Template

Program History minor

Department History

Number of students enrolled in the program in Fall, 2011 118

Faculty member completing template Aaron Cohen (Date 1-31-12)

Period of reference in the template: 2006-07 to present

1. Please describe your program’s learning-outcomes trajectory since 2006-07: Has there been a transformation of organizational culture regarding the establishment of learning outcomes and the capacity to assess progress toward their achievement? If so, during which academic year would you say the transformation became noticeable? What lies ahead; what is the next likely step in developing a learning-outcomes organizational culture within the program?

The History minor program does not have a formal assessment program, since the department has focused on BA learning outcomes. The minor requires only content-based coursework of 24 units from the following categories: 6 units of lower division US history, 6 units of lower division non-US history, and 12 units of upper division history in any area.

While ten years ago many faculty members were skeptical about assessment, at present the great majority accept the need for assessment. Our BA History assessment is a model process. The department expects to continue to develop its assessment plan to take into account further changes in assessment strategy and technique as recommended by the university.

2. Please list in prioritized order (or indicate no prioritization regarding) up to four desired learning outcomes (“takeaways” concerning such elements of curriculum as perspectives, specific content knowledge, skill sets, confidence levels) for students completing the program. For each stated outcome, please provide the reason that it was designated as desired by the faculty associated with the program.

The History minor program does not have a formal assessment program. Generally, the history department would like students to have a basic knowledge of US and non-US history and be able to explore history content as best suits their personal or professional interests.

3. For undergraduate programs only, in what ways are the set of desired learning outcomes described above aligned with the University’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals? Please be as specific as possible.

The History minor program does not have a formal assessment program. The coursework required to gain a minor in history touches all categories of the Baccalaureate Learning Goals.
The study of history contributes to cultural literacy and develops critical thinking and other useful skills while helping students understand the present and plan for the future. Once the assessable learning outcomes are determined, more specific information can be given about how they align with BLGs.

4. For each desired outcome indicated in item 2 above, please:
   a) Describe the method(s) by which its ongoing pursuit is monitored and measured.
   b) Include a description of the sample of students (e.g., random sample of transfer students declaring the major; graduating seniors) from whom data were/will be collected and the frequency and schedule with which the data in question were/will be collected.
   c) Describe and append a sample (or samples) of the “instrument” (e.g., survey or test), “artifact” (e.g., writing sample and evaluative protocol, performance review sheet), or other device used to assess the status of the learning outcomes desired by the program.
   d) Explain how the program faculty analyzed and evaluated (will analyze and evaluate) the data to reach conclusions about each desired student learning outcome.

   Our BA History assessment is a model process and will serve as a starting point for our department in developing a History minor assessment plan.

5. Regarding each outcome and method discussed in items 2 and 4 above, please provide examples of how findings from the learning outcomes process have been utilized to address decisions to revise or maintain elements of the curriculum (including decisions to alter the program’s desired outcomes). If such decision-making has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur.

   See 4 above.

6. Has the program systematically sought data from alumni to measure the longer-term effects of accomplishment of the program’s learning outcomes? If so, please describe the approach to this information-gathering and the ways in which the information will be applied to the program’s curriculum. If such activity has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur.

   The department has not sought data from History minor alumni to measure longer-term effects of accomplishment of our learning outcomes since there are no outcomes for the minor. The main impediment is the more general problem of identifying former students to receive the survey (it would be nice if the university could provide us with follow-up contact information). We are willing to take advice about how to measure our graduates’ use of their history minor after graduation.

7. Does the program pursue learning outcomes identified by an accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization as important? Does the set of outcomes pursued by your
program exceed those identified as important by your accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization?

The History minor program does not have an accrediting agency.

8. Finally, what additional information would you like to share with the Senate Committee on Instructional Program Priorities regarding the program’s desired learning outcomes and assessment of their accomplishment?

The appropriate practices for assessment of minors is still under review and development on the national and university level. The history department expects to respond and adapt to any future recommendations that are made regarding assessment of minors.