

## STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT REPORT

**PROGRAM:** History (BA)  
**SUBMITTED BY:** Dr. Jace Stuckey  
**DATE:** 9/30/20

### Executive Summary: Description of Assessment Process

**Program description from the Course Catalog:** Please copy and paste the current year’s catalog description of this program. This is generally a one-two paragraph description immediately following the name of the program. Please be sure to include the listing of program outcomes as printed.

The study of history aims to improve an understanding of the modern world through a perspective that enables evaluation of both its mature and its underdeveloped conditions. The history program at Marymount focuses primarily on the areas of European and American history. Resources for the study of history in the Washington area are extraordinary, and many students find opportunities to witness firsthand history-making events in this capital city.

The history major — traditionally a preparation for careers in law, business, teaching, research, and many other fields — includes courses essential to the study of the European and American traditions. The requirements of the major are deliberately flexible to accommodate a variety of options within the discipline and with other fields of study.

Internship opportunities in the Washington area are outstanding. The study abroad program offers internship and study programs in numerous locations. The most popular destinations include England, Ireland, and Italy.

History majors are encouraged to consider a minor concentration in another discipline.

List *all* of the program’s learning outcomes, as of the assessment year’s catalog: (regardless of whether or not they are being assessed this year)

Learning Outcome	Year of Last Assessment	Assessed This Year (Y=Yes)	Year of Next Planned Assessment
<i>1) Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze and assess critically primary and secondary sources within their historical contexts.</i>	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
<i>2) Students will demonstrate the ability to interpret history through research and synthesis of evidentiary sources and application of theory and method.</i>	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
<i>3) Students will demonstrate the ability to apply historical knowledge effectively through the construction and communication of oral and written arguments in a professional forum.</i>	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21

Provide a **brief** description of the assessment process used including how results are shared and discussed and strengths, challenges, and planned improvements to the **process**, providing evidence of a culture of continuous improvement based on assessment. If there is something that is impeding your ability to implement improvements, please comment on those issues (generally not more than two paragraphs, may use bullet points):

Through the standards set by its Learning Outcomes, the History Program requires students to seek knowledge through active inquiry and first-hand research into the available evidence, thereby fostering the intellectual growth and intellectual curiosity prioritized by Marymount’s university mission and strategic plan. In accordance with Marymount’s objectives of remaining true to its Catholic identity, developing moral character, and educating the whole person, the History Learning Outcomes challenge students to exercise those habits of independent judgment, critical analysis, and rigorous examination of evidence necessary to participate responsibly in community and public life and make mature, informed life-choices, rather than bowing to momentary impulse, prevailing consensus, time honored dogma, or received authority.

By introducing our students to the theory and methodology of the discipline of history, the History Learning Outcomes enable them to cultivate the wisdom one can derive from knowledge of the fundamental causes of human behavior. Moreover, the Learning Outcomes contribute to diversity and a global perspective by encouraging students to evaluate human behavior in its socio-cultural contexts and take it on its own terms, thereby promoting an understanding of and sensitivity to those people who have different customs and ways of life and see the world from perspectives different from our own.

Finally, by prioritizing the skills of oral and written arguments in a professional forum (through the mechanism of the History Internship), the History Program’s Learning Outcomes advance our students’ career preparation, engage our students in the larger community, and foster collaborative ties between our program of study at Marymount and regional institutions. The History Program is integral to the humanistic education that lies at the heart of Marymount’s Liberal Arts Core Curriculum and the mission of the School of Arts and Sciences. But its Learning Outcomes also hone skills and provide experience that prepare our graduates for a wide range of professional opportunities, including those for which the greater D.C. area is particularly rich, such as academic history, secondary education, public history, archival and library science, and public service.

### Closing the Loop: Progress on Planned Improvements from Prior Year

Describe how the program implemented its planned improvements from last year:

