History/ Political Science Assessment Plan

I. Mission

This program offers undergraduates the opportunity to earn a baccalaureate degree in History/Political Science. By fusing the complementary disciplines of history and political science, this degree program seeks to foster an understanding and appreciation of local, national and international events and issues of the past and present. The dual degree gives the student breadth and depth in both areas, History and Political Science. Majors explore both disciplines, with one track emphasizing history, another emphasizing political science, and a third designed for pre-law majors. We also offer a B.S. degree in History and Political Science that encourages disciplinary partnerships with other majors (including, but not limited to Education). The mission of the History/Political Science reflects IU Kokomo's broader mission in a number of ways. The discipline's course content often addresses matters of culture, representation, and diversity. Students who build their skills in History and Political Science attend graduate programs or law school; they become teachers in primary and secondary schools; participate in political campaigns and interest groups; and some engage in museum work.

II. Program goals and student learning outcomes

Goal #1: Fostering Global Learning

a. Understanding of historical and political processes
    i. Understanding historical development of societies
    ii. Understanding diverse cultures
    iii. Understanding and application of historical and political theories
    iv. Understanding political systems in practice

Goal #2: Encourage Active Citizenship

a. Political and historical interaction
    v. Exposure to diverse viewpoints
    vi. Exposure to cultural interchange and conflicting ideas
    vii. Experience with internships and presentations (e. g., fieldwork, internship, or teaching evaluation)

Develop Discipline-Specific Skills

a. Develop discipline-specific skills
    i. Demonstrate critical thinking
    ii. Utilize scholarly sources with proper citations
    iii. Thesis articulation in written work
    iv. Supporting evidence in written work
    v. Command of content knowledge
    vi. Implement scholarly arguments
    vii. Present research capably and clearly to an audience.

II. Curriculum map (where in curriculum student learning outcomes occur)

Outcomes:	HIST H105	HIST H106	HIST H113	HIST H114	POLS Y103	POLS Y215	POLS Y217	POLS Y219	HPS 300/ 400
Understanding historical development	X	X	X	X					X
Understanding diverse cultures	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Historical and political theories	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Understanding political systems in practice	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Exposure to diverse viewpoints	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
cultural interchange and conflicting ideas	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Experience with internships and presentations								X	X
Demonstrate critical thinking	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
scholarly sources with proper citations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Thesis articulation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Supporting evidence	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Command of content knowledge	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Implement scholarly arguments	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Present research capably and clearly								X	X

III. Assessment activities planned for the following academic year

a. Assessment schedule:

Assessment Schedule	
2013-2014	Cultural Diversity (V)
2014-2015	Cultural Diversity (V) continued; Speech (I); Physical and Life Sciences (IX)
2015-2016	Speech (I) continued: Physical and Life Sciences (IX) continued; Quantitative Literacy (III); Social and Behavioral Science (VII)
2016-2017	Quantitative Literacy (III) continued; Social and Behavioral Science (VII) continued; Humanities and Arts (VIII); Information Literacy (II)
2017-2018	Humanities and Arts (VIII) continued; Information Literacy (II) continued; Critical Thinking (IV); Ethics(VI)
2018-2019	Critical Thinking (IV) continued; Ethics (VI)

b. For each outcome you plan to assess, identify approximately when, where (e.g., in which courses), and how (i.e., through what activity) students will demonstrate their achievement of the outcome.

Expectations across the discipline vary, as will assessments. For example, although courses emphasize the importance of critical thinking, students develop that skill over time. In survey-level courses, students may work toward the objective of classifying properly different political or economic perspectives. Later, they are typically pressed to present and defend their own opinions about the evidence they encounter in a variety of media/exercises.

