

Academic Assessment Report
Department of History
Prepared by Alessandro Brogi, UGSD
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At the end of the Fall semester 2017 and Spring 2018 semester, instructors administered exit surveys to graduating seniors enrolled in all five sections of the HIST 4893 Senior Capstone. Three of those sections were taught by full time faculty, two by Ph.D. instructors ranking at the lecturer level. The document in this appendix is the template questionnaire given to instructors.

As in the past three years, survey questions were designed to assess the undergraduate program's learning outcomes as stated in the 2015 Academic Assessment Plan. This year, the UGS Director also asked all Capstone instructors to provide their own evaluation of the feedback received from students throughout the duration of the seminars. This year's assessment in part benefits from the use of results and methods adopted in the current academic year, based on last year's evaluation of the Spring 2017 surveys. It also recommends further implementation of methods to meet our retention and graduation goals, which fulfill our institution's mission of increasing graduation rates, as stated by the Quality Initiative Proposal of 2014.

The capstone course is designed for seniors and requires them to use the historical knowledge they have gained over the course of their undergraduate experience to more fully demonstrate skills of analysis, synthesis, and integration. They are required to produce a lengthy primary source-based research paper which properly contextualizes the subject matter and deals effectively with differing points of view as expressed in the appropriate historiography.

The Senior Capstone varies in research topical focus from section to section, but each course shares the following activities and promotion of skill sets: the development of a testable research question or thesis, analysis of primary sources, effective written and oral communication, production of a lengthy primary research-based paper.

History majors, by the end of their curriculum, are tested to demonstrate proficiency with critical thinking and writing skills, and with historical research methods designed to support well-argued answers to historical questions utilizing primary and secondary sources

Stated learning outcomes for the B.A. in History (2015 Academic Assessment Plan-History):

- Develop knowledge and skills necessary for careers requiring knowledge of history, critical analysis, and research, including teaching, law, and government
- Allow students to pursue their interest in a particular region, time, period, or culture
- Enhance understanding of the role played by diversity in the shaping of human experience
- Train students to communicate effectively in writing
- Train students to communicate effectively in class discussion
- Ensure that students understand the basic mechanics of historical research, including

location and retrieval of information, correct usage of primary and secondary materials, and proper citation techniques

- Provide future generations of historians with the training necessary to allow them to continue the pursuit of the above goals

Capstone seminars general techniques for B.A. in History (2015 Academic Assessment Plan – History)

- Senior capstone seminar required for all History majors (HIST 4893)
- The Capstone seminar requires majors to conduct original archival research and produce article-length essays (the best of which are published in the *Ozark Historical Review* or occasionally in the *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*)
- Capstone seminars also introduce majors to the philosophy and methodology of the discipline
- Seniors enrolled in the capstone sections have already taken writing-intensive upper-level courses in their fields of specialization
- In some cases, seniors in capstone have also had previous enrollment in discussion-oriented seminars designed to enhance communication skills

In the following pages the rubric utilized by each instructor reflects the learning outcomes expected from a Capstone Seminar. The SSLO stands for “Social Sciences Learning Outcomes.” While officially considered a discipline in the “Humanities,” the craft of History research, analysis, and writing, at these methodological levels, reflects a mix of skills that correspond to methodologies adopted in both the Humanities and the Social Sciences.

Also, in tune with the Undergraduate General Education Curriculum, and fulfilling the requirements and recommendations from the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, the discipline of History has been identified with specific learning indicators and outcomes described as follows – from the proposed revision of the Gen Ed Curriculum of this past Fall 2017:

A) Develop a working knowledge of how scholars and artists think and act in fundamental areas of study

Learning Outcome 3.2: Upon reaching this goal, students will be able to articulate a minimum of three vital concepts of aesthetic, humane, and ethical sensibilities embodied in the humanities.

Learning Indicators for Learning Outcome 3.2:

To be certified as meeting this outcome, a course must incorporate at least three of the five learning indicators. In an approved course, students will

- a. identify fundamental concepts, structures, themes, and principles of the discipline being introduced

- b. analyze texts and other created artifacts using theories and methods of the discipline
- c. produce a reasonable short essay about the material introduced in the course
- d. interpret texts and other created artifacts within multiple historical, intellectual, and cultural contexts
- e. draw connections among cultural achievements of various groups of people of different ethnicities, religious backgrounds, racial origins, and sexual identities

AND

B) Expand diversity awareness, intercultural competency, and global learning

Learning Outcome 4.1: Upon reaching this goal, students will have developed knowledge and abilities aimed at interacting appropriately within intercultural contexts and engaging with complex global systems and issues.