Outcome	Planned Improvement	Update
1. Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze and assess critically primary and secondary sources within their historical contexts.	Include low-stakes, in-class exercises in the senior seminar in which students practice analyzing primary sources in historical context. While this is a skill we teach in all of our history courses, it needs to be reinforced for students in the senior seminar.	Students completed low-stakes, in-class exercises in HI 420 in which they identified and discussed how historians analyze and incorporate primary sources and then practiced these skills. In Summer 2020 we are standardizing the HI 250 syllabus to address areas where students fall short in this outcome, and the new syllabus will be used for the first time in Fall 2020.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to interpret history through research and synthesis of evidentiary sources and application of theory and method.	The improvement suggested for outcome 1 of adding low stakes opportunities for analysis of primary sources in historical context in the senior seminar should also help with this outcome. To improve students’ ability to make original arguments, history faculty will be meeting to	In 300-level courses, such as 315, faculty incorporated assignments that emphasize crafting and supporting a thesis. In HI 420, the thesis project was further scaffolded to emphasize developing an original argument. Students completed an additional assignment in which they described their thesis and outline in order to allow for additional thinking and feedback on how

Outcome	Planned Improvement	Update
	<p>strategize how better to integrate this skill into all of our courses. In the senior seminar, we will reinforce this through additional exercises and readings that task students with identifying arguments in scholarly works and analyzing how the arguments were constructed.strategize how better to integrate this skill into all of our courses. In the senior seminar, we will reinforce this through additional exercises and readings that task students with identifying arguments in scholarly works and analyzing how the arguments were constructed.</p>	<p>an argument is built. Students also worked on this skill in low-stakes, in-class exercises, for example identifying and discussing the thesis, argument, and structure in scholarly works.</p>
<p>3. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply historical knowledge effectively through the construction and communication of oral and written arguments in a professional forum.</p>		

**Provide a response to last year’s University Assessment Committee review of the program’s learning assessment report:**

Based on the positive response we received from the University Assessment Committee, we will continue to implement our planned improvements to the history program through revisions of HI 250 and HI 420, supported by small changes to 300-level courses.

**Outcomes Assessment 2019-2020**

**Learning Outcome 1:**

<p><b>Outcome Measures</b> <i>Explain how student learning will be measured and indicate whether it is direct or indirect.</i></p>	<p><b>Performance Standard</b> <i>Define the acceptable level of student performance.</i></p>	<p><b>Data Collection</b> <i>Discuss the process for collecting this data: who conducted the assessment, when, and how?</i></p>	<p><b>Result</b> <i>Did you meet your target? What was the result?</i></p>
<p>Direct measure: Student performance in completion of analytical papers required in Senior Seminar will provide the data for assessing this outcome. The rubric below indicates how student learning will be measured.</p>	<p>85% of students in Senior Seminar must attain a rating of “meets or exceeds criteria” on all items in the rubric.</p>	<p>In Spring 2020, 10 students completed Senior Seminar. The assessment item was the final research paper.</p>	<p>1) The History Faculty assessed student performance on the Research Paper according to the five criteria stated in the rubric below. 2) In Spring 2020, 7 out of 10 students met or exceeded criteria, falling below the 85% threshold.</p>
<p>Indirect measure: An exit survey given to students in Senior Seminar at the end of the semester.</p>	<p>85% of students in Senior Seminar respond that their program of study in History “meets or exceeds” the objective of providing them with the skills and opportunities to attain Learning Outcome 1.</p>	<p>In Spring 2020, 10 students completed Senior Seminar. The assessment item was an exit survey, which 9 students completed.</p>	<p>1) The History Faculty examined student responses to the Senior Seminar exit survey and quantified their responses. 2) According to the exit surveys, 8 of 9 students responded that their program of study in History met or exceeded the objective of providing them with the skills and opportunities to attain Learning Outcome 1. This exceeds the 85% threshold.</p>

**RUBRIC FOR LEARNING OUTCOME 1 (direct measure)**

Criteria	Exceeds Criteria			Meets Criteria			Fails to Meet Criteria		
	5	4.5	4	3.5	3	2.5	2	1.5	1
1) The paper identifies accurately the genre of the source and its intended audience.	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	—	—	<u>—</u>
2) The paper identifies accurately the goal of the author and the author's thesis and supporting arguments.	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	—	—	—
3) The paper identifies the author's methods of argument, including uses of evidence and rhetoric.	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	—	—	—
4) The paper assesses the source in proper historic context and infers the historic circumstances giving rise to its production.	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	—	—	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	—	—
5) The paper adopts only claims supported by evidence and synthesizes evidence from the source to reach appropriate conclusions and offer a logical interpretation of it.	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	—	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	—	—

**Interpretation of Results**

**Analysis and Implications:** *What does this result tell you about the extent to which your students achieved this outcome? What are the strengths and weaknesses that this result highlights, and what are the implications for your curriculum or your program?*

