

**Institutional Effectiveness
2024-2025**

Program: History BA/BS

College and Department: College of Arts & Sciences, History

Contact: Kent T Dollar

Mission:

The Department of History offers a wide array of courses to diverse student populations. The department provides General Education instruction to a large number of students in the state-required American history sequence, while Western and World Civilization sequences satisfy TBR humanities requirements. In addition, department faculty offer numerous specialized courses that attract majors and non-majors alike.

The department has developed and maintains a comprehensive and successful curriculum for history majors. The programs are designed to provide future historians with the tools and knowledge for successful graduate study in the discipline, and to prepare graduates for careers in education, law, public service or business. Majors are expected to think analytically, ascertain facts and make objective judgments, and write clearly, communicating the results of reasoned analysis.

The department shares with the University both its broader commitment to cross-cultural understanding and its special obligation to serve the Upper Cumberland region of Tennessee.

Attach Curriculum Map (Educational Programs Only):

Attached Files: See Appendix 1

SLO-1 Ability to Research and Write Proficiently

Define Outcome:

History majors in their senior year will demonstrate the ability to research and write a scholarly paper of professional quality. The History Department's goal is that 100 percent will score a "B" or higher in History 499X, the Senior Seminar course, and 100 percent will acknowledge on the Senior Exit Exam Survey that they are "Very Satisfied" with their ability to research and write proficiently. The percentage to score a "B" or higher is raised from 75 percent to 100 percent for the 2024-2025 academic year.

Assessment Methods:

Student capstone projects, completed in History 499X, are evaluated using a faculty-developed rubric. The rubric includes the following criteria:

- Formulate an original thesis and defend it in a sustained argument.
- Make effective use of primary sources and demonstrate an ability to professionally evaluate and employ secondary sources.
- Make proper use of citation conventions, thereby avoiding plagiarism.
- Use standard written English effectively and appropriately.
- Present a well-organized paper.
- Place the research topic in a broader historical context.
- Demonstrate critical thinking, reasoned analysis, and/or problem solving.
- Follow any additional directions as assigned by the professor.

Attached Files:

See Appendix 2

See Appendix 3

Criteria for Success (Thresholds for Assessment Methods):

The History Department's goal is that 100 percent will score a "B" or higher in History 499X, the Senior Seminar course, and 100 percent will acknowledge on the Senior Exit Exam Survey that they are "Very Satisfied" with their ability to research and write proficiently. The percentage to score a "B" or higher is raised from 75 percent to 100 percent for the 2024-2025 academic year.

The History Department faculty believe that in a capstone course, such as the Senior Seminar, which takes place during a student's senior year, that every student should achieve a grade a grade of "B" or higher in the course.

Link to 'Tech Tomorrow' Strategic Plan:

2.B Research, Scholar, Intellect, and Creativity

Results and Analysis:

Fall 2024 & Spring 2025 Results

The History Department utilizes a scoring rubric to gauge the success of history majors taking History 499X, the Senior Seminar course, focusing in particular on the students' ability to research and write a scholarly paper of professional quality. The rubric allows the history faculty, at a quick glance, to measure student success and to identify areas needing improvement, as well as to document the percentage of students who earn a "B" grade or higher (up from a "C" or higher for the 2021-2022 academic year). The chair then shares this information with the entire faculty at an assessment meeting at the end of the spring semester. The History Department did not meet its goal of 100 percent of students scoring at a "B" or above during the 2024-2025 academic year.

Fall 2024

Rubric Results for Fall 2024

N=14	Excellent	Good	Emerging	Weak	Grades
Thesis	57.1%	14.2%	21.4%	7.1%	A—8
Argument	57.1%	14.2%	14.2%		B—2
Primary	57.1%	14.2%	21.4%		C—2
Secondary	57.1%	14.2%	21.4%		D--1
Citations	57.1%	14.2%	7%	14.2%	I--1
English	57.1%	21.4%	14.2%		B or higher: 10-71.4%
Organization	57.1%	14.2%	14.2%	7.1%	
Context	57.1%	14.2%		21.4%	
Critical	57.1%	7.1%	28.5%		
Directions	57.1%	7.1%	21.4%	7.1%	

Dr. Paula Hinton taught the Senior Seminar in Fall 2024. The topic was “The Crime of the Century,” specifically, the 20th century in America. Although the focus was the research paper, students also read *The Trial of Lizzie Borden: A True Story* and *The Murder of the Century: The Gilded Age Crime that Scandalized a City & Sparked the Tabloid Wars*. These two books were chosen because they illustrate the kind of research she wanted the students to accomplish in the class, although the crimes the books covered were from the 1800s. From the syllabus:

"Although the primary focus of this course will be the preparation of a major research paper, we will also touch on the history of crime in 20th-century America and what it reveals about American culture, gender roles, class, etc. The question you will address in your research is “What was the defining crime/trial of the 20th century, and why?” Some people argue that it is the Lindbergh kidnapping, the Manson murders, Watergate, the St. Valentine’s Day Massacre, the O. J. Simpson trial, or the crimes of Ted Bundy, Leopold & Loeb, Ed Gein, etc....The list is endless!!! For example (and using an event from another century) think about how the Salem Witch Trials defined an era (a time, a place, and a people). This is a VERY broad question, I know, and that is the point. Americans are constantly making this claim—that “such and such” is the “crime/trial of the century.” Why? Why do we do this? What is the motive? What are we trying to say about ourselves (and others)? What image are we constructing/portraying? Why do we use such hyperbole? What does this reveal about that particular time/place/community?"

