

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
ANNUAL ASSESSMENT REPORT
AY 2006-2007**

Through its curriculum, the Department of History endeavors to give students an acquaintance with, and appreciation for, our historical heritage, and seeks to enable them to see the relationships among causes and effects in the historical development of the nation, other countries, and other civilizations. Furthermore, the study of History is intended to assist the students' development of critical thinking, including the analysis and evaluation of historical evidence, and the ability to integrate and interpret data.

The department has created a three-year rotating schedule to assess the following programs: core curriculum, major and minor, and graduate program. This academic year the department is scheduled to assess the major.

I. Mission/Purpose

- A. Content:** The history department defines its mission for majors as offering them an acquaintance with, and an appreciation for, our historical heritage. It seeks to enable them to see the relationship between causes and effects in the historical development of their own and other countries and of civilization at large. This knowledge is developed in the four basic areas of European, United States, Latin American and Non-Western, and Diplomatic and Military history.
- B. Analytical Skills:** Furthermore, the study of history is intended to assist the student's development of critical thinking, including the analysis and evaluation of historical evidence, the ability to integrate and interpret such data.

II. Expected Results

The Department of History expects educational progress by majors to be measured in terms of how well they achieve the following goals:

- A. Demonstrate a basic knowledge of major issues and events in European, United States, Latin American/Non-Western, and Military/Diplomatic History.
- B. Demonstrate an ability to research [examine multiple sources on the same topic], think [evaluate and form a defensible thesis and conclusion from the sources], and write [present the research and thought following accepted rules of grammar and composition] as historians do.

III. Assessment Tools

- A. Educational Testing Service's Major Field Achievement Test: This was the second year that the department administered the ETS major field achievement test

in history to measure the accomplishments of its senior majors. It was expected that the group would score at least in the 60th percentile nationally.

- B. **Opinion Surveys:** As was the case two years ago, we used “The Citadel Experience Survey” to compare our majors with Citadel cadets at large just as we used the ETS major field test permits to compare our majors with a broader sampling of history majors from throughout the nation.
- C. **Student Portfolios:** The department’s assessment plan calls for the analytical skills of majors to be documented mainly by a portfolio of their written work. The department, however, has had difficulty in assembling meaningful portfolios of work on a regular basis. In an effort to redress that shortcoming, the department, last year, adopted a capstone course as a new requirement for history majors. Aside for the pedagogical benefits, the course should help us to overcome prior difficulties in collected comparable pieces of polished work to assess the analytical skills of our students. The first such capstone seminar will be offered in the fall of 2008.

IV. Actual Results

- A. **Multiple Choice Examinations:** The spreadsheet below profiles how The Citadel’s senior history majors compared with the 5,426 history majors from throughout the nation on the ETS major field test. It also shows how our history department compared with the 141 others whose students participated. The hard copy printouts of how our majors performed, as well as the national percentile charts, are available upon request.

ETS Major Field/History Test 2007

Citadel Senior History Major Performance

Black=Raw Score

Red=National Percentile

	U.S.	%	Eur	%	Af/As/LA	%	Overall	%
Majors/Avg	46.00	55.00	48.00	70.00	52.00	90.00	148.00	70.00

As indicated in section III-A, our goal was for Citadel history majors to score in the 60th percentile in the areas tested. Our majors as a unit, when compared to those from the 141 other colleges that participated, exceeded the target score in all but one of the categories. The Citadel’s scores in the areas of history tested were:

U.S. History:	55th percentile
European History:	70th percentile
African, Asian, Latin American History:	90th percentile
Overall Score:	70th percentile

In comparison to the last time our majors took the test (2005), the performance in European History remained the same. In African, Asian, and Latin American History it rose 15 percentile (from 75 up to 90) points. In U.S. History, it dropped by 10 percentile points (from 65 down to 55) . And, in the overall score, it fell by 5 percentile points (from 75 down to 70).

- B. Opinion Surveys:** The department’s initial assessment plan set a goal of 80 percent of our graduating history majors “strongly agreeing” or “agreeing” to key questions about instruction and advising within the department of history. The assessment committee embraced the same goal for responses to such questions in The Citadel experience survey. The spreadsheet below was created from information provided in the most relevant portions of that survey.

