

**Commission on Higher Education Program Assessment Report:
Department of History and Philosophy- Lander University**

Introduction and overview:

The Department of History and Philosophy at Lander University offers three degree tracks for undergraduate students majoring in History: a Bachelor of Arts degree, a Bachelor of Science degree, and a Bachelor of Science degree with Secondary Certification in Social Studies. The program also offers minor areas of study in Philosophy, Pre-Law, Religion, and International Studies. As of the 2008-2009 academic year, the department had seventy-three majors, with twenty-nine of these pursuing a History BS degree, fifteen pursuing a History BA degree, and twenty-nine pursuing a History BS with Secondary Certification degree. There were seven full-time tenure-track positions during the 2008-2009 academic year, including five professors of history and two professors of philosophy. This number, however, will be reduced to five tenured or tenure-track professors during the 2009-2010 academic year due to the retirement of two tenured History professors.

Figure 1: Department of History and Philosophy Data- Majors and Credit Hour Production
Source: *Fact Book, 2008-2009*, Lander University Office of Institutional Research

New Fall Headcount for HSPH:

	2003	2004	2005		2006		2007		2008	
History	80	73	79	8.2%	82	3.8%	56	-31.7%	68	21.4%

Total Credit Hour Production:

	2006	2006	2006	2007	2007	2007		2008	2008	2008	
	Lower Div.	Upper Div.	Total CHP	Lower Div.	Upper Div.	Total CHP		Lower Div.	Upper Div.	Total CHP	
HIST	1579	487.0	2066	1113.0	470.0	1583	-23.4%	1446.0	453.0	1899.0	20.0%

	2006	2006	2006	2007	2007	2007		2008	2008	2008	
	Lower Div.	Upper Div.	Total CHP	Lower Div.	Upper Div.	Total CHP		Lower Div.	Upper Div.	Total CHP	
PHIL	624.0	45.0	669	504.0	63.0	567.0	-15.2%	504.0	123.0	627.0	10.6%

Figure 2: HSPH Enrollment Figures from 2007-2009

Source: Lander University Registrar's Office

Type of courses	Semester	# Sections	Enrollment	Students/section
Gen. Ed.	Spring 2007	16	351	21.9
	Fall 2007	13	356	27.3
	Spring 2008	9	263	29.2
	Fall 2008	14	461	32.9
	Spring 2009	10	328	32.8
Upper Div.*	Spring 2007	6	282	47
	Fall 2007	7	159	22.7
	Spring 2008	6	149	24.8
	Fall 2008	5	160	32
	Spring 2009	7	123	17.5

*Section tallies do not include HIST 499, 451, and 490.

Program Goals:

The Department of History and Philosophy has identified a series of program goals related to student academic progress and performance assessment, both in particular history courses and throughout the three degree tracks. Many of these goals, referenced below as *instructional goals*, concern desired learner outcomes and the means by which they are assessed. Other goals relate to *student progress toward degree* requirements, departmental *staffing* needs, and efforts to promote applied scholarship and enhance community *linkages*.

Instructional goals:

By studying the development in time of politics, societies, economies, attitudes, systems of thought, and cultures, Lander University history graduates will be able to demonstrate competency in the following six skill areas:

1. A history student will be able to critically evaluate a secondary source of history.
2. A history student will be able to critically evaluate primary sources.
3. A history student will be able to place major events in American history in correct chronological order.
4. A history student will be able to narrate a series of events in the history of a country other than the United States.
5. A history student will be able to write a research paper using the *Chicago Manual of Style* for documentation.
6. A history student will be able to orally articulate and defend a position developed through research

These learning outcomes will contribute to meeting Lander University's first Strategic Plan Goal: Learning.

Student Progress toward degree:

Students who select any of the three History degree tracks as their major area of study should make reasonable progress toward that degree. Above all, the Department aims to mentor and guide students effectively to graduation, offering timely guidance with respect to degree and university-wide requirements. This unit goal supports Lander University's broader Strategic Plan Goal for Accountability.

