

## Form E-1-A for Boston College Core Curriculum

Department/Program   HISTORY CORE  

- 1) **Have formal learning outcomes for the department's Core courses been developed? What are they?** (What specific sets of skills and knowledge does the department expect students completing its Core courses to have acquired?)

History Core courses introduce students to the importance of historical context and the process of historical change by examining which aspects of human life have changed and which have endured over time and across different regions of the world. Students learn how to interpret the past using primary sources, and they acquire breadth of knowledge, a critical framework, and analytical skills.

By studying past events, students develop an understanding of the historical roots of contemporary societies and come to view the present with a sharper eye, appreciating that it, too, is contingent and will one day be re-examined and reconstructed. Through this process, students become better-informed and more open-minded whole persons, prepared to engage in the world.

Core courses, regardless of subject matter. Through the History Core, students develop skills to

- Analyze primary sources in their historical context
- Narrate change over time

- 2) **Where are these learning outcomes published? Be specific.** (Where are the department's expected learning outcomes for its Core courses accessible: on the web, in the catalog, or in your department handouts?)

The learning outcomes are available on the History Department Core website. <https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/morrissey/departments/history/undergraduate/core/core-requirements.html>

In addition, the learning outcomes are printed in the syllabi for History Core courses.

- 3) **Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine whether students have achieved the stated outcomes for the Core requirement?** (What evidence and analytical approaches do you use to assess which of the student learning outcomes have been achieved more or less well?)

The History Department had performed direct assessment of the learning outcomes, which was undertaken by instructors and teaching assistants using a quantitative scale prior to the pandemic. Since the pandemic, we have experienced large fluctuations in the TA labor pool, desire for seats in the core, and increased pressure on instructors. We will resume direct assessments in the 2025–26 academic year in anticipation of reenvisioning our core learning outcomes and course offerings.

During the 2024–25 academic year, the current Core Moderator, Nicole Eaton, compiled updated data about History Core courses on a macro level. The department updated its understanding of enrollment needs and numbers for core courses hosted by the History department and in other departments and renewed EQ/CP cores, types of courses students take to fulfill core, AP placement scores and core enrollments, study abroad and transfer fulfillment. With this new data, the Department will shift to collecting data about core course learning outcomes and will begin planning workshops to reenvision core course offerings in the future.

- 4) **Who interprets the evidence? What is the process?** (Who in the department is responsible for interpreting the data and making recommendations for curriculum or assignment changes if appropriate? When does this occur?)

Data collection and initial interpretation is the responsibility of the History Core Moderator, who shares this information with the Department Chair (via full department as well as committee meetings) about the Core.

- 5) **What were the assessment results and what changes have been made as a result of using this data/evidence?** (What were the major assessment findings? Have there been any recent changes to your curriculum or program? How did the assessment data contribute to those changes?)

Our core course offerings have recently stabilized after long-term challenges related to pandemic backlogs and faculty and TA labor shortages. As of the 2024–2025 academic year, we have determined that we are now meeting enrollment needs through a variety of large and small course offerings in the department, paired with external offerings from other departments, and paired EQ/CP courses.

In the 2025–26 academic year, the department hopes to hold a series of workshops to reenvision the two-course History core sequence in ways that help students better understand the value of historical thinking. We intend to do the following:

- (1) Further develop our course objectives and learning outcomes and articulate them in a more robust core statement.
- (2) Explore the development of thematic History I and History II core courses while maintaining the importance of chronological divisions (pre/early-modern history and modern history).
- (3) Explore options for developing more small and medium core course offerings while balancing the department's need to offer robust elective offerings.

- 6) **Date of the most recent program review.** (Your latest comprehensive departmental self-study and external review.)

The History Core Moderator, Nicole Eaton, analyzed university-level Core enrollment data for History enrollments with IRP and Student Services in October/November 2024. After sharing findings with the department, the department agreed to hold a series of workshop gatherings to reenvision the department's core course offerings.

During summer 2025, the Core Moderator will calculate viable options for varying the size of future core courses (with the hopes of developing more small-to-medium core courses, depending on faculty availability, TA availability, and room availability).

Evaluation of core course learning outcomes on the course level will resume in fall 2025 as part of a data collection effort for reenvisioning the History core at large.