All of the students successfully identified, read, and comprehended sources for their research papers, which indicates that students successfully learned the research process. Most students exceeded the criteria for analyzing primary sources in historical context and synthesizing evidence to form an interpretation, indicating that for most students, the changes emphasizing the analysis of primary sources achieved the desired goals. However, three students failed to meet the criteria relating to the analysis and interpretation of primary sources. Two of these students would likely have achieved an acceptable outcome if not for the disruptions caused by COVID-19. They ran out of time by the end of the semester to incorporate feedback from the instructor. In any case, they all would have benefited from an additional round of feedback from the instructor relating to context and interpretation in their use of sources. The course built in two (one round of peer feedback and one round of instructor feedback). A third planned round of feedback was canceled when spring break was extended. At least one student commented on the exit survey that additional feedback and revision would have been helpful.

Most students successfully identified, analyzed, and incorporated primary and secondary sources in their capstone paper. However, the short primary source analysis paper could still be improved. It occurred early in the course, and some students did not fully

understand the difference between evaluating how they planned to use the source in the paper and completing the analysis of primary sources in historical context for the paper.

**Discuss planned curricular or program improvements for this year based on assessment of outcome:**

The timing and preparation for the short primary source paper should be reconsidered to improve student analysis of the primary sources they identified for their paper. Means to push students to identify and read these sources earlier in the semester could also improve student performance on this outcome.

The instructor should also plan for two rounds of revisions based on instructor feedback and in-person meetings.

**Learning Outcome 2:**

Outcome Measures	Performance Standard	Data Collection	Result
<p>Direct measure: Student performance in completion of the Research Paper required in Senior Seminar will provide the data for assessing this outcome. The rubric below indicates how student learning will be measured.</p>	<p>85% of students in Senior Seminar must attain a rating of “meets or exceeds criteria” on all items in the rubric.</p>	<p>In Spring 2020, 10 students completed Senior Seminar. The assessment item was a Research Paper requiring research of sources, synthesis of findings, and application of theory and method in the formulation of an original interpretation of history.</p>	<p>1) The History Faculty assessed student performance on the Research Paper according to the five criteria stated in the rubric below. 2) Of the 10 students assessed, 7 met or exceeded the criteria for Learning Outcome 2. This falls below the 85% threshold.</p>
<p>Indirect measure: An exit survey given to students in Senior Seminar at the end of the semester.</p>	<p>85% of students in Senior Seminar respond that their program of study in History “meets or exceeds” the objective of providing them with the skills and opportunities to attain Learning Outcome 2.</p>	<p>In Spring 2020, 10 students completed Senior Seminar. The assessment item was an exit survey, which 9 students completed.</p>	<p>1) The History Faculty examined student responses to the Senior Seminar exit survey and quantified their responses. 2) According to the exit surveys, 8 of 9 students responded that their program of study in History met or exceeded the objective of providing them with the skills and opportunities to attain Learning Outcome 2. This</p>

Outcome Measures	Performance Standard	Data Collection	Result
			exceeds the 85% threshold.

### RUBRIC FOR LEARNING OUTCOME 2 (direct measure)

Criteria	Exceeds Criteria			Meets Criteria			Fails to Meet		
	5	4.5	4	3.5	3	2.5	2	1.5	1
1) The paper's thesis statement provides an original argument concerning the interpretation of the past, and the paper's introduction and conclusion present the paper's thesis and main supporting points clearly.	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	—	<u>3</u>	—	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	—	<u>1</u>
2) The paper is tightly structured and coherently organized, with arguments unfolding in a clear sequence—each body paragraph builds the case for the thesis and excludes irrelevant material.	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	—	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	—	—	—	<u>1</u>
3) The paper demonstrates familiarity with the basic scholarly literature and interpretative debates on its subject—it synthesizes both primary and secondary sources and makes no claims unsupported by evidence from cited sources.	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	—	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	—	<u>1</u>
4) The writing style of the paper is clear and concise, its language flows and engages the reader's attention, and its word choice and tone are appropriate for the assignment and audience.	<u>2</u>	—	—	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	—	—	<u>1</u>
5) The paper is reasonably free of errors in grammar, punctuation, and syntax, and it applies correctly the Chicago/Turabian format for references in the footnotes/endnotes and bibliography.	<u>2</u>	—	—	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	—	—	<u>1</u>

#### Interpretation of Results

**Analysis and Implications:** *What does this result tell you about the extent to which your students achieved this outcome? What are the strengths and weaknesses that this result highlights, and what are the implications for your curriculum or your program?*

Students reported in the exit survey that the skills they developed in previous courses helped prepare them for the expectations of HI 420. They stated that they were familiar with the tasks asked of them. This indicates that the strategy of incorporating

argumentation into coursework prior to HI 420 was successful. However, one student reported that s/he had never before been asked to write a historiography and thus found this to be a challenge.

