

**Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements**  
**Department of History**  
**Master's Program in History**  
**PhD Programs in History**

**Assessment Measures**

The Department of History uses the following measures to assess departmental learning outcomes:

- Grades, course evaluations, and enrollment totals for Historical Analysis and Methodology (HIST601)
- Comprehensive exams
- Progression through the programs
- Other

**Assessment Findings**

***Historical Analysis and Methodology Discussion (Appendix A):***

The Department of History analyzed course grades, evaluation, and enrollment data in HIST 601 (Historical Analysis and Methodology) for a five-year period (Fall 2003 through Fall 2007). This is the gateway course for all history graduate students at the M.A. level and is required of all Ph.D. students who have not completed a similar course during their M.A. work.

During this period, enrollment remained between 11 and 14 students with the unusual exception of the enrollment of seven students in the Fall 2007 term. The vast majority of students (86%) in Historical Analysis and Methodology had good to exceptional performance (B- to A+), with average grades ranging from 2.83 to 3.61 and a trend toward increasingly higher grades over the years. Over the period analyzed, three students failed the course and three students received a C which is not an acceptable grade for graduate credit.

The course and instructor mean ratings fluctuated about one percent over the years (ranging from 6.56 to 7.75 out of ten for course rating, and 7.75 to 8.83 out of ten for instructor rating). This relatively weak rating of the course reflects the difficulty of the course for our entering students and also the fact that it is the only course in their graduate program which is not reflective of the specific subfield in which they are interested. Despite the ratings, the department believes that the course serves its function and prepares students for the remainder of their program. It is intimately connected to the successful completion of the M.A. degree.

In a supplementary analysis, we considered whether students' grades in History 601 were related to their persistence in the program. (The data are not displayed to preserve confidentiality.) In the cohorts we examined, if a student withdrew from History 601, he/she dropped out of the program. Conversely, most students who received an A or B continued through the program, but there were anomalies and getting a good grade in History 601 did not guarantee that the

student persisted. Two students who earned an A- in History 601 subsequently dropped out. One student who received an F when he first took the course repeated it and earned a B. This student eventually progressed through the program and was awarded a Master's degree.

***Master's Comprehensive Exams and Progression (Appendices B, C):***

Twenty-five out of 36 new students in master's program cohorts starting in Fall 2000 through 2006 completed their degrees and seven withdrew before the end of their studies. The department believes that a full time student should complete the master's degree within two years of enrollment but in analyzing the student performance, it is clear that a number had turned from initial full time status to part time status for financial reasons. Only 14 out of the 25 students who graduated passed their comprehensives as expected by the end of the second year of registration (usually in the Spring) and another six completed the requirement in their third year (usually during the Summer or Fall term). Four satisfied all requirements in their fourth year of enrollment and one delayed until the fifth year. Only four students among the twenty-five who completed the M.A. proceeded on to the Ph.D. program at CUA while, to the department's knowledge, two individuals who left with an M.A. are pursuing the Ph.D. at other institutions. Only one student attempted the master's comp but failed. However, the student passed in the next semester. Of the four students who proceeded on to the Ph.D. from the M.A., three completed their Ph.D. comps in their second year of registration at that level. The fourth student completed the Ph.D. examinations in the third year of registration. Three of the four students remain in the program and are completing their dissertations. The fourth student dropped out for financial reasons.

***PhD Comprehensive Exams and Progression (Appendices B, C):***

Eleven out of the 24 new PhD students in the cohorts starting between Fall 2000 through 2006 passed their PhD major comps within three years of registration -- one in the first year, one in the second year, and nine in the third year (most in the Fall semester) -- meeting departmental expectations. Another two students completed this requirement in their fourth year. Six students dropped out of the program before completion of their courses. This attrition is not unexpected but the problem which concerns the department is that once having completed the comprehensive requirement few of the students who have attempted the Ph.D. have completed the dissertation in a timely manner. Of the thirteen students who have passed the comprehensive examination, eleven have approved dissertation proposals but only two of these students have completed the dissertation phase of the degree to date. Two individuals have dropped out for financial reasons. The remaining students are laboring on their projects but it is taking an inordinately long time because of their lack of financial support for this phase of their effort.

