



History [HIST]

Cycles included in this report:

Jun 1, 2024 to May 31, 2025

Program Name: History [HIST]

Reporting Cycle: Jun 1, 2024 to May 31, 2025

1 Is this program offered via Distance Learning?

100% Distance and Traditional

2 Is this program offered at an off-site location?

No

2.1 If yes to previous, provide addresses for each location where 50% or more of program credits may be earned.

3 Example of Program Improvement

2020-2021:

The department's student organization (Phi Alpha Theta) reached a high with 9 new members inducted despite the pandemic, the centerpiece of our efforts to recruit and retain students to the department.

2021-2022:

The history department's student organization (Phi Alpha Theta) inducted 8 new members and resumed in-person activities. This remains a major focus of our efforts to build student engagement and retention.

2022-2023:

Offering a new internship program to encourage student engagement with the community and development of professional skills and work experience. 3 students completed internships in spring 2023. Dr Smith is serving as internship coordinator.

2023-2024:

Created a new student organization, the History Club, designed to be more inclusive and engaging than our old student organization Phi Alpha Theta, which is an academic honor society with rigorous membership requirements. 19 students joined the History Club and we had our first events to support it. Dr Smith is serving as History Club advisor.

2024-2025:

The history department launched its new concentration in Public History with two courses -- HIST 350: Introduction to Public History and HIST 400: Topics and Issues in Historical Perspective: The Public History of Lake Charles.

4 Program Highlights from the Reporting Year

2020-2021:

The department's online history BA was named one of the top 25 online history programs by Learn.org. They particularly emphasized our active Phi Alpha Theta chapter and the program's focus on rigorously preparing students for graduate and professional programs.

2021-2022:

More than half of the courses offered by the McNeese history department in the 2021-22 academic year were face-to-face, as we work to help rebuild a more active and engaged campus following the disruptions caused by hurricanes and the pandemic and the resulting temporary shift to online classes.

Our general history BA program had an enrollment of 42 for the year and our online history BA program rose to an enrollment of 12. Both of those numbers are up from last year (37 and 9). The Social Studies Ed concentration of 32 was down only slightly (from 34), which was offset by the gains in the other programs, during a year in which the university's overall enrollment has declined.

2022-2023:

We have resumed a full schedule of in-person activities with our student organization, Phi Alpha Theta. This year one of our students, Kallie Johnston, presented a paper (based on her capstone research project) at the annual meeting of the Louisiana Historical Association, and won an award for best student paper.

2023-2024:

We created a new Public History concentration of the History BA which is now in the McNeese catalog for the upcoming academic year. This offers students a new professional degree option (other than Social Studies Education) within the History program.

2024-2025:

The history department hired two TT faculty members, one specializing in Women's History and the other in 19th century Europe.

5 Program Mission

The purpose of the Bachelor of Arts in History is to provide our graduates with knowledge of significant past events and values, to train them in historical methodologies, to encourage critical thinking, and to give them practice in research and writing. The knowledge and skills our graduates learn will enable them to become informed, responsible citizens.

6 Institutional Mission Reference

McNeese State University is primarily a teaching institution whose mission is successful education of the undergraduate students and services to the employers and communities in its region. McNeese uses a traditional admission process based on courses completed, GPA, and standardized test scores.

The purpose of the Bachelor of Arts in History is to provide our graduates with knowledge of significant past events and values, to train them in historical methodologies, to encourage critical thinking, and to give them practice in research and writing, and to enable them to become informed and responsible citizens.

7 Assessment and Benchmark HIST 101, 102, 201, and 202.

Assessment: Assignments administered in HIST 101, 102, 201, and 202.

Benchmark: At least 70% of students in survey courses will achieve a score of 70% or better on embedded assignments on historical trends (HIST 201 and HIST 202) or problem solving (HIST 101 and HIST 102).

Prior to 2021-2022, the benchmark was at least 70% of students in survey courses will achieve a score of 70% or better on embedded critical thinking assignments.

