Student Learning Objectives:

100 level courses--learning outcomes

Students should be able to:

• Define the difference between primary & secondary sources
• Think critically about all sources (Further guidelines are available on the History Dept. website, http://www.umass.edu/history/writing.html)
• Recognize historical differences—significant ways in which past times & places differ from contemporary world—and begin to develop historical imagination and empathy
• Identify historical continuities and connections
• Articulate historical significance—i.e. not just factually identify a person or event, but also be able to explain why that person or event matters
• Know the difference between opinion and historical analysis / interpretation / judgment
• Understand that are different interpretations of history, & that these are valid to the extent that they can be demonstrated with evidence
• Take & review notes on lectures & readings in structured ways
• Identify a thesis in a reading or paper
• Write short essays (as a paper or as part of an exam)
• Demonstrate mastery of specific content of course

100 level courses are associated with breadth as HS (Gen Ed historical studies designation) requires—must cover a broad span of time.

Guidelines for quantity and kinds of reading:

• Must expose students to primary sources (i.e. no textbook-only courses.)
• Quantity depends on kinds of reading, range seems to be from 10 to 75-100 pages of primary sources a week (depending on whether difficult text or easily digestible memoir)

Expectations for writing and other ways of developing / assessing skills

The range is from:

• 4 papers in the course
• two 5-page papers
• paper with explicit check-list of what is required for students / corresponding grading rubric
• regular pass / fail response papers for readings for all / have specific groups within
class write about specific article (pass/fall combined with one 5 page paper, midterm /
final)
• midterm & final exams, which test?
• in-class (or in discussion section) debates and exercises

200 level--learning outcomes
Students should:
• Refresh & reinforce skills learned at earlier levels
• Understand the basic idea of historiography—i.e. not only can historical interpretations
differ, but that interpretations are often linked to ways of doing history
• Show basic research skills (not just Google a term!)
• Find relevant primary sources for a given topic (in the library as well as online
• Understand the purpose of footnotes and be able to use consistent citations

Reading guidelines: 75-100 pages a week

300 level--learning outcomes
Students should be able to:
• Refresh & reinforce skills learned at earlier levels
• Develop basic public speaking skills, i.e. presenting research or arguing for particular
historical interpretation
• Productively critique historical writing by peers
• Work independently on a limited project, with guidelines
• Work with intermediate historiography
• Present longer & more sophisticated narratives & analyses

Assessment Tools:
Weekly quizzes
• Discussion section activities in small groups and for whole class
• Essay exams (short answers and long essays)
• Debates in the classroom
• Student presentations
• Synoptic essays (distributed to the whole class)
• Short essays
• Long research papers
• Historiographical essays
• Group projects
• PowerPoint presentations
• Annotated bibliographies
• Thesis projects

**Highlighted Recent Activities:**

• Retreat Discussion about course designations (2010, 2011, and in fall 2013)
• Brown bag luncheons on faculty teaching methods (2011, and resuming in 2013)