All but 2 of the 14 students in the class were Americanists. At the end of the semester, 8 students earned an A, 3 finished with a B, 2 received a C, and there was 1 Incomplete. Overall, they were highly motivated and met class deadlines.

Spring 2025

Rubric Results for Spring 2025

N=5	Excellent	Good	Emerging	Weak	Grades
Thesis	40%	40%		20%	A—
Argument	20%	20%	60%		B—2
Primary		20%	40%	60%	C—3

Secondary	20%	40%	20%	40%	D--
Citations	20%	40%	20%	40%	B or higher: 2--40%
English		40%	40%	20%	
Organization		80%	20%		
Context		40%	60%		
Critical	20%	20%	60%		
Directions	20%	20%	40%	20%	

During the Spring 2025 semester, Dr. Krystal D. Akehinmi taught the Senior Seminar course on the topic of the “US Civil Rights Movement, Oral History and Memory” to five enrolled students. In addition to planning, conducting, transcribing and evaluating their own oral history interviews with individuals who hold memories of the Civil Rights Movement, students took a field trip to Nashville, TN. There they toured sites and archives related to Civil Rights Movement history at three historically black universities. Student assessed their own oral histories alongside others they researched and the secondary and primary sources we interrogated in their papers. The top two students showed consistent improvement and plan to study law and a form of public history. Both provided excellent presentations. Another, who plans to go into archival work demonstrated marked growth in presentation and citation skills. The latter two, who plan to teach high school demonstrated growth in deciphering scholarly arguments. All of the students were strongest in their assessments of historiography and weakest in establishing historical context. All of the students struggled with argument development, but Dr. Akehinmi was impressed by the how much clearer their writing emerged by the end of the semester. The highest scores went to students whose analyses were consistent across a range of primary and secondary sources in addition to proper citation and source integration.

Senior Seminar Results Since Fall 2021

Fall 2021 N=9	Spring 2022 N=11	Fall 2022 N=4	Spring 2023 N=6	Fall 2023 N=5	Spring 2024 N=11
A—2	A—9	A—1	A—2	A—3	A—1
B—3	B—2	B—1	B—2	B—1	B—10
C—2		C—2	C—2	C—1	
D—1					
F—1 (no paper)					
C or higher-- 87.5%	C or higher— 100%	B or higher— 50%	B or higher— 66%	B or higher— 80%	B or higher— 100%

Fall 2024 N=14	Spring 2025 N=5
A—8	A—
B—2	B—2
C—2	C—3
D—1	
I—1 (no paper)	
B or higher-- 71.4%	B or higher— 40%

The four-year Senior Seminar results show that the History Department has enjoyed some success in improving its SLO-1 results. Indeed, the percentage of students scoring a "B" or higher rose each year except the previous one. In 2024-2025, the department did not meet its goal of 100 percent scoring a "B" or higher, a goal that was implemented in the fall of 2024 after the department met its goal the previous academic year. (Previous

goal was 75 percent earning a “B” or higher.) In fact, the department did not even come close to meeting its target this past year. Perhaps the goal is too high or perhaps the students were not of the same quality as the previous year, which could also explain the poor ACAT results for 2024-2025.

Exit Interview Survey

In Fall 2022, the History Department created an anonymous survey to administer at the end of each student's exit interview. The questions directly correspond with the department’s student learning objectives. The question that corresponds with SLO-1 reads:

How satisfied are you that the history program taught you the proper way to conduct research and write effectively?

Exit Interview Survey Results Fall 2024

N=	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
	4	1		

Exit Interview Survey Results Spring 2025

N=4	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
	4			

Exit Interview Survey Results Since Fall 2022

Semester	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Spring 2025	4			
Fall 2024	4	1		

Spring 2024	3	3		
Fall 2023	2	1		
Spring 2023	4	2		
Fall 2022	2	1		

In 2022-2023, the History Department sought to identify additional methods to determine if its SLO-1 outcomes are being met. The chair formulated a three-question survey (later lengthened to eight questions), that is administered to graduating seniors during their exit interview. The questions correspond directly with the History Department's three SLOs. Regarding SLO-1, the question asks if the students are satisfied with their ability to research and write proficiently. Although all of the students for 2024-2025 are satisfied (marking "satisfied" or higher) with their abilities in these areas, the department did not meet its goal of 100 percent of the students answering "Very Satisfied" on the question. However, the results for 2024-2025 were excellent, with 80 percent answering "Very Satisfied" in the fall and 100 percent answering "Very Satisfied" in the spring.