Learning Indicators for Learning Outcome 4.1:

To be certified as meeting this outcome, a course must incorporate at least three of the five learning indicators. In an approved course, students will

- a. examine and interpret an intercultural experience from both one's own and another's worldview.
- b. articulate the essential tenets of a cultural worldview other than one's own through an analysis of its components, including but not limited to history, values, communication styles, politics, economy, and beliefs and practices.
- c. identify and participate in cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication.
- d. identify and analyze significant global challenges and opportunities in the human and natural world.
- e. identify and analyze the historical and/or contemporary interrelationships among multiple global cultures.

Learning Outcome 4.2: Upon reaching this goal, students will have developed familiarity with concepts of diversity in the United States.

Learning Indicators for Learning Outcome 4.2:

To be certified as meeting this outcome, a course must incorporate at least three of the five learning indicators. In an approved course, students will

- a. identify the range of diversity in the United States, including but not limited to age, color, creed, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.
- b. explain the historical and/or contemporary construction of difference (whether cultural, legal, political, or social) through analysis of power structures, privilege, and explicit or implicit prejudice, and their roles in fostering discrimination and inequalities in the United States.
- c. describe the advantages of inclusion by identifying and analyzing notions of inclusivity and pathways (whether cultural, legal, political, or social) for cultivating inclusion at all levels of society.
- d. analyze the historical and/or contemporary development of group agency and assess its role in addressing discrimination and inequalities in the United States.
- e. demonstrate problem-solving and change management skills for achieving social equity.

These are learning outcomes for our General Education classes, and they include our core offerings (US History I and II, World History I and II) in BOTH the Humanities AND the Social Sciences Learning Indicators' groups. By the time the students reach senior level, these learning outcomes are further honed, so that students are able to master all the above learning indicators, adding their ability to synthesize, integrate, and apply knowledge developed throughout the undergraduate years.

The SSLO Rubric used for the Capstone Seminars was thus submitted to each instructor to assess the final research papers, and score them as follows:

Department of History Learning Outcomes Scoring Rubric

Competency	Excellent Mastery	Good Mastery	Some Mastery	Minimal Mastery	No Mastery
Historical Inquiry Detail and Contextualization (SSLO1)	The essay frames a significant historical question that is properly and consciously contextualized, with clear knowledge of the material, mastery of detail and periodization, while also providing a well-learned original insight	The essay frames question and the student makes an effort to explain its significance, with accurate periodization, and minimal flaws in either contextualization or detail. It demonstrates learning adding limited personal insight	The question is not framed clearly, and the student shows limited understanding of context, periodization, or logic. Significant flaws in or neglect of detail. Very limited, or derivative insight backed up by some learning.	No discernible understanding of the historical question. Unclear context and/or periodization. Severe flaws in detail. No personal insight or insight not derived by learning	The essay avoids the question. No information or very scattered information retained
Sources (SSLO2)	Student uses a wide range of sources, from lecture notes to course readings, to other sources and literature, as assigned by the instructor (scholarly databases may be included). All major works on the topic are addressed. Primary sources are clearly referenced	Good use of sources online or on paper. Some of the major works on the topic are missing. Most material is from the reading assignments in class. The distinction between primary and secondary sources is almost consistently clear	Limited use of sources, and all those that are used are from the assigned readings for class. Major works on the topic are missing. The distinction between primary and secondary sources is unclear	Very little evidence that the student checked a sufficient number of sources, primary, secondary, or from databases. Main sources on the topic unknown	No use of sources, or highly inaccurate use of only one or two. No knowledge of the distinction between primary and secondary sources
Critical Evaluation of sources (SSLO3)	Student demonstrates careful reading and thorough assessment of assigned primary sources and secondary literature, placing ideas and conflicting interpretations into perspective. The essay offers an original point of view within the historiographical debate	Demonstrates knowledge and adequate analysis of the historiographical debate, from at least a selected number of sources. An interpretation is offered, though not thoroughly consistent with the analyzed sources	Knowledge and accurate analysis of at least two interpretations. The personal interpretive analysis is weak though.	Little and/or flawed analysis of sources. No interpretive point of view offered	No analysis of sources, or awareness of interpretive differences

