

Assessment Cycle 2025-2026

Program - Bachelor of Arts (BA) in History (261)

School of Social Sciences and Applied Programs

College: Arts and Sciences

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Date: 06/04/2026

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Date: 06/14/2026

Northwestern Mission. Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to acquiring, creating, and disseminating knowledge through innovative teaching, research, and service. With its certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs, Northwestern State University prepares its increasingly diverse student population to contribute to an inclusive global community with a steadfast dedication to improving our region, state, and nation.

College of Arts and Sciences' Mission. The College of Arts & Sciences, the largest college at Northwestern State University, is a diverse community of scholars, teachers, and students, working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. The College strives to produce graduates who are productive members of society equipped with the capability to promote economic and social development and improve the overall quality of life in the region. The College provides unequalled undergraduate education in the social and behavioral sciences, English, communication, journalism, media arts, biological and physical sciences, and the creative and performing arts, and at the graduate level in the creative and performing arts, English, TESOL, and Homeland Security. Uniquely, the College houses the Louisiana Scholars' College (the State's designated Honors College), the Louisiana Folklife Center, and the Creole Center, demonstrating its commitment to community service, research, and preservation of Louisiana's precious resources.

School of Social Sciences and Applied Programs. The School of Social Sciences and Applied Programs at Northwestern State University is dedicated to the education of students for professional, leadership, academic, and research careers in the challenging fields of criminal justice, public safety, homeland security, public service, and the social sciences. The school provides instruction across a broad range of concepts, with the ultimate goals of student attainment of excellence in analytical and critical thinking abilities, effective interpersonal, communication, problem-solving skills, moral commitment, and the acquisition of substantive bases of knowledge, necessary to secure positions in criminal justice, all levels of government, public policy, and private organizations. Using active learning, participatory pedagogy, and a Global perspective, the school holds a generalist orientation, through innovative analyses, in a student-centered, nurturing environment, and emphasizing an occupational context.

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History Program Mission Statement: The students who complete the History curriculum will have developed an understanding of contemporary events and ideas as they affect the locality, region, nation, and the world. Most particularly within the democratic environment of the United States, students will be prepared to fulfill their civic obligations as citizens. Students will be prepared for entry-level positions in any number of areas including teaching in public schools, business, industry, and government. In addition, they will be prepared for continued academic work in graduate programs. The program uses evaluation of research paper assignments in the capstone class as part of the required Student Learning Outcomes. In addition, a Capstone exam testing student knowledge in four introductory classes is required in the Capstone class. Additional SLO achievement is gathered by student performance and department benchmarks in the HIST 3000: Historians Craft class which measures completion of bibliography, archival, and primary source exercises.

Methodology: The assessment process for the BA in History program is as follows:

- (1) Data from assessment tools are collected and returned to the program coordinator.
- (2) The program coordinator will analyze the data to determine whether students have met measurable outcomes.
- (3) Results from the assessment will be discussed with the program faculty.
- (4) Individual meetings will be held with faculty teaching core undergraduate courses if required.
- (5) The Program Coordinator will propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment cycle, and where needed, curricula and program changes.

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Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO 1. Students will identify key persons, events, terminology, and themes associated with World History and U.S. History.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

HIST 1010: Early World Civilization

HIST 1020: Modern World Civilization

HIST 2010: History of the United States to 1865

HIST 2020: History of the United States since 1865

HIST 4000: History Research Methods

Measure: 1.1. All history majors are required to take HIST 1010 and HIST 1020, which provide an opportunity for students to acquire foundational knowledge and understanding of the major components of World History. The program assesses foundational knowledge of World History through two instruments administered to students enrolled in HIST 4000, a capstone course required for graduation. The target is that the students in all sections will earn a composite rating of 70% on each World History instrument. Measure 1.1 is assessed in fall and spring.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met. On the first instrument, the students achieved the target (82%). On the second instrument, students also achieved the target (91%). Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, the following changes were implemented in 2025-26 according to the plan of action from 2024-25. Faculty focused on improving course development, design, and delivery in HIST 1010 and 1020. To drive improvement, one history faculty member collaborated with colleagues at LOUIS/Board of Regents to revise course OER materials to address new accessibility requirements, further reducing textbook-related barriers for students. Additional faculty and adjunct instructors implemented the new Board of Regents OER textbook and coursework in HIST 1010 sections. One faculty member applied for a grant to convert sections of History 1020 to use OER. Student achievement on the first instrument increased substantially (5%+) over the previous year.

