"CLOSING THE LOOP": PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT DOCUMENTATION AND REPORT

Graduate Program Assessment Report
Academic Year: 2015/16

Program: Archives and Records Management (History)
Assessment Coordinator: Randall C. Jimerson

Program Mission: Grounded in the study of History, the Archives and Records Management program recognizes the value of historical knowledge and understanding as a basis for identifying and preserving records of enduring value to society. The curriculum integrates automation and electronic records issues with traditional methods for textual records. Students examine basic principles of archives and records management; learn methods of selecting, organizing, and using recorded information; and gain practical work experience in applying these techniques through a required internship.

Program Student Learning Goals:
Graduates of the ARM program should:
1. be able to identify theories of the nature and purpose of records and archives.
2. understand and analyze history of archives and recordkeeping in legal, social, cultural & financial systems.
3. be able to apply theory and principles to practice, employing proper methodologies.
4. gain an ability to conduct original research and write effectively for a professional and/or public audience.
5. be able to articulate and exemplify the profession’s core values, ethics, and social responsibility.

Program Student Learning Objectives:
Goal 1:
   a. Articulate archival theories.
   b. Analyze and critique theories of key archival writers.
   c. Develop personal theoretical framework.
Goal 2:
   a. Able to explain nature of recordkeeping & archives in Ancient, Medieval, and Modern eras, focusing on Europe and US.
   b. Able to explain historical changes in archival systems and practices.
Goal 3:
   a. Able to prepare MARC catalog records and EAD finding aids.
   b. Can process and arrange archival materials, with only general supervision.
   c. Capable of providing reference service, appraisal, and/or preservation for archival materials and/or institutional records.
Goal 4:
   a. Skills in conducting secondary and original research.
   b. Ability to formulate a critical thesis and develop an effective argument.
   c. Skill in writing clearly and effectively in support of student’s research-based argument.
Goal 5:
   a. Able to identify and explain core values and professional ethics.
   b. Applies ethical concepts in case studies and hands-on work.
   c. Able to articulate and evaluate societal importance and impact of archives & records.

**Please respond to the following:**
1. Describe the level of faculty participation on this assessment.

   Since this is a new process for the Department of History, this year’s assessment for ARM/History was conducted by the ARM/History program director, in consultation with the other members of the department’s Graduate Program Committee. Future assessments will be conducted more widely with input from other faculty and adjunct instructors.

2. Describe the frequency of evaluating the program SLOs.

   This is done individually for each course taught, by the instructor. In future, there will also be an annual evaluation by the department’s Graduate Program Committee.

