Assessment Plan
November 16, 2011

B.A./B.S. in History

1. Student Learning Objectives

I. Identify and interpret primary sources that are instructive about the past
   A. explain the difference between a primary source and a secondary source
   B. ask appropriate questions about primary sources
   C. demonstrate analytical skills and thoughtfulness in interpretation of
      primary sources

II. Use libraries, databases, reference works, and other research resources
   A. locate and check out scholarly history books from the library
   B. navigate information databases on library website
   C. utilize interlibrary loan and information delivery services
   D. work effectively with archival and manuscript sources

III. Read works of history not just for content but also for argument, historiographical
     context, and perspective
    A. identify historical questions and arguments of secondary sources
    B. demonstrate familiarity with the historiography (published scholarship) of
       fields of study
    C. write book reviews, annotated bibliographies, and historiographical essays

IV. Synthesize and communicate information about the past in clear, persuasive prose
     and speech
    A. identify stylistic and grammatical errors and edit and revise own writing
    B. edit and critique others’ writing
    C. construct well-organized essays
    D. practice public speaking, discussion leadership, and argument
    E. communicate history to the public

V. Demonstrate historical imagination through original research
   A. produce a full-length research paper on a significant, original historical
      topic
   B. share research findings with various audiences

VI. Demonstrate global awareness and awareness of modern and pre-modern societies
    A. Take broad range of courses on different time periods, countries, and
       regions
B. Integrate knowledge acquired from various classes into comparative perspective

2. Methods

**HIST 495 Capstone.** Objectives I-V are addressed in the capstone course HIST 495, Senior Thesis, with the production of a major, original research paper. Students in 495 are required to gather and analyze primary sources, use a wide variety of library and archival resources, master a body of historiography, propose an original, significant topic, pose appropriate historical questions about the topic, write clearly and well, edit their own work, and critique other students’ work. The final product, a full-length research paper that aspires to professional quality, is assessed by the course instructor. The best 495 papers are also recognized with the department’s annual 495 prize. The next step in the department’s assessment plan (see below) will be to apply a standard rubric of criteria for 495 papers based on the above objectives, and collect the resulting outcomes data from instructors.

**Senior Exit Survey.** Graduating History majors answer 23 specific questions and 2 open-ended questions about the program, including whether their studies helped them prepare for their profession, understand the world, and improve reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. Results are tabulated by the Assistant to the Undergraduate Director and used by the Undergraduate Committee to evaluate the program and recommend improvements.

**Student Representation.** At least one undergraduate student serves on the department’s Undergraduate Committee. Student representatives are nominated by faculty and appointed by the Director of Undergraduate Studies. The representative shares with the committee student concerns and levels of satisfaction with the program.

**Data Collection.** The Director of Undergraduate Studies and the Assistant Chair maintain and assess numerical data, such as the number of majors and minors, number of graduates, class sizes, gender ratios, and course enrollments.