

**Assurance of Student Learning Report
2022-2023**

PCAL

History Department

MA History 078

Alexander Olson

Use this page to list learning outcomes, measurements, and summarize results for your program. Detailed information must be completed in the subsequent pages.

Student Learning Outcome 1: Graduates will showcase broad knowledge of historical events/periods and their significance.

Instrument 1 **Direct: Comprehensive Exams (each graduate must complete four essays and an oral examination)**

Instrument 2 **Direct: Thesis (for those opting for thesis-track MA)**

Instrument 3 **Indirect: Faculty scoring report on oral component of comprehensive exam.**

Based on your results, check whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 1.

Met

Not Met

Student Learning Outcome 2: Graduates will effectively and accurately interpret primary sources and historical data.

Instrument 1 **Direct: Comprehensive Exams (each graduate must complete four essays and an oral examination)**

Instrument 2 **Direct: Thesis (for those opting for thesis-track MA)**

Instrument 3 **Indirect: Faculty scoring report on oral component of comprehensive exam.**

Based on your results, check whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 2.

Met

Not Met

Student Learning Outcome 3: Graduates will identify and describe the contours and stakes of conversations among historians within defined historiographical fields.

Instrument 1 **Direct: Comprehensive Exams (each graduate must complete four essays and an oral examination)**

Instrument 2 **Direct: Thesis (for those opting for thesis-track MA)**

Instrument 3 **Indirect: Faculty scoring report on oral component of comprehensive exam.**

Based on your results, check whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 3.

Met

Not Met

Program Summary (Briefly summarize the action and follow up items from your detailed responses on subsequent pages.)

Please see next page.

The assessment for AY 2022-23 produced the highest scores of any of the past four assessment cycles for the MA History program. Using a scale of 0-3, the average rating across all objectives and artifacts was 2.62, an improvement over AY 2021-22 (2.03), AY 2020-21 (2.41), and AY 2019-20 (2.46). It is possible that this year's data was inflated by the unusually strong group of students from the Fall 2021 recruiting class who graduated in AY 2022-23.

The following steps have been taken in recent years to improve student success in our program:

- A curriculum revision was approved that included the newly-created HIST 536: Sources and Methods (addressing SLO 2) as a required course alongside HIST 535: Historiography (addressing SLO 3). The new curriculum took effect in Fall 2022.
- Several new courses were approved to further diversify the range of historical content (SLO 1) that students can encounter in the program.
- A new version of the Graduate Student Handbook was written and distributed in Fall 2022.
- The MA History website was updated to reflect the new curriculum and expanded options for online students.

The following are the ongoing steps that the graduate faculty are currently to improve student success in our program:

- Review how the program is (or is not) serving the needs of online-only students.
- Ensure that faculty and students are informed about the new curriculum and comprehensive examination process.
- Take advantage of the newly-created course, HIST 598: Comprehensive Exam Preparation (1 credit), to improve support for non-thesis students who are getting ready to take the comprehensive exam

Student Learning Outcome 1

Student Learning Outcome	Graduates will showcase broad knowledge of historical events/periods and their significance.		
Measurement Instrument 1	Direct: The purpose of the comprehensive exams is to give students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery in three areas of historical inquiry as well as the handling of primary sources. The written examinations are completed over a three-day period and are followed by an oral examination. Both thesis and non-thesis students must sit for the four comprehensive exams.		
Criteria for Student Success	The program used two measures of success. The first was achieving at minimum a Low Pass for all students. The second was for at least 80% of students to achieve an average of 2 (Pass).		
Program Success Target for this Measurement	100% (Low Pass) 80% (Pass)	Percent of Program Achieving Target	100% (Low Pass) 100% (Pass)
Methods	Direct: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The artifacts were the five comprehensive exams ($N = 6$) and all identifiers removed (student name, course numbers, faculty name). The papers were split among three full-time faculty so that each comprehensive exam was read by three different reviewers. ○ The rubric was divided into three categories: low pass, pass, and high pass. One point was earned for a low pass, two points for a pass, and three points for a high pass. ○ The average of all three reviewers was used as the final score for each artifact. 		
Measurement Instrument 2	Direct: The M.A. Thesis is a culminating research project which will demonstrate the student's mastery of historical research. It should present an original argument that is carefully documented from primary and secondary sources. The thesis should represent a contribution to the field and be of a quality suitable for submission to an academic publication.		
Criteria for Student Success	The program used two measures of success. The first was achieving at minimum a Low Pass for all students. The second was for at least 80% of students to achieve an average of 2 (Pass).		
Program Success Target for this Measurement	100% (Low Pass) 80% (Pass)	Percent of Program Achieving Target	100% (Low Pass) 100% (Pass)
Methods	Direct: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The artifact is the MA thesis ($N = 3$) and all identifiers removed (student name, course numbers, faculty name). The theses were split among three full-time faculty so that each thesis was read by three different reviewers. ○ The rubric was divided into three categories: low pass, pass, and high pass. One point was earned for a low pass, two points for a pass, and three points for a high pass. ○ The average of all three reviewers was used as the final score for each artifact. 		
Measurement Instrument 3	Indirect: Oral examination scoresheet and report		
Criteria for Student Success	The program used two measures of success. The first was achieving at minimum a Low Pass for all students. The second was for at least 80% of students to achieve an average of 2 (Pass).		
Program Success Target for this Measurement	100% (Low Pass) 80% (Pass)	Percent of Program Achieving Target	100% (Low Pass) 100% (Pass)