Prior to 2017-2018, the benchmark was students in general education survey courses will on average score 70% or better on a critical thinking assignment in order to demonstrate proficiency in that skill.

Prior to 2015-2016, scores for pre-test and post-test were assessed, with a benchmark of 10% improvement.

7.1 Data

2020-2021:

Course	Students scoring 70% or higher					
	Face-to-Face Sections			Online Sections		
	# of students	% of students	Benchmark met?	# of students	% of students	Benchmark met?
HIST 101	—	—	—	138	82.8%	Yes
HIST 102	—	—	—	81	81.1%	Yes
HIST 201	—	—	—	500	78.9%	Yes
HIST 202	—	—	—	488	82.0%	Yes

2021-2022:

Course	Face-to-Face Sections			Online Sections		
	Students scoring 70% or higher		Benchmark met?	Students scoring 70% or higher		Benchmark met?
	#	%		#	%	
HIST 101	45/48	93%	Yes	26/26	100%	Yes
HIST 102	32/34	94%	Yes	17/18	94%	Yes
HIST 201	89/95	93%	Yes	58/59	98%	Yes
HIST 202	108/120	90%	Yes	68/68	100%	Yes

2022-2023:

Course	Face-to-Face Sections			Online Sections		
	Students scoring 70% or higher		Benchmark met?	Students scoring 70% or higher		Benchmark met?
	#	%		#	%	
HIST 101	98/109	90%	Yes	113/119	95%	Yes
HIST 102	31/34	91%	Yes	55/67	82%	Yes
HIST 201	235/270	87%	Yes	128/139	92%	Yes
HIST 202	281/296	95%	Yes	126/135	93%	Yes

2023-2024:

Course	Face-to-Face Sections			Online Sections		
	Students scoring 70% or higher		Benchmark met?	Students scoring 70% or higher		Benchmark met?
	#	%		#	%	
HIST 101	68/75	90%	Yes	109/122	89%	Yes
HIST 102	53/56	94%	Yes	71/84	84%	Yes
HIST 201	209/300	70%	Yes	115/115	100%	Yes
HIST 202	351/398	88%	Yes	102/102	100%	Yes

2024-2025:

Course	Face-to-Face Sections			Online Sections		
	Students scoring 70% or higher		Benchmark met?	Students scoring 70% or higher		Benchmark met?
	#	%		#	%	
HIST 101	82	92.1%	Yes	56	81.1%	Yes
HIST 102	62	91.1%	Yes	49	71.0%	Yes
HIST 201	245	66.2%	No	102	94.4%	Yes
HIST 202	258	87.4%	Yes	105	99.0%	Yes

7.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

The planned general education redesign means that this is the last year that history survey courses will assess critical thinking, though it remains a foundational skill that our program is intended to develop. The ongoing pandemic and two fall hurricanes caused all courses to shift online including many that were intended to be face to face, making this a year whose teaching metrics are difficult to assess, though most indications including these would seem to indicate it was a successful year, which is a credit to both our faculty and students.

2021-2022:

This is our first year assessing the new Gen Ed SLOs. Data is not available for the fall as it was not reported in a way that was consistent with the new intention of tracking the specific number of students meeting the benchmark rather than the overall percentage on the assignment. Since the fall was the pilot semester for the assignment that might be for the best. Spring data shows both online and in person courses meeting the benchmark. As these are new SLOs, new assignments, and a new way of analyzing the data, the department faculty will meet and consider these results and if adjustments to the new assignments are needed.

2022-2023:

The benchmark was met. The lowest score was for online HIST 102, which had a new instructor assigned in the spring who was teaching the class and the SLO for the first time, with promising results but lower than those for the more veteran instructors. Revisions to the assignments assessing the SLOs are ongoing, based on instructor and student feedback.

2023-2024:

The benchmark was met. Scores were lower in face to face sections, which might correlate with poor attendance in some of those classes, especially by freshman in the surveys admitted with poor study skills. Improving performance for those students is an issue of ongoing concern for the department and university.

Faculty who teach online classes now are required to receive pedagogy training every year.