Staffing:

The Department of History and Philosophy, with five full-time tenured or tenure-track professors, is currently working at or above capacity in terms of service to students majoring in History, including advising, mentoring, teaching, committee membership, etc. For the 2009-2010 academic year, however, the department will be staffed by only three full-time tenured or tenure-track professors tasked with advising and mentorship duties to students. One of the Department's goals, therefore, is to maintain functionality in service areas to students by replacing retired faculty with new hires designed to meet specific department needs and redress deficiencies.

Linkages:

The faculty of the History and Philosophy Department believe that knowledge should be placed in service to the community. We believe further that our students understand historical processes better when they learn how this knowledge can be applied in practical real-world settings. We thus aim to seek out and cultivate community and state-wide linkages with National Historical Sites, parks, museums, archives, libraries, etc. in order to provide our students with historical internships that can offer them hands-on work experiences relating to history. This goal supports the Lander Strategic Plan Goal for Linkages.

Indicators of Success/Student Learning Outcomes:

Instructional goals:

1. In order to demonstrate competency in the first instructional goal listed above, students will write a critical evaluation of a secondary source of history (a scholarly book). Students will demonstrate thereby the ability to write correctly, summarize data, evaluate

historical arguments and scholarly presentation, and produce written work according to a specific format.

2. To demonstrate competency in the second instructional goal, students will write a critical evaluation of a primary source of history (a text or document drawn from a specific period in history), demonstrating a knowledge of scholarly methods of documentary analysis and interpretation.
3. To demonstrate competency in the third instructional goal, students will be required to participate in exercises and exams that ask them to place major events in American history in correct chronological order.
4. For the fourth instructional goal listed above, students will write a narrative essay on a series of events in a country other than the United States. The students will demonstrate thereby the ability to write correctly, construct historical arguments logically, address the role of historical causation, and produce written work according to a specific format.
5. Students will demonstrate competency in the fifth instructional goal by writing a research paper that makes use of the *Chicago Manual of Style* for documentation.
6. Students will demonstrate competency in the sixth instructional goal by participating in a thesis paper defense that requires them to choose a position and defend it.

Student Progress Toward Degree:

The department's goal of providing effective mentorship and guidance to History majors in each of its three degree tracks seeks to assist students in recognizing and attaining major milestones in their progress toward graduation. Recognizing that students are sometimes dealing with numerous challenges beyond the classroom related to financial exigency, health, and family concerns, departmental mentorship should nevertheless help students achieve their program goals within a reasonable amount of time. By the same token, proper supervision of student progress should enable a majority of students declaring a particular major within the department to successfully graduate within that major program.

Staffing:

In order to replace retiring faculty and meet service needs to students, especially with respect to advising and mentorship, the department hopes to hire two new tenure-track History professors during the 2009-2010 academic year. These positions should be able to cover European history course needs and advising needs for secondary education students.

Linkages:

In order to provide internship opportunities to Lander University History majors, the department will seek to renew existing relationships with the Ninety-Six National Historical Park and initiate

new relationships with museums and archives in Greenwood, Columbia, Greenville, and Spartanburg. The department will produce a master list of such opportunities for advising purposes.

Assessment Instruments and Frequency of Assessment:

Instructional Goals:

1. In order to assess the first instructional goal listed above, students will write book reviews. The reviews will be placed in a portfolio and assessed by the history faculty using a Book Review Rubric (Attachment B). This will be done each fall semester when History 201, the department's core course in historical methods, is taught.
2. The second instructional goal will be assessed by having students write analyses of primary sources. Designated analyses from every student will be placed in a portfolio and assessed by the history faculty using a Primary Source Analysis Rubric (Attachment F). This will occur each fall semester when History 390, one of the department's required core courses in American History, is taught.
3. Assessment of the third instructional goal will be done by tests requiring the placement of events in chronological order (Attachment G) which will be administered at the conclusion of History 390 and at the conclusion of History 391. These tests will be piloted in spring semester 2009 due to a scheduling anomaly for History 390.
4. Students will write narrative essays in History 201. The essays will be placed in a portfolio and assessed by the history faculty using a Narrative Essay Rubric (Attachment E). Frequency: each fall semester when History 201 is offered or in spring semesters if it is necessary to administer the assessment in other courses.
5. All majors will write thesis papers in History 499 demonstrating their ability to research and document the research in the *Chicago* style. The thesis papers will be placed in a portfolio and assessed by the history faculty using the Capstone Thesis Evaluation Rubric (Attachment D). Frequency: Each semester when History 499 is taught.
6. All majors will orally defend the historical position (thesis) developed in their History 499 thesis papers. The oral defense will occur at the end of each semester following the submission of the thesis papers. The defense will be assessed by attending faculty members using an Oral Thesis Defense Rubric that has been incorporated into the new Capstone Thesis Evaluation Rubric (Attachment D). Frequency: Each semester when History 499 is taught.

