

May 30, 2007-June 5, 2007

History Program

Learning Outcomes Assessment Project 2006-2007

Preamble

As a discipline that documents and interprets continuity and change through time, California State University Channel Islands' History Program prepares students to search into the human experience, as well as to communicate and analyze historical interpretations and ideas, verbally and in the written form. An emphasis of the program is to examine events from local (i.e., the West Coast Region and North America) and global perspectives. In this regard, a defining aspect of the History Program consists of a cutting-edge series of courses that emphasize the United States' relationship with the Pacific Rim, encompassing the Americas, the Pacific Islands, and Asia.

In support of the University's commitment to an interdisciplinary education, the History Program affords students the opportunity to integrate into their plan of study cross-listed history courses as well subjects outside the discipline to be utilized as part of their electives. Furthermore, the History Program promotes community-based applied research by placing student interns within public, private, and non-profit institutions as part of its Capstone Course.

History Program Student Learning Outcomes

Students graduating with a B.A. in History should possess a:

- good understanding and knowledge of the history of North America.
- good understanding and knowledge of global history in other regions of the world.
- good knowledge and problem-solving skills in analyzing contemporary and historical events.
- good communication skills in oral and written forms.
- good skills in historical research, analysis, and presentations.

For the 2006-2007 AY, the History Program selected the following two lynchpin Learning Outcomes for assessment:

- good understanding and knowledge of the history of North America.
- good understanding and knowledge of global history in other regions of the world.

These Learning Outcomes were assessed through the evaluation of four upper-division courses. For the assessment of the "*good understanding and knowledge of the history of North America*" Learning Outcome, the two courses chosen exist within a total of 16 allowed to fulfill 9-12 required units for the North America category of the major. They are:

HIST 349 History of Business and Economics in North America

and

HIST 350 Chicano History and Culture

For the assessment of the Learning Outcome of the “*good understanding and knowledge of global history in other regions of the world*” the two courses selected exist within a total of 8 allowed to fulfill 6 units required for the Thematic History category of the major. They are:

HIST 365 Themes in World History

and

HIST 413 World Religions and Classical Philosophy

HIST 365 can also fulfill unit requirements in the World History category for the major.

Course Summaries

HIST 349 History of Business and Economics in North America is an upper division interdisciplinary general education course fulfilling requirements within category D for majors and non-majors. The course is designed to study the systematic economic development of Canada, Mexico, and the United States since the colonial period. Ten final exam essays were randomly collected for this assessment according to the attached rubrics.

The required readings for the HIST 349 provide students with an excellent and comprehensive understanding and knowledge of the history and economics of North America. The books required are:

- Marc Egnal’s *Divergent Paths: How Culture and Institutions Have Shaped North American Growth* (1996)
- Alfred D. Chandler’s *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (1999)
- Thomas O’Brien’s *The Century of U.S. Capitalism in Latin America* (1999)
- Jeffrey L. Bortz and Stephen Haber’s *The Mexican Economy, 1870-1930: Essays on the Economic History of Institutions, Revolution, and Growth* (2002)

To engage students comprehensively and in-depth with the required literature listed above, the course requires students to create and submit discussion questions for each week’s readings. Three, four-page essays are also required of students that “engage comparatively” the assigned reading material and information presented during lecture. Furthermore, unannounced quizzes are periodically implemented to encourage students to reflect upon the readings. Similarly, map quizzes are conducted to reinforce the visual conceptualization of economic developments in the North American region of the globe. These exercises in addition to the exams and group research projects promote the *good understanding and knowledge of North American history*.

HIST 350 Chicano History and Culture examines the history of Mexican Americans from the colonial era to the 1980s. The multidimensional culture of Mexican American is studied largely in relation to the westward economic and political expansion of the United States. For the cultural component of the course, students are exposed to the music, and literature of Chicanos. Ten final exam essays were randomly collected for this assessment following the attached rubrics.

The required readings for HIST 350 provide students with an excellent and comprehensive understanding and knowledge of the history of North America, specifically in Mexico and the United States Southwest. The books required for the course are:

- Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands=La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987)
- Rudolfo Anaya's *Bless Me, Ultima* (1972)
- Michele Serros' *Chicana Falsa, and other Stories of death, identity, and Oxnard* (1993)
- Blackboard Electronic Coursepack Reader

In addition to the short answer final exam reviewed for this assessment, student knowledge and understanding of the course material is evaluated at mid-semester. Students were also required to submit regularly analytical reflections papers on the assigned readings as well as present information before the class on significant figures and organizations informing a greater appreciation for Chicano history and culture. In addition to the standard lecture format, the course utilized the Socratic Method in small student groups and class discussion to review the subject matter. These activities promote the *good understanding and knowledge of North American history*.