2024-2025:

The benchmark was met in HIST 101, 102, 202, both face-to-face and online, as well as the online HIST 201. However, the face-to-face HIST 201 benchmark came up shy of reaching the benchmark. The diverse range of college readiness among freshmen and the rise of AI cheating is an issue of concern.

8 Assessment and Benchmark Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI)

Assessment: Student Evaluation of Instruction.

Benchmark: The mean average of students completing the Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI) in history courses, where the scale is 1.00 to 5.00 and 5.00 is "excellent," will rate their instructor at 4.50 or above on Item #7, which reads: "The instructor requires students to think critically about the people and events of the past."

Prior to 2016-2017, the benchmark was an average score of 4.00 or higher.

Files:

Department of History SEI

8.1 Data

Item #7:

Academic Year	Average	Benchmark met?
2020-2021	4.58	Yes
2021-2022	4.42	No
2022-2023	4.52	Yes
2023-2024	4.44	No
2024-2025	4.58	Yes

8.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

The benchmark was again met, despite the disruption of the semester by the pandemic and hurricanes, indicating that the development of critical thinking skills remains a strength of our program.

2021-2022:

The adjusted benchmark was narrowly missed. This was a challenging academic year, with both students and faculty adjusting to the resumption of face-to-face classes, and the history department losing two faculty lines. We will continue focusing on developing critical thinking skills, still a key goal of the department, though it is no longer a SLO for general education.

2022-2023:

The adjusted benchmark was met. The critical thinking score (4.52) was slightly higher than the overall average SEI scores for the department (4.49) indicating that students see this as a particular strength of program faculty. Higher results this year also reflect a more "normal" year with campus and classes still recovering from disruptions in previous years due to hurricanes, the pandemic, and other natural disasters.

2023-2024:

The benchmark was narrowly missed. In general, this was a challenging year with many students struggling especially in survey classes as many are academically underprepared and with weak study skills. The department is having ongoing discussions about how to best meet these students where they are and help them succeed. Some faculty are banning electronic devices in classes as a way of improving student focus.

2024-2025:

The benchmark was met. This achievement is particularly satisfying considering that two of our TT faculty were in their first year and taught a good share of students.

9 Assessment and Benchmark History Department Exit Survey

Assessment: History Department Exit Survey.

Benchmark: 75% of history graduates on the History Department Exit Survey, where the scale is 1.00 to 4.00 and 4.00 is "Excellent," will rate the department at a 3.00 or higher on the question which asks if they gained an appreciation for elements of diversity within the world and within societies.

9.1 Data

Academic Year	Students rating 3.00 or higher		Benchmark met?
	#	%	
2020-2021	9/9	100%	Yes
2021-2022	11/11	100%	Yes
2022-2023	9/9	100%	Yes
2023-2024	7/8	87.5%	Yes
2024-2025	13/15	86.7%	Yes

9.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

Benchmark met. Our recent faculty hires of Asian and African American history specialists have enabled the department to continue to build on the strength of appreciation for diversity in our courses and curriculum.

2021-2022:

Benchmark met. Dr Lee has developed a new class on the Civil Rights Movement to supplement our African American history course to expand our curriculum's emphasis on diversity and its value. I also taught a class on Colonial America which emphasized the diversity of groups arriving from Europe in early America beyond just the English.

2022-2023:

Benchmark met. We hope to expand our course offerings in both women's studies and women's history, with the help of both visiting lecturers teaching those courses and hopefully a new full-time hire with this area of specialization next year.

2023-2024:

Benchmark met. Consider raising benchmark. We hired a tenure track assistant professor to teach women's history for the coming academic year, which should significantly improve the department's ability to cover issues of diversity in our curriculum.

2024-2025:

Benchmark met. DEI has become a hot button political issue, but the department maintains its commitment to diversity in our curriculum and course offerings.

10 Assessment and Benchmark HIST 300 Research Project/Presentation

Assessment: HIST 300 research project and presentation.