<p>Argument and Organization (SSLO4)</p>	<p>The student develops and defends a clear argument, backed by evidence that engages research material, with primary sources also analyzed in an original and intentional way. The essay has a clear introduction, logical passages in argument, and supporting evidence. A conclusion brings everything together, also addressing broad implications</p>	<p>There's an argument, though not always clearly stated. All material is engaged, though the organization of the paper shows some flaws. It may show little evidence of an original interpretation of primary sources. The conclusion is adequate, though it misses some parts of the argument, and does not address broad implications</p>	<p>Little argument, even though the student attempts to make one, which is not followed up throughout the essay. Poor organization or engagement with research material. The conclusion is vague at best, absent at worst</p>	<p>No articulation of an argument. Poor or no knowledge of research material. No discernible organization or conclusion</p>	<p>No argument, no knowledge</p>
<p>Research Techniques (SSLO5)</p>	<p>Student consciously employs verification strategies as needed, demonstrates how research was conducted, and properly annotates all material. The organization is clear, showing how one source is logically followed by the next</p>	<p>Student employs some verification strategies. Demonstration of research and annotations is not always consistent. The organization of sources is adequate though not consistently logical</p>	<p>Little verification of sources. The essay shows little or no evidence of how research was conducted, or distinction among sources. The annotation is poor or missing. The ensuing argument is spotty</p>	<p>No verification of sources. Some sources are cited, but in random way. No annotations. No discernible argument</p>	<p>No sources, no annotations</p>
<p>Writing Style (SSLO6)</p>	<p>Clear thesis statement and argument. Points made in logic sequence. Paragraphs support solid topic sentences. Sentence structure, syntax, grammar and punctuation all excellent. No misuse of words, and correct interpretation of foreign terms. (Optional Plus): Elegance of style and original turns of phrase</p>	<p>Thesis statement may be slightly unclear. Logic flow of arguments. Paragraphs not consistently supporting topic sentences. Very occasional mistakes in structure, syntax, grammar and punctuation. Some words, in English or foreign languages may be misused. Little originality of prose</p>	<p>Thesis is poorly stated. Argument tends to jump around though some points are identifiable. Many paragraphs without topic sentences. Some mistakes in structure, syntax, grammar, and punctuation. Misuse of words. No elegance of style</p>	<p>No discernible thesis. The writing is poor. The argument is fuzzy. Paragraphs lack topic sentences and fail to follow logically. Frequent mistakes in structure, syntax, grammar, and punctuation. Misuse of words. The essay is hard to follow</p>	<p>Shows no thesis, or effort to make one. The essay is full of mistakes and shows little or no knowledge of the mechanics of writing. The essay is hard to follow due to the poor writing</p>

RESULTS:

The results were mixed. In some Capstone sections students performed really well, in others, the SSLO rankings of several of them was in the scores of 3, or even 2, in some categories. Full time faculty has tended to be more rigorous than our graduate instructors in their assessment, and this committee suspects there's a correlation between tenure-track or graduate assistants vs. tenured faculty and the desire/need to receive good evaluations by students.

Simply put, this should not be the case. Neither junior faculty/grad instructors should aim at popularity via easy high grades, nor senior faculty should bring on their expertise to weed out students who may be more meritorious than it appears from these scores (see below, on this point, under "SUGGESTIONS").

Rather than assess the rubric results for each individual class, we draw here some general conclusions on the main/shared trends and problems found in these evaluations.

Students performed well, and in many instances excelled in the SSLO2 (Use of sources) and SSLO3 (critical evaluation of sources)

Scoring only slightly below SSLO2 and SSLO3 was category SSLO5, on Research Techniques. This is a good sign, because the Capstone seminars are mainly meant to be on methodology; content knowledge comes with it, too; but primarily we intend to assess the ability of students to conduct research, using techniques, approaches, and analytical skills that they learned through four years of training in History and other related disciplines.

The most problematic category, on average (though the average was still rather high, between "some" and "good" mastery – or 3.7 scores), was SSLO1, on contextualization. This may be due, as noted, to the approximate knowledge students may have on the given subject of that Capstone section. Students generally select their Capstone seminar based on their schedule; faculty teaches subjects for each section that are in their field of expertise. A student who has mostly focused on US History might then find himself/herself in a seminar on European History. This would place a student at a disadvantage, compared to the "Europeanists," when it comes to proper contextualization and historiographical inquiry.

We should however question if the relative difficulty in contextualizing the specific subject of research might be also due to the students' "narrow" horizons, or even inability to relate the subject to broader trends and issues in History in general.