Student Progress toward degree:

The best way to assess whether students are making adequate progress in their chosen programs is to have assigned advisors keep close tabs on their transcripts and courses of study. Each

advisor should compile a portfolio for her/his assigned advisees and update it regularly. This is a difficult process to assess and measure in quantitative terms. There are, however, some tools that can assist in judging the effectiveness of faculty mentorship and advising. The most important of these are the student evaluations of advisor preparedness, compiled by online surveys during the advising period each semester. In addition, the Praxis exam pass/fail ratios of students pursuing a History BS with Secondary Certification degree, and the number of such students registering to take the exams, can help determine whether students are moving through that particular degree track in a timely manner and identify program weaknesses based on student performance in the exams.

Staffing:

Staffing needs are assessed by reference to teaching loads, enrollment levels, the number of declared majors within the department, and departmental service demands, including university committee memberships and advising and mentorship responsibilities to students.

Linkages

Departmental success or failure in providing internship opportunities for History majors can be assessed superficially by reference to the number of students per semester registered for internships in HIST 490. The department's goal of increasing the range and diversity of opportunities available to students, however, can only be assessed by comparing the number of students enrolled in HIST 490 with the total number of distinct work sites that hosted the students and the type of work undertaken at each site. This assessment should be done at least once every two academic years.

Expected Outcomes:

Instructional Goals:

1. If expectations are met, eighty percent (80%) or more of all history majors will score 80% or higher on the assessment based on the Book Review Rubric. If that expectation is only partially met, with 80% of students scoring only 75% or better on the book review, then the department will consider ways of revising instructional techniques to address minor shortcomings. If the goal is not met, with less than 80% of students scoring above an 75% on the review, then the department will consider major efforts at instructional reform and/or remediation for students with difficulties.
2. If expectations are met, at least eighty percent (80%) or more of all history majors will score 80% or higher on the assessment based on the primary Source Analysis Rubric. If that expectation is only partially met, with only 70-79% of students scoring an 80% or

better, then the department will consider ways of revising instructional techniques to address minor shortcomings. If the goal is not met, with less than 70% of students scoring above an 80%, then the department will consider major efforts at instructional reform and/or remediation for students with difficulties.

3. If expectations are met, at least eighty percent (80%) or more of all history majors will score 80% or higher on the tests. If that expectation is only partially met, with only 70-79% of students scoring an 80% or better, then the department will consider ways of revising instructional techniques to address minor shortcomings. If the goal is not met, with less than 70% of students scoring above an 80%, then the department will consider major efforts at instructional reform and/or remediation for students with difficulties.
4. If expectations are met, at least eighty percent (80%) or more of all history majors will score 80% or higher on the assessment based on the Narrative Essay Rubric. If that expectation is only partially met, with only 70-79% of students scoring an 80% or better, then the department will consider ways of revising instructional techniques to address minor shortcomings. If the goal is not met, with less than 70% of students scoring above an 80%, then the department will consider major efforts at instructional reform and/or remediation for students with difficulties.
5. If expectations are met, at least eighty percent (80%) or more of all history majors will score 80% or higher on the assessment based on the Thesis Documentation Rubric. If that expectation is only partially met, with only 70-79% of students scoring an 80% or better, then the department will consider ways of revising instructional techniques to address minor shortcomings. If the goal is not met, with less than 70% of students scoring above an 80%, then the department will consider major efforts at instructional reform and/or remediation for students with difficulties.
6. If expectations are met, at least eighty percent (80%) or more of all history majors will score 80% or higher on the assessment based on the Oral Thesis Defense Rubric. If that expectation is only partially met, with only 70-79% of students scoring an 80% or better, then the department will consider ways of revising instructional techniques to address minor shortcomings. If the goal is not met, with less than 70% of students scoring above an 80%, then the department will consider major efforts at instructional reform and/or remediation for students with difficulties.