Decision: The target was met in AC 2025-26. Based on the analysis of the 2025-26 results, faculty will focus on several components to drive improvement in 2026-27. Most importantly, faculty members will engage with open coursework, open textbooks, and other OER-based resources. This will include materials developed for the original Board of Regents OER textbook program and the associated podcast grant, which students have responded to favorably. Faculty members will seek funding to facilitate conversion of additional introductory courses to utilize OER. Faculty will update the survey instruments associated with this measure to reflect course revisions. Analysis of the results of these surveys and Board of Regents feedback regarding OER will guide faculty

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course development and help faculty coordinate curriculum strategies to drive improved results for the Measure 1 instruments.

Measure: 1.2. All history majors are required to take HIST 2010 and HIST 2020, which provide an opportunity for students to acquire foundational knowledge and understanding of the major components of U.S History. The program assesses foundational knowledge of U.S. History through two instruments administered to students enrolled in HIST 4000, a capstone course required for graduation. The target is that students in all sections will earn a composite rating of 70% on each U.S. History instrument. Measure 1.2 is assessed in fall and spring.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In 2024-25, the target was met. On the first instrument, students achieved the target (85%). On the second instrument, students achieved the target (81%). Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, the following changes were implemented in 2025-26 according to the plan of action from 2024-25. Faculty focused on improving course development, design, and delivery in HIST 2010 and 2020. Faculty revised course sections to address a change in textbook format and edition. To drive improvement, one history faculty member collaborated with colleagues at LOUIS/Board of Regents, to develop OER materials that increase accessibility and lower textbook barriers for students in history courses. Student achievement on the second instrument increased substantially (4%+) over the previous year.

Decision: The target was met in AC 2025-26. Based on the analysis of the 2025-26 results, faculty will focus on several results to drive improvement in 2026-27. Most importantly, faculty members will engage with open coursework, open textbooks, and other OER-based resources. As this report was being written, two faculty members applied for funding to convert sections of HIST 2010 to use OER; such efforts will continue. Faculty will update the survey instruments associated with this measure to reflect course revisions. Analysis of the results of these surveys and Board of Regents feedback regarding OER will guide faculty course development and help faculty coordinate curriculum strategies to drive improved results for the Measure 1 instruments.

SLO 2. Students will select and apply appropriate research methods and analytical skills.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

HIST 3000: The Historian's Craft

Measure 2.1. All history majors must take HIST 3000 as the first part of the program's two-course experiential learning capstone. Students enrolled in HIST 3000 must complete a citation instrument that directly assesses this SLO. The target is that 75% of students

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enrolled in the course will earn a rating of 70% on the instrument. Measure 2.1 is assessed in fall.

Finding: Target not met.

Analysis: In 2024-25, the target was not met. Fifty-four percent (54%) of students (7/13) achieved the target. Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, the following changes were implemented in 2025-26 according to the plan of action from 2024-25. Instructors in all junior and senior-level history courses were encouraged to incorporate bibliographic citation assignments into their courses. Faculty were also encouraged to require students to use the same citation method - Turabian's / Chicago Manual of Style. This is the most common style used in the profession and is foundational for coursework in HIST 3000. Students struggled with this target, declining from a high point in 2024-25. Only 43% of students (10/23) met the target. That said, students performed better on this measure in 2025-26 (43%) than they did in 2023-24 (38%). Student enrollment in this course doubled compared to the previous year.

Decision: In AC 2025-26, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-26 results, faculty will focus on several components to drive improvement in AC 2026-27. Due to administrative changes, program faculty are reallocating courses, including History 3000. This provides an opportunity to revise instruction and assignments associated with measures 2.1, 2.2, and 3.1. More broadly, faculty are encouraged to incorporate citation components in their assignments. Faculty will also be encouraged to be familiar with new technologies, including AI, which are reshaping how citations are constructed.

Measure 2.2. All history majors must take HIST 3000 as the first part of the program's two-course experiential learning capstone. Students enrolled in HIST 3000 must complete an Annotation instrument that directly assesses this SLO. The target is that 75% of students enrolled in the course will earn a rating of 70% on the instrument. Measure 2.2 is assessed in fall.