Use of Results to Improve Outcomes:

The History Department's goal of 100 percent of students acknowledging on the Senior Exit Exam Survey that they are "Very Satisfied" with their ability to research and write proficiently will remain unchanged. Beginning in the 2023-2024, the department has adopted the identical grading rubric for History 3410 that is being used in History 499X Senior Seminar. This was to make certain that students are being taught the skills listed on the rubric during History 3410, usually a major's first history course. Furthermore, these skills are now being emphasized in all upper-division history courses students take prior to taking the Senior Seminar course. Using the same rubric allows the chair to compile the results more easily and share them with the faculty during the end-of the year assessment meeting. Also, the use of the matching rubrics will allow the history faculty to compare individual students' performance on these skills for both 3410 and 499X.

For 2025-2026, instead of relying on students' previous coursework alone, professors teaching the Senior Seminar will be required to teach in the course the skills necessary for writing a scholarly research paper. The instruction will include how to make an effective argument, how to support an argument with historical evidence, and how to cite sources properly according to *Chicago*. The professor will also instruct student in matters of style, grammar, sentence structure, etc. Professors will be encouraged to include other material that will help students improve their writing. This instruction will ensure that students, no matter which courses they have taken in the history program, are being taught in the Senior Seminar the skills necessary to produce a scholarly paper that will result in a grade of "B" or higher.

SLO-2 Explore History Beyond the Classroom

Define Outcome:

The History Department desires to instill in history majors an appreciation of the past, to include a desire to explore history beyond the classroom. The goal is that 50 percent of majors will participate in extra-curricular activities/events and 100 percent will acknowledge ("Very Satisfied") on the Senior Exit Exam Survey that they possess an interest in pursuing history beyond the classroom. The History Department faculty believe that 50 percent participation is a reasonable expectation but hopes to exceed that.

Assessment Methods:

The success of this SLO will be measured by tracking spreadsheets for the number of history majors who participate in each extra-curricular event/activity and the Senior Exit Exam Survey results.

Criteria for Success (Thresholds for Assessment Methods):

50 percent of majors will participate in extra-curricular events/activities and 100 percent will acknowledge on the Senior Exit Exam Survey that they possess an interest in pursuing history beyond the classroom. The History Department faculty believe that 50 percent participation is a reasonable expectation but hopes to exceed that.

Link to 'Tech Tomorrow' Strategic Plan:

1.A Experiential Learning

Results and Analysis:

The History Department scheduled numerous extra-curricular activities during the 2024-2025 academic year. Most of these activities were sponsored by the History Club, advised by Dr. Laura Smith and Dr. Allen Driggers. Beginning in the fall of 2021, the History Department created a tracking chart to be used for each event. The club's events are also opportunities to add history majors to the program, as nonmajors are eligible for membership. Dr. Laura Smith's approachability and congeniality when interacting with the students has won over several who have changed their majors to history. Despite numerous activities, the History Department did not reach its goal of 50 percent of its majors participating in extracurricular activities nor did it reach the 100-percent threshold on the Exit Interview Survey. There are approximately 50 students currently majoring in history.

Fall 2024

The History Department launched its first annual “Rendezvous” on September 9th. The “Rendezvous” was intended to be a welcome reception for our incoming freshmen and a welcome back to our existing majors. The event provided majors the opportunity to interact with each other as well as with faculty members. Students were also asked to select a faculty mentor. The event was well attended.

The History Club kicked off the new academic year with an introductory mix and mingle meeting on August 28th, during which the members, and prospective members, interacted in a social setting. During the meeting, the students planned their activities for the fall term. During the fall term, the club held game nights, media nights, movie nights, and a Halloween cookout. Although the History Department had planned to establish the History Department Forum in the fall of 2024, a jam-packed schedule prevented it from doing so. Other departmental extracurricular activities in the fall included two planned field trips in October to the Columbus ships in Knoxville; however, Hurricane Helene caused those trips to be canceled. The number of history majors, as well as all students, participating in these activities has greatly increased since the fall of 2021.

