

Deep Learning

Disciplinary Norms and the Practice of Assessment

Or

How we learned to stop worrying and accept
assessment

Original PLOs

- Recognize the processes by which societies, cultures, and institutions change over time
- Describe particular historical developments and explain their wider historical context
- Critically read, analyze, and synthesize primary and secondary sources
- Use methods of narrative and analysis appropriately for communicating historical phenomena
- Identify the various contexts that shape the construction and use of historical sources and knowledge.

Assessment tool

- Everyone reading a sample of capstone essays (25-35 pp.)
- Focus on one outcome

History Assessment Meeting

This has nothing to do with our program

We're not learning anything!

This is BS



History Assessment Meeting



Why?

We were assessing one outcome that we could not separate from others.

Response to our Assessment Reports

Us

- This is not useful
- It does not measure what we value
- It is disconnected from our teaching

Them

- Not a large enough sample size
- No norming
- Blah Blah Blah
- [What we heard: we are “gathering data about how effectively we gather data” and you don’t give good data!]

2012

REVOLUTION!!!



What do we really care about?

- Do you understand that social arrangements in any time and place are socially constructed
- Do you understand that a source written at any time in the past or present represents the concerns of its time place and authorship
- Do you know that ANY book you read has a point of view and CANNOT tell the whole story. There is no such thing as an “unbiased” course.
- All societies have power relations but these are never solid
- Do you know what a historical question is
- Do you know that history is a dialogue with the past
- Do you understand that writings objects and artifacts allow us to open up // offer glimpses of thoughts, beliefs and practices
- Core of history major is teaching you to use these pieces of the past to understand or explain
- There is always dynamic between change and continuity
- We care about text and context HISTORICAL CONTEXTUALIZATION

Or...

History is really interesting and fun and
hard and important

What do we want to know?

- Range of student work
- How to help students put skills together
- Integration of PLOs, not separation

Revision of PLOs

- Use [AHA Tuning Project](#) as guide
- Four big categories
- Sub-questions in each
- So now. . .

- **Historical Knowledge**
 - Place particular events in broader historical contexts, including broad patterns of historical change, structures and representations of power, and forms of identity.
 - Analyze change over time.
 - Explain how events of the past have influenced the present.
- **Critical Thinking**
 - Analyze primary sources
 - Assess the relationship between historical contexts and events, ideas and processes.
 - Identify and summarize an author's argument.
 - Identify points of agreement and disagreement among conflicting interpretations of the past.
 - Construct a well-developed thesis and a persuasive argument.
- **Research Skills**
 - Use the library, relevant databases and indexes, and the Internet to identify and locate sources.
 - Develop bibliographies of primary and secondary sources.
 - Master conventions for citations and bibliographies.
 - Produce an original research paper (20-page minimum) that analyzes primary and secondary sources.
- **Communication**
 - Organize an analytical essay that sustains an argument over the entire length of the paper.
 - Present information in lucid, grammatically correct prose.
 - Construct paragraphs with effective topic sentences.
 - Make a well-organized and clear oral presentation.

Assessment Process

- Read capstone essays
- Analyze integration of PLOs
- Reflective essays
- Discuss strengths and weaknesses
- Reflect on pedagogical strategies



Assessment connected to our work



Teaching is central

Assessment tied to Disciplinary Norms

Assessment as practice often draws on social science methods

As a humanities program, we draw on humanities methods

AND

We're considered a model!

What we've learned

- Useful structure for analyzing what is working
- Clear focus on alignment of skills through program
- Strengthening pedagogy, learning from each other

Major always in process