed sources	Shows rudimentary or basic aptitude using library databases to find at least one peer-reviewed source	Relies solely on non-peer-reviewed sources despite assignment requirements; cannot use library search engines
Locate primary sources by using library and specialized search engines	Shows confidence navigating JSTOR, Discovery, WorldCat, and other library	Able to fully navigate basic search functions of JSTOR, Discovery, WorldCat, and	Shows rudimentary or basic aptitude using library or other databases to	Is unable to find, distinguish, or define a primary source

	databases, including advanced search options, to locate credible and relevant primary sources	other databases to locate reliable primary sources	find at least one primary source	
Properly format and structure a research essay	Adheres to the guidelines of assignment and discipline, has clear and informative introduction, conclusion, and clearly identifiable body paragraphs with topic sentences	Mostly adheres to the guidelines of assignment and discipline, structure and purpose of the essay is clear	Attempts to adhere to the guidelines of assignment and discipline, able to identify basic purpose of essay	Format and structure of essay does not adhere to the standards of the discipline (e.g., long unanalyzed block quotes, skewed margins, no paragraphs, no introduction, etc.)
Include fully traceable Chicago-style citations	All citations are included, properly formatted, and fully traceable citations	Citations mostly accurate with minimal or minor formatting errors	Citations sometimes present, but errors impact traceability	Citations missing or incomprehensible

Goal #4: Diversity and Inclusion	Mastery	Strength	Emerging	Needs Work
Reflect critically on commonality and difference	Demonstrates refined and consistent reflection on the social construction of difference and its many implications	Shows consistent reflection on the social construction of difference and begins to grapple with its many implications	Shows rudimentary understanding of the social construction of difference	Relies on cultural stereotypes and shows a static understanding of difference (e.g., differences are innate or permanent)
Demonstrate empathy, or ability to connect with and appreciate the experience of others	Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of social and cultural perspectives, and is eager to engage and understand multiple perspectives	Demonstrates an understanding of social and cultural perspectives and how those perspectives impact themselves and others	Shows some understanding of the perspectives of a specific social group (one's own or others)	Is unable or unwilling to empathize with the experience of others
Reflect critically on systems of power, privilege, and oppression	Reflects critically on the intentional creation and propagation of systems of power, privilege, and	Consistently reflects on systems of power, privilege, and oppression, showing some understanding of	Shows some awareness of historical or contemporary privilege, systems	Shows no awareness of historical or contemporary privilege, systems

	oppression, demonstrating an understanding of their wide-ranging and continuing impact	their creation and function	of power, or oppression	of power, or oppression
Acknowledge and engage with positionality and one's own biases	Thoroughly analyzes own assumptions, biases, and societal/cultural influences to evaluate and reflect upon their conclusions or arguments	Shows consistent awareness, of the influence of personal bias, upbringing, and societal/cultural influences in reflection and analysis	Shows an awareness, however vague, of the influence of personal bias, upbringing, and societal/cultural influences in reflection and analysis	Shows no awareness of how bias, upbringing, or societal/cultural influences impact analysis and argument

Goal #5: Discipline of History	Mastery	Strength	Emerging	Needs Work
Connect the past with the present, or explain historical causation	Explains cautiously and convincingly the relationship between sometimes conflicting causes and effects; processes causation with nuance	Consistently explains the relationship between causes and effects	Shows a rudimentary understanding of cause and effect; highlights at least one aspect of causation	Treats events in isolation, or shows no reference to cause and effect
Appreciate change and continuity over Time	Highlights and fully explains change or continuity over time	Recognizes change and continuity over time	Demonstrates, however superficially, some understanding of change and continuity over time	Anachronistic, shows no understanding of change and continuity over time
Able to provide appropriate historical context	Develops, with consistent effectiveness, necessary historical context	Develops, with some effectiveness, necessary historical context	Develops, though with limited effectiveness, at least one aspect of historical context	Does not provide or develop historical context, analysis not rooted in the past
Appreciate the complexity and contingency of history	Shows consistent appreciation of nuance and grasps the contingency of knowledge	Shows, on more than one occasion, an understanding of contingency and appreciation of nuance	Shows, on at least one occasion, an understanding of contingency and appreciation of nuance	Uncritically uses teleological lens to explain events

B. History Assessment Rubric (Old)

*** This rubric is no longer in use. It was last updated June 12, 2019.

Goal #1: Analytical Skills	Mastery	Strength	Emerging	Needs Work
Distinguish Primary and Secondary Sources and understand their uses	Shows expert knowledge in the uses and limitations of primary and secondary sources	Demonstrates an understanding of the uses and limitations of primary and secondary sources	Can define the difference between a primary and secondary source	Is unaware of what primary or secondary sources are
Question the veracity and source of evidence	Demonstrates an advanced understanding of the limitation and utility of different types of evidence	Shows consistent understanding that evidence has limits and specific applications	Shows an understanding, however basic, that all evidence is not equal	Accepts evidence without questioning its veracity
Analyze and contemplate the implications of the biases of a document or source	Recognizes, diagnoses, and fully weighs the biases and motives of a document and its author	Recognizes and diagnoses the biases of a document or author	Shows some awareness of the biases of a document or its author	Does not acknowledge that the author exists or that the author or document has biases
Show awareness of the nature of sources and conclusions that can be drawn from those sources	Shows consistent awareness of the relationship between the nature of sources and conclusions that can be drawn from them	In some cases, shows awareness of the nature of sources and conclusions that can be drawn from them	Treats sources superficially, but identifies the nature of at least one source	Fails to recognize the limitations of sources or what can't be known or determined

