

Helpful Hints/Recommendations from the History TAG Panel

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The History Panel has used the following criteria and procedures in evaluating courses submitted for the History Transfer Assurance Guide (TAG). This discussion is to assist those submitting course syllabi for future consideration by the History Panel.

Each of the five outcomes is considered essential and must be taught.

1. Apply critical thinking as to analyze primary and secondary sources (i.e. historical analysis of text.)

It is expected that each course will require reading in both historical primary and secondary sources. The specific titles of these readings should be listed in the syllabus, including the **actual titles of the specific primary source documents**, not just the title of the printed collection of which the individual document is a part. The syllabus should also show that the primary sources are actually used as the basis for one or more specific written and/or oral assignments during the course.

2. Explain the cause, effect, and relevance of specific historical events and/or periods within the broader historical context.

The syllabus should describe the chronological, geographical, and thematic scope of the course. It should identify the major periods, events, topics, or concepts developed in the course and show how they will be organized and related in some type of logical, coherent fashion. Relevant readings, discussions, and other activities should be linked to specific course topics and themes.

3. Understand and articulate diverse historical interpretations.

The syllabus should indicate that students are presented with various historical interpretations of the material being studied, and are expected to incorporate these interpretations into their understanding and analysis of historical events. This could be indicated by the titles of specific lectures, assigned readings in secondary sources, or specific topics for class discussion or written/oral assignments.

4. Clearly demonstrate the ability to understand and apply basic historical concepts, methodologies, and approaches.

The syllabus should indicate that students are given assignments, written and/or oral, that require them to “think historically” about events, persons, concepts, and themes studied in the course. Students should be introduced to the kinds of

questions that historians ask about the past and the methods used to find answers to them.

5. Articulate historical arguments in a variety of forms of communication.

The syllabus should indicate that students will be evaluated through different kinds of assignments and activities, that use different forms of communication. These could include essay or short answer examination questions; analysis of primary and/or secondary source material; or oral class presentations and participation in class discussion. Students should be expected to show ability to understand and articulate historical arguments about the past, not merely to memorize and repeat factual information.