

College: Fairmount College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Department/Program (s): History

Degree (s) Offered: M.A. in American or European History. B.A. in History, Public History.

Triggers: None

Brief Description of degree programs: The purpose of WSU's Department of History is to illuminate the forces that have shaped our world and to provide a historical perspective for the future. While students may focus on a specific area of concentration, the program introduces them to a variety of classes that assures them a foundation for an integrated liberal education. Combined with courses in other disciplines, the history major prepares students for entrance into a wide variety of career opportunities, including business, government, law, journalism, teaching, communication, and public affairs. The degree programs require the student to possess knowledge of American, European and World History and geography.

Assessment of Learning Outcomes:

1. Each student will achieve a passing score of a "C" or better in all survey and upper division courses, based on each faculty member's grading system, but within the overall grading rubric of the department. Student academic progress folders (with grades included) are reviewed twice a year.
2. Students will research, write, and submit for their file a research paper that addresses the particular topic within the context of comparative analysis and change over time. Students will also prepare and submit a book review. Copies of research papers and book reviews are collected and stored in a locked file.

With the exception of grades and submission of reports/paper, measurements of learning outcomes are not specified. Outcomes are reported as folder reviews and grades.

Placement of Graduates: Minimal information is provided on some BA graduates in that they are employed and go on to pursue graduate work at well-known schools.

Sources of External Support/Faculty Comments: Two small grants were received over the last 3 years. Scholarly productivity has been consistent, despite cuts in faculty travel budgets. Student credit hour production has decreased slightly with a decrease FTE (1.0 FTE since 2005). The report mentioned that the Department has secured generous donations from history Alumni who have entered more lucrative endeavors like business or law.

Conclusions:

Statements/Commendations:

- The History Department appears to be doing a commendable job at performing the functions expected of it by the University despite losing faculty.
- The Department shares a common “threat” to many departments on the Wichita State campus in that it has lost FTEs over the past few years. This situation is not unique to the history department, and will have to be addressed at the Dean’s or Provost’s level, in terms of prioritizing resources (see Dean’s review).

By April 1, 2012 (send to the Office of the Provost):

- Efforts should be made to document that the program review process is a part of a continuous improvement approach involving all departmental faculty.
- The learning outcomes for both programs should be further developed and a revised assessment process needs to be implemented to include the following:
 - Learning Outcomes: Statements that describe what students are expected to know and be able to do by the time of graduation. These relate to the skills, knowledge, and behaviors that students acquire through their program (e.g., graduates will demonstrate advanced writing ability).
 - Assessment Methods: Direct measures used to identify, collect, and prepare data to evaluate the achievement of learning outcomes (e.g., writing project evaluated by a rubric, consider administering the CLA to all seniors).
 - Targets: Expectations of students to achieve the desired outcome to demonstrate program effectiveness (e.g., 90% of students will demonstrate at least the benchmark performance on a writing project).
 - Results: Actual achievement on each measurement (e.g., 94% of the students achieved at least the benchmark performance on the writing project).
 - Analysis: An evaluation that determines the extent to which learning outcomes are being achieved and leads to decisions and actions to improve the program. The analysis and evaluation should align with specific learning outcomes and consider whether the measurement and target remain valid indicators of the learner.
- General education expectations should be further developed (and assessed) for both program majors and non-majors.
 - To measure student learning, assess a representative sample of student assignments (e.g., for writing or critical thinking abilities) using a rubric from selected courses (pre, at the beginning of semester and post, at the end).
 - Utilize processes listed above to evaluate the outcomes.

Prior to the next review in 2014:

- Data should be collected and evaluated in terms of student perceptions about the program. The University implemented an electronic undergraduate and graduate student exit survey in 2011 (by program) for this purpose.
- Data should be collected and evaluated from all program graduates to include salary, employment location, and employment in the field. The University is implementing an alumni survey (by program) for this purpose in 2012.