Overall, students seem to have had relatively few problems with writing style. Sure, there is still an unfortunate occurrence of the "historian in bloom" who considers good, elegant writing a secondary, or even ancillary requirement in the craft of History. We do not aim at forging "poet laureates," but surely the cogency of argument sometimes suffered from poor/approximate syntax, and/or stiff/dry style. In some cases, students even displayed flawed diction, awkward sentence structure, and repetition. *Repetition* is, unfortunately, a frequent occurrence in History papers written by neophytes.

Other problems included the following:

- the heavy reliance by some students on only a select number of sources
- poor bibliography
- formatting and referencing issues.

This last element astonished some instructors, who went over these matters of form several times in class, including the use of Chicago/Turabian citation style, something that History seniors should be familiar with in their last semester.

OTHER ISSUES ENCOUNTERED BY INSTRUCTORS:

The most shared evaluation by our instructors and faculty was simply that non-honors students reach this level of proficiency too late in their academic careers. Quoting Prof. Williams' feedback, "the overall impression that I carried away from [this class] is that the department should be doing certain things with our non-honors history majors earlier than their final year here." Prof. Pierce adds that "more research papers should be required in our 4000 level classes."

Another difficulty encountered: many students were slow to define manageable topics and develop sets of questions about them to guide their research. Professors Pierce and Sonn in particular noted how late in the semester most students had come up with an actual research topic, or even area of interest.

Students then had difficulty identifying the *best* sources for their topics. A couple of faculty members and one lecturer have blamed the heavy reliance of students on the QuickSearch function on our library website.

Re. the topical content vs. methodology, Prof. Sonn had the following, pertinent observation: "I spent the first 7 weeks covering the topic (the Sixties), then three more weeks on how to research and write a paper, during which time they were supposedly doing just that. Perhaps one could start with the nuts and bolts stuff, then move to substantive content. However, if they don't know much about the topic, they still cannot choose a meaningful focus, so I don't know if that would work any better."

Some students showed a low ability to distill an argument from assigned readings and conversing about it. [I myself have been often stunned by the poor quality of oral presentations even by our most distinguished Honors students – could they perhaps benefit from taking one or more classes from our Fulbright College's Communications Department? Or should we train them, early on, in the basics of synthesis, discussion, and compelling oral exposition?]

One faculty member even noted that students' inability to discuss may stem from the simple fact of their "selective," if not even "absent" reading. At the risk of sounding like an "old guard" this fact is pure and simple: current generations of students don't have the same sustained concentration that reading books requires as past generations did; in the new information age,

distilled (by others) information, with breadth and the expense of depth, often precludes the students' ability to perform that process themselves. In History, the reading of many sources does require a knack – or better, sustained training – for reading selectively, with a clear eye toward the relevant passages contained in the source – a process that sometimes online sources do well, but that is far more effective when the reader applies his/her own discerning qualities, and even ability to propose and shape an original argument and thesis from which to operate that distinction/distillation without being arbitrary in the selection.

Speaking of “distillation,” here’s another excellent, if somewhat jaded, quote from one of our faculty members: “it baffles me that anyone who doesn’t like to read, or can’t read would become a history major. We need to make clear to students from their first moments as history majors that the motto around here is ‘we read until we bleed.’”

HIGH MERIT and ACHIEVEMENTS:

All this is not to say that we lack stellar students. About one fourth of the students overall ended with an “A” grade in the class (in some sections, that percentage was as high as 40%), and the papers of at least one or two of them from each section were recommended for publication in our *Ozark Historical Review*.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- 1) A very simple – but feasible? – suggestion came from all instructors, and, based also on my experience, I strongly endorse it: the type of exercise required by the Senior Capstone seminar should come **earlier** in the students’ time here. As a student noted in the exit survey, “if these methodologies [argumentation, research, access to archives, critical reading, contextualization] are important to faculty in Fulbright, they need to communicate that to students early on in their academic career.” Short of placing the Capstone Seminar – as we do for our Honors Methods class – as a mandatory (or strongly recommended) class in their junior year, we should at least offer classes with a methodology component earlier, possibly even in their sophomore year.
- 2) One possible solution – strongly recommended by the Undergraduate Committee - is to **make Perspectives in History (HIST-1003) mandatory** for History majors. This would help students learn early on what a quality source is, whether it is primary or secondary, how to conduct research, how to shape a thesis, and argue it cogently. This will require **increasing the number of sections of HIST Perspectives** from our current one to two at least, perhaps one per semester of their freshmen year.
- 3) Upper level classes should encourage, promote, and tutor students in scholarly colloquy. Class participation must be improved. Our 3000-4000 level classes could have **discussion sessions** with our graduate assistants, or at least dedicate **a block of a few minutes of each lecture to discussion participation**, or, even better, **short oral presentations** made mandatory for each student.

