



Liberal Studies [LSTU]

Cycles included in this report:

Jun 1, 2020 to May 31, 2021

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Program Name: Liberal Studies [LSTU]

Reporting Cycle: Jun 1, 2020 to May 31, 2021

1 Is this program offered via Distance Learning?

100% Traditional or less than 50% Distance/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

2016-2017:

Created a new history internship course in order to enhance student opportunities for professional development and experience. The Geography concentration of the Liberal Studies program created a new capstone/ internship course.

2017-2018:

Students were having difficulty meeting the benchmark for presenting their research in a professional setting, so it was decided to move the capstone course to the fall semester for the coming academic year, so they could present their research project findings at the Louisiana Historical Association annual meeting in the spring.

2018-2019:

Moving the capstone course to the fall semester after missing the benchmark for students presenting their research in a professional setting enabled multiple students in the department to present papers in the spring at the Louisiana Historical Association annual meeting.

2019-2020:

Philosophy began offering a new course on "Existentialism" to appeal to students in that concentration.

2020-2021:

Both the method and capstones classes were moved online due to the extraordinary circumstances of the pandemic and hurricanes.

4 Program Highlights from the Reporting Year

2016-2017:

The theatre arts and pre-law concentrations in particular continue to demonstrate strong enrollment figures. Dr. Janet Allured created a new women's studies brown bag lecture series to support the women's studies concentration of the Liberal Studies degree. Dr. Philippe Girard created a women's history series on the McNeese radio station to do the same.

2017-2018:

Dr. Janet Allured's women's studies brown bag lecture series to support the women's studies concentration of the Liberal Studies degree established itself as one of the college's outstanding and most popular lecture series. Dr. Philippe Girard's women's history series on the McNeese radio station also helped promote the program successfully. Dr. Charles McNeely staged several successful theater productions that helped promote the theater arts concentration of the degree.

2018-2019:

The women's studies brown bag lecture series created by Dr. Janet Allured, and Dr. Philippe Girard's women's history series on the McNeese radio station, both continue to promote the women's studies concentration of the Liberal Studies degree successfully. Dr. Allured also now officially advises students in that concentration.

Dr. Charles McNeely staged several theater productions that promote the Liberal Studies degree's theater arts concentration.

Dr. William Noseworthy created several new courses, including a History of Buddhism course and a History of Asian Religion course, to promote the Liberal Studies degree's religious studies concentration.

History department faculty met with Philosophy faculty members to discussing how to coordinate scheduling and advising for students in the Philosophy concentration of the Liberal Studies degree.

2019-2020:

Dr. Noseworthy created a course on the history of Hinduism to promote the Liberal Studies BA's Religious Studies concentration. Dr Allured's women's studies speaker series continued successfully, as did Dr Girard's radio program on women's history.

2020-2021:

Though the pandemic and hurricanes disrupted plans for this year, Dr McNeely's theater productions resumed in the spring, and Dr Girard continued his radio program on women's history. Dr Noseworthy taught his history of Buddhism class for the first time, which had a strong enrollment and positive student response.

5 Program Mission

The purpose of the Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies program is to provide our graduates with knowledge of significant past events and values, to train them in research methods, to foster cross-disciplinary collaboration, and to teach them proper writing techniques. The knowledge and skills our graduates learn will enable them to become informed and responsible citizens in a multicultural, global community.

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 admissions process based on courses completed, GPA, and standardized test scores.

The B.A. in Liberal Studies will specifically focus on this segment of the University mission statement: "successful education of the undergraduate students."

7 Assessment and Benchmark Gen Ed Critical Thinking Assignment

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 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.

Outcome Links

Critical Thinking [Program]

Graduates will think critically about human interaction with their physical and cultural environment.

Cross-Disciplinary Trends [Program]

Graduates will evaluate cross-disciplinary trends to make sound judgments in academic and professional environments.

7.1 Data [Approved]

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Course	2013-2014			2014-2015		
	Pre- and post-test averages	% improvement	Benchmark met?	Pre- and post-test averages	% improvement	Benchmark met?
HIST 101	83 to 85	2%	No	83.8 to 86	2.2%	No
HIST 102	71 to 81	10%	Yes	71 to 76	5%	No
HIST 201	75 to 80	5%	No	66.7 to 71.9	5.2%	No
HIST 202	77 to 82	5%	No	73.5 to 79.7	6.2%	No

Course	2015-2016		2016-2017		2017-2018	
	# of sections	Benchmark met?	# of sections	Benchmark met?	# of sections	Benchmark met?
HIST 101	3/3	Yes	6/6	Yes	6/6	Yes
HIST 102	2/2	Yes	4/4	Yes	4/4	Yes
HIST 201	10/12	No	22/23	No	22/24	No
HIST 202	13/13	Yes	18/21	No	22/22	Yes