3. How are the assessments meaningfully connected to improvement efforts?

   The results of these assessments will be shared with teaching faculty, including adjuncts. The ARM/History program director will consult with teaching faculty to review progress, problems, and other concerns on a regular basis.
### Student Learning Objectives Assessed This Year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Measures</th>
<th>SLOs Assessed</th>
<th>Results and Improvements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example: assessment of written thesis by thesis committee</td>
<td>(list the numbers from above)</td>
<td>Example: Faculty evaluated early thesis drafts using a common rubric. Results indicate that 70% of the students are writing at an adequate level for demonstrating mastery of approaches to data analysis. In response, the 502 course will have a greater focus on nonparametric statistics using data from previous theses.</td>
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<td>Assessment of student written essays and oral discussions in HIST 525 and 538.</td>
<td>1.b</td>
<td>The instructor for these courses (who is the ARM/History program director) evaluated student written and oral expression in terms of comprehension of archival theories. Among first year students (HIST 525) 2 of 6 demonstrated an excellent grasp of these theories; 3 of 6 showed a very good understanding; and 1 of 6 had an adequate understanding. The instructor will work to explain these theoretical writings more clearly. Among second year students (HIST 538), 2 of 6 showed a superior knowledge of these theories (including new information presented in 538); 3 of 6 had an excellent understanding; and 1 of 6 had a very good understanding of archival theory. The instructor will modify instructional methods to seek improved levels of comprehension among all students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment of written analytical essays, book reviews, oral reports, and class discussion, in HIST 525 and 538.</td>
<td>2.a</td>
<td>The instructor for these courses (who is the ARM/History program director) evaluated student analytical essays, written book reviews, oral reports, and class discussions in order to evaluate student mastery of these concepts. Among first year students (HIST 525) 2 of 6 demonstrated an excellent grasp of these theories; 3 of 6 showed a very good understanding; and 1 of 6 had an adequate understanding. The instructor will work to explain these theoretical writings more clearly. Among second year students (HIST 538), 2 of 6 showed a superior knowledge of these theories (including new information presented in 538); 3 of 6 had an excellent understanding; and 1 of 6 had a very good understanding of archival theory. The instructor will modify instructional methods to seek improved levels of comprehension among all students.</td>
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<td>Assessment of student original research papers in year-long course HIST 539</td>
<td>4.c</td>
<td>This course is still in progress at the time of this report, but preliminary results can be based on first and second drafts of student research papers. In addition, 5 of 6 students have made public presentations of their research, one at the regional Northwest Archivists conference in Seattle, and 4 at the WWU Graduate Student Conference. The sixth student is currently employed at Yellowstone National park Archives and was unable to make a public presentation. Results thus far of student draft articles indicates that 2 of the 6 are expected to complete exceptionally good research papers, 3 are expected to complete very good to excellent papers, and one is on course to complete a very good research paper. The instructor will work in future to prod students to complete drafts earlier to allow more time for evaluation, recommendations, and revisions.</td>
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**Improvements Implemented Since Last Report:** n/a
Graduate Program Self-Assessment Report Rubric

The Graduate Council, in coordination with the University Accreditation and Assessment Advisory Committee (AAAC), will use this rubric in responding to the program assessment reports. Keep these criteria in mind as you complete your report. As part of your Closing the Loop report, please complete a self-assessment using this rubric. Simply circle whether you believe your Student Learning Assessment is at Best Practice, At Standard, Developing, or Unacceptable using the descriptions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Best Practice</th>
<th>At Standard</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
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<tr>
<td>Level of Faculty Participation</td>
<td>Broad faculty participation</td>
<td>Select faculty participation with departmental discussion.</td>
<td>Select faculty participation.</td>
<td>Minimal faculty participation.</td>
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<td>Frequency and Meaningfulness of Assessment</td>
<td>1. All degree or program SLOs assessed twice in a 5-year cycle corresponding with the Graduate Council program review schedule. 2. Assessments meaningfully connected to improvement efforts.</td>
<td>1. All degree or program SLOs assessed at least once in a 5-year cycle corresponding with the Graduate Council program review schedule. 2. Assessments meaningfully connected to improvement efforts.</td>
<td>Some SLOs not assessed, but selected SLO assessments meaningfully connected to improvement efforts.</td>
<td>Some SLOs not assessed, and elected SLO assessments not meaningfully connected to improvement efforts.</td>
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<td>Measures</td>
<td>1. SLO assessment includes meaningful direct measures with threshold designations. 2. Indirect measures meaningfully supplement direct measures.</td>
<td>SLO assessment includes 1 meaningful direct measure for each outcome.</td>
<td>SLO assessment includes direct measures but they are not sufficiently meaningful.</td>
<td>No direct measures of student learning.</td>
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<td>Reporting Results</td>
<td>Reported results detail meaningful conclusions sufficient to support data-informed and measurable improvements.</td>
<td>Reported results permit actionable improvements but in a manner that is inferential rather than measurable.</td>
<td>Reported results are not sufficiently specific or meaningful to permit data-informed improvements.</td>
<td>No results reported.</td>
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<td>Stage of Implementation of the Improvements</td>
<td>Improvement is fully implemented; program is prepared to evaluate the effect of the improvement upon student achievement.</td>
<td>Improvement is largely implemented (e.g., proposed curriculum change was approved by the department/college and sent to the Graduate Council/ACC).</td>
<td>Program has a plan for implementing the improvement.</td>
<td>Program has no plan for implementing the improvement.</td>
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