**Annual Academic Assessment Report Cover Sheet**

Assessment reports are due the 1st Wednesday after the Fall Term

Email to: assessment@unlv.edu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Information:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Assessed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Submitted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact Person for This Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Marcia Gallo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>5-1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:marcia.gallo@unlv.edu">marcia.gallo@unlv.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please attach a narrative (not to exceed 4 pages, excluding appendices) addressing the following:

- What are the student learning outcomes? Please provide a numbered list.
- Which learning outcomes were assessed?
- How were they assessed? (Programs must use at least one direct assessment of student learning.)
- Undergraduate programs should assess at least one University Undergraduate Learning Outcome (UULO) each year, which may or may not overlap with a program learning outcome.
- Graduate programs should assess at least one outcome related to one of the following graduate level requirements each year:
  - student engagement in research, scholarship, creative expression and/or appropriate high-level professional practice.
  - activities requiring originality, critical analysis and expertise.
  - the development of extensive knowledge in the field under study.
- What was learned from the assessment results?
- How did the program respond to what was learned?

Please limit the narrative portion of your report to no more than four pages. You may attach appendices with data, tables, charts, or other materials as needed. Please explain the relevant conclusions from any appendices in your narrative. Please contact the Office of Academic Assessment if you have questions or need assistance.
UNLV History Department, College of Liberal Arts
M.A. Program Assessment Report 2016-17

Overview
The M.A. Program Assessment for 2016-17 evaluates the Student Learning Objectives (below) and reviews the continuing strength of the Public History minor; reports M.A. Program completion (including theses successfully defended) and M.A. student awards received.
Direct assessment focuses on the results of comprehensive examinations, including new efforts to link coursework with examinations and to coordinate examination scheduling.
Overall, the department continues to work conscientiously on improving student performance and completion of the M.A. program in a timely manner.

Student Learning Objectives
Upon completion of the M.A. program in History, students should be able to:
(1) Demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of the content and historiography of an extensive body of scholarly material in a major field defined by historical period, geographic region or regions, or theme, e.g. History and Memory.
(2) Demonstrate knowledge of the content and historiography of an extensive body of scholarly material in a minor field defined by historical period, geographic region or regions, or theme, e.g. History and Memory.
(3) Demonstrate an awareness of the role of historians in the construction of the past and the role of contemporary context in shaping the perspectives of historians.
(4) Demonstrate the ability to formulate an original research project, identify pertinent sources, examine those sources thoroughly, efficiently, and even-handedly within the context of the existing scholarly literature in the field and construct a well ordered, well argued and well written paper of substantial length.
I. General M.A. Program Assessment

**Continuing Strength of Public History Program**

Building on the already established strengths of our Public History program, the minor in Public History has grown in importance for students in the M.A. program. The department established its graduate Public History program in 1999; it continues to be one of the top ranked programs in the U.S. Encompassing such areas as historic preservation, the history of public lands, oral history, and material culture, the Public History addition complemented nationally recognized strengths in the linked fields of U.S. West, environmental, and cultural history. MA students increasingly avail themselves of the opportunity to learn and practice public history through coursework and hands-on experience in mounting exhibits and shows. In 2016-17, nearly half of the History M.A. students had selected a Public History minor.

UNLV’s public history program is also the only graduate program in the U.S. with the official “Statewide Cultural Preservation Organization” housed within a history department. Preserve Nevada was awarded the Las Vegas Historic Preservation Award in 2011 for advocacy on behalf of the entire state and was nominated by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as a full member of the National Partner Working Group.

In addition, the well-regarded regional Southwest Oral History Association is housed within UNLV’s History Department. This one-of-a-kind collaboration, begun in 2014 and renewed in 2017, brings together faculty and staff in the History Department, the College of Liberal Arts, and the University Libraries. It also ensures that both History faculty and students are connected to a vital network of oral history practitioners, conferences, scholarships and awards.
History M. A. student Franklin Howard serves as the Graduate Assistant for the Southwest Oral History Association.

**Successful Completion of Program**

In 2016-17, six students successfully completed the History M.A. Program. Some of them are continuing their employment as educators, such as Clark County School District teacher Kristina Lewis, or have gone on to continue their education in other programs. For example, Maryse Lundering-Timpano, who majored in United States history with a minor in Public History, was accepted into and has begun the Master of Library Sciences Program at the University of Michigan.

In addition to strengthening students’ preparation for comprehensive examinations, the History Department continues to emphasize that M.A. students use the seminar as an opportunity to develop a topic that could lead to a thesis. Three students successfully completed and defended theses in 2016-17: Sara Black, Tracy Neblina, and Linsey Scriven. Professors William Bauer, Eugene Moehring, and Marcia Gallo, respectively, served as Advisors. Although the overall number of students writing theses is fewer than in previous decades, the quality of the completed theses has risen.

**Student Awards**

The Department’s M.A. students have continued to distinguish themselves both within and outside the Department. M.A. student Sara Black was selected as the recipient of the award for Best Thesis in the History Department and nominated for the College of Liberal Arts award for her thesis entitled “Homeland, Homestead, and Haven: The Changing Perspectives of Zion National Part, 1700-1930.” M.A. student recipients of the Jerry Lodge and Robert E. Clark Scholarships for academic excellence in this period are Franklin Howard, William Marino, Alan Mattay, Lee Hanover, and Brandon Booth. Hanover and Mattay
also won departmental awards for their work pre-comprehensive examinations and Howard was honored as the department's best post-comprehensive examinations student.

II. Direct Assessment.
Assessing Student Learning Objectives 1, 2, and 4, and continuing the efforts established in the previous assessment period, the History Department reviewed M.A. Program comprehensive exams from Fall 2016 through Spring 2017. The Graduate Committee has continued exploring and implementing ways to link the curriculum and the examinations more closely and to improve faculty-student communication about exam expectations. For example, all M.A. students must meet with the M.A. Program Coordinator or the Graduate Coordinator as well as with their Advisor at least once each semester. Documentation requirements for students’ progress throughout the program have been strengthened, with clear expectations and deadlines stated and regular reminders provided to students. An innovation during this assessment period has been the establishment of specific examination days in both spring and fall semesters. The dates are announced at the beginning of the semester, with reminders sent throughout. This new scheduling system replaces the more individualistically determined and rather haphazard practice that had been in place and also helps lessen some of the students’ confusion and anxiety.

An analysis of twelve examinations from Fall 2016 and Spring 2017, with a scale of 1-5 for each area of evaluation (Preparation, Historical Knowledge, Historiography, and Writing and Analysis) shows the following:

a) most students taking examinations in this period did well preparing for the exams;
b) many students improved their integration of historical knowledge and historiography;
c) some students could have improved their writing and analysis in their essays.
Representative comments from faculty examiners include:

“Your opening paragraph and organizing framework might have taken more account of chronology, and the response in general might have more thoroughly interwoven historiographical analysis (which is strong in relation to individual texts) with historical narrative, or explored the relationship between them.”

“Great use of a range of sources that together added up to more than a sum of their parts. This is just what you need to do to discuss a zone of activity that is not really a ‘field.’ Lot of thoughtfully selected sources nicely deployed.”

The results may indicate that faculty have been better preparing students for comprehensive examinations, emphasizing the components of the examination itself and the importance of integrating historical knowledge and historiography as well as writing and analysis. The History Department will continue its efforts to improve M. A. student success.