Most students achieved all elements of this learning outcome, stating a thesis, developing an argument, and engaging with the scholarly literature. This provides further evidence that the new activities and assignments emphasizing thesis and argument were successful. However, one student failed to meet all of the criteria for this outcome. One additional student failed to meet the criteria for stating a thesis. As with the students discussed in Outcome 1, this student would have benefitted from an additional round of feedback with the instructor. Another additional student failed to address the historiography or any debates within scholarly literature at all, but this was largely the result of disruptions related to COVID-19 and other obstacles, causing much of the work for the paper to be completed in the last several weeks.

Most students successfully stated a thesis, constructed an argument, and engaged with the scholarly literature in their capstone paper. Some students still needed more feedback and revision relating to developing a thesis that was focused and historical, as well as crafting an argument through their analysis. Some students struggled to articulate the “so what” of their arguments through a historical lens. Most students would also have benefitted from additional work on describing the historiography of their topic and considering their contribution to it.

**Discuss planned curricular or program improvements for this year based on assessment of outcome:**

In HI 420, requiring a revision memo in which students describe how they will respond to feedback, requiring students to complete a reverse outline from their draft, or other methods of engaging students with the revision process would help some students stay focused on the necessary work for this project. Requiring a revised Thesis and Outline assignment would provide additional opportunities for students to develop their argument. This would also allow the instructor should to monitor whether they incorporate the feedback provided by the instructor about their argument. Additional in-class exercises in which students work with the “so what” question would be helpful as well. Finally, faculty should discuss the concept of historiography in 300-level courses, using this term explicitly. Even if students are not asked to write this type of assignment, they would still become familiar with the concept.

**Learning Outcome 3:**

**Assessment Activity**

<b>Outcome Measures</b> <i>Explain how student learning will be measured and indicate whether it is direct or indirect.</i>	<b>Performance Standard</b> <i>Define and explain acceptable level of student performance.</i>	<b>Data Collection</b> <i>Discuss how the data was collected and describe the student population</i>	<b>Analysis</b> <i>1) Describe the analysis process. 2) Present the findings of the analysis including the numbers participating and deemed acceptable.</i>
<b>Direct measure:</b> The direct measure for the outcome is the Supervisor Final Internship Evaluation form that every site supervisor completes for each intern. The form provides a rubric measuring	The acceptable level of student performance will be a rating of “Excellent” or “Good” on the criteria of “oral communication,” “written communication,” and “apply academic knowledge to the	Each intern has a site supervisor who is required as a part of the Center for Career Services internship agreement to submit to the Academic Internship Mentor (AIM) an evaluation form developed by the CCS describing	2) According to the Supervisor Final Internship Evaluations for our 5 interns in 2017-2018, 4 of the 5 students met or exceeded two of the three criteria for Learning Outcome three, and all 5 students met or exceeded the third criterion. On oral communication 4 scored excellent or good. Four students scored excellent or good on written communication while all 5 scored excellent or good on applying academic knowledge to the