Methods	Indirect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The artifact is the report form ($N = 6$) produced by faculty supervisors of the oral component of the comprehensive exam. ○ The scoresheet was divided into three categories, each reflecting one of the three SLOs, and faculty committees were asked to arrive at a consensus for scoring in each field: low pass, pass, and high pass. One point was earned for a low pass, two points for a pass, and three points for a high pass. No student failed their oral comprehensive exams this year. ○ These reports provide an indirect assessment tool, since scoring is based on the decision of the committee. 		
Based on your results, check whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 1.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
Actions			
<p>In AY 2022-23, across all instruments, the average for SLO 1 was 2.63, the average for SLO 2 was 2.67, and the average of SLO 3 was 2.56.</p> <p>SLO 1 measures student mastery of historical content, as opposed to methodology (SLO 2) and historiography (SLO 3). In the past three ASL reports, the scores for SLO 1 were higher than the scores for SLO 2 and SLO 3. Our efforts in recent years to improve student learning have concentrated on SLO 2, and this is reflected in the outcome of this assessment, with SLO 2 moving above SLO 1.</p> <p>The department is undergoing the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review how the department can best serve the needs of students on the Non-Thesis Track. • Discuss how to ensure that students encounter historical content that enhances understanding of race, gender, and power in a global context. This has included the creation of two new graduate courses for the AY 2023-24 catalog. • Examine learning outcomes for all courses, making sure that the course learning outcomes align with those of the program. Where necessary and appropriate, adjust course-specific learning outcomes to dovetail with program learning outcomes. • Ensure that students receive mentoring and practice for their comprehensive exams throughout their studies as part of their regular coursework. 			
Follow-Up			
<p>Over the past two years, we piloted an expanded comprehensive exam structure that was approved in August 2020 and followed up with a new oral examination assessment tool (the oral examination report) that was approved in August 2021. We will continue gathering data on the efficacy of these changes in measuring SLO 1.</p> <p>Expanded enrollment in the History MA has also made it possible to offer a wider array of electives, which contributes to SLO 1 with greater breadth of content.</p>			
Next Assessment Cycle Plan			
<p>No major changes will be made to the assessment plan. Faculty will be encouraged to consistently prepare an oral examination report immediately after the exam and in accordance with the approved scoring sheet.</p>			