Collective Co-Curricular Activity Attendance Results Fall 2024

Activity	Date	History Majors	Total Students
History Club Mix & Mingle	8/28/24	11	33
1 st Annual Rendezvous	9/9/24	20	20
History Club Game Night	9/6/24	8	26
History Club Movie Night	9/15/24	5	16
History Club T-Shirt Meeting	10/4/24	12	28
Hurricane Relief Effort Field Trip	10/21/24	2	2
History 4903 Field Trip to Opera	10/25/24	9	10
Hurricane Relief Effort Field Trip	10/28/24	2	2
History Club Halloween Party	11/1/24	7	26
History Club Fact vs. Fiction	11/15/24	6	14

History Club End of Semester Party	12/4/24	6	18
Total		88	195

Spring 2025

The History Club scheduled the same number of events but saw a drop in student participation in 2024-2025. The numbers are still strong, however. The activities included game nights, movie nights, and a murder mystery performance. History faculty members also led four field trips to various sites in Nashville.

Because of a very busy April, the History Department elected not to hold its annual Phi Alpha Theta Lyceum. The lyceum is an event where students are invited to present research papers they have written in their history courses. The event is meant to mimic a professional history conference and provide students with a unique forum in which to present their best work and to field questions from the attendees, including faculty. It is truly a beneficial experience to our majors, and monetary prizes are awarded for best paper and best presentation. The Lyceum will be held again in the spring of 2026.

The History Department sponsors two endowed lectures: the Womack and the Winchester. The Womack Lecture went forward in the fall of 2024. On November 4th, Dr. Max Fraser, professor of history at Dartmouth College, delivered a talk entitled, "Hillbilly Highway: The Transappalachian Migration and the Transformation of American Politics." The event was well attended with dozens of students (including history majors) present as well as faculty and members of the community. The annual Winchester Lecture was held on April 23rd, 2025, with Dr. Charles Israel, professor of history at Auburn University, presented, "Scopes at 100: Before the Trial of the Century and a Century Later," to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Scopes Monkey Trial, which took place in Dayton, Tennessee. The event was well attended (estimated 200 present) including students, history majors, faculty, and members of the community.

Collective Co-Curricular Activity Attendance Results Spring 2025

Activity	Date	History Majors	Total Students
History Club Spring Kickoff Event	1/29/25	15	33
History Club Game Night	2/7/25	4	23

History Club Movie Night	2/23/25	5	17
History 4210 Field Trip to Hermitage	2/21/25	10	13
History Club T-Shirt Meeting	3/12/25	9	21
History 4880 Field Trip to TPAC	4/3/25	7	9
History Club Murder Mystery	4/4/25	4	17
History 2060 & History 4994 Field Trip	4/5/25	6	8
History 4020 Field Trip to Hermitage	4/22/25	3	3
History Club Movie Night	4/25/25	3	13
History Club End of Year Party	4/30/25	10	20
Total		76	177

Collective Co-Curricular Activity Attendance Since Fall 2021

Semester	Activities	History Majors	Total Students
Fall 2021	4	28	63
Spring 2022	5	40	110
Fall 2022	8	47	131
Spring 2023	9	72	170
Fall 2023	11	79	247
Spring 2024	7	68	133
Fall 2024	11	88	195
Spring 2025	11	76	177

The results above table demonstrates that the number of departmental extra-curricular activities, as well as student attendance, has increased since the department began tracking attendance in Fall 2021, with the exception of spring 2024. Furthermore, the number of history majors participating in these co-curricular activities increased in the

2024-2025 academic year over the previous academic year, with 164 majors participating in 2024-2025 and 147 in 2023-2024.

Exit Interview Survey

In the fall of 2024, the History Department added five new questions to the Exit Interview Survey to gauge better the success it is having with SLO-2. The questions on the Exit Interview Survey that corresponds with SLO-2 are:

How satisfied are you with the history program furthering your desire to explore history outside of the classroom?

Exit Interview Survey Results (Question 1) Fall 2024

Question/SLO N=5	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
2--SLO2	5			

Exit Interview Survey Results (Questions 1) Spring 2025

Question/SLO N=4	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
2--SLO2	1	3		

Did the history program further your interest in exploring history after you graduate?

Exit Interview Survey Results (Question 2) Fall 2024

Question/SLO N=5	Yes	No
2--SLO2	5	

Exit Interview Survey Results (Question 2) Spring 2025

Question/SLO N=4	Yes	No
2--SLO2	4	

How likely is it that after graduation you will visit historical sites?

Exit Interview Survey Results (Question 3) Fall 2024

Question/SLO N=5	Very Likely	Likely	Not Very Likely	Highly Unlikely
2--SLO2	4	1		

Exit Interview Survey Results (Question 3) Spring 2025

Question/SLO N=4	Very Likely	Likely	Not Very Likely	Highly Unlikely
2--SLO2	1	3		

How likely is it that after graduation you will read historical works, such as books and articles?

Exit Interview Survey Results (Question 4) Fall 2024

Question/SLO N=5	Very Likely	Likely	Not Very Likely	Highly Unlikely
2--SLO2	3	2		

Exit Interview Survey Results (Question 4) Spring 2025

Question/SLO N=4	Very Likely	Likely	Not Very Likely	Highly Unlikely
2--SLO2	3	1		

How likely is it that after graduation you will watch historical programs on your phone, a computer, or television?