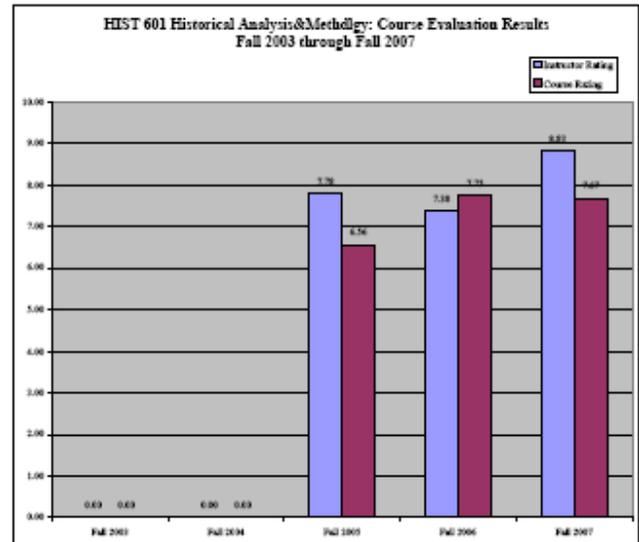
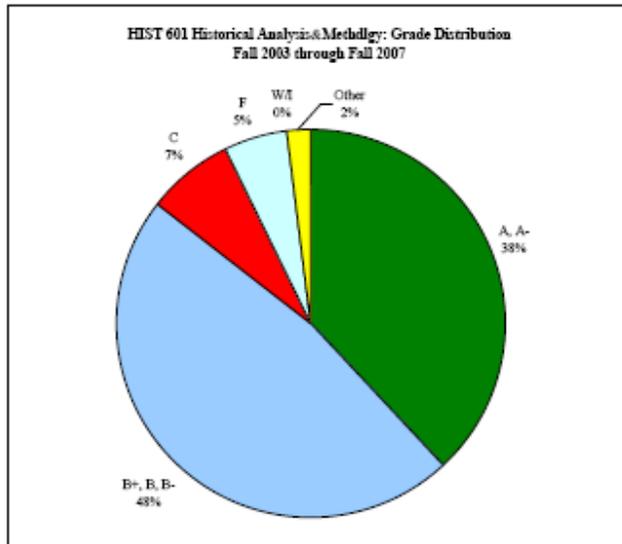
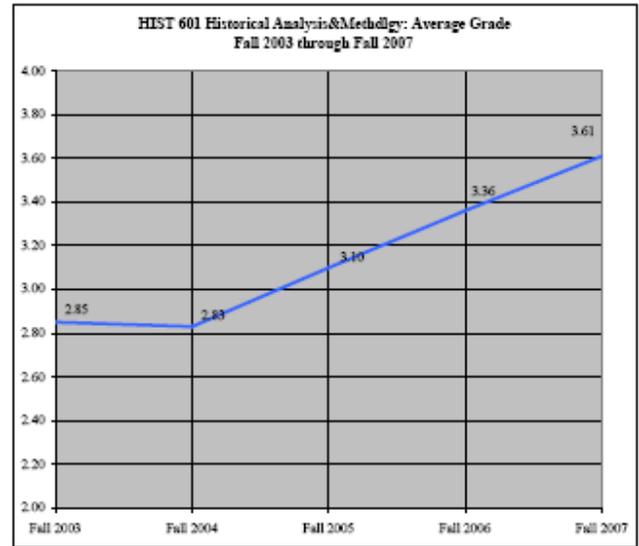
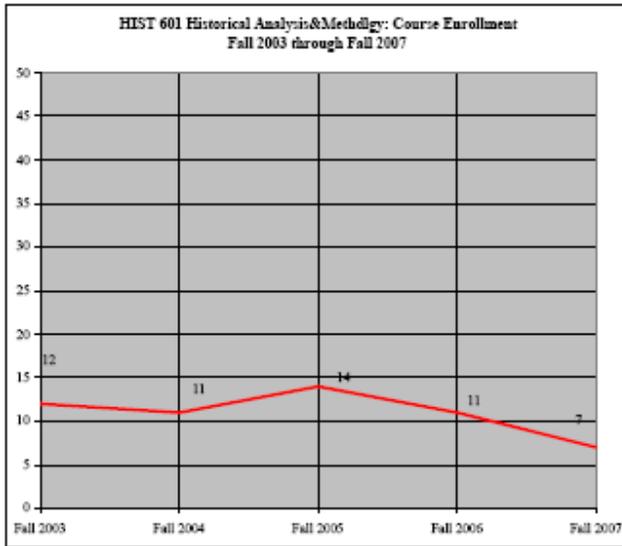
***Curricular Improvements for Master's Program and Ph.D. Program***

The key course is History 601 which functions as the gateway course in the department. Both student and faculty performance are continuously reviewed and no changes have been made to it in the recent past because of our belief that it is functioning properly to prepare students for the remainder of their work.