Benchmark 1: 70% of students in HIST 300 will successfully complete a research exercise in which they cite historical sources and critically analyze historical documents.

Benchmark 2: 70% of students in HIST 300 will earn a grade of C or better on an oral presentation of their research project to the class.

10.1 Data

Semester	Face-to-Face Sections			Online Sections		
	Pass Rate		Benchmark met?	Pass Rate		Benchmark met?
	#	%		#	%	
Fall 2020	—	—	—	3/3	100%	Yes
Spring 2021	—	—	—	6/6	100%	Yes
Fall 2021	—	—	—	10/10	100%	Yes
Spring 2022	3/3	100%	Yes	—	—	—
Fall 2022	3/4	75%	Yes	—	—	—
Spring 2023	—	—	—	8/9	89%	Yes
Fall 2023	1/1	100%	>Yes	—	—	—
Spring 2024	—	—	—	13/14	92%	Yes
Fall 2024	2/2	100%	Yes	—	—	—
Spring 2025	3/4	75%	Yes	—	—	—

10.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

Students again performed well by this metric, suggesting their professional development is benefiting from the methods course, which for the first time this year moved online, though it was not planned to do so, due to the pandemic and hurricanes. Results were still positive, which is a testament to the hard work and dedication of both history faculty and students.

2021-2022:

The benchmark was met. Current plans are to alternate teaching HIST 300 online and face-to-face to accommodate students in both the online and in-person History BA degrees. Data suggests students are benefiting from the professional development opportunities offered in both methods of instruction.

2022-2023:

The benchmark was met in both the face to face and online sections of HIST 300 for the research project assignment, which continues to be a crucial aspect of our program's students' professional development. Although the university Quality Enhancement Plan focusing on professional development is potentially ending, this will remain a major focus for history department programs. We are considering adding a Public History concentration option to the History degree, which would further enhance their professional development opportunities.

2023-2024:

Students met the benchmark for the research project assignment. The one student who did not use AI in their paper. Discouraging the improper use of AI is a new focus and challenge for the department.

2024-2025:

Students met the benchmark for the research project assignment. The new Public History concentration will focus on enhancing professional development opportunities for students.

10.2 Data

Semester	Face-to-Face Sections			Online Sections		
	Pass Rate		Benchmark met?	Pass Rate		Benchmark met?
	#	%		#	%	
Fall 2020	—	—	—	3/3	100%	Yes
Spring 2021	—	—	—	6/6	100%	Yes
Fall 2021	—	—	—	10/10	100%	Yes
Spring 2022	3/3	100%	Yes	—	—	—
Fall 2022	3/4	75%	Yes	—	—	—
Spring 2023	—	—	—	8/9	89%	Yes
Fall 2023	1/1	100%	Yes	—	—	—
Spring 2024	—	—	—	13/14	92%	Yes
Fall 2024	2/2	100%	Yes	—	—	—
Spring 2025	3/4	75%	Yes	—	—	—

10.2.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

The oral presentations in the methods course again produced strong results, despite the course having to move online unexpectedly due to the pandemic and hurricanes. Students and faculty both adapted well to the technological and other challenges created by this move.

2021-2022:

The benchmark was met. Oral presentations remain a critical element of the program's professional development opportunities, and students in both the new fall online and spring face-to-face sections performed well on this assignment.

2022-2023:

The benchmark was met. Students in the spring online section did particularly well on the oral presentation assignment, reflecting students adapting successfully to the use of new technology in a professional setting.

2023-2024:

The benchmark was met. The imbalance in enrollment between the low numbers in the fall face to face section and high numbers in the spring online section are not ideal and discussions are ongoing as to how best to schedule the methods class and if it should be offered online for non-online majors or not.

2024-2025:

The benchmark was met. Our new Public History concentration will especially focus on students presenting their research to the public, complementing the focus of this assessment.

11 Assessment and Benchmark HIST 410 Research Project/Presentation

Assessment: HIST 410 research project and presentation for General History Concentration students.