HIST 365 Themes in World History fulfills general education requirements within category D. The course for the fall 2006 semester was designed to examine the migration and interaction of societies from a world systems approach. This assessment reviewed the final project portfolios of three student groups (ranging from 1 to 8 members in size) detailing in an interdisciplinary manner the migration and development of civilizations in world history.

The required readings for HIST 365 provide students with an outstanding and inclusive understanding and knowledge of global human migration patterns. The books required are:

- Patrick Manning's *Migration in World History* (2005)
- Brian M. Fagan's *The Great Journey: The Peopling of Ancient America* (2003)
- Michael Gomez's *Reversing Sail: A History of the African Diaspora* (2005)
- Allan Levine's *Scattered Among the Peoples* (2002)
- Ritu Menon and Kamla Bhasin's *Borders & Boundaries: Women in India's Partition* (1998)

To support the comprehensive and in-depth study of the required readings listed above, the course assigns several reflective student writing assignments. The inculcation of information and the instilling of a *good understanding and knowledge of global history* outside of North America are also reinforced by weekly collaborative in-class student activities.

HIST 413 World Religions and Classical Philosophy fulfills general education requirements in category D and comparatively studies major religions (i.e., Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism) and classical philosophies (e.g., of Augustine, Confucius, and Plato) of the ancient world. The course evaluates human conceptualizations of the universe, religion, the natural world, as well as society. By doing so, it connects these world views to the creation of cultural institutions, economic

systems, and government. For the purposes of this assessment, the take home final exam was evaluated by the attached rubric.

The required readings for the HIST 413 provide students with a representative and critical foundation for obtaining good historical knowledge and understanding of the major religions and philosophies of the ancient world. The books required are:

- Huston Smith's *The World's Religions* (1991)
- *The Dhammapada* (1973)
- *The Upanishads* (1965)
- Plato's *The Republic* (2003)
- Apuleius' *The Golden Ass* (1995)
- Electronic Coursepack Reader

To promote active engagement and reflection upon the material assigned, the course requires that students regularly memorialize their learning. In addition, the course calls for students to complete a research paper on a topic of their own choosing and approved by the instructor. A mid-term and final are also administered. And as with all the courses reviewed for this Learning Outcomes assessment project and most, if not all, courses within the History Program, students are rewarded for their participation in class activities and discussion. As a result, this course successfully advances a *good understanding and knowledge of global history* outside of North America.

Data and Analysis

In addition to the assessment of the required readings, activities, and assignments detailed above, student final exams and a student group portfolio research project for each course were assessed individually and independent of each other. The findings from each of these assessments were completed to discover how well the program is educating students in relation to the History Program Learning Outcomes:

- good understanding and knowledge of the history of North America.
- good understanding and knowledge of global history in other regions of the world.

HIST 349 History of Business and Economics in North America

For rubric "A" assessing the *understanding* of the history of North America, the average score in HIST 349 History of Business and Economics in North America was 4.2 (out of a 5 point scale). The final exam assessed consisted of two sections. The first required that students provide a paragraph detailing the significance of ten terms out of a list of fifteen. The second half of the final allowed student to select one problem out [of] three provided to write an essay within a one hour span of time. The three questions for this section asked students to write on either the role of labor, capital, or government in the development of North American economies during the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. The format and directions for the final successfully promoted the development of student essays indicating a good understanding of the history of business and economics in Canada, the United States, and Mexico.

For rubric “B” assessing the *knowledge* of the history of North America, the average score was 4.2 (out of 5 point scale). The sample of exams illustrated that students learned good information relating to the goals and objectives of the course. This was evidenced by the students’ provision of specific examples and references in their writing in the substantiation of general statements.

HIST 350 Chicano History and Culture

For rubric “A” assessing the *understanding* of the history of North America, the average score in HIST 350 Chicano History and Culture was 3.45 (out of a 5 point scale). The final exam consisted of ten short answer problems in which students were instructed to devote approximately ten minutes of writing. Prior to the exam, a student based review of the material since the mid-term took place. This discussion informed the creation of the exam. A draft of the exam was electronically posted approximately one week before the scheduled final. Unlike the mid-term that covered material examining the civilizations in the Americas prior to European contact and the influences of Spain up to 1821, Mexico to 1848, and the United States after 1848, the final exam focused on issues relating to the history and culture of Chicanos in the United States since 1900.

For rubric “B” assessing the learning outcome of *knowledge* of the history of North America, the average score was 3.4 (out of 5 point scale). The sample of exams illustrated that information learned by students relating to the goals and objectives of the course ranged from fair to good. Within the exams reviewed, some students provided highly detailed, analytical responses while others wrote in a general manner with limited examples and historical evidence.