Exit Interview Survey Results (Question 5) Fall 2024

Question/SLO N=5	Very Likely	Likely	Not Very Likely	Highly Unlikely
2--SLO2	5			

Exit Interview Survey Results (Question 5) Spring 2025

Question/SLO N=4	Very Likely	Likely	Not Very Likely	Highly Unlikely
2--SLO2	4			

How likely is it that after graduation you will browse historical websites?

Exit Interview Survey Results (Question 6) Fall 2024

Question/SLO N=5	Very Likely	Likely	Not Very Likely	Highly Unlikely
2--SLO2	2	3		

Exit Interview Survey Results (Question 6) Spring 2025

Question/SLO N=4	Very Likely	Likely	Not Very Likely	Highly Unlikely
2--SLO2	2	2		

Exit Interview Survey Results Since Fall 2022

How satisfied are you with the history program furthering your desire to explore history outside of the classroom?

Semester	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Spring 2025	1	3		
Fall 2024	5			
Spring 2024	2	4		
Fall 2023	3			
Spring 2023	4	2		
Fall 2022	3			

The History Department's goal is that 50 percent of majors will participate in extra-curricular activities/events and 100 percent will acknowledge ("Very Satisfied") on the Senior Exit Exam Survey that they possess an interest in pursuing history beyond the classroom. Unfortunately, the History Department did not meet its goal for this SLO. However, the History Department saw improvement over the previous academic year, with 67 percent of majors scoring "Very Satisfied" in the 2024-2025 academic year over 56 percent who scored the same in 2023-2024. It is also important to point out that 100 percent of history majors marked the answer to this question as "satisfied" or higher since the survey was first implemented in Fall 2022.

Use of Results to Improve Outcomes:

The History Department's SLO-2, *Exploring History Beyond the Classroom*, is an outcome that is important but difficult to measure. The best ways to gauge this, we have found, is to track student participation in history-related events and, frankly, by asking the students about it during their Exit Interview. The exit interview surveys indicate that the History Department is enjoying much success in this area. Indeed, if the goal was 100 percent of students scoring "Satisfied" or "Likely" or above, the department would have met its goal.

To involve more students, the History Department will build on the success the History Club had in 2024-2025 by arranging activities and conducting more field trips to entice more students to participate.

The History Department will launch a new faculty lecture series, the History Department Forum, in the fall of 2025. The Forum will be held monthly and allow the history faculty to present their research to history faculty and students. This is sure to interest students. There was an unsuccessful attempt to launch this lecture series last academic year. Also, professors will announce these opportunities in each of our classes and encourage students to attend.

Professors will announce these extra-curricular opportunities in each of our classes and encourage students to attend. The history faculty will also incorporate into their teaching, the use of historical video clips, websites, or movies, not only for their content, but also to generate interest among the students for exploring history beyond the classroom.

SLO-3 Obtain General Factual Knowledge

Define Outcome:

Graduating history majors will demonstrate a reasonable command of general factual knowledge. This will be demonstrated by 100 percent of majors scoring at or above 500 (the national average) on the ACAT Examination each semester and 100 percent acknowledging on the Exit Interview Survey that they are "Very Satisfied" with the general factual knowledge they have obtained as a history major.

Assessment Methods:

ACAT

The ACAT is an exit exam for students majoring in history. There are two exams: one in American history and one in European history. The American history ACAT includes four content areas: U.S. 1820 to 1890, U.S. Colonial to 1763, U.S. Military/Diplomatic, and U.S. 1763 to 1820. The European history ACAT includes four content areas: European Medieval, European Early Modern, French Revolution and Napoleon, and European Modern to Present. The exam is administered in the Senior Seminar course during students' senior year.

Senior Exit Interview

The chairperson invites all graduating seniors to a one-on-one interview in the weeks prior to their graduation. The chair asks the seniors to review the program. The chair seeks information on successful/unsuccessful classes, effective/ineffective professors, and asks about areas in need of improvement. The results can provide useful information for all three SLOs, as well as general program development. Graduating history majors also complete a brief survey that corresponds with the History Department's SLOs.

Criteria for Success (Thresholds for Assessment Methods):

The History Department's goal is that 100 percent of majors will score at or above 500 (the national average) on the ACAT Examination and 100 percent will acknowledge on the Exit Interview Survey that they are "Very Satisfied" with the general factual knowledge they have obtained as a history major. The History Department faculty believe that since the ACAT examination is taken during a history major's senior year, that every student should score at least at the national average on the exam.