<p><b>Outcome Measures</b> <i>Explain how student learning will be measured and indicate whether it is direct or indirect.</i></p>	<p><b>Performance Standard</b> <i>Define and explain acceptable level of student performance.</i></p>	<p><b>Data Collection</b> <i>Discuss how the data was collected and describe the student population</i></p>	<p><b>Analysis</b> <i>1) Describe the analysis process. 2) Present the findings of the analysis including the numbers participating and deemed acceptable.</i></p>
<p>student performance in the HI 400 History Internship on a scale from “Excellent” to “Poor.”</p> <p>Three criteria measure student attainment of Learning Outcome 3, namely “oral communication, “written communication,” and “apply academic knowledge to the workplace.”</p>	<p>workplace” achieved by 85% of student interns.</p>	<p>the student’s performance in History Internship. This outcome is analyzed by scoring the ratings received by interns on the three criteria put in boldface on the rubric below.</p> <p>In Spring 2020 2 student completed in Spring of 2020. There were no students enrolled for Fall or Summer. The results for student performance on Learning Outcome 3 derive from the work of these 2 students.</p>	<p>workplace with one neutral response.</p>
<p>Indirect measure: The Summary Reflective Statement, a final short essay in which the student reflects on his or her internship and the ways in which Marymount coursework prepared the student for experiential learning, which is submitted at the conclusion of the internship as a</p>	<p>85% of students in Senior Seminar respond that their program of study in History “meets or exceeds” the objective of providing them with the skills and opportunities to attain Learning Outcome 3.</p>	<p>In the Spring of 2020 2 students completed their Internship. Supervisors for both filled out their evaluation, but only one student completed the student self-evaluation. Learning Outcome 3 derive from the work of these 2 students.</p>	<p>1) The History Faculty examined the Summary Reflective Statements from 2 interns and quantified their responses. 2) According to their essays, both interns strongly agreed or agreed that the Marymount program in history had prepared them to achieve Learning Outcome three.</p>

<b>Outcome Measures</b> <i>Explain how student learning will be measured and indicate whether it is direct or indirect.</i>	<b>Performance Standard</b> <i>Define and explain acceptable level of student performance.</i>	<b>Data Collection</b> <i>Discuss how the data was collected and describe the student population</i>	<b>Analysis</b> <i>1) Describe the analysis process. 2) Present the findings of the analysis including the numbers participating and deemed acceptable.</i>
course requirement of HI 400 History Internship.			

**RUBRIC FOR LEARNING OUTCOME 3 (direct measure)**

**Supervisor Final Internship Evaluation Form:**

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Neutral	Fair	Poor
Attendance and Punctuality	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Follows Directions	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Adheres to Deadlines	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Takes Initiative without Supervision	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>Oral Communication</b>	_ <u>1</u> _____	_ <u>1</u> _____	_____	_____	_____
<b>Written Communication</b>	_ <u>1</u> _____	_ <u>1</u> _____	_____	_____	_____
Ability to Accept Criticism	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>Apply Academic Knowledge To the Workplace</b>	_ <u>1</u> _____	_ <u>1</u> _____	_____	_____	_____
Overall Professionalism Rating	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Overall Performance Rating	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

**Interpretation of Results**

**Analysis and Implications:** *What does this result tell you about the extent to which your students achieved this outcome? What are the strengths and weaknesses that this result highlights, and what are the implications for your curriculum or your program?*

For the direct measure of Learning Outcome 3, both students completing the History Internship in 2019-2020 met or exceeded all three criteria (written communication and oral communication) from the direct measure, for a rating of 100%. Both met or exceeded the third criterion (application of academic knowledge to the workplace) for a rating of 100%.

For the indirect measure, both students reflected that the History Program had met or exceeded the objective of preparing them for application of their academic knowledge to oral and written communication in a professional forum, with one neutral response.

With a positive response from supervisors about our students, and an 100% positive response from our students about the History Program, the History Faculty is satisfied that our Majors' performance has secured handily our program standard for Learning Outcome 3. However, given the limited number of responses we will continue to work to meet the new rating goal of 85% in all outcomes in the future.

Assessment of Learning Outcome 3 for the 2016-2017 indicates that the History Program has properly trained and prepared our Majors with the academic skills and knowledge they need for successful oral and written communication in a professional forum.

**Discuss planned curricular or program improvements for this year based on assessment of outcome:**

For AY2017-2018 the School of Arts and Sciences increased the requirement for hours given to assignments and/or student interaction away from the internship site. The School of Design, Arts, and Humanities will continue this policy for 2018-19. For the history internship, HI400, this requirement was implemented beginning in fall of 2018 with a series of writing assignments including a weekly journal discussing their duties and what they learned, as well as a final 2-3 pages reflective paper on their internship. Interns must also meet with the history internship coordinator regularly to discuss their internship. Finally, the coordinator contacts the intern's on-site supervisor for updates. The writing assignments are designed to measure the skills heretofore only evaluated with the supervisor's final report after the internship had finished. The implementation of these assignments yielded positive results with respect to demonstrating mastery of oral and written communication as well as the application of knowledge to the workplace. As such, they will continue to be part of the internship requirements for History students.

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**Appendices** (please only include items that will help reviewers understand your process – for example, test questions, rubrics, survey questions, more detailed description of assessment measures, summary tables of survey results, etc.)