

## ASSESSMENT WEBSITE INFORMATION

College: Humanities and Social Sciences

Degree Program: History MA

Chair/Director: Pam Hronek 2012-2013 Report

### DATA SAY:

The Department of History has historically met as a faculty to review programs and to discuss ways to improve student learning. In 2010, faculty agreed that quality of the MA candidates' work was not meeting expectations in the areas of historical thinking, research, and writing skills.

### SO WHAT:

A combination of higher entrance standards and intentional communication of high expectations would be needed for overall program improvement.

### HOW WE CHANGED:

New admissions standards adopted in 2011 include submission of acceptable GRE scores and two letters of recommendations from professors familiar with the student's work. A graduate committee was formed to review applications. Program changes include an "Introduction to Graduate Studies" course that articulates the level of proficiency expected of MA graduates for the student learning outcomes of historical thinking, research and writing skills. Two graduate seminars, one emphasizing research and the other emphasizing graduate-level reading, were added to provide students opportunities to conduct original research and analyze primary source documents. Finally, a faculty mentoring and thesis component was added to the introductory course for students who are interested in pursuing careers as university professors.

### WHAT WE GOT:

The number of MA students initially dropped slightly as a result of the new admittance standards, but they increased over the past academic year.

Comprehensive exam scores have risen such that student performance for the learning outcomes of historical thinking, research, and writing skills now are meeting expectations, and more students are writing theses. One student completed a thesis in 2012-2013 and is currently enrolled in a doctoral program. Four other students are completing theses and hope to enter doctoral programs in the near future. Other graduates are seeking diverse career paths in secondary and university teaching, community outreach, and museum development.