Link to 'Tech Tomorrow' Strategic Plan:

1.B General Education Curriculum

Results and Analysis:

For years, the History Department has relied primarily on the ACAT examination results to measure students' general factual knowledge as they complete the history program. Beginning

in the 2022-2023 academic year, the department added the Exit Interview Survey to help measure the department's success with this SLO. The ACAT examination is a standardized test that measures students' general knowledge in four content areas of American history or European history. The examination is administered in the Senior Seminar course after students have completed nearly all of their coursework and are preparing to graduate. The History Department did not meet its goal of having 100 percent of majors scoring 500 or above on the test, nor did the department reach its goal of having 100 percent of majors acknowledge on the Exit Interview Survey that they are satisfied with their attainment of general factual knowledge.

Fall 2024

The ACAT scores in the fall of 2024 improved over the scores in the fall of 2023. The overall improvement on the US exam was a modest three points, while the improvement on the European exam was considerable: 574 (Fall 2023) and 688 (Fall 2024). The improvement in the European exam scores for the same periods showed a remarkable improvement of 114 points, with one student scoring in the 100th percentile! Unfortunately, for the US exam, 6 of 12 students scored beneath the 500-point threshold (national average), which is the History Department's goal for this SLO. One even scored in the 7th percentile. Consequently, these low scores brought down the overall class average for the Fall 2024 exam. The good news is that class average for both the US and European exams was above the national average.

ACAT Results (US)—Fall 2024

Historical Area by Class	N=12		Overall Performance by Each Student		
Area	Std Score	%ile		Std Score	%ile
US 1820 to 1890	508	53	Student 1	599	84
US Colonial to 1763	549	69	Student 2	412	19
US military/Diplomatic	498	49	Student 3	354	7
US 1763 to 1820	503	51	Student 4	488	45
			Student 5	493	47
			Student 6	639	92

		Student 7	546	68
		Student 8	387	13
		Student 9	499	50
		Student 10	633	91
		Student 11	507	53
		Student 12	682	97
OVERALL			520	58

ACAT Results (European)—Fall 2024

Historical Area by Class	N=2	Overall Performance by Each Student	
Area	Std %'ile Score *		Std %'ile Score
Early Modern	669 *	Student 1	775 100
French Rev. & Napoleon	629 *	Student 2	602 85
Medieval	533 *		
Modern to Present	597 *		
OVERALL			688 93

*No percentile scores provided.

Spring 2025

The US ACAT scores in the spring of 2025 declined considerably over the scores in the spring of 2024. The overall score for the 4 students who took the US exam was 403, down from 507 the previous fall. Such a drop is surprising and unacceptable. There was some good news regarding those who took the European exam. The one student who took the exam in the spring of 2025 received a 586, which is a 59-point improvement over the previous spring.

ACAT Results (US)—Spring 2025

Historical Area by Class	N=4	Overall Performance by Each Student	
Area	Std %'ile Score		Std %'ile Score
US 1820 to 1890	419 *	Student 1	485 44
US Colonial to 1763	460 *	Student 2	400 16
US military/Diplomatic	437 *	Student 3	460 34
US 1763 to 1820	396 *	Student 4	269 1
OVERALL			403 24

*No percentile scores provided.

ACAT Results (European)—Spring 2025

Historical Area by Class	N=1	Overall Performance by Each Student	
Area	Std %'ile Score *		Std %'ile Score
Early Modern	536 *	Student 1	586 81
French Rev. & Napoleon	475 *		
Medieval	553 *		
Modern to Present	560 *		
OVERALL			586 81

*No percentile scores provided.

ACAT (US) Results by Semester Since Fall 2020

	Spring 2020 N=15	Spring 2021** N=2	Fall 2021 N=9	Spring 2022 N=11	Fall 2022 N=4	Spring 2023 N=6	Fall 2023 N=3	Spring 2024 N=10	Fall 2024 N=12	Spring 2025 N=4
Area	Std %' ile Score	Std %' ile Score	Std %' ile Score	Std %' ile Score	Std %' ile Score	Std %' ile Score	Std %' ile Score	Std %' ile Score	Std %' ile Score	Std %' ile Score
US 1820 to 1890	593 82	477 *	541 66	542 66	439 27	537 64	517 57	537 64	508 53	419 *
US Colonial to 1763	586 81	491 *	553 70	510 54	532 63	496 48	562 73	564 74	549 69	460 *
US military/Diplom atic	569 75	481 *	489 46	518 57	490 46	520 58	516 56	498 49	498 49	437 *
US 1763 to 1820	550 69	506 *	555 71	518 57	541 66	516 56	440 53	491 46	503 51	396 *
OVERALL PERFORMANCE	596 83	486 45	546 66	525 60	498 49	519 58	507 53	527 61	520 58	403 2 4

*No percentile scores provided

**No Senior Seminar in Fall 2020

ACAT (European) Results by Semester Since Fall 2023***

	Fall 2023 N=2	Fall 2024 N=2	Spring 2025 N=1
Area	Std %'ile Score	Std %'ile Score	Std %'ile Score
Early Modern	**	669 *	536 *
French Rev/Napoleon	**	629 *	475 *
Medieval	**	533 *	553 *