Student Learning Outcome 2

Student Learning Outcome 2			
Student Learning Outcome	Graduates will effectively and accurately interpret primary sources and historical data.		
Measurement Instrument 1	Direct: The purpose of the comprehensive exams is to give students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery in three areas of historical inquiry as well as the handling of primary sources. The written examinations are completed over a three-day period and are followed by an oral examination. Both thesis and non-thesis students must sit for the four comprehensive exams.		
Criteria for Student Success	The program used two measures of success. The first was achieving at minimum a Low Pass for all students. The second was for at least 80% of students to achieve an average of 2 (Pass).		
Program Success Target for this Measurement	100% (Low Pass) 80% (Pass)	Percent of Program Achieving Target	100% (Low Pass) 100% (Pass)
Methods	Direct: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The artifacts were the five comprehensive exams ($N = 6$) and all identifiers removed (student name, course numbers, faculty name). The papers were split among three full-time faculty so that each comprehensive exam was read by three different reviewers. ○ The rubric was divided into three categories: low pass, pass, and high pass. One point was earned for a low pass, two points for a pass, and three points for a high pass. ○ The average of all three reviewers was used as the final score for each artifact. 		
Measurement Instrument 2	Direct: The M.A. Thesis is a culminating research project which will demonstrate the student's mastery of historical research. It should present an original argument that is carefully documented from primary and secondary sources. The thesis should represent a contribution to the field and be of a quality suitable for submission to an academic publication.		
Criteria for Student Success	The program used two measures of success. The first was achieving at minimum a Low Pass for all students. The second was for at least 80% of students to achieve an average of 2 (Pass).		
Program Success Target for this Measurement	100% (Low Pass) 80% (Pass)	Percent of Program Achieving Target	100% (Low Pass) 100% (Pass)
Methods	Direct: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The artifact is the MA thesis ($N = 3$) and all identifiers removed (student name, course numbers, faculty name). The theses were split among three full-time faculty so that each thesis was read by three different reviewers. ○ The rubric was divided into three categories: low pass, pass, and high pass. One point was earned for a low pass, two points for a pass, and three points for a high pass. ○ The average of all three reviewers was used as the final score for each artifact. 		
Measurement Instrument 3	Indirect: Oral examination scoresheet and report		
Criteria for Student Success	The program used two measures of success. The first was achieving at minimum a Low Pass for all students. The second was for at least 80% of students to achieve an average of 2 (Pass).		
Program Success Target for this Measurement	100% (Low Pass) 80% (Pass)	Percent of Program Achieving Target	100% (Low Pass) 100% (Pass)

Methods	Indirect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The artifact is the report form ($N = 6$) produced by faculty supervisors of the oral component of the comprehensive exam. ○ The scoresheet was divided into three categories, each reflecting one of the three SLOs, and faculty committees were asked to arrive at a consensus for scoring in each field: low pass, pass, and high pass. One point was earned for a low pass, two points for a pass, and three points for a high pass. No student failed their oral comprehensive exams this year. ○ These reports provide an indirect assessment tool, since scoring is based on the decision of the committee. 		
Based on your results, check whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 2.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
Actions			
<p>In AY 2022-23, across all instruments, the average for SLO 1 was 2.63, the average for SLO 2 was 2.67, and the average of SLO 3 was 2.56.</p> <p>The scores for SLO 2 were higher than either SLO 1 or SLO 3. This reverses a trend in past ASL reports in which SLO 2 was an area of weakness. Prior to the curriculum revision that took effect in Fall 2022, the program's course offerings focused almost exclusively on historical content (Outcome 1) and historiography (Outcome 3), with no dedicated course offerings providing training in the use of primary sources (Outcome 2) at the graduate level. In Fall 2021, we offered a new course, HIST 536: Sources and Methods. In Fall 2022, this class became the second core course in the MA History curriculum.</p> <p>In Fall 2020, the graduate faculty approved a revision to the comprehensive examinations to better measure SLO 2. Students are now required to complete a fourth essay that focuses exclusively on the handling of primary sources. The AY 2022-23 assessment measured a cohort that entered the program entirely under the new system.</p> <p>The results of this assessment suggest that the curriculum revision has succeeded in strengthening SLO 2.</p>			
Follow-Up			
<p>Over the past two years, we piloted an expanded comprehensive exam structure that was approved in August 2020 and followed up with a new oral examination assessment tool (the oral examination report) that was approved in August 2021. We will continue gathering data on the efficacy of these changes in measuring SLO 2.</p>			
Next Assessment Cycle Plan			
<p>No major changes will be made to the assessment plan. Faculty will be encouraged to consistently prepare an oral examination report immediately after the exam and in accordance with the approved scoring sheet.</p>			