Student Progress Toward Degree:

If expectations of efficacious departmental advising and mentorship are met, then over 30% of all history majors who maintain full-time enrollment and good standing will qualify for graduation within a span of five years. Over 30% of students declaring a particular degree track, moreover, will graduate in that same degree track. If the goal is not met, with less than 30% of students graduating within a five year span or receiving degrees in their original degree track, then the department will consider new advising procedures and/or identify staffing/personnel recommendations to address the deficiency.

Linkages:

There should be at least four internships during any academic year and the number of distinct internship locales/work partners should be equal to the number of internships.

Review of the Results and the Actions Taken*Instructional Goals:*

1. According to the first sample of book reviews that were subjected to analysis using the new book review rubric, the department's goal of having 80% of students score 80% or better was not met. Of 14 students enrolled in the fall 2008 historical methods course, HIST 201, only 4, or 26% of the class, scored an 80% or better. Only 10 or 71% of the class scored above a 75%.

These initial numbers were a disappointment to the department. It is possible that this particular class tested below the average abilities of most history majors. If so, future data will help moderate this result. Given this early negative indicator, however, the department is considering ways to offer remedial help to students to improve performance on writing book reviews. These efforts would include additional class-time devoted to reading comprehension exercises and writing assignments. The natural venues for this additional instructional components are of course the HIST 201 course on Historical Methods and the 100-level history courses that students typically take first.

2. Data not yet available.

3. A quiz (Attachment G) to test student knowledge of chronological sequence in American History was developed and administered in History 390 during the spring semester of 2009. The department's goal of having 80% or more of students score an 80% or better was not neither met nor partially met. Out of a total of 50 possible points, scores on the assessment tool ranged from a low of 4 points to a high 22, with no students in a class of 24 scoring above a 44%. There are two possible explanations for this poor showing. First, the assessment tool and rubric may be flawed and in need of revision. The department will revisit this assessment rubric in the fall semester and discuss ways of improving it. Second, the HIST 390 course in which this assessment was conducted was structured by the professor (Dr. William Ramsey) as an exploration of U.S. Foreign policy between 1776 and 1920. As such, the course may not have provided students with adequate background in the basic Chronology of U.S. History. Dr. Ramsey will address this possibility by redesigning the HIST 390 course to focus more effectively on chronological knowledge. The revised course will be piloted in the fall semester of 2009.

A similar assessment quiz was administered in HIST 391 during the spring 2009 semester, but that data is still being processed by the professor and is currently unavailable for analysis.