2018-2019:

Course	Face-to-Face Sections			Online Sections		
	# of sections	%	Benchmark met?	# of sections	%	Benchmark met?
HIST 101	4/4	100%	Yes	2/2	100%	Yes
HIST 102	5/5	100%	Yes	1/1	100%	Yes
HIST 201	24/24	100%	Yes	6/6	100%	Yes
HIST 202	19/20	95%	No	5/5	100%	Yes

2019-2020:

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	128	84.2%	Yes	53	83.8%	Yes
HIST 102	6	85.6%	Yes	14	83.7%	Yes
HIST 201	348	82.1%	Yes	160	85.3%	Yes
HIST 202	551	78.5%	Yes	80	80.5%	Yes

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

Critical Thinking [Program]

Graduates will think critically about human interaction with their physical and cultural environment.

Cross-Disciplinary Trends [Program]

Graduates will evaluate cross-disciplinary trends to make sound judgments in academic and professional environments.

7.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2015-2016:

The department head changed in 2015; therefore, assessment data was reported for that year, but a newly modified assessment and benchmark were created.

2016-2017:

Though not every section met the benchmark, overall the results in almost every section well exceeded the 70% threshold, and the few that missed did so by small margins.

Because this recent assessment did not provide specific-enough information about student achievement, average scores in these sections will be reported and the benchmark will be revised to state, "At least 70% of students in survey courses will achieve a score of 70% or better on embedded critical thinking assignments". Also, information was not previously disaggregated by major, but will be moving forward.

2017-2018:

Includes results from four distance learning/CALL program sections, all of which met the benchmark.

Only one instructor's sections (for HIST 201) failed to meet the benchmark, and only by a small amount (66 and 69 average scores in the two sections). Will discuss with that instructor how to help students get better results.

2018-2019:

The data is now disaggregated by online and face-to-face sections. Online courses performed as well or better than their in-person counterparts.

Data is not available to measure the results of this assessment by student rather than by course section. Also this is the last year history general education courses will assess critical thinking as a student learning outcome, so changing this assessment this year is not likely to lead to significant program improvement.

All sections except one in-person 202 course met the benchmark. That section scored a 68%, so missed the benchmark by 2%. That instructor will be encouraged to improve results.

2019-2020:

We are now tracking the critical thinking scores by student rather than by section. Performance generally is strong and above the benchmark despite the pandemic disruption of the spring semester.

2020-2021:

The planned general education redesign means that this is the last year that the department's survey courses will assess critical thinking, though it remains a foundational skill that our programs are 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.

Outcome Links**Critical Thinking [Program]**

Graduates will think critically about human interaction with their physical and cultural environment.

Cross-Disciplinary Trends [Program]

Graduates will evaluate cross-disciplinary trends to make sound judgments in academic and professional environments.

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: See list of attachments to view. (Requires Adobe Reader or compatible viewer).

Department of History SEI

Outcome Links

Critical Thinking [Program]

Graduates will think critically about human interaction with their physical and cultural environment.

Cross-Disciplinary Trends [Program]

Graduates will evaluate cross-disciplinary trends to make sound judgments in academic and professional environments.

8.1 Data

Item #7:

Academic Year	Average	Benchmark met?
2014-2015	4.57	Yes
2015-2016	4.52	Yes
2016-2017	4.57	Yes
2017-2018	4.58	Yes
2018-2019	4.55	Yes
2019-2020	4.51	Yes
2020-2021	4.58	Yes

Outcome Links

Critical Thinking [Program]

Graduates will think critically about human interaction with their physical and cultural environment.

8.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2015-2016:

This assessment was added in 2014-2015; however, because the benchmark of a 4.00 average has been consistently met, the department will increase the benchmark to 4.50.

2016-2017:

The new benchmark was met and surpassed in 2016-2017.

2017-2018:

The adjusted benchmark was again met and surpassed, with even slightly better results.

2018-2019:

The higher benchmark was again met. The department's general education courses are in the process of being redesigned, with new student learning objectives and assessments, which it is hoped will have a beneficial result on outcomes.

2019-2020:

The new benchmark was again met. Critical thinking remains a key focus of their department's programs.

2020-2021:

The new benchmark was again met, despite difficulties related to the pandemic and hurricanes this year, reflecting the department's continued dedication to teaching critical thinking and success in doing so despite considerable obstacles.

[Outcome Links](#)

Critical Thinking [Program]

Graduates will think critically about human interaction with their physical and cultural environment.

