

UHCL Assessment Plan  
FY07 (or academic year 2006-07)

School of Human Sciences and Humanities

**This assessment plan was chosen as example plan because it contained specific use of results to improve student learning. In some cases, wording were modified slightly for illustration purposes**

History - MA

Learning Outcomes Assessment					
Learning Outcomes	ULO <sup>1</sup>	Assessment Methods	Criteria for Success	Assessment Results	Use of Results
MA students will demonstrate the ability to identify primary and secondary historical sources, draw inferences from them, analyze and identify historical problems, and develop appropriate solutions to historical questions.	a, g	Evaluate capstone projects: research paper, masters thesis, or masters project and rank according to a five point scale in four areas: identifying sources, drawing inferences, identifying and analyzing historical problems, developing solutions to historical questions.	Students must earn a rank of acceptable in all areas and above acceptable in a minimum of two areas.	A sample of capstone projects produced by graduate students who are completing the Masters degree in history have demonstrated full competence in identifying primary and secondary historical sources, in drawing inferences from them, and in analyzing and identifying historical problems. The average score on the five point Likert scale on each of these three categories is respectively: 4.6, 4.2, and 4.7. The ability to develop appropriate solutions to historical questions, while still acceptable, is weaker than the other three areas: Likert scale score average 3.7.	In general, the ability to develop solutions to historical problems requires, in addition to advanced coursework and capstone projects, experience gleaned only by practicing the profession of history. To help students accelerate the development of such skills that require maturation as historians, the history faculty can introduce as a requirement for each research project a conclusion that contemplates possible solutions to the historical problems addressed in the paper. To ensure that this requirement becomes routine, history faculty can include it formally in the Research and Methods course which trains history graduate students in the craft of historical research, analysis and exposition.

Learning Outcomes Assessment					
Learning Outcomes	ULO <sup>1</sup>	Assessment Methods	Criteria for Success	Assessment Results	Use of Results
MA students will demonstrate the ability to place political and social issues, ideas, and events within appropriate historical contexts and perspectives.	a, g	Evaluate capstone projects: research paper, masters thesis, or masters project and rank according to a five point scale in four areas: identifying sources, drawing inferences, identifying and analyzing historical problems, developing solutions to historical questions	Students must earn a rank of acceptable in all areas and above acceptable in a minimum of two areas.	Students completing the masters degree in History have demonstrated the ability to place political and social issues, ideas and events within appropriate historical contexts and perspectives. The average score for this overarching category was 3.8, but it was skewed negatively by a low score attained by one paper. The average without counting that paper would have been 4.2.	The history faculty will continue to offer in each graduate course full training in the skills required to analyze the historical contexts of issues, events and ideas. This is to be accomplished through classroom instruction, assignments, as well as extracurricular studies of history including film and discussion series, Constitution Day, Columbus Day/Dia de la Raza, and/or other activities.
MA students will demonstrate the ability to apply appropriate historical research approaches and methods.	a, g	Evaluate capstone projects: research paper, masters thesis, or masters project and rank according to a five point scale in four areas: identifying sources, drawing inferences, identifying and analyzing historical problems, developing solutions to historical questions.	Students must earn a rank of acceptable in all areas and above acceptable in a minimum of two areas.	A sample of capstone projects reveals that students completing the masters degree in History have achieved the ability to apply historical research approaches and methods in their scholarly work. The average score for this overarching category was 4.1. The students' strengths lie in consulting a diversity of sources, critiquing them for their flaws and merits, articulating an analysis and supporting it from the evidence. Areas to improve include making concessions and drafting conclusions.	The Research and Methods course offered annually will include one lecture on concessions and how to grapple with evidence that does not fit or with gaps in the argument. Another lecture will explore possibilities for crafting more resounding conclusions, especially those that explore broader implications, identify historical parallels or otherwise suggest a project's larger relevance rather than summarize points presented in the body of the work.

## <sup>1</sup>University Learning Outcomes (ULO)

**In developing student learning outcomes, select from the list below the university level learning outcome(s) that match most closely to the learning outcomes.**

- a.** Critical Thinking - The mastery of higher order thinking skills including quantitative and qualifying analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information, argumentation, problem solving, and creativity.
- b.** Communication - Effective written and oral expression including the use of such media as audio, video, text, and graphics.
- c.** Information Technology - The application of information technology to search for, access, retrieve, organize, interpret, and transfer information.
- d.** Interpersonal Competence - The capacity to understand many points of view and to work responsibly with others in a variety of settings.
- e.** Ethical Citizenship - The ability to make ethical decisions in person and professional societal contexts
- f.** Global Perspective - The capability to demonstrate awareness of local and global diversity, within the students chosen discipline, the international economy, and the interrelated worldwide environment.
- g.** Self-directed Learning - The ability to identify, assess, revise, and monitor learning to achieve personal and professional goals.
- h.** Other: Professional accreditation standards