

# Annual Assessment Report

**Department:** HISTORY

**Academic Year:** 2022-23

**Date of Submission:** September 7, 2023

**Department Chair:** Heather Keaney, Fall 2022

Alister Chapman, Spring 2023-present

## I. Response to the previous year PRC’s recommendations

<b>Item: Too much focus on HIS198 students?</b>	<b>Response:</b> HIS198 (the senior seminar) works well for us for assessment, both because it allows us to assess what students have learned by the end of their time in the major, and because it is the course with the highest proportion of history majors (it sometimes includes an Art History major or two). However, the department agrees that it would be good to work with a larger group of students and so, after a few years focused on HIS198, our assessment work this year focuses on our work in HIS10 Perspectives on World History
<b>Item: “Am ambitious rubric?”</b>	<b>Response:</b> We have not edited our HIS198 rubric yet, but we are sensitive to the ways that we need to interpret it in ways that are appropriate for undergraduate students.
<b>Item: Need for more indirect assessment.</b>	<b>Response:</b> This point is well taken. We will be including indirect assessment in our work this year.
<b>Item:</b>	<b>Response:</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	

## II A. Program Learning Outcome (PLO) assessment

*If your department participated in the ILO assessment you may use this section to report on your student learning in relation to the assessed ILO. The assessment data can be requested from the Dean of Curriculum and Educational Effectiveness.*

<b>Program Learning Outcome</b>	Students will be able to construct sound arguments.
<b>Who is in Charge /Involved?</b>	Chandra Mallampalli and Marianne Robins took the lead on this assessment. This was a follow-up on the assessment work that we did last year.
<b><u>Direct Assessment Methods</u></b>	Both professors read all seven papers from the HIS198 senior seminar, taught by Dr. Robins in Fall 2022. They then scored the papers using the rubric we have developed for HIS198.
<b><u>Indirect Assessment Methods</u></b>	
<b>Major Findings</b>	<p>With 4 being a superior paper, 3 being a good paper, 2 being a needy paper etc. the papers scored as follows in the area of logica and argumentation (note there are fourteen scores here, to reflect the fact that both professors read each paper):</p> <p>4 papers: 3 3 papers: 8 2 papers: 3</p> <p>From the report: “Both of us thought the quality of the papers was above the average class—all students presented a background and formulated an argument; in some cases they sustained the argumentation throughout the paper, in others, an overarching argument. Some papers sustained the argument throughout; others did not seem to support the argument consistently.”</p>
<b>Closing the Loop Activities</b>	<p>The suggestions in the report were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasize “sustaining of the argument throughout the paper” and use of sources (more concentrated focus on use of evidence, what that consists of, marshalling of evidence varies, how much information is needed to support an argument, or the kind of information needed)</li> <li>• Require more meetings with the faculty who specializes in the area of the topic</li> <li>• Ask students who are working in an entirely new area to work in the summer</li> <li>• Working with students to help them make more of their primary sources, which in most cases should be the driving force of their arguments</li> </ul> <p>Work has already begun on implementing these recommendations in HIS198 this Fall. In particular, Dr. Robins communicated the third point above to students over the summer.</p>

<b>Collaboration and Communication</b>	
<p>The report has been studied by the members of the department who teach HIS198 and HIS99 (Foundations of History). There have been conversations as a department, and the decision to implement the third bullet point above—a significant departure—were agreed on by the department.</p>	

or/and

**II B. Key Questions**

<b>Key Question</b>	
<b>Who is in Charge/Involved?</b>	
<a href="#"><u>Direct Assessment Methods</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Indirect Assessment Methods</u></a>	
<b>Major Findings</b>	
<b>Recommendations</b>	
<b>Collaboration and Communication</b>	

### III. Follow-ups

<b>Program Learning Outcome or Key Question</b>	Students will be able to construct sound arguments.
<b>Who was involved in implementation?</b>	Our assessment this year was a continuation of work that we had done in 2021-22. However, we decided to focus on logic and argumentation, which was just one part of our remit last year.
<b>What was decided or addressed?</b>	We decided not to pursue the idea of a one-unit pre-senior seminar course, as mentioned in our previous report. Rather, we are now requiring summer work for senior seminar students who want to branch out and pursue an entirely fresh project. Dr. Robins and Dr. Chapman are continuing to refine our teaching in HIS99 Foundations of History and HIS198 to help students improve their work in these areas. One new challenge is the presence of LLMs (see below).
<b>How were the recommendations implemented?</b>	Dr. Robins communicated with the senior seminar students during the summer.
<b>Collaboration and Communication</b>	

### IV. Other assessment or Key Questions related projects

<b>Project</b>	How does student access to large language models (e.g. ChatGPT) affect our work.
<b>Who is in Charge /Involved?</b>	The whole department, with Alastair Su as our resident expert.
<b>Major Findings</b>	We are in the initial stages of this work, but have had a series of conversations about how to respond to LLMs. Together, we agree that we need to accept these are here to stay and can be a useful tool; the challenge is how to help students use them in ways that will help them become better thinkers and writers. We have read articles together and shared syllabus language with each other.

<b>Action</b>	We anticipate that this will become a key question in our next program review cycle.
<b>Collaboration and Communication</b>	

**V. Adjustments to the Multi-year Assessment Plan (optional)**

Proposed adjustment	Rationale	Timing
Assessing the World History GELO, 2023-24	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This will contribute to the college’s ILO assessment for the year.</li> <li>2. We have this additional year of assessment that was not planned at the time of our last major report, given the change from six- to seven-year reports.</li> </ol>	The initial work will be done by Drs. Keane, Robins, and Chapman, Fall 2023.

**VI. Appendices**

- A. Prompts or instruments used to collect the data
- B. Rubrics used to evaluate the data
- C. Relevant assessment-related documents (optional)