

ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

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Evidence to Support Achievement of Student Learning

As noted in the summary of evidence below, the History MA program had a large number of students graduating during the 2015-2016 academic year. There was a total of eight (8) students who completed the History MA program in 2015-2016, with four (4) students completing theses and the MA Thesis option in the program and another four (4) student completing Master's essays and exams and the Capstone option in the program.

In addition, we conducted a survey of recent History MA alums in the Fall 2015 semester, and the results from that survey indicate some significant achievements and evidence of student learning in the program. For example, graduates from the MA program who responded to the recent survey all (100% of respondents) noted that the graduate program continued to influence them in making an effective written or oral argument and analyzing the validity of an author's argument from the evidence they present, while 90% noted that the graduate program continued to influence their understanding of the impact of the past in current world events, their recognition of personal biases in academic and popular writing, and their analysis of books, articles, documentaries, films with attention to the author's thesis and intent. In addition, graduates from the MA program overwhelmingly noted that the CSU History program was either effective or very effective in shaping them as an advanced scholar in all twelve (12) separate areas measured. The responses from the survey of recent alums as well as the large number of graduates during the 2015-2016 academic year demonstrates that students in the History MA program are both completing the degree program and in doing so learning significant skills and becoming advanced scholars through the program.

Analysis and Program Change

One of the strengths of the History MA program continues to be the faculty in the program. In the survey of recent alums of the MA program, 90% of MA graduates noted that the faculty were a significant strength of the program. One of the reasons for the success of the faculty is the relatively small class size for graduate students in the program, which allows for close faculty mentoring of graduate students. In fact in the survey of recent alums of the program, 80% of MA graduates noted that small class size was a strength of the program.

Despite small class size being a strength of the MA History program, one of the challenges that the program has experienced is that classes have been cut by the CSU administration due to enrollment expectations that do not match the way that most graduate programs in History work, particularly a relatively small program like the one we have at Chicago State. History graduate courses work best with relatively small numbers of students so that the faculty members teaching these courses can have detailed discussions with these students about the trends in historical scholarship and research. The administrative cuts in courses have led faculty to offering fewer courses for graduate students, often not giving the graduate students the choices that they need in order to match their scholarly and research interests.

In fact, one of the weaknesses or areas that could be improved in the History MA program is to offer more courses in a wider diversity of historical fields. In fact, in the survey of recent alums of the program, several alums noted that the History MA program could be improved by offering more courses in US History, World History, and Ancient History. Overall, these comments indicate that History faculty need to continue to monitor the graduate courses offered by the program and encourage the administration not to cancel these courses even with relatively small numbers of students.

Assessment as a Departmental Priority

Because the History MA program underwent a program review in the Fall 2015 semester as part of the program review of all of the History programs, History faculty have been particularly engaged with assessing the History MA program during the 2015-2016 academic year. Leading up to the submission of the History Program Review to the Program Review Committee, History faculty engaged in several discussions about the History MA program both in person and via email in order to produce a strong Program Review Report that was submitted at the end of September 2016. In addition, after submitting this report, History faculty had several discussions about the report and its evidence and analysis of the History MA program leading up to the meeting with the Program Review Committee in December 2015. Following that meeting in December, History faculty have reviewed the decision of the Program Review Committee and its recommendations, which included a recommendation for a priority review of all History programs in three (3) years. Coming out of this program review process, the History faculty were able to review all of the assessment data over the past five years of the History MA program, and the faculty have decided to make significant efforts to improve the assessment process for the History MA program over the next three years.

Publicizing Student Learning

The major mechanism for publicizing assessment results and student learning for the History MA program is the departmental website. However, the staff member in charge of making updates to this website was laid off as part of the massive number of staff layoffs at the end of April 2016. Thus, despite the large number of graduates from the History MA program in the 2015-2016 academic year, it will be difficult to publicize the achievements of those students without a staff member to update the departmental website.

Summary of Evidence and Improvements

Instruments (Specify names)	2015/16 Results	Improvements	2016/17 Results	Improvements	2017/18 Results	Improvements
M.A. Thesis	4 pass (1 from Fall, 3 from Spring)	Largest number of students completing theses in an AY				
Capstone: Master's Essay & Exams	4 pass (1 from Summer, 1 from Fall, 2 from Spring)	First group of students completing the capstone course with Master's essay & exams				

Meetings, Discussions with Graduate Students	Ongoing evaluation	Individual meetings with MA students to discuss progress towards degree.				
Faculty evaluations of students	No report	New process for evaluating History MA students needs to be identified.				
Questionnaires [Grad Student Program Satisfaction Survey]	Online survey created and completed by program alums in Fall 2015	Detailed data from survey indicates program satisfaction, strengths of program, career opportunities for students.				