Student Learning Outcome 3

Student Learning Outcome	Graduates will identify and describe the contours and stakes of conversations among historians within defined historiographical fields.		
Measurement Instrument 1	Direct: The purpose of the comprehensive exams is to give students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery in three areas of historical inquiry as well as the handling of primary sources. The written examinations are completed over a three-day period and are followed by an oral examination. Both thesis and non-thesis students must sit for the four comprehensive exams.		
Criteria for Student Success	The program used two measures of success. The first was achieving at minimum a Low Pass for all students. The second was for at least 80% of students to achieve an average of 2 (Pass).		
Program Success Target for this Measurement	100% (Low Pass) 80% (Pass)	Percent of Program Achieving Target	100% (Low Pass) 100% (Pass)
Methods	Direct: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The artifacts were the five comprehensive exams ($N = 6$) and all identifiers removed (student name, course numbers, faculty name). The papers were split among three full-time faculty so that each comprehensive exam was read by three different reviewers. ○ The rubric was divided into three categories: low pass, pass, and high pass. One point was earned for a low pass, two points for a pass, and three points for a high pass. ○ The average of all three reviewers was used as the final score for each artifact. 		
Measurement Instrument 2	Direct: The M.A. Thesis is a culminating research project which will demonstrate the student's mastery of historical research. It should present an original argument that is carefully documented from primary and secondary sources. The thesis should represent a contribution to the field and be of a quality suitable for submission to an academic publication.		
Criteria for Student Success	The program used two measures of success. The first was achieving at minimum a Low Pass for all students. The second was for at least 80% of students to achieve an average of 2 (Pass).		
Program Success Target for this Measurement	100% (Low Pass) 80% (Pass)	Percent of Program Achieving Target	100% (Low Pass) 100% (Pass)
Methods	Direct: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The artifact is the MA thesis ($N = 3$) and all identifiers removed (student name, course numbers, faculty name). The theses were split among three full-time faculty so that each thesis was read by three different reviewers. ○ The rubric was divided into three categories: low pass, pass, and high pass. One point was earned for a low pass, two points for a pass, and three points for a high pass. ○ The average of all three reviewers was used as the final score for each artifact. 		
Measurement Instrument 3	Indirect: Oral examination scoresheet and report		
Criteria for Student Success	The program used two measures of success. The first was achieving at minimum a Low Pass for all students. The second was for at least 80% of students to achieve an average of 2 (Pass).		
Program Success Target for this Measurement	100% (Low Pass) 80% (Pass)	Percent of Program Achieving Target	100% (Low Pass) 100% (Pass)

Methods	Indirect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The artifact is the report form ($N = 6$) produced by faculty supervisors of the oral component of the comprehensive exam. ○ The scoresheet was divided into three categories, each reflecting one of the three SLOs, and faculty committees were asked to arrive at a consensus for scoring in each field: low pass, pass, and high pass. One point was earned for a low pass, two points for a pass, and three points for a high pass. No student failed their oral comprehensive exams this year. ○ These reports provide an indirect assessment tool, since scoring is based on the decision of the committee. 		
Based on your results, check whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 3.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
Actions			
<p>In AY 2022-23, across all instruments, the average for SLO 1 was 2.63, the average for SLO 2 was 2.67, and the average of SLO 3 was 2.56.</p> <p>The average score for SLO 3 (historiography) fell below SLO 1 (historical content) and SLO 2 (methodology), but the historiography average of 2.56 is nevertheless considerably higher than the scores for SLO 3 in past ASL reports.</p> <p>The department is undergoing the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer the core course, HIST 535: Historiography, on an annual basis so that incoming students can be introduced to this key concept in the field early in their course of study. Offering HIST 535 every year will have the additional benefit of building cohort identity. • Discuss how and whether graduate history courses are successfully fostering the historiographical skills measured by SLO 3 as opposed to the content-driven skills measured by SLO 1. • Examine learning outcomes for all courses, making sure that the course learning outcomes align with those of the program. Where necessary and appropriate, seek to adjust course-specific learning outcomes to dovetail with program learning outcomes. • Ensure that students receive mentoring and practice for their comprehensive exams throughout their studies as part of their regular coursework.. 			
Follow-Up			
<p>Over the past two years, we piloted an expanded comprehensive exam structure that was approved in August 2020 and followed up with a new oral examination assessment tool (the oral examination report) that was approved in August 2021. We will continue gathering data on the efficacy of these changes in measuring SLO 3.</p>			
Next Assessment Cycle Plan			
<p>No major changes will be made to the assessment plan. Faculty will be encouraged to consistently prepare an oral examination report immediately after the exam and in accordance with the approved scoring sheet.</p>			