**Citadel Experience Survey, 2007
Comparison of All Seniors with Senior History Majors
On Selected Questions Related to Major Course of Study
[Red=%Above college norm]**

	% All Sr SA&A	%Hist SA&A	Diff
Major Program of Study	93.69	95.84	2.15
Instruction in Major Program	93.02	100	6.98
Availability of Academic Advisor	78.07	83.33	5.26
Academic Advising in Course Selection & Requirements	77.07	79.16	2.09
Major curriculum prepared me to use methodologies of discipline	94.02	95.83	1.81
Professors in major were interested in my progress as a student	89.37	95.83	6.46
Professors in major were accessible	94.35	100	5.65
Professors in major had enthusiasm for subject	94.35	95.84	1.49
If starting over, would you choose the same major?	79.4	83.33	3.93
How many had more than 5 class assignments this year that required some kind of information gathering or outside research	39.87	50	10.13

The department’s assessment goals were met in all categories except academic advising—where they fell just below the target of 80%. In most categories, that goal was well exceeded and noticeable above the college norm.

V. Major Actions and Issues

- A. Content:** The results of The Citadel experience survey document that history majors—even more than most of the college’s graduating students--are very satisfied with the quality of the instruction and advising that they receive. The results of the major field achievement test indicate that the department is also doing a very good job, by national standards, of giving its majors a solid command of basic issues and information.
- B. Analytical Skills:** As outlined in section III-C above, the department has taken steps to remedy past problems in collecting the type and the amount of written work from majors that is necessary for a proper evaluation of how well the

department is developing their ability to research, think, and write as historians do. The creation of the capstone seminar will increase the department's staffing need by .25 FTE (2 sections) per year.

Conclusions: Although perhaps simply a normal deviation, it is, nonetheless, a matter of some concern that this year's graduating history majors scored a lower in U.S. History (55th v 65th percentile) and overall (70th v 75th percentile) than their counterparts in 2005.

For the last couple of years, we have pointed out that a significant rise in the department's structural commitments has forced it to rely more on adjunct faculty than we deem to be in the best interests of our students. Non-permanent faculty now teach between 25% and 30% of all the sections offered by the department. [please see copy of attached memorandum]. If that situation is not addressed, the number will rise further with the implementation of the capstone seminar.

Generally speaking, adjuncts are, of course, not as well qualified as permanent faculty members. We believe that the recent need to rely more on non-permanent faculty helps to explain the decline in performance on this year's ETS scores. In addition to other factors addressed in the memo reference above, we also believe that one of the best ways to reverse this decline in achievement scores is to allocate to the department a new tenure-track position which would raise its authorized strength from the current level of 13 up to 14 permanent (tenured or tenure-track) faculty members.

We also recommend that the college set aside a designated time or times (morning or afternoon) during the academic year for the administration of assessment tests. In 2005, we were able to get cadets excused from a Saturday morning inspection to take the test. The rate of participation, and morale, of those seniors who took the test was high. This year, the college was unable to excuse cadets from inspection to take the test. As the ETS tests take two hours to administer, we, therefore, had to schedule it on a Wednesday afternoon when most senior cadets are not otherwise required to be on campus. Turnout and morale were lower and both of these facts may have had a detrimental effect on performance. Making a special period available for the administration of assessment tests would make it clear to all concerned how important the activity is and help to insure that the best and most accurate results are obtained.

VI. Major Goals and Objectives for 2007-2008

- A. Conduct search for Assistant Professor specializing in "United States History since 1945" to fill position vacated by Blain Roberts
- B. Secure permission to add a tenure-track position to the department and conduct search to fill it with new Assistant Professor, ideally one specializing in History of diplomacy and capable of organizing and administering activities in support of interdisciplinary minor in International Relations

- C. Launch and Supervise “Fall Term in England” program for @15 cadets studying at Royal Holloway University near London
- D. Organize and implement lecture series in support of minor in Southern Studies
- E. Assume administrative jurisdiction over The Citadel’s courses in Music and Art Appreciation