

Department Statement on Goals for the Major:

As a field of study, history provides students with many of the necessary skills for a productive professional career. Toward this end, the major attempts to provide students with the ability to think and read analytically; to form sound opinions and support them with logical arguments based on evidence; to communicate ideas effectively; and to conduct historical research. The history major also provides students with a body of historical knowledge that will enable them to understand contemporary events of local, national and global importance, as well as to understand the various cultures and civilizations that make up the world community.

Learning Outcomes: In order to assess the efficacy of student learning in the above areas, the history department has developed a list of learning outcomes by course-level. They focus on students' facility with historical knowledge, and measurements of their critical thinking, reading, and writing skills.

100-level courses: Students will have the opportunity to work with primary, secondary, and tertiary sources in history. Students will be exposed to different ways of interpreting these sources. Additionally, they will take exams or write papers that allow them to show their understanding of broad historical knowledge and offer them the opportunity to synthesize disparate areas of historical inquiry. **The primary learning outcome in 100-level courses is demonstrated facility with a body of historical knowledge.**

200-level courses: All 200-level courses will build upon the introductory 100-level course knowledge and skills and require students to engage in deeper textual analysis of primary and secondary sources. Students will be introduced to the formal study of historiography. Students will also demonstrate basic proficiency in critical writing about these texts. Writing assignments can include critical book reviews of a scholarly monograph, synthetic essays, and basic research papers based on secondary and/or primary sources. **The primary learning outcomes in 200-level courses are basic proficiency in critical reading and critical written evaluations of texts, as well as demonstration of proper citation and documentation.**

300-level courses: Students will build upon 100-level historical breadth knowledge and intermediate 200-level analytical and methodological skills to develop an advanced understanding of a specialized field in history. Students will have the opportunity to master a specific area historical inquiry through challenging readings. Earlier training in methods will allow students to participate in deep textual analysis of primary and secondary sources in class discussions, presentations, and critical essays. **The primary learning outcomes are advanced proficiency in critical reading and critical written**

evaluations of texts, as well as proficiency in analysis of historical theory and methods.

400-level: Students will be given the opportunity to show their mastery of historical methods, analytical skills, and critical writing abilities in a highly advanced and specialized course focused on a very specific historical issue, period, or type of methodology. Such courses will provide students with a small class seminar experience. Additionally, the class will provide a forum for students to gain and demonstrate their facility with a very specific body of historiography. Students' abilities to critically analyze texts, assess methodology, and analyze historiography will be measured by an advanced interpretive research/term paper (often in conjunction with in-class oral presentations). **The primary outcomes in 400-level courses are an advanced written interpretation of a variety of texts, proficiency in evaluation *and use* of historical methods and theory, and proficiency in oral presentations of students' written work and/or student critical discussions of texts.**