Modern to Present	**	597 *	560 *
OVERALL PERFORMANCE	573 77	688 *	586 *

*No percentile scores provided

**No area scores provided.

***European exam given first time in Fall 2023, but isn't administered each semester.

Exit Interview Survey

The question on the Exit Interview Survey that directly corresponds with SLO-3 reads:

How satisfied are you that the history program provided you with historical general factual knowledge? (SLO-3)

Exit Interview Survey Results Fall 2024

Question/SLO N=5	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
3--SLO3	4	1		

Exit Interview Survey Results Spring 2025

Question/SLO N=4	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
3--SLO3	4			

SLO-3 Exit Interview Survey Results Since Fall 2022

Semester	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Fall 2024	4	1		

Spring 2025	4			
Spring 2024	5	1		
Fall 2023	3			
Spring 2023	5	1		
Fall 2022	3			

The charts above indicate that over the past five years, the students as a class have scored above 500 in a majority of semesters (7 of 10). So, the good news is that if we look at the big picture, a majority of history majors are scoring at or above the national average (500) over the past five years. As mentioned above, poor performance by even one student can bring down a classes' overall score, and the overall scores for a class can be brought down by the quality of students in it. The History Department continues to explore ways to bring up the individual student scores and meet its objectives. The history faculty continue to consider ways to encourage the students to take the exam more seriously. Some have expressed an interest in assigning weight to the exam in calculating the course's final grade or by excusing students from an assignment if they score high. The issue here is that the ACAT scores usually arrive after the semester has ended, depriving faculty the opportunity to know the students' scores when computing their final grades. Beginning in Fall 2025, the History Department decided to administer the exam much earlier, allowing the scores to be received before the end of the semester and to be figured into the students' final course grades.

Use of Results to Improve Outcomes:

The overall class ACAT results for Fall 2024 were solid (520, 58th percentile), but the Spring 2025 scores were terribly disappointing (403, 24th percentile US exam; 586; 81st percentile European exam). Three of the students who took the American exam scored in the 400s and another scored beneath 300, simply unacceptable for a senior completing the history program. The one bright side is that the student who took the European exam scored well above the national average (586).

Beginning in the fall of 2025, the history faculty will use Generative AI to prepare ACAT practice exams for both the American and European exams, which can be administered in class to

familiarize students with the exam. Also, students can review the practice exam content on their own to prepare for the exam. This is in addition to the in-class review session.

Furthermore, professors teaching the Senior Seminar will be required to make students' ACAT exam scores a part of the students' overall course grade.

Summative Evaluation:

Overall, the History Department had a successful academic year, but it did not meet its SLO goals. Highlights include the achievements in SLO 1, SLO 2, and SLO 3 mentioned above as well as many others. Exit interviews also indicate that the History Department is succeeding in its mission. The chair of the History Department conducted an exit interview with five students who graduated at the end of fall 2024 and with four who graduated in the spring of 2025. Overall, each expressed praise for the history program, the history courses they took, and their history professors. Some of the comments included:

"loved the program"

"enjoyed all the professors"

"haven't had a negative experience"

"disappointed couldn't take more classes"

"the reason I stayed at Tech and the reason I stayed in college"

"the professors do a great job making students feel comfortable"

"challenging yet rewarding"

"doing everything right"

"I loved it"

"I had a great experience in the history program"

"I struggle to think of areas in need of improvement"

"informative, satisfying"

"absolutely loved it"

"faculty put students first"

"department is a good size to get to know the professors"

Although the exit interviews are useful, the history faculty recognize that more concrete, measurable results beyond the exit interviews are needed. The faculty acknowledge that the department did not meet all three of its Student Learning Outcome goals in 2024-2025, and

that opportunities for improvement exist. Students in the Senior Seminar must improve in crafting effective and clear arguments, composing a compelling narrative, and formatting sources properly. Faculty will now begin teaching these skills and others in the Senior Seminar and continue these efforts in other upper-division history courses. Faculty must also find a way to encourage to improve the ACAT examination scores. Scoring in the 1st percentile is simply unacceptable for any senior history major who is completing his or her program requirements. The history faculty continue to explore ways to bring up the individual student scores. Administering ACAT practice exams to supplement the review sessions likely will improve scores, and requiring professors teaching the Senior Seminar to factor in students' scores into their final course grade will incentivize students to take the exam seriously. More student involvement in extra-curricular activities is a must and additional ways of tracking students' appreciation of the past are being considered. In addition, history professors will also incorporate into their teaching, the use of historical video clips, websites, or movies, not only for their content, but also to generate interest among the students for exploring history beyond the classroom. The history faculty will be working on all of these in the coming academic year.