In History, assessment may include: map quizzes, reading quizzes; short essays; longer papers or essays; presentations; and discussions/debates. In Political science, assessment may include reading quizzes; short essays; longer essays or papers; discussions; and presentations. Quizzes and short essays are assigned (and sometimes spontaneous) throughout the semester, particularly as tools to assess comprehension in survey-level courses. Longer papers are usually scheduled at regular (more widely-spaced) intervals in courses. Discussions may be more informal (reactions or consideration of readings, as in a colloquium-styled course). Presentations, especially in seminars, are often saved for the end of the semester, or are done in the context of interscholastic competitions (like Model UN). In other courses, scheduled discussions encourage students to prepare for a debate about varying viewpoints.

c. For each component of the outcome(s) you plan to assess, describe the **performance characteristics or criteria** necessary for successful achievement.

<u>Map quizzes</u>: students must be able to identify countries correctly on a map.

Reading quizzes: students must respond to questions (often in multiple-choice format) that illustrate they read and understood the concepts described.
Short essays: students must be able to demonstrate content knowledge or understanding of a historical or political concept, or to summarize information correctly based on films previously viewed.
Longer essays/papers: Students must compile evidence that responds to general questions, and will strive to present and defend a thesis statement about that question. Successful achievement will show that students mastered content knowledge for a particular topic, and (to varying degrees) that they are able to
Discussions/debates: Students will participate in oral exchanges about course content, illustrating their ability to employ evidence and to respond to claims and counter-claims about that material. These discussions at times may consider spontaneous statements and the effectiveness of a response to unanticipated viewpoints (or evidence). Where applicable, students must also display the ability to work with teammates to consider and deliver evidence effectively.
Presentations: Students must show that they can organize data effectively; that they have mastered content knowledge about a subject; that they can deliver confidently that material in a set period of time; and that they have developed an argument that illustrates considered reflection of key historical or political theories to explain the significance of the topic at hand.

d. Indicate a benchmark, that is, what level of performance will be considered acceptable (e.g., 85% of students will demonstrate satisfactory achievement of this outcome).

For map quizzes, quizzes, short essays, satisfactory achievement of outcomes will be indicated when students can identify correctly (or narrate accurately, illustrating factual recall of) 75% of the assigned material.

For discussions/presentations, 75% of students must be able to engage in a substantive narrative that illustrates factual mastery, and the ability to respond to a counter-point (raised by a colleague or the instructor).

For higher order skills (analysis, argumentation); students will attempt to present an argument that links content knowledge clearly to an opinion about the question asked. Minimally competent: students will take a side or will characterize data in a way that relates to the theme of the question. Competent: students will attempt analytical commentary on approximately 75% of the material (ie, there may be gaps in such efforts, but the student does more than narrating factual details). Such commentary will explain *how* or *why* the facts illustrate that an opinion is reasonable.

IV. Ongoing Assessment

The History/Political Science area (like all academic areas) has been asked to engage in program assessment. Transitions in leadership and in assessment practices over the past few years (from Sharon Calhoon, to Doug Eider, to Julie Saam) appear to have altered the expectations associated with those responsibilities in some ways. This does not object to any single method; it

only acknowledges that this discipline has felt challenged to make adjustments from year to year. We are anxious to contribute to a more consistent culture of assessment. To that end, the faculty are anxious to have a clear set of expectations communicated—what is expected? What sorts of documentation would prove helpful to the broader campus efforts at assessment? Is there a uniform rubric that establishes the ways in which assessment "success" indicators should be recorded? Will we align our efforts with the newly-introduced Re-Imagining the First Year (at least for General Education courses)?

Most recently, the faculty were told to engage in assessment only of upper-level (elective) courses and not of courses associated with the General Education curriculum. Faculty were asked to compile data for their courses on the extent to which students engaged in adequate analytical effort, and only to use a 3-tiered category (did not accomplish, accomplished minimally, accomplished effectively) as the basis of assessment.

Because of these factors, we do not consider our program assessment to be complete. To evaluate each of the courses listed in our schedule, this process could take up to two years (to permit at least one incidence of POLS courses, which occur in sequence). As noted, department members would appreciate further information if there are rubrics that may help to encourage more uniformity across disciplines.