Finding: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met. Ninety-two percent (92%) of students (12/13) achieved the target. This was the second time the instrument and measure were incorporated into the assessment process. Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, the following changes were implemented in 2025-26 according to the plan of action from 2024-25. Faculty were encouraged to incorporate annotation exercises in their classes if appropriate. Since most of the students who failed to achieve this target failed to complete the relevant instrument at all, faculty emphasized the importance of completing all work associated with History 3000. Based on these actions, the target was met with 78% of students (18/23) achieved the target. Students struggled with this target, declining from a high point in 2024-25, but they still met the target. Student enrollment in this course doubled compared to the previous year.

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Decision: In AC 2025-26, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2025-26 results, faculty will focus on several components to drive improvement in 2026-27. Faculty will be encouraged to incorporate annotation exercises in their classes. Due to administrative changes, program faculty are reallocating courses, including History 3000. This provides an opportunity to revise instruction and assignments associated with measures 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, which should generate improvement in 2026-27.

SLO 3. Students will demonstrate the ability to develop and complete a research project based on primary and secondary sources.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

HIST 3000: The Historian's Craft

HIST 4000: History Research Methods

Measure 3.1. All history majors must take HIST 3000 as the first part of the program's two-course experiential learning capstone. Students enrolled in HIST 3000 are required to distinguish between primary and secondary sources and must complete written assignments based on their understanding of historical text typology. The target is that 75% of students enrolled in the course will earn a rating of 70% on the instrument that specifically assesses this SLO. Measure 3.1 is assessed in the fall.

Finding: Target not met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was not met with 69% percent of students (9/13) achieving the target. Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, the following changes were implemented in 2025-26 according to the plan of action from 2024-25. Faculty were encouraged to incorporate primary/secondary source exercises and bibliographic citation exercises in junior and senior level courses to ensure students reflected on the difference between primary and secondary sources. As a result of these changes, the target was still not met with only 57% of students (13/23) achieving the target. Student success on this measure declined from 2024-25 (from 69% achievement to 57% achievement). Student enrollment in this course doubled over the same period.

Decision: In 2025-26, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the 2025-26 results, faculty will focus on several components to drive improvement in 2026-27. Faculty will be encouraged to incorporate primary/secondary source exercises (including bibliographic citation exercises) in upper-level classes to encourage familiarity and reflection. This helped drive improvement in previous years, but it will need to continue to ensure future success. Due to administrative changes, program faculty are reallocating courses, including History 3000. This provides an opportunity to revise instruction and assignments associated with measures 2.1, 2.2, and 3.1, which should generate improvement in 2026-27.

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Measure 3.2. All history majors must take HIST 4000 as the second part of the program's two-course experiential learning capstone. Students enrolled in HIST 4000 must complete a 15-page research paper on a topic of their choice in either U.S. History or World History. Students must demonstrate sufficient comprehension of the subject they research as well as the historiography of that subject. The target is that 80% of students enrolled in the course will earn a rating of at least 70% on the assessment of this component of the research paper. Measure 3.2 is assessed in fall and spring.

Finding: Target met.

Analysis: In 2024-25, the target was met. In 2024-2025, 100% of students enrolled in the course earned a rating of 70% on the assessment of this component of the research process. Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, the following changes were implemented in 2025-26 according to the plan of action from 2024-25. Most importantly, faculty developed and promoted a new academic map for the curriculum that highlighted the Public History Internship class (HIST 4990). By offering an internship pathway to completing the degree, the History program better serves students planning for public history careers rather than research programs in graduate and professional schools. This should result in better performance in HIST 4000 and fewer "re-take" semesters. Additionally, faculty encouraged students to complete all required elements of the research process in a timely manner, with careful attention to deadlines.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was met. All (100%) of students (3/3, 6/6) enrolled in the course earned a rating of at least 70% on the assessment of this component of the research process.

Decision: In 2025-26, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2025-26 results, faculty will focus on several components to drive improvement in 2026-27. The History Program will encourage advisors to communicate with students about the importance of completing all enrolled courses, and they will encourage students to consider the opportunity provided by the HIST 4990 internship. The internship became an official option in the 2025-26 curriculum. In 2026-27, the History program will build on its curricular revisions to develop a Public History concentration that will improve the program's accessibility, utility, and time-to-completion. Most importantly, the program will utilize the University's new, standardized Academic Map and the new website to improve advising communication and time-to-completion understanding.

SLO 4. Students will model the knowledge, skills, and disposition appropriate for professionals in Public History.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

HIST 4990: Public History Internship

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Measure 4.1. History majors have the option to complete an internship in Public History (with an agency or host approved by the course instructor). Students may take the class as an elective or as part of the capstone requirement for the program. Site supervisors will be required to complete a standardized form to evaluate the knowledge, skills, and disposition for each intern that they supervise. The target is that 80% of students enrolled in the course will earn a rating of at least 70% (35 out of 50 possible marks) on the evaluation form. Measure 4.1 will be assessed in all semesters that HIST 4990 is offered.