Assessment Plan Changes:

List of Appendices:

Appendix 1: History BA/BS Curriculum Map

Appendix 2: Senior Seminar Rubric

Appendix 3: History Department Exit Interview Survey

Appendix 1: History BA/BS Curriculum Map

Basic Course	Short Title	SLO-1 Research & Writing	SLO-2 Appreciation of the Past	SLO-3 Factual Knowledge	Race/Gender Diversity & Citizenship	Global Awareness
1310	World Science		X	X		X
2010	Early US		X	X	X	
2020	Modern US		X	X	X	
2210	Early Western		X	X		X
2060	Race & Ethnic Stu.		X	X	X	
2070	African Am. Hist.		X	X	X	
2220	Modern Western		X	X		X
2310	Early World		X	X		X
2320	Modern World		X	X		X
3100	Tennessee History	X	X	X	X	
3360	US Military	X	X	X		X
3390	Civil Rights	X	X	X	X	
3410	Methods	X				
3420	Archives	X	X			
3430	Digital History		X			
3550	Ancient	X	X	X		X
3710	Spain	X	X	X		X
3720	Mexico	X	X	X	X	X
3900	Environmental	X	X	X		X
3910	Intro. Am. Indians	X	X	X	X	
4010	Colonial	X	X	X	X	
4020	Early Republic	X	X	X	X	
4030	Civil War	X	X	X	X	
4040	Gilded Age	X	X	X	X	
4050	Early 20 th Century	X	X	X	X	
4060	Postwar US	X	X	X	X	
4070	History of Comics	X	X	X		
4090	Popular Culture	X	X	X	X	X
4100	Appalachian	X	X	X		
4200	Old South	X	X	X	X	
4210	New South	X	X	X	X	
4230	Economic	X	X	X		
4250	US West	X	X	X	X	
4290	Science Tech	X	X	X		
4330	Religion	X	X	X		X
4350	Gender	X	X	X	X	
4354	Female Bodies	X	X	X	X	
4360	US Social	X	X	X	X	
4380	Black Women	X	X	X	X	X
4390	African-American	X	X	X	X	X
4400	Film History	X	X	X		X
4420	Public History		X	X		
4440	Native American	X	X	X	X	

Appendix 1: History BA/BS Curriculum Map, cont.

4470	Sports History	X	X	X	X	
4520	Medieval	X	X	X		X
4530	Renn/Reformation	X	X	X		X
4540	Abs/Enlightenment	X	X	X		X
4550	French Revolution	X	X	X		X
4560	19 th Century Eur.	X	X	X		X
4565	World War I	X	X	X		X
4570	World War II	X	X	X		X
4620	Russia/USSR	X	X	X		X
4630	Modern France	X	X	X		X
4640	Modern Germany	X	X	X		X
4650	Early England	X	X	X		X
4660	Modern England	X	X	X		X
4668	Nazi Germany	X	X	X		X
4680	Holocaust	X	X	X		X
4690	British Commwlt	X	X	X	X	X
4710	Africa	X	X	X	X	X
4730	Middle East	X	X	X		X
4740	Japan	X	X	X		X
4750	China	X	X	X		X
4760	Vietnam	X	X	X		X
4770	History of India	X	X	X	X	X
4790	Latin America	X	X	X	X	X
4800	Legal History	X	X	X		
4810	Scientific Contr.	X	X	X		
4880	History of Med.	X	X	X		
4890	History of Nursing	X	X	X		
4900	Topics	X	X	X		
4910	Directed Studies	X	X	X		
4940	Internship		X	X		
4990	Senior Seminar	X	X	X		

Appendix 2: Senior Seminar Rubric

Senior Seminar Rubric Results

Name:	Excellent	Good	Emerging	Weak	Paper Grades	Comments
Course:						
Thesis						
Argument						
Primary						
Secondary						
Citations						
English						
Organization						
Context						
Critical						
Direction						

Additional Comments:

Appendix 3: History Department Exit Interview Survey

History Department Exit Interview Survey

Very Satisfied Satisfied Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied

1. How satisfied are you that the history program provided you with historical general factual knowledge?

Very Satisfied Satisfied Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied

2. How satisfied are you that the history program taught you the proper way to conduct research and write effectively?

Very Satisfied Satisfied Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied

3. How satisfied are you with the history program furthering your desire to explore history outside of the classroom?

Yes No Not Sure

4. Did the history program further your interest in exploring history after you graduate?

Very Likely Likely Not Very Likely Highly Unlikely

5. How likely is it that after graduation you will visit historical sites?

Very Likely Likely Not Very Likely Highly Unlikely

6. How likely is it that after graduation you will read historical works, such as books and articles?

Very Likely Likely Not Very Likely Highly Unlikely

7. How likely is it that after graduation you will watch historical programs on your phone, a computer, or television?

Very Likely Likely Not Very Likely Highly Unlikely

8. How likely is it that after graduation you will browse historical websites?