

- II. **Program Learning Outcomes:** A description of what you intend for students to know (cognitive), think/feel (affective), or do (psychomotor), when they have completed your degree program. A suggested manageable number of outcomes should be in the range of five to ten. Describe Program Learning Outcomes review activities.*

The Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) program learning outcomes are under review but no changes have been approved at this time. Please refer to the section on the LAS degrees for more information on the review process.

a. Program Learning Outcomes

There are five Liberal Arts and Science program learning outcomes for the AA and AS Degrees in the Division of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The History 111-113 sequence supports these:

Outcome I – Critical Thinking/Problem Solving

Students should have the ability to think logically and problem solve using analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

Outcome II – Global Awareness

Students should recognize and articulate an understanding of the increasing interdependence of world cultures and their consequences.

Outcome III – Group Participation/Social Interaction

Students should learn to achieve group goals in a variety of social contexts.

Outcome IV – Professional Effectiveness

Students should demonstrate responsibility and accountability in accomplishing goals.

Outcome V – Communication

Students should be able to communicate effectively in a variety of ways with varied audiences.

b. End-of-sequence Learning Outcomes

The end-of-sequence learning outcomes for HIS 111-113 are:

- Describe specified Western political, social, cultural and economic institutions from the Congress of Vienna to the present.
- Evaluate specified historical interpretations of these institutions and developments.
- Analyze specific historical interpretations through a class-developed set of criteria.

Each course in the History sequence has standard objectives which all faculty use (see above).

- III. **Assessment Method(s):** A measurable indicator of success in attaining the stated learning outcome(s). The methodology should be both reliable and valid. Please describe in detail.

- a. Formative Assessment Method(s) and Description: a measurable indicator of student in-progress success in attaining the stated learning outcome(s).

Writing activities are a major formative means of assessing student progress in the HIS 111, 112, 113 sequence. Each instructor must have a minimum of half of the final grade based on writing assignments. A major emphasis is placed on writing and pre-writing assignments throughout the Western Civilization sequence. Additionally, issues related to the proper use and citation of references is a part of the curriculum content reinforced in the HIS courses. Currently no writing assessment tool is used by all members of the faculty.

Topics to be covered for each course (HIS 111, 112, 113) are listed in the master syllabi. Since the courses do not have to be taken in sequence, the instructors can make no assumption of knowledge from any of the other courses. All instructors construct their own exams to determine the extent of their students' learning.

Students enrolled in full-time-instructor-taught sections of HIS 113 in Spring Term write a critical essay set up and assigned by the department faculty to demonstrate the student's ability to think and write critically utilizing the five program learning outcomes of the sequence. The essay emerges from the study of a specific packet of primary source material. The packet contains background information about the topic, a list of documents that must be used as references, guidelines for the critical essay, and a specific topic on which they must write. The essay forms a part of the student's final grade as determined by the specific instructor. The essays are assessed according to predetermined criteria. The results of the assessment are then tabulated to determine departmental norms. All instructors receive the list of department norms with which they compare their own.

The faculty have utilized a standardized assessment rubric in the past to track the student progress toward the program outcomes. In the past critical essays were evaluated by the faculty using a standard grid and the agreed upon criteria. The criteria were clearly defined and a rating of 1 to 4 was used to rate each student's level of acquisition of the learning outcomes. Each student received his/her paper with comments from the instructor.

The critical essay requirement was developed in 1993. The activity is completed every year and reported to the faculty, LAS Division Dean, department Chair and the assessment coordinator. Faculty completed an analysis of all HIS 113 student ratings. The analysis points out strengths and weaknesses relative to student acquisition of the specified learning outcomes.

The faculty also receives informal student feedback. Faculty from neighboring four-year institutions occasionally provide information about the performance of SCC graduates who have completed the HIS sequence.

- b. Summative Assessment Method(s) and Description: a measurable indicator of end-of-program success in attaining the stated program learning outcome(s).

This section is not applicable to end-of-sequence assessment in Liberal Arts and Sciences. Refer to the section on summative assessment of the program learning outcomes for liberal Arts and Sciences.