9 Assessment and Benchmark History Department Exit Survey

Assessment: History Department Exit Survey.

Benchmark: 75% of liberal studies 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.

Files: See list of attachments to view. (Requires Adobe Reader or compatible viewer).

HISTORY DEPARTMENT EXIT SURVEY

[Outcome Links](#)

Cross-Disciplinary Trends [Program]

Graduates will evaluate cross-disciplinary trends to make sound judgments in academic and professional environments.

9.1 Data

Academic Year	Students rating 3.00 or higher		Benchmark met?
	#	%	
2014-2015	10/10	100%	Yes
2015-2016	7/7	100%	Yes
2016-2017	4/5	80%	Yes
2017-2018	4/4	100%	Yes
2018-2019	5/5	100%	Yes
2019-2020	6/6	100%	Yes
2020-2021	5/5	100%	Yes

[Outcome Links](#)

Cross-Disciplinary Trends [Program]

Graduates will evaluate cross-disciplinary trends to make sound judgments in academic and professional environments.

9.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2016-2017:

One student out of five completers gave the program a score of 2.00, so the benchmark was missed. Maintain benchmark until summer 2017 when the department will have three continuous years of data on this new assessment and determine how to modify.

2017-2018:

The benchmark was achieved for this year. The program faculty will meet in the coming year with the faculty who teach in the various concentrations (Philosophy, Geography, etc) to discuss curricular issues including how to improve this outcome.

2018-2019:

Benchmark met. The department this year added a new faculty member who is a specialist in Asian history and created four new upper-level courses on Asian history. It is intended that this updated curriculum will increase students' appreciation for diversity and understanding of global issues.

Will consider increasing the benchmark.

2019-2020:

Benchmark met. The disruption caused by the pandemic in the spring made planning based on this year's data difficult.

2020-2021:

Benchmark again met. Reflecting the importance of diversity to our program, the history department hired a specialist in African American history to begin this year. Endowed Professorship money was also used to hire a visiting lecturer to teach two upper level Women's Studies courses (on "Women & the Environment" and "Feminist Theory"), which were well received.

Outcome Links

Cross-Disciplinary Trends [Program]

Graduates will evaluate cross-disciplinary trends to make sound judgments in academic and professional environments.

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.

Outcome Links

Cross-Disciplinary Trends [Program]

Graduates will evaluate cross-disciplinary trends to make sound judgments in academic and professional environments.

Research [Program]

Graduates will be able to conduct and present research in the humanities.

10.1 Data

Semester	Pass Rate		Benchmark met?
	#	%	
Spring 2016	—	75%	Yes
Spring 2017	—	100%	Yes
Fall 2017	3/3	100%	Yes
Spring 2018	4/5	80%	Yes
Fall 2018	2/2	100%	Yes
Spring 2019	3/3	100%	Yes
Fall 2019	4/4	100%	Yes
Spring 2020	4/4	100%	Yes
Fall 2020	5/5	100%	Yes
Spring 2021	—	—	—

Outcome Links

Cross-Disciplinary Trends [Program]

Graduates will evaluate cross-disciplinary trends to make sound judgments in academic and professional environments.

10.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2015-2016:

This assignment was moved to HIST 300 in 2015-2016, so the department will maintain the benchmark until three years of data have been gathered and determine how to modify the benchmark at that time.

2016-2017:

New course instructor assigned to HIST 300 for 2017-2018, and rotation of faculty teaching the course is now planned to best serve students in the major. Also, information was not previously disaggregated by major, but will be moving forward.

2017-2018:

Liberal Studies majors in HIST 300 met the benchmark, which it seems appropriate to maintain at the current level.

2018-2019:

The benchmark was met. At the departmental faculty meeting in the fall the instructors for HIST 300 and 410 discussed how best to coordinate the departmental methods courses and how to best assess these outcomes going forward.

2019-2020:

Benchmark met. The disruption of the pandemic in the spring made planning based on this year's data difficult.

2020-2021:

Benchmark met. The performance of the Liberal Studies students on this metric was strong, despite the challenges posed this year by the pandemic and hurricanes, a testament to the dedication and perseverance of our students and faculty.

Outcome Links**Cross-Disciplinary Trends [Program]**

Graduates will evaluate cross-disciplinary trends to make sound judgments in academic and professional environments.

10.2 Data

Semester	Pass Rate		Benchmark met?
	#	%	
Spring 2016	—	75%	Yes
Spring 2017	—	100%	Yes
Fall 2017	3/3	100%	Yes
Spring 2018	5/5	100%	Yes
Fall 2018	2/2	100%	Yes
Spring 2019	3/3	100%	Yes
Fall 2019	4/4	100%	Yes
Spring 2020	4/4	100%	Yes
Fall 2020	5/5	100%	Yes
Spring 2021	—	—	—

Outcome Links**Research [Program]**

Graduates will be able to conduct and present research in the humanities.