Finding: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2024-25, the target was met. All (100%) students (3/3) achieved the target. More iterations of assessment (and student participants) are needed to draw meaningful conclusions. Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, the following changes were implemented in 2025-26 according to the plan of action from 2024-25. In 2025-26, the program formalized the implementation of the internship-based capstone course by adding it to the degree plan and incorporating it into the University's new academic map for the History degree. This provides a new path to credential for students interested in public history career fields and resume-building work experience.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was met. All (100%) of students (6/6) achieved the target.

Decision: In 2025-26, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2025-26 results, faculty will focus on several components to drive improvement in 2026-27. Most importantly, faculty will communicate that the Public History Internship is now an option in the program's degree plan. The program coordinator will also email majors each semester to notify them of the option. Faculty will work to ensure students understand the importance of completing weekly response assignments in a timely manner, both for their own benefit and for the benefit of the site supervisor and community partner. Finally, the Program will build on its curricular revisions to develop a Public History concentration that will improve the program's accessibility, utility, and time-to-completion understanding.

Measure 4.2., All history majors have the option to complete an internship in Public History (with an agency or host approved by the course instructor). Students may take the class as an elective or as part of the capstone requirement for the program. All interns will be required to complete a reflection exercise assessing strengths, weaknesses, and professional development over the course of the internship. These exercises will be evaluated using a standardized rubric. The target is that 80% of students enrolled in the course will earn a rating of at least 70% (70 out of 100 possible marks) on the evaluation form.

Finding: Target met.

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Analysis: In AC 2024-2025, the target was met. All (100%) students (3/3) achieved the target. More iterations of assessment are needed to draw meaningful conclusions. Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, the following changes were implemented in 2025-26 according to the plan of action from 2024-25. In 2025-26, the program formalized the implementation of the internship-based capstone course by adding it to the degree plan and incorporating it into the University's new academic map for the History degree. This provides a new path to credential for students interested in public history career fields and resume-building work experience.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was met. All (100%) of students (6/6) achieved the target.

Decision: In 2025-26, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2025-26 results, faculty will focus on several components to drive improvement in 2026-27. Most importantly, faculty will communicate that Public History Internship is now an option in the program's degree plan. The program coordinator will also email majors each semester to notify them of the option. Faculty will work to ensure students understand the importance of completing weekly response assignments and reflection exercises in a timely manner, both for their own benefit and for the benefit of the site supervisor and community partner. Finally, the Program will build on its curricular revisions to develop a Public History concentration that will improve the program's accessibility, utility, and time-to-completion understanding.

SLO 5. The program will provide a balanced rotation of advanced World History and U.S. History courses delivered in face-to-face and online modalities.

Course Map:

HIST 3010-4980 (excluding HIST 4000): Advanced history coursework.

Measure: 5.1. This administrative outcome is designed to provide structure, predictability, and appraisal of the program's balanced course offering imperative. Each semester the program will offer, at a minimum, the following distribution of courses: 2 U.S. History (Face-to-Face); 2 World History (Face-to-Face); 2 U.S. History (Online); 2 World History (Online). The target is that the program will meet 100% (8/8) of this requirement each semester.

Finding: Partially met.

In Fall 2025, the History Program offered the following advanced courses:

Face-to-Face US History (3): HIST 3040; HIST 4340; HIST 4500

Face-to-Face World History (2): HIST 3010; HIST 4470

Online US History (1): HIST 3060

Online World History (3): HIST 3090; HIST 3110; HIST 4980

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In Spring 2026, the History Program offered the following advanced courses:

Face-to-Face US History (2): HIST 3040; HIST 3330

Face-to-Face World History (3): HIST 3120; HIST 4010; HIST 4420

Online US History (2): HIST 3240; HIST 4310

Online World History (2): HIST 3100; HIST 4430

Analysis: In AC 2024-2025, the target was met for each semester (8/8 and 8/8). Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, the following changes were implemented in 2025-26 according to the plan of action from 2024-25. The History Program maintained a balanced course offering imperative, which this administrative outcome reflects. The program tried to adjust to enrollment changes, offer a balanced array of classes, and use special topics sections to meet individual student needs. Communication between faculty and regular curricular meetings were critical components of this effort. Future semesters will require some balance to ensure sufficient online options are available.