- 4) As also suggested by all instructors, we recommend that **more research papers should be required in our 4000 level classes**. The research pieces may not be as elaborate and extensive as in Capstone seminars, but narrowly-defined research topics, and a limit at 10 pages for a thinkpiece or research paper are recommended.
- 5) More than a suggestion, this is a question: **should the teaching of methodology come before the topical part of the Capstone courses?** The UDGS's opinion is that, yes, students should familiarize themselves with the nuts and bolts of methodology in the first weeks of class. This might also help them come up with feasible research topics and appropriate ways to formulate thesis questions earlier than in the post-fall/spring break period.
- 6) WRITING. We often claim that our majors are trained in research, analytical skills, critical thinking, and excellent proficiency in writing – assets that any employer, and not just the Education profession, will find valuable, and, in some cases, even essential. But how can we have the courage to write letters of recommendation for students who showed to be incapable of even using good prose?

We propose that History faculty dedicate themselves more to critiquing our students writing. Our junior faculty members – we should add – have done a commendable job in **helping students work on their drafts**. We do not suggest faculty to help students re-write drafts lazily written in haste at the last minute. **Enforcement of draft-writing, with examples on how to edit and revise, should be clearly applied in Capstone seminars;** it is strongly encouraged in upper level classes. We cannot demand of faculty to mentor each student in a class of 30+ students, but a clear set of rules on draft writing, with sample and examples, should be applied in each 3000 and 4000 level class in our department.

- 7) CONSISTENCY. The differential between the various Capstone sections begs for an alternative solution: a rigorous process of uniform, consistent evaluation. There will always be differences between demanding and less demanding instructors; but those differences should not be made artificial. Grade inflation is a bad enough affliction that has already diluted the selection process (yes, I am underlining selection) in most Ivy League schools. Can you imagine a student receiving a “C” at Yale or Harvard, even if he/she deserves it? [From my own experience there, I can say categorically that if I should ever have attempted to give a student a “C,” I would have been summoned by the “Inquisition Court of Influential Parents” and, perhaps, the Executive Committee of the Department]. This may cost us a few majors, but surely we should not endorse some students who are inept or unwilling to learn with a B grade.

EXIT SURVEYS RESULTS

Most of the 69 graduating seniors enrolled in the five capstone sections (two in the Fall of 2017 and three in the Spring of 2018) completed the exit surveys. As in all surveys since 2015, this one had only one question with a numerical rating: “On a scale of 1 to 10, how prepared did you feel for the work you did in the capstone based on your previous HIST coursework and why?”

This year the **average rating** was an astounding **8.5**, higher by at least half point compared to the same item from the past four years. Does this result contradict the above findings? Do students overrate their preparation coming into the Capstone Seminar? Or is this score a confirmation that most students benefitted from their previous coursework in HIST classes, and considered the Capstone's large research project as the culmination of an excellent training program? Despite the problems encountered, we should acknowledge the excellent work of mentorship offered by our faculty as well as our graduate instructors. If students evaluations and self-evaluations are so high, and if the department is recognized via their own feedback, and even a **2016 Ferritor Award for Teaching Excellence** in the whole department, then we can rest assured that we provided ample, valuable guidance to our students.

As in the past four years, the Capstone instructors, under recommendation of the UGS Committee, asked students to provide extensive responses, particularly on the questions that addressed their prior training in HIST courses (e.g.: "What could the HIST department do over the course of your academic career to help you prepare better for the capstone?") or the questions about the connection between their HIST degree and their career plans.

Based on the responses, the high scores of the rated question should be qualified. These were common remarks in the responses:

- Limited experience in working with and analyzing primary sources
- Need for specialized advising (from the HIST department) mapping a coherent, progressive sequence of courses
- Lack of experience on oral presentations and communication
- Need for flexibility on research area (social, political, diplomatic, etc.) within each capstone
- Burdensome foreign language requirement for HIST majors (only a few, though, were adamant about this problem)
- A limited understanding of career options outside the teaching profession

Issues most specifically addressed in exit surveys

Reporting students particularly expressed the need to have more training for long research papers in our upper level classes, with the possibility of tutoring through at least two paper drafts. Some went further, recommending a specific course, early in their student career, teaching the fundamentals of research skills and techniques (see our point on our Perspectives class, HIST 1003, above).

