Annual Key Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements
Medieval and Byzantine Studies Program
B.A. Program in Medieval and Byzantine Studies

AY 2015-2016

Key Assessment Findings

Graduating seniors in Medieval and Byzantine Studies are required to complete a Senior Thesis based on an interdisciplinary research project developed over the course of two semesters as part of the course sequence *MDST 496A: Senior Tutorial* and *MDST 496B: Senior Thesis*. This senior thesis fulfills the comprehensive examination requirement. The choice of a research topic, the research itself, and the crafting of a research paper of significant length are done under the close supervision of a faculty member (area advisor) and it is preceded by the completion of relevant coursework in the field. The area advisor is chosen for his or her expertise in the relevant area of study. The choice of the research project must be approved by the Director or Undergraduate Advisor of the Center for Medieval and Byzantine Studies. The completed thesis is to be submitted in the spring semester of senior year (as part of MDST 496B) and it is read and evaluated by the area advisor and a second faculty member. Both faculty members confer in assessing the success of the thesis in meeting the goals outlined in the student learning assessment rubrics.

In Academic Year 2015-2016 the MBS program graduated one major who successfully passed the comprehensive exam requirement. Due to the limited data set, no further numerical assessment can be offered.

Curricular Improvements

While MBS has never had a large number of undergraduate majors and minors (usually 1-2 majors and 3-6 minors per class), the quality of students has usually been very high. Our graduates have gone on to prestigious MA and PhD programs in Medieval Studies, English, History, Philosophy, Theology, and Law. In recent years we saw a significant increase in the enrollment of MBS minors, especially among Honors students. The number of majors remains low but consistent, creating a total of 3-5 undergraduate MBS major in total at any given time.

Our unique interdisciplinary gateway course, *MDST 201: Medieval Pathways*, has been significantly redesigned in 2013-14 to include more field trips to CUA special collections and Washington area museums and research institutions. The course continues to be team-taught by MBS faculty members and features a series of invited lectures by CUA faculty in the field of

Medieval Studies. The course continues to attract students from a variety of academic fields, either as a gateway to the MBS major or minor or as an elective course.

Submitted by Dr. Lilla Kopár, Director of the Center for Medieval and Byzantine Studies

UNDERGRADUATE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION RESULTS
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF MEDIEVAL AND BYZANTINE STUDIES
AY2011-2012 to AY2015-2016

	Fail		Pass		High Pass		Pass w/Honors		TOTAL
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
AY2011-2012		0.00%		0.00%		0.00%		0.00%	0
AY2012-2013		0.00%	1	100.00%		0.00%		0.00%	1
AY2013-2014		0.00%		0.00%		0.00%		0.00%	0
AY2014-2015		0.00%	1	100.00%		0.00%		0.00%	1
AY2015-2016		0.00%	1	100.00%		0.00%		0.00%	1
TOTAL	0	**0.00%**	3	**100.00%**	0	**0.00%**	0	**0.00%**	**3**

Note:

1) Milestone outcomes were included in the categories High Pass and Pass with Honors if these designations were explicitly indicated in the students' milestone record.

2) Category "High Pass" includes both "High Pass" and "Pass with distinction".

3) The count in this table is based on the exam outcomes of all attempts in an academic year.

Student Learning Assessment Rubric
Medieval and Byzantine Studies BA

Trait	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)	Meeting Expectations (2pts)	Below Expectations (1pt)
Research Project Design	Candidate has selected an original topic that is interdisciplinary, well-defined enough to satisfactorily explore in a 40-50 page treatment. Primary source selection meshes well with aims of project. Methodology selected is highly appropriate to research goals.	Candidate has selected a topic that is interdisciplinary, well-defined enough to satisfactorily explore in a 40-50 page treatment. Primary source selection is adequate to aims of project. Methodology selected is reasonable in view of research goals.	Candidate has selected a topic that is not interdisciplinary, or not well-defined enough to satisfactorily explore in a 40-50 page treatment. Primary source selection is flawed in view of the aims of project. Methodology may be ill-defined or inappropriate.
Organization and Presentation of Material	Material is extremely clearly and logically organized.	Material is generally clearly and logically organized.	Material is presented in a confusing or disorganized fashion and does not build to a convincing conclusion.
Writing Style	Clear and concise writing conveys ideas smoothly and elegantly. Appropriate use of any relevant terminology.	Writing is generally clear and concise with occasional digressions. Generally appropriate use of relevant terminology.	Writing is unclear or register is inappropriate to a scholarly paper. Incorrect use of terminology or vocabulary. Frequent digressions and non-sequiturs.
Perceptive reading and analysis of Primary Sources	Candidate makes rich and thoughtful use of primary sources, read in the original language. Thesis reflects original insights derived from close reading and analysis of sources in conjunction with detailed understanding of the relevant social, historical and cultural contexts.	Candidate makes good use of primary sources, read in the original language or partly in translation. Thesis reflects close reading and analysis of sources in conjunction with some understanding of the relevant social, historical and cultural contexts.	Candidate makes little or poor use of primary sources. Close readings may be flawed or lack proper contextualization.
Selection and use of Secondary Sources and Documentation	Candidate reveals a strong familiarity with the relevant secondary literature. Selection of the most relevant works and clear integration of the	Candidate reveals some familiarity with the relevant secondary literature. Selection of relevant works may lack sources expected for	Candidate reveals weak or inconsistent familiarity with the relevant secondary literature. Selection of relevant works appears haphazard.

	literature in the development of the thesis.	work at the MA or PhD level. Some integration of the literature in the development of the thesis.	Or overreliance on secondary works.
Presents a clear and persuasive thesis	Thesis is clear and the evidence marshaled to support it makes a convincing case.	Thesis is generally clear and persuasive despite minor weaknesses.	Thesis is unclear, muddled or unpersuasive.
Professional Presentation	Careful proofreading, notes and bibliography conform to standard formats (Chicago or MLA). Foreign language names, quotations and terminology are handled consistently and in accordance with relevant conventions.	Proofreading, notes and bibliography conform to standard formats (Chicago or MLA) with occasional errors. Foreign language names, quotations and terminology are generally handled consistently and in accordance with relevant conventions.	Proofreading, notes and bibliography conform to standard formats (Chicago or MLA) with an unacceptable number of errors. Foreign language names, quotations and terminology are handled inconsistently or without regard to relevant conventions.