

Department of History and Political Science
Action Plan Update
2009

The Department of History and Political Science completed its Departmental Review in December 2006. Within this review the Department adopted the following six Recommendations of Action, listed in order of priority. Each recommendation is ongoing within the department.

1. Consider the incorporation of specific outcomes for both History and Political Science.
2. Each faculty member should review all his or her syllabi and file a report indicating which courses could benefit from an increased international perspective and how syllabi will be altered to achieve that goal.
3. Tools used for collecting data must be revised to elicit information specific to the learning outcomes.
4. Formalize the process of developing, researching and writing senior projects, and tie the senior project to the methods courses.
5. Ensure that recent versions of all syllabi are available in a central file.
6. Add an essay component to the exit exam in order to measure critical analysis.

Work in Progress:

In the academic year 2008-2009 program reviews were conducted for the International Studies major (led by Professor Gitty Amini) and the Social Science major (led by Professor Steve Sayles). The program review for the International Studies major remains ongoing.

The Department has considered the option of adding specific outcomes for both History and Political Science, but at this time, considers the five general learning outcomes as sufficient.

Faculty members have reviewed their syllabi to determine whether their courses could benefit from an increased international perspective. Where appropriate, faculty members have made alterations.

The Department has developed two methods courses over the last several years. In the History area, the Department offers Approaches to History and in the Political Science

area the Department offers The Study of Politics. Both courses serve as a springboard for conducting research and preparing for the senior project. Students are taken through the steps necessary to conduct research and write their senior theses.

The Department has revised its senior exit survey to elicit specific responses that relate to the Department's learning outcomes. This is likely to be an ongoing endeavor as we fine tune the survey instrument. The department is still evaluating the appropriateness of an essay component of the exit exam.

A central storage system has been developed to house all senior theses, senior exit exams and alumni surveys over the past years. In the 2009-2010 academic year, the Department will conduct an audit of the exit exams and compile a report of findings as appropriate.

Faculty members continue to update their syllabi as necessary and the Department maintains comprehensive files on all courses.