As each capstone concentrated on the area of expertise of the respective instructors, some students felt that, due to scheduling, they had to choose the section that did not best fit their geographic, chronological, or especially topical preference. This may explain some of the most disappointing scores on contextualization and historiography, among the SSLOs.

Unlike past surveys, these returns did not feature a recurrent past complaint from students with a preference for courses and themes in US History for the four semester sequence of our foreign language requirement. In fact, there's a notable appreciation by some students of the

possibility that a History degree has given them to study abroad, citing those sessions as one of their most important learning experiences.

The History Department is however changing its program requirements, starting from the Fall of 2019, making the study of a foreign language to a level of intermediate II of proficiency optional for all non-Honors History majors. We predict that only about 20% of our majors will opt for a foreign language starting from that Fall. This decision was made in cooperation with the School of Education and Health Professions of the U. of Arkansas. Their new program for a Bachelor of Arts in Teaching (B.A.T.) will offer opportunities of certification for our majors within a four year program. In order to obtain both a B.A.T. and a major in History, the foreign language requirement would have made it likely for a student to exceed the 120 credit hours minimum required for graduation (currently for a double degree as well).

There has not been a particular distinction, in the students' opinion, between the quality of the capstones taught by our tenured or tenure-track faculty and those taught by our ABD or graduated doctors/instructors. This is further evidence that the HIST Department has continued to attract high performing graduate students, and has done an excellent job in further training them in the early stages of their profession (but see the above point on the differential in evaluations of the final papers between instructors and full time faculty).

More than one third of the polled students reported that they will most likely pursue a teaching career, at the high school or college levels. Law School was a distant second in their professional/school career options. Only a handful expressed an interest in professions, in the public or private sectors, which offer opportunities for the analytical, research skills and thematic knowledge acquired with a History degree.

Some of the measures/changes already undertaken by the History Department:

- Introduction from Fall of 2016 of a topical History Perspective course, taught by faculty, granting 3 credit hours and meeting both a major elective requirement and the perspectives requirement. This course introduces students to the basic research and analytical skills of the historian's craft
- Improving the mentoring of our graduate instructors with the introduction, started in the Fall of 2016, of four large sections (one each) of our core curriculum survey classes taught by faculty with prior teaching awards and staffed with two or three graduate assistants per sections
- The current curriculum agreement between the HIST Department and the Fulbright Advising office provides more flexibility than in the past for course substitutions at the discretion of the UGSD that will enable students to receive appropriate credit transfers from accredited institutions or study abroad programs
- We have encouraged more faculty members to teach the capstone, turning the previous ratio of 2-1 ratio of instructors/faculty for the two semesters into a 1-2 ratio instructors/faculty.
- In coordination with the Fulbright Advising Office we have assisted students with course sequencings that allow the gradual acquisition of research skills, geographic or chronological area expertise.

- Starting from the Fall of 2016, and in cooperation with the Employer Relations Office of Fulbright College, we have provided career mentoring, conveying the applicability of the training, concepts, and skills gained from a History major to careers outside of teaching and archival or museum work
- The Department has also encouraged high impact practices through internships, and improved the existing network of History alumni connected to the Department through Linked-In, which helps us track students' success records after graduation

Conclusion

Survey results show that students have adequate training throughout their History coursework, especially at their upper level, but that further steps need to be taken to improve the students' skills set in all aspects involving research, analysis, written and oral expression. The department is also taking steps to further improve course offerings and the research components in them.

Career mentoring has also improved through our Undergraduate Director's membership in the Fulbright Advisory Board, connecting the advising offices of Fulbright with UGS Directors of most Fulbright Departments.

With the University's Office of Graduation and Retention changing its name into "Office of Student Success," the change has not been just nominal. The new office, working closely with the Fulbright Advisory Board, and other similar board from other UofA colleges, reflects our efforts to improve retention and graduation rates. Newly introduced tutoring programs to UA Cares to the Center for Educational Access have helped our majors. Financial aid opportunities, even in the form of one-time grants of \$1,500-2,000 dollars have helped our students in financial need. We predict that our retention will gradually improve about the 65% mark over the next few years.

5. What suggestions would you make for the future of the History degree program?

6. Other comments on strengths and weaknesses of the History degree program.

7. Do you feel like the history major has prepared you for your intended career? Why or why not?

8. What are your short-term plans (next 2 years)?

9. What are your longer-term plans?

10. Contact address/e-mail after graduation