Hist 365 Themes In World History

For rubric “A” assessing the *understanding* of global history in other regions of the world, the average score in HIST 365 Themes In World History was 3.75 (out of a 5 point scale). The central focus of the research and writing for several group portfolios within the random sample was on civilizations in North America. In this regard, the Learning Outcome for World History courses call for a “*good understanding of global history in other regions of the world*” outside of North America. Nonetheless, the required reports as a whole provided analyses demonstrating an *understanding* of regional topic in relation to historic global themes of migration in a fair to good manner.

For rubric B assessing the *knowledge* of global history in other regions of the world, the average score was 3.88 (out of 5 point scale). As detailed above, the central focus of the research and writing for many of the group portfolios reviewed centered on civilizations in North America. The reports also integrated specific detail in the research and writing of the projects in a manner that ranged from fair to good, demonstrating substantive *knowledge* of global migration patterns.

HIST 413 World Religions and Classical Philosophy

For rubric “A” assessing the *understanding* of ancient global religions and classical philosophies, the average score in HIST 413 World Religions and Classical Philosophy was 3.75 (out of a 5 point scale). The final exam for this course was a take home. It required students to select a question from a list of three to respond to within a span of five to six pages. The content of the writing for this assignment was drawn from the assigned readings. One problem, for example, asked students to consider the experiences of religious groups viewed as subaltern to a more dominant faith. Another questioned **[was how]** how varying empires adopted a specific religion to legitimize their own hegemony. And the third problem asked students to compare the rise and transformation of two major religions. As a whole, the sample of exams effectively summarized an understanding of the importance of major religions and

classical philosophies. Embedded complexities within issues related to the subject material were highlighted by several students.

For rubric “B” assessing the *knowledge* of the history of ancient global religions and classical philosophies, the average score in HIST 413 World Religions and Classical Philosophy was 3.75 (out of a 5 point scale). The sample of exams illustrated a superb balance between description and an effort to analyze information. Indeed, the structure and administration of the final exam as a take home promoted reflective analysis.

Conclusion

The assignments and activities detailed in the course syllabi and the sample of exams and group research portfolios for HIST 349, 350, 365, and 413 indicate that students within the History Program are obtaining both good knowledge and a good understanding of the history of North America and that of civilizations in other regions of the world. This is accomplished through varying pedagogical approaches. For example, the assigned books and readings listed within all the syllabi evidence seminal works in each field of history as well as include current publications allowing students to appreciate the foundations of historical knowledge and its evolution. The activities promoting engagement by way of class discussion and collaboration via Learning Communities in and out of the classroom testify to how the Learning Outcomes under this assessment are being supported, achieved, and instilled in students. Indeed, HIST 365 illustrates how the pedagogy of collaborative, team-based research is being effectively employed to track global migrations via online research and the integration of individual student findings that are interdisciplinary in character. The excellent idea of having students periodically summarize the material covered in the readings and lecture of HIST 349 also verifies that the Learning Outcomes of the program are being achieved. Similarly, the take home final of HIST 413 and the exam questions provided in advance of the scheduled final for HIST 350 ensure that students are engaging the material in a deliberative manner.

Another strong point of the courses within this assessment is that they are integrative of knowledge and approaches outside the discipline of History. By their very nature and design, this is achieved in HIST 349 and 413. HIST 365, although not required, encourages students in their research portfolio projects to investigate global migration in conjunction to the literature within the particular disciplines of anthropology, archaeology, and geography. HIST 350, on the other hand, integrates the use of music, the appreciation of poetry, and the examination of literary theory to promote an enhanced understanding and knowledge of the history and culture of Chicanos.

Recommendations for the Program

There is essentially one recommendation for the History Program. This is that courses in World History create assignments and exercises that focus primarily on global histories within regions other than North America. This will ensure that students in the History Program learn in-depth about civilizations in a truly global manner. Otherwise, students may reflex to viewing world history solely from a North American, if not a United States, perspective.

Another recommendation entails somehow guiding instructors who teach United States history to find ways to integrate the influence and importance of Canada or Mexico when appropriate. This recommendation is provided in relation to HIST 350 Chicano History and Culture, particularly, and in relation to Canada. Although the course does discuss the material in relation to the mutual influence of Mexico and the United States no connection is made to the possible impact of Canada on the

experience of Chicanos or vice-versa. This is important for two reasons: 1. Canada is a nation that lies within the continent of North America and 2. It is a signatory of the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement.

