



and Historiography, the capstone class, always taken in the fall semester of the senior year.

The concentration in the History learning experience is on critical analysis in part because the department is too small to hope to offer comprehensive coverage of anything so broad a discipline intellectually vibrant and culturally relevant to students.

Learning goals are embedded in every class taught by History faculty. Every student is expected to master an increasing level of critical and analytical ability. This expectation is most clearly expressed in the capstone course, Historiography. In a developmental sense, the History Department moves students from survey-

other half history/secondary education majors. All majors must complete 33 credits, with greater fle  
complete at least one course in each of three major fields: U.S., Europe, Non-


**Assessment Methods**

Students are assessed in HI 480, the departmental capstone course, since all history majors must take this course in their senior year. This course contains three major assignments that are used as direct measures of senior level performance.

- (1) a paper written exclusively from primary sources followed by an oral defense at the end of the term;
- (2) a long research paper; and
- (3) a written essay exam.

These three student performances are collected at the conclusion of the HI 480 course and reviewed by two members of the history department using the rubrics below.

goals. The primary source paper is used to assess learning goals 2, 3 and 5. The long research paper is used to assess learning goals 2 and 5. The written essay exam is used to assess learning goals 1 and 4.

**Primary Source Paper**

Student papers that met departmental standards to a high degree were assigned 5 points, those to a moderate degree 3 points, those to an insufficient degree 1 point.

High degree: 3 students      15 points  
 Moderate degree: 7            10 points  
 Insufficient degree: 4        4 points

TOTAL:                    29 points

**Long Research Paper**

Student papers that met departmental standards to a high degree were assigned 5 points, those to a moderate degree 3 points, those to an insufficient degree 1 point.

High degree: 6 students      30 points  
 Moderate degree: 7            21 points  
 Insufficient degree: 1        1 point

TOTAL: 52 points

### **Exam**

Student exams that met departmental standards to a high degree were assigned 5 points, those to a moderate degree 3 points, those to an insufficient degree 1 point.

High degree: 4 students	20 points
Moderate degree: 8 students	24 points
Insufficient degree: 2 students	2 points

TOTAL: 46 points

### **Analysis of Assessment Results**

The data suggests that students performed much better on the long paper and on the exam than on the primary source paper. This could indicate:

1. Students have insufficient experience working with primary sources before they enroll in Historiography.
2. The course is not structured appropriately to promote better performance.

### **Im**

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- \*reflects a fair understanding of a moderate variety of sources, including statistical data
- \*reflects a substantive ability to critically analyze original sources, with some ability to distinguish sources according to their reliability and importance
- \*reflects either an original or derivative point of view, expressed in a relatively clear thesis

Department learning goals are met to an *insufficient degree* when this paper meets the

Department learning goals are met to an *insufficient degree* when this paper meets the following criteria:

- \*inadequately researched, with an incomplete bibliography
- \*unclear and unoriginal thesis, with argument inadequately supported by a narrow and limited range of sources
- \*does not demonstrate an understanding of cause and effect in history
- \*reflects little or no ability to apply critical thought and make distinctions between and among sources
- \*reflects little or no ability to situate specific content in a relevant body of theory
- \*Oral defense reflects little or no ability to express in oral form an understanding of relevant issues and intellectual theories related to the paper

(3) Essay Exam:

Department learning goals are met to a *high degree* when this paper meets the following criteria:

- \*reflects an advanced understanding of comparative models
- \*reflects a clear awareness and understanding of diverse cultural traditions in historical thinking

Department learning goals are met to a *moderate degree* when this paper meets the following criteria:

- \*reflects some understanding of comparative models
- \*reflects some awareness and understanding of diverse cultural traditions in historical thinking

Department learning goals are met to an *insufficient degree* when this paper meets the following criteria:

- \*reflects little or no understanding of comparative models
- \*reflects a limited awareness and understanding of diverse cultural traditions in historical thinking
- \*reflects a derivative or unclear response