10.2.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2015-2016:

Benchmark met. Success rate is high, but this is traditionally a rigorous course with comparatively high attrition, so it makes sense that the students who remain and complete the course successfully would do well on the assignment.

2016-2017:

New course instructor assigned to HIST 300 for 2017-2018, and rotation of faculty teaching the course is now planned to best serve students in the major. Also, information was not previously disaggregated by major, but will be moving forward.

2017-2018:

Liberal Studies majors in HIST 300 met the benchmark for the oral communication assignment, which it seems appropriate to maintain for now at the current level.

2018-2019:

The benchmark was met. At the departmental faculty meeting in the fall the instructors for HIST 300 and 410 discussed how best to coordinate the departmental methods courses and how to best assess these outcomes going forward. Scheduling and faculty rotation of the methods courses were also discussed.

2019-2020:

Benchmark met. The disruption of the pandemic in the spring made planning based on this year's data difficult.

2020-2021:

Oral presentations unexpectedly had to move online this year due to the pandemic and hurricanes forcing classes to move to remote learning, so students were forced to adapt to new technology and did so successfully, building new and valuable skills.

Outcome Links

Research [Program]

Graduates will be able to conduct and present research in the humanities.

11 Assessment and Benchmark HIST 410 Research Project/Presentation

Assessment: HIST 410 research project and presentation.

Benchmark 1: 75% of students in HIST 410, where students must write a lengthy history research paper, will earn a grade of C or better.

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 in HIST 410 will earn a grade of C or better.

Outcome Links

Research [Program]

Graduates will be able to conduct and present research in the humanities.

11.1 Data

Academic Year	Pass Rate		Benchmark met?
	#	%	
2014-2015	8/10	80%	Yes
2015-2016	3/3	100%	Yes
2016-2017	10/10	100%	Yes

2017-2018	5/5	100%	Yes
2018-2019	13/13	100%	Yes
2019-2020	10/12	83.3%	Yes
2020-2021	20/22	90.9%	Yes

Outcome Links

Research [Program]

Graduates will be able to conduct and present research in the humanities.

11.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2016-2017:

Benchmark met. The department is considering starting in 2017-2018 only offering the capstone once per year to ensure a larger cohort and better scheduling efficiency. Also, information was not previously disaggregated by major, but will be moving forward.

2017-2018:

The Liberal Studies students in HIST 410 met and exceeded the benchmark. For future years the department faculty have agreed to raise the benchmark to 75%.

2018-2019:

The higher benchmark was met. At the departmental faculty meeting in the fall the instructors for HIST 300 and 410 discussed how best to coordinate the departmental methods courses and how to best assess these outcomes going forward. Scheduling and faculty rotation of the methods courses were also discussed.

2019-2020:

Strong results again for the research projects in the capstone course. The disruption of the pandemic in the spring made planning based on this year's data difficult.

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.

Outcome Links

Research [Program]

Graduates will be able to conduct and present research in the humanities.

11.2 Data

Academic Year	Pass Rate		Benchmark met?
	#	%	
2014-2015	7/10	70%	Yes
2015-2016	3/3	100%	Yes
2016-2017	10/10	100%	Yes
2017-2018	5/5	100%	Yes
2018-2019	13/13	100%	Yes
2019-2020	10/12	83.3%	Yes
2020-2021	20/22	90.9%	Yes

Outcome Links

Research [Program]

Graduates will be able to conduct and present research in the humanities.

11.2.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2016-2017:

Benchmark met. The department is considering starting in 2017-2018 only offering the capstone once per year to ensure a larger cohort and better scheduling efficiency. Also, information was not previously disaggregated by major, but will be moving forward.

2017-2018:

Liberal Studies students in HIST 410 met and exceeded the benchmark. Department faculty have agreed to raise the benchmark to 75% for future semesters.

2018-2019:

Liberal Studies majors met the benchmark for the oral presentation assessment, a key element in their professional development.

At the departmental faculty meeting in the fall the instructors for HIST 300 and 410 discussed how best to coordinate the departmental methods courses and how to best assess these outcomes going forward. Scheduling and faculty rotation of the methods courses were also discussed.

2019-2020:

The higher benchmark was again met. The pandemic in the spring disrupted end of year assessment and planning.

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.

Outcome Links

Research [Program]

Graduates will be able to conduct and present research in the humanities.

End of report