To reinforce and advance the Learning Objectives assessed by the program to this point, entailing:

- good understanding and knowledge of the history of North America.
- good understanding and knowledge of global history in other regions of the world.
- good communication skills in oral and written forms.
- good skills in historical research, analysis, and presentations.

and from the review of the syllabi and course assignments within HIST 280 The Historian's Craft, HIST 491 Historiography during the fall 2006 semester and that of HIST 349 History of Business and Economics in North America, HIST 350 Chicano History and Culture, HIST 365 Themes in World History, and HIST 413 World Religions and Classical Philosophy during the spring of 2007, it is recommended that the History Program seek internal or external funding for a programmatic retreat to discuss strategies on how to complement as well as build upon the Learning Outcomes successfully achieved within these courses and others at the lower and upper division level. In this retreat, the History Program can discuss, among other items, how it can utilize existing resources of the university to further advance its Learning Outcomes. For example, in this proposed retreat the program could not only familiarize itself with what is currently being accomplished by the History faculty in respect to the above courses as well as others, but also investigate how the University Writing Center, the Center for Integrative and Interdisciplinary Studies, and the Multicultural, Women's & Gender Student Center assists or can assist in further advancing the History Program's Learning Outcomes.

References

Course Descriptions:

HIST 349 HISTORY OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS IN NORTH AMERICA (3)

Three hours of lecture per week

Examines the growth and development of the economies of North America since colonial times. Addresses social, ethical, economic and management issues during the development of Canada, the United States, and Mexico. Analyzes the business principles underlying the growth and development of the economies.

Same as ECON 349, BUS 349

GenEd: D, Interdisciplinary

HIST 350 CHICANO HISTORY AND CULTURE (3)

Three hours lecture per week

Examines the settlement and culture of Mexicanos in the United States to the present. Particular attention is given to the relationship of Mexicanos to the political and economic institutions of the United States.

HIST 365 THEMES IN WORLD HISTORY (3)

Three hours lecture per week

Explores the major trends in global approaches to history. These include anthropological, diaspora, environmental, and world systems approaches.

GenEd: D

HIST 413 WORLD RELIGIONS AND CLASSICAL PHILOSOPHY (3)

Three hours lecture per week

Prerequisite: ENGL 330

This course studies and compares some major religions and philosophical schools in the ancient world. It examines how different societies and peoples have formed their basic assumptions concerning the universe, faith, human nature and society, and how those fundamental assumptions have affected their chosen modes of thinking, ways of life, organizations of society, forms of government, and approaches to knowledge.

GenEd: D

Evaluation Criteria of History North America

CSUCI History Program

Learning Outcomes Assessment Project AY 2006-07

Instructional Outcomes	Score
A. Good understanding of the history of North America	
B. Good knowledge of the history of North America	

Scoring Criteria:

1. Inadequate.
 - A. The final activity fails to demonstrate an understanding of historical North American themes within the assignment.
 - B. Final activity does not engage in historical analysis and demonstrates inadequate knowledge of the history of North America.
2. Poor.
 - A. Final activity demonstrates a superficial understanding of historical themes around North America.
 - B. Final activity summarizes the topic. Knowledge of the history of North America is minimal or nonexistent.
3. Fair.
 - A. Final activity conveys basic understanding of North American historical themes.
 - B. Final activity makes an attempt to analyze North American historical events and processes, and demonstrates an acceptable balance between description and analysis.
4. Good.
 - A. Final activity details a firm understanding of North American historical themes.
 - B. Historical analysis may not be well-developed, or be well-integrated, but the final activity demonstrates an acceptable level of knowledge of North American historical events and processes as well as knowledge of global history theory, interpretations, and/or perspectives.
5. Very Good.
 - A. Final activity effectively shows a complex understanding of North American history themes and compares the work of historians.
 - B. Final activity analytically integrates knowledge of North American historical events and processes with knowledge of North American history theory, interpretations and/or perspectives.

_____ Evaluator Initials and Date _____

Evaluation Criteria of World History Learning Outcomes

CSUCI History Program

Learning Outcomes Assessment Project AY 2006-07

Instructional Outcomes	Score
A. Good understanding of global history in other regions of the world	
B. Good knowledge of global history in other regions of the world.	

Scoring Criteria:

1. Inadequate.
 - A. The final activity fails to demonstrate an understanding of the global historical themes within the assignment.
 - B. Final activity does not engage in historical analysis and demonstrates inadequate knowledge of world history.
2. Poor.
 - A. Final activity demonstrates a superficial understanding of historical themes around the globe.
 - B. Final activity summarizes the topic. Knowledge of world history is minimal or nonexistent.
3. Fair.
 - A. Final activity conveys basic understanding of global historical themes.
 - B. Final activity makes an attempt to analyze world historical events and processes, and demonstrates an acceptable balance between description and analysis.
4. Good.
 - A. Final activity details a firm understanding of global historical themes.
 - B. Historical analysis may not be well-developed, or be well-integrated, but the final activity demonstrates an acceptable level of knowledge of world historical events and processes as well as knowledge of global history theory, interpretations, and/or perspectives.
5. Very Good.
 - A. Final activity effectively shows a complex understanding of global history themes and compares the work of historians.
 - B. Final activity analytically integrates knowledge of world historical events and processes with knowledge of global history theory, interpretations and/or perspectives.

_____ Evaluator Initials and Date _____