Benchmark 1: 75% of students in HIST 410 will earn a grade of C or better on the research paper, demonstrating their ability to conduct historical research.

Benchmark 2: 75% of students in HIST 410, where students must present their findings orally, will earn a grade of C or better.

Prior to 2018-2019, the benchmarks were 70% of students.

11.1 Data

Semester	Face-to-Face Sections			Online Sections		
	Pass Rate		Benchmark met?	Pass Rate		Benchmark met?
	#	%		#	%	
Fall 2020	—	—	—	18/20	90%	Yes
Spring 2021	—	—	—	2/2	100%	Yes
Fall 2021	6/6	100%	Yes	—	—	—
Spring 2022	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fall 2022	7/7	100%	Yes	—	—	—
Spring 2023	—	—	—	2/2	100%	Yes
Fall 2023	7/8	87.5%	Yes	—	—	—
Spring 2024	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fall 2024	7/7	100%	Yes	—	—	—
Spring 2025	—	—	—	2/2	100%	Yes

11.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

Despite the capstone course having to unexpectedly move online due to the pandemic and hurricanes, students produced strong research in the method course, a testament to the perseverance and dedication of our students and faculty.

2021-2022:

Benchmark was met. Though our intention is to only offer the capstone course in the fall, a small spring online section was needed to accommodate three recently declared Liberal Studies majors who needed it to graduate.

2022-2023:

The higher benchmark was again met and exceeded, with history majors continuing to produce strong research projects in the capstone class. Again a smaller spring online capstone section (taught as an overload) was needed to supplement the fall section, to accommodate both students in the online History BA program and students who recently switched into the Liberal Studies degree and needed to take the capstone in order to graduate in May.

2023-2024:

Benchmark met. Students continue to produce strong capstone research projects. Though none this year presented their papers at the Louisiana Historical Association meeting, which was in New Orleans and so a little more difficult to get to, in the future we would like to encourage and support them in doing so.

2024-2025:

The benchmark was met with a rate of 100%. Next year we are going to assign a faculty member specializing in US history to teach the fall capstone course, since most students pick US history research topics.

11.2 Data

Semester	Face-to-Face Sections			Online Sections		
	Pass Rate		Benchmark met?	Pass Rate		Benchmark met?
	#	%		#	%	
Fall 2020	—	—	—	18/20	90%	Yes
Spring 2021	—	—	—	2/2	100%	Yes
Fall 2021	6/6	100%	Yes	—	—	—
Spring 2022	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fall 2022	7/7	100%	Yes	—	—	—
Spring 2023	—	—	—	2/2	100%	Yes
Fall 2023	8/8	100%	Yes	—	—	—
Spring 2024	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fall 2024	7/7	100%	Yes	—	—	—
Spring 2025	—	—	—	2/2	100%	Yes

11.2.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

Despite the capstone course having to unexpectedly move online due to the pandemic and hurricanes, students produced strong presentations in the method course, a testament to the perseverance and dedication of our students and faculty. The presentations being done remotely added another important skill set for our students.

2021-2022:

The benchmark was met. The capstone course was again taught face-to-face in the fall, and a small spring online section (with all Liberal Studies majors, no History majors) was also taught, though going forward our intention is that all students should take the course in the fall and some students present their research at a conference (possibly the Louisiana Historical Association) in the spring.

2022-2023:

The benchmark was met. Building on the strong projects and presentations in the fall, and after a practice session with history faculty mentors in the early spring, one outstanding student (Kallie Johnston) was invited to present her research project at the Louisiana Historical Association annual meeting in the spring, where it won an award for outstanding student paper. Going forward we plan for more students to present their papers at the LHA each spring, with departmental support.

2023-2024:

The benchmark was met. Students continue to display good professional development with the quality of their presentations. In the future we would like to encourage students to present their work both at Louisiana Historical Association annual meetings and at undergraduate research symposiums in the UL system, with department and college support.

2024-2025:

The benchmark was met with a rate of 100%. Next year we have a goal to have students present research at the university's undergraduate research symposium as well, which restarted this year.