Despite these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was not met. In Fall 2025, the program offered only one online advanced U.S. History course; the other course was cancelled due to low enrollment, so student needs were not greatly impacted by the decision.

Decision: In 2025-26, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the 2025-26 results, faculty will focus on several components to drive improvement in 2026-27. The History Program will ensure that the course rotation will address the four categories of advanced coursework included in this measure. This will require careful attention to university enrollment trends and demand for online courses. In 2025-26, program faculty piloted a new Academic Map and 5-year course rotation. Once the university's website is fully functional, these resources should improve faculty and student planning and communication.

Comprehensive Summary of Key Evidence of Improvement Based on Analysis of Results. The following reflects all the changes implemented to drive the continuous process of seeking improvement in AC 2025-2026. These changes are based on the knowledge gained through analyzing the AC 2024-2025 results and lessons learned.

SLO	Measure	Key Evidence
1	1.1	Faculty focused on improving course development, design, and delivery in World History coursework and course materials; one history faculty member worked with LOUIS/Board of Regents to revise OER to improve accessibility
1	1.1	Faculty implemented the new Board of Regents OER textbook and coursework in multiple HIST 1010 sections; the number of faculty using OER course materials for HIST 1010 increased from 2 to 3.
1	1.1	One faculty member applied for a grant to convert sections of History 1020 to use OER.

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1	1.2	Faculty focused on improving course development, design, and delivery in American History coursework
1	1.2	Faculty revised coursework to address the implementation of a new digital edition of the required textbook
2	2.1	Instructors in all junior and senior-level history courses were encouraged to incorporate bibliographic citation assignments into their courses.
2	2.1	Faculty were encouraged to require students to use the same citation method - Turabian's / Chicago Manual of Style.
2	2.2	Faculty were encouraged to incorporate annotation exercises into their courses to improve familiarity with different types of source materials.
3	3.1	Instructors in all junior and senior-level history classes were encouraged to incorporate primary and secondary sources into their courses.
3	3.2	Efforts to maintain improvement (+25% from 2023-24) in the achievement of Measure 3.2 were successful for the second straight year.
4	4.1	The new Public History Internship class completed its third full-year of delivery, providing an alternate pathway to completion of the degree. The course is now a capstone option in the catalog and course map.
4	4.2	The new Public History Internship class completed its third full-year of delivery, providing an alternate pathway to completion of the degree. The course is now a capstone option in the catalog and course map.
5	5.1	The program maintained a substantially balanced course offering, offering 15 of the 16 course types that they hoped to offer (combinations of face-to-face, online, World History, and U.S. History).

Table 1: Comprehensive Summary of Key Evidence of Improvement Based on Analysis of Results

Plan of Action moving forward.

SO	Measure	Plan
1	1.1	One faculty member will work with LOUIS/Board of Regents to ensure OER-based course materials for world history meet the upcoming accessibility requirements.
1	1.1	One faculty member will apply for grants to facilitate the development of an additional OER-based introductory course.
1	1.2	Two faculty members will apply for grants to facilitate the development of an additional OER-based introductory course.
2	2.1	The new instructor for HIST 3000 will work to ensure students understand professional citation methods. Faculty will be encouraged to expand their use of citation exercises in junior and senior-level courses.
2	2.2	The new instructor for HIST 3000 will work to ensure students understand scholarly annotations. Faculty will be encouraged to incorporate annotation exercises in their classes if appropriate.

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3	3.1	The new instructor for HIST 3000 will work to ensure students understand primary and secondary sources. Faculty will be encouraged to incorporate primary/secondary source assignments in their classes to encourage familiarity and reflection.
3	3.2	Using the updated degree plan and new academic map, History faculty will encourage students to complete courses promptly and consider the HIST 4990 internship.
4	4.1	Faculty will develop a new Public History concentration to wrap around the HIST 4990 course, further ensuring the appropriateness and relevance of coursework and experiences.
4	4.2	Faculty will develop a new Public History concentration to wrap around the HIST 4990 course, further ensuring the appropriateness and relevance of coursework and experiences.
5	5.1	Program faculty will revise the program course offerings and course rotation in 2026 to address personnel and administrative changes.
5	5.1	Faculty will develop new classes that can satisfy both World and American history requirements, improving scheduling flexibility while also highlighting the global interconnections of human history.

Table 2: Plan of Action Moving Forward