We also look at the number of students who move on from the M.A. to the Ph.D. level and the number of students who complete the Ph.D. degree. The latter element has been subject to serious review. Although we have granted 21 Ph.D.s over the past ten years, department members are dissatisfied with the rate of completion of the degree. In assessing the issues involved, however, we have concluded that it is not the academic component of the program which is at fault – the vast majority of our graduates are employed in government service, academia or as independent scholars -- but rather the inability of the department to offer adequate funding in the form of tuition waivers beyond the years of taking courses, and dissertation stipends which are routinely available at larger universities for students doing their dissertation research. In an effort to seek increased support, we have decided to create the position of Director of Graduate Studies to closely monitor both the financial and the professional needs of all of our graduate students.

COURSE SUMMARY DATA: DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
HIST 601 Historical Analysis&Methodlg

Term	Course Enrollment	Course Grade		Course Grades							Course Evaluation Results					
		Avg.	StDev.	Grade Distribution							Course Eval.		Instructor Rating		Course Rating	
				A, A-	B+, B, B-	C	F	WI	Other	#	%	Avg.	StDev.	Avg.	StDev.	
Fall 2003	12	2.85	1.07	3	6	1	1		1		0.00%					
Fall 2004	11	2.83	1.00	2	8						0.00%					
Fall 2005	14	3.10	1.04	6	6	1	1			9	64.29%	7.78	1.56	6.56	3.00	
Fall 2006	11	3.36	0.73	6	3	2				8	72.73%	7.38	1.69	7.75	1.83	
Fall 2007	7	3.61	0.32	4	3					6	85.71%	8.83	0.98	7.67	1.86	



**Graduate Student Comps Exam Data  
History Department (Cohort 2000-2006)**

**Master's Program***Comps*

Cohort	Cohort Size	Passed MA comps in 2000-01	Passed MA comps in 2001-02	Passed MA comps in 2002-03	Passed MA comps in 2003-04	Passed MA comps in 2004-05	Passed MA comps in 2005-06	Passed MA comps in 2006-07	Passed MA comps in 2007-08
2000	4	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
2001	3		0	2	1				
2002	4			0	1	2	0	0	0
2003	8				0	4	1	3	
2004	7					0	0	2	1
2005	8						0	5	0
2006	3							1	0

**PhD Program***Comps*

Cohort	Cohort Size	Pass PhD comps in 2000-01	Pass PhD comps in 2001-02	Pass PhD comps in 2002-03	Pass PhD comps in 2003-04	Pass PhD comps in 2004-05	Pass PhD comps in 2005-06	Pass PhD comps in 2006-07	Pass PhD comps in 2007-08
2000	2	0	0	2					
2001	5		0	0	1	1	0	0	0
2002	1			1					
2003	4				0	0	2	1	0
2004	3					0	0	3	
2005	3						0	1	1
2006	6							0	0

Note: A particular cohort is defined as the combination of the students first enrolled in consecutive sessions of one year: the summer session, the fall semester, or the spring semester the following year. For example, Cohort 2000 consists of the students first enrolled in Summer 2000, Fall 2000, or Spring 2001.

**Graduate Student Retention & Graduation Data Summary  
History Department (Cohort 2000-2006)**

**Master's Program**

Cohort	Number of entering master's students	Number of students who have not received a degree and did not maintain continuous enrollment	Number of students who enrolled in PhD program after receiving a master's degree	Number of students who passed comps	Graduated in 1st year	Graduated in 2nd year	Graduated in 3rd year	Graduated in 4th year	Graduated in 5th year
2000	4	2	1	2	0	0	1	0	1
2001	3	0	0	3	0	2	1		
2002	4	1	2	3	0	1	2	0	0
2003	8	0	1	8	0	4	1	3	
2004	7	3	0	3	0	1	1	1	0
2005	8	1	0	5	0	5	0	0	0
2006	3	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0

**PhD Program**

Cohort	Number of entering doctoral students	Number of students who have not received a degree and did not maintain continuous enrollment	Number of students who left the program after receiving a master's degree	Number of students who passed comps	Graduated in less than 2 years	Graduated in 3rd year	Graduated in 4th year	Graduated in 5th year	Graduated in 6th year	Graduated in 7th year	Graduated in 8th year
2000	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
2001	5	4	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
2002	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2003	4	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2004	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2005	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2006	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Note: A particular cohort is defined as the combination of the students first enrolled in consecutive sessions of one year: the summer session, the fall semester, or the spring semester the following year. For example, Cohort 2000 consists of the students first enrolled in Summer 2000, Fall 2000, or Spring 2001.