Department: Liberal Studies

Assessment Coordinator: Scott Pearce and Kimberly Lynn

Department Student Learning Outcomes:

Humanities, History of Culture B.A. (with thesis and non-thesis options)

Upon graduation, History of Culture majors will have:

1. engaged texts of disparate origin and kind through close reading, and with a critical eye;
2. mastered multiple methods of inquiry used in the humanities disciplines;
3. acquired substantial knowledge of different worlds of thought and belief around the globe with a sensitivity to comparative dimensions;
4. contextualized books, works of art and other cultural artifacts within the worlds that gave them birth, and seen their influence over social, political and religious dynamics;
5. gained an appreciation of a range of manifestations of cross-cultural contact and exchanges across human history, and a capacity to use these in everyday life; and
6. developed and employed cognitive, analytical and communication skills which will be of use in many fields and professions beyond the university.

Humanities, Religion & Culture B.A. (with thesis and non-thesis options)

Upon graduation, Religion & Culture majors will have:

1. engaged texts of disparate origin and kind through close reading, and with a critical eye;
2. mastered multiple methodologies used in the academic study of religion;
3. acquired substantial knowledge of different religions around the globe with a sensitivity to comparative dimensions;
4. contextualized books, works of art and other cultural artifacts within particular religions and within a larger world of cross-cultural study of religion, and so gained a sense of how they affect individuals and groups;
5. gained an appreciation of a range of manifestations of cross-cultural religious influence and exchange across human history, and a capacity to use these in everyday life; and
6. developed and employed cognitive, analytical and communication skills that will be of use in many fields and professions beyond the university.
### Student Learning Outcomes Assessed This Year*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Measures</th>
<th>SLOs Assessed</th>
<th>Degree Program</th>
<th>Results</th>
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<td>Examination of Selected Sample of Senior Papers (direct assessment measure)</td>
<td>2, 6</td>
<td>History of Culture (thesis option)</td>
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*Please note that, simply by chance, no Religion and Culture degrees were given this year; the two concentrations very much overlap, and the lessons taken from History of Culture senior theses are being applied to the Religion and Culture program as well.*

**Changes based on assessment findings:**

In discussion of these matters in a Spring, 2015, department meeting, it was agreed that preliminary framing of possibilities for curricular development was to be done by Scott Pearce and the in-coming chair, Kimberly Lynn, in preparation for the department’s 2015 Annual Report. Working as a committee of the whole for curriculum, the department will discuss these matters in 2015-2016.
Suggestions for Next Year

Our direct assessment this year focuses on SLOs 2 and 6 as seen in work done for the thesis options of the two programs. In closing the loop next year, the department might consider these possibilities:

- Establish clear rules on when a fundamentally complete first draft of the paper must be submitted for examination by the reader, second reader and the department as a whole (possibly at the end of the seventh week).
- Have a faculty member give comment when the paper is delivered at the Scholars Week seminar (possibly the second reader).
- Establish a department committee (possibly a committee of the whole) to examine and discuss all the year’s papers, in terms of both style and content, the latter with particular reference to further possibilities for multidisciplinary approach; and then clearly publish these suggestions for work on senior theses in the following year.
- More generally, a broader reflection on how we organize the courses that make up the senior thesis option (LBRL 498 for reading, followed the next quarter with a LBRL 499 for writing) and their sequence.