4. Data being processed.

5. Data being processed.

6. Data being processed.

Student Progress toward degree

Student evaluations of faculty advisors within the Department of History and Philosophy suggest that our professors, at least those actively engaged in advising students, are knowledgeable and helpful. Student perceptions of academic advising survey results for the fall 2008 semester rated faculty performance on average at 4.61 for being “knowledgeable about the University’s policies and procedures.” (On a scale from 1-5). Faculty advising performance on average was rated 4.78 for being “knowledgeable about the requirements of my major.” (see attachment). This is gratifying, but there is nevertheless evidence suggesting that declared History majors are having difficulty reaching their objective: a bachelor’s degree. The number of Bachelors degrees (B.S., B.A., and B.S. with Secondary Certification inclusive) awarded has been declining annually since 2005. Whereas 22 degrees were awarded to History graduates during the 2005/2006 academic year, only 17 were awarded the following year, 12 in the 2007/2008 academic year, and a mere 10 during the most recent academic year of 2008/2009. (See attachment) This is striking, since the number of declared History majors has not declined apace, with the exception of 2007 when History majors declined by 31%. The number of declared History majors in the fall of 2008 (68) was only 7% lower than the number of majors in the fall of 2004, when last year’s cohort of graduates enrolled as freshman at the university. There are several variables at work in this dynamic, including transfers into and out of Lander, as well as changes of major choice within Lander. Yet the Department of History and Philosophy believes that a department that boasted between 56 and 82 declared majors over the past six years should be able to produce more than 10 graduates per year. Even if the department’s lowest yearly number of majors (56 in 2007) is used as a benchmark, this indicates that only 17% of History majors are receiving degrees. This trend is even more pronounced with respect to the History BS with Secondary Certification degree. According to the Lander University Registrar, Mac Kirkpatrick, no students at all have successfully completed this degree track and received a degree since the summer of 2005. If this rate of graduation (0%) holds true, it may be feared that none of the 28 students who are currently pursuing this line of study will finish successfully. The reason for this particular failure, we believe, may stem from two causes. First, it may be linked to the department’s inability to hire and retain a Coordinator of Secondary Education to act as advisor and mentor to History BS with Secondary Certification majors. Because this degree track is especially demanding and requires intensive faculty mentorship, the lack of this position places History B.S. with Secondary Certification majors at a serious disadvantage. Second, the challenging nature of this degree track may simply be too challenging. The degree requirements

as currently structured require at least one semester of overload registration and allows for no elective choice whatsoever. There is a possibility, therefore, that this degree track may simply be unachievable for ordinary students. It has certainly proved to be so without the assistance of a full-time Coordinator of Secondary Education.

Staffing

Despite retirements and new hires, the Department of History and Philosophy has shouldered its responsibilities since 2006 with the labors of 5 full-time tenure track Historians, 2 part-time adjunct historians (on average), and 2 full-time tenure track Philosophers. The available data at present does not allow for a division of credit hour production between Full-Time tenure track professors and part-time adjunct instructors. Because full-time professors teach a 4 course per semester load, while adjunct instructors teach at most 1-2 course per semester, calculations of credit hour production per faculty member that do not make such a distinction must be understood to be somewhat lower per tenure track faculty member than is actually the case. With this in mind, Historians within the Department of History and Philosophy produced an average of 295 credit hours in 2006, 226 in 2007, and 271 in 2008. Our 2 philosophers meanwhile produced 233 credit hours per professor in 2006, 283 in 2007, and 313 in 2008. (See Figure 3).

Figure 3: HSPH Credit Hour Production per faculty member

Source: Fact Books, 2006-2008, Lander University Office of Institutional Research

History CHP/Faculty Member

Year	Ten-Track Faculty	Part-time Faculty	Total CHP	CHP/Faculty
2006	5	2	2066	295
2007	5	2	1583	226
2008	5	2	1899	271

Philosophy CHP/Faculty members

Year	Ten-Track Faculty	Part-time Faculty	Total CHP	CHP/Faculty
2006	2	1	699	233
2007	2		567	283
2008	2		627	313

These figures indicate that teaching responsibilities have held steady for historians and that five tenure track positions, supplemented by adjunct labor, is a requisite level of staffing to meet

those demands. Credit hour production per faculty member, however, does not reveal other departmental and administrative responsibilities, such as advising, that tenure track historians are also required to perform above and beyond the teaching. The loss of two tenure track positions in 2009, with the retirements of Dr. Jean Paquette and Dr. Kenneth Mufuka, therefore place a tremendous burden on the remaining three tenure track historians. This will need to be addressed through new hires in the 2009-2010 academic year.

For philosophers teaching within the Department, the rising figures for credit hour production per faculty member indicate growing demands for Philosophy courses, especially those that satisfy General Education requirements. This trend has been addressed in the past academic year, 2008-2009, but overload teaching assignments that were shared by Dr. John Moore and Dr. Lee Archie. This solution, however, is very fatiguing for both professors and may need to be addressed by the addition of part-time adjunct teaching.