IV. **Results:** A description of the actual results of overall student performance gathered from the assessment(s). (see III.a.)

Informal feedback from transfer students indicate they compete very well with students at four-year institutions. In addition, faculty from four-year institutions have expressed a high level of satisfaction with SCC students who transfer to their institution.

Commitment to the practice of assessment has been lost in recent years for four reasons. First, the process of assessing students was flawed in so far as students taking 113 may or may not be near the end of their sequence. Essentially, students being assessed could be taking HIS 113 at the beginning, middle or end of their coursework. Meaningful comparisons across years seemed fruitless. Second, assessment practices from 1993 to 1995 revealed a total of four History majors actually participated in the program assessment. Third, a lack of feedback from the administration led faculty to conclude the effort was no longer valued. Finally, the resulting knowledge gained from this assessment effort was so ambiguous that it did not justify the considerable time commitment required to complete the assessments.

V. **Analysis/Actions:** From analysis of your summative assessment results, do you plan to or have you made any adjustments to your program learning outcomes, methodologies, curriculum, etc.? If yes, describe. If no, explain.

The practice of using critical essays for assessment purposes has been dropped for reasons mentioned above.

Alternative methods of more meaningful assessment are under consideration.

Faculty remain in close contact with the faculty at Wright State University ensuring the ability to quickly adjust course offerings to meet the change in demand anticipated from the proposed curriculum requirements at WSU.

The faculty have noticed a change in student preparedness for college level work. Fewer students appear to have familiarity with historical issues. This leads to a need to use more time reviewing elementary details rather than addressing larger, more philosophical issues.

VI. **General Education:** Are you using any tool(s) to assess any of the three primary general education outcomes * (communication, thinking, values/citizenship)? If so, describe.

- a. Where within the major do you assess written communication? Describe the assessment method(s) used. Describe assessment results if available.

Written communication skills are emphasized in the Western Civilization sequence through required writing assignments. These assignments involve very specific expectations including the use of appropriate citation and format guidelines. Nearly

fifty percent of a student's grade on the written project reflects their writing proficiency.

- b. Where within the major do you assess oral communication? Describe the assessment method(s) used. Describe assessment results if available.

Class discussion is required of all students which serves as a means of reinforcing oral communication skills. No tool is currently used to assess oral skills.

- c. Where within the major do you assess thinking? Thinking might include inventing new problems, seeing relationships and/or implications, respecting other approaches, demonstrating clarity and/or integrity, or recognizing assumptions. Describe the assessment method(s) used. Describe assessment results if available.

Thinking and problem-solving skills are stressed through discussions and interactions as well as through use of the essay questions. There is a natural connection between one's ability to think and success in the Western Civilization sequence.

Classes are being re-structured for "less lecture, more reading" to allow more class time for analysis of events.

- d. Where within the major do you assess values/citizenship/community? These activities might include behaviors, perspective, awareness, responsibility, teamwork, ethical/professional standards, and service learning or community participation. Describe the assessment method(s) used. Describe assessment results if available.

Values/citizenship is stressed through the discussion of basic historical topics such as the development of liberalism and the development of constitutionalism.

Faculty in HIS 111-112-113 help students to value these concepts: human rights and dignity, democratic systems and freedom of speech. Through the study of Western Civilization student learners come to an appreciation of others and a deeper understanding of self and others.

- e. Computer and information literacy:

Students must type or word process all papers for these courses. Consequently, basic computer skills are required. Additionally, students need to be able to apply information literacy skills as they locate information, analyze the appropriateness of the information they find, interpret the information and incorporate that information into a written essay. Assignments require students to utilize and cite a minimum of six primary source documents. Students are cautioned against plagiarism but no effort, beyond mere observation, is made to check for proper source citation or avoidance of either global or incremental plagiarism.

- * Note: The oral communication checklist and the written communication checklist developed by the General Education Committee were adopted for college-wide use during the 1997-98 academic year by Academic Council. Thinking Guidelines developed by the General Education Committee are being piloted by faculty during the 1998-99 academic year.