Goal #2: Creative and Critical Thinking	Mastery	Strength	Emerging	Needs Work
Write a thesis question	Research question is concise, specific, contestable, and able to be answered with existing sources	Research question, while not as specific as it could be, is contestable and able to be answered	Research question, while limited in scope, provides some room for debate	Research question is a dead end or not debatable, or research question does not exist
Craft a thesis statement	Elaborates a coherent, complex, and creative argument that leaves no doubt as	States a coherent argument that conveys the purpose of the writing	States an argument that, while somewhat incoherent or vague, conveys to	Essay offers an implicit or unclear argument, leaving the reader unsure of

	to the purpose of the writing		the reader the general purpose and direction of the writing	purpose of the writing
Consider a question from multiple angles	Demonstrates a keen understanding of contingency by highlighting and contesting alternative possibilities	Recognizes and weighs alternative possibilities in formulating an argument	Although confident in answer, demonstrates an awareness, however vague, of alternative possibilities	Assumes one definitively correct answer without processing alternatives
Able to understand and trace far-reaching implications of an event or condition	Able to connect distant and distinct events or occurrences, demonstrating an advanced understanding of causation	Shows consistent awareness that an event or occurrence can lead to unexpected or far-ranging results	Shows basic understanding that an event or occurrence can lead to unexpected or far-ranging results	Views events or occurrences as detached from history and causation

C. History Exit Survey

Last Updated June 17, 2021

Congratulations on completing the history program here at Wells College! The faculty of the History Department would like to receive your feedback to help us improve the program for future majors. Could you please fill out the following survey and submit it to Professor Phillip Guingona, pguingona@wells.edu. The data collected is for assessment purposes and will not be used outside of the Department’s assessment report.

Demographic Information (unless otherwise stated, circle one):

1. You are a... first-year second-year junior senior
2. You are a... history major history minor other major or minor
3. You identify as... non-binary woman man other prefer not to answer
4. You identify as (check all that apply)... Black or African American Asian or Pacific Islander White Indigenous or Native American Latino/Latina/Latinx or Hispanic Middle Eastern or North African other prefer not to answer
5. Do you have any accommodations? yes no prefer not to answer

6. How many history courses have you taken at Wells College?
One two three four more than four

Survey Questions:

7. What are your plans after graduation? Do you feel as if the History Program has put you in a position to achieve those plans? Why or why not?
8. Do you feel like the History Program has helped you understand history as a discipline or field of study?
1. How confident do you feel (circle one)...
- a. locating a peer-reviewed secondary source using the library databases?
very confident confident somewhat confident not confident
 - b. incorporating a quote or piece of evidence to support an argument?
very confident confident somewhat confident not confident
 - c. citing, using Chicago-style citations, a source that you reference?
very confident confident somewhat confident not confident
 - d. drafting a thesis statement?
very confident confident somewhat confident not confident
 - e. identifying the biases or (hidden) motivations of an author?
very confident confident somewhat confident not confident
9. What can we do to help improve your ability to do the tasks outlined in the previous question?
10. The Department of History has identified five broad goals for students in the discipline: 1. Develop analytical skills to enable students to become well informed, critical, and active citizens; 2. Think creatively and critically to compose well-reasoned arguments and interpretations; 3. Develop technological and research skills that enable students to access, critically evaluate, and utilize information effectively; 4. Develop an appreciation of difference and diversity by cultivating a sense of shared humanity; 5. Develop expertise in the discipline of history. In what ways has the History Program aligned with or fulfilled these learning goals? What can be done to improve this course to better align with these goals?
11. Would you suggest changing or modifying any of the aforementioned goals? How and why?

D. HIST 101 and HIST 103 Questionnaire

Last Updated June 12, 2021

HIST 101: World History to 1650 and HIST 103: World History from 1650 are designed to introduce the discipline of history to majors and non-majors alike. The faculty of the History Department would appreciate your feedback to help us improve this course for future students. Could you please fill out the following survey before the end of the semester? The data collected is for assessment purposes and will not be used outside of the Department's assessment report.

Demographic Information (unless otherwise stated, circle one):

2. You are a... first-year second-year junior senior
3. You are a... history major history minor other major or minor
4. You identify as... non-binary woman man other prefer not to answer
5. You identify as (check all that apply)... Black or African American Asian or Pacific Islander White Indigenous or Native American Latino/Latina/Latinx or Hispanic Middle Eastern or North African other prefer not to answer
6. Do you have any accommodations? yes no prefer not to answer
7. How many history courses have you taken at Wells College?
One two three four more than four

Survey Questions:

8. Do you feel the course helped you understand "doing history," or history as a discipline or field of study?
9. How confident do you feel (circle one)...
 - f. locating a peer-reviewed secondary source using the library databases?
very confident confident somewhat confident not confident
 - g. incorporating a quote or piece of evidence to support an argument?
very confident confident somewhat confident not confident
 - h. citing, using Chicago-style citations, a source that you reference?
very confident confident somewhat confident not confident
 - i. drafting a thesis statement?
very confident confident somewhat confident not confident
 - j. identifying the biases or (hidden) motivations of an author?
very confident confident somewhat confident not confident

10. How can the history professor(s) help you improve your ability to complete the tasks outlined in the previous question?

11. The Department of History has identified five broad goals for students in the discipline:
 1. Develop analytical skills to enable students to become well informed, critical, and active citizens;
 2. Think creatively and critically to compose well-reasoned arguments and interpretations;
 3. Develop technological and research skills that enable students to access, critically evaluate, and utilize information effectively;
 4. Develop an appreciation of difference and diversity by cultivating a sense of shared humanity;
 5. Develop expertise in the discipline of history.In what ways has this class aligned with or fulfilled these learning goals? What can be done to improve this course to better align with these goals?

12. Would you suggest changing or modifying any of the aforementioned goals? How and why?