

Millikin University
College of Arts and Sciences
Annual History Major Assessment
2011-12
by
Dr. Dan Monroe
2012

Executive Summary

In the 2011-12 academic year, both Dan Monroe and Timothy Kovalcik were awarded tenure, solidifying our American and European history lines, providing continuity that will be helpful in attracting students. We continued to employ a talented group of adjuncts--Bill Keagle, Bob Sampson, and Ellie Perelman--each of whom offered courses strong in content and popular with students. The History Department again received student evaluation ratings that are above both the college and university averages. Our newest tenure-line faculty member, Dr. Brian Mullgardt, has aggressively embraced his role as coordinator of the Social Science Education major; Dr. Mullgardt revised the eight-semester plan for Social Science Education, wrote a letter touting our program to high school history teachers that will be distributed by marketing, and shepherded our program through a difficult meeting of the Illinois State Board of Education. The department still lacks a tenure line in nonwestern history, a requirement of all History and Social Science Education majors, a position that needs to be filled before accreditation review. Professor Ellie Perelman is currently offering excellent nonwestern history courses strong on content and popular with students; she has a PhBT1 0 0 1 313.97 667.5PhBT qq aermajor; Dr. Mullga requireme

Either History 201 and 202 (Rise of Modern Europe, to and since 1700), or History 203 and 204 (American History, to and since the Civil War);
Six elective courses, four of which must be at the 300 level or above;
One 400-level content seminar;
History 480, Historiography and Research.

In the academic year 2011-2012, the History Department again expanded the range of its courses. Dr. Mullgardt offered new courses on 20th century popular culture and the 1920s. He is developing a new course on World War Two that will be on the schedule in the coming academic year. Dr. Perelman taught new courses on Japanese and Chinese history as well as an immersion course on the cultural history of Zombies that managed to be strong on content while meeting the ongoing student Zombie-mania. Dr. Perelman is working on future courses on the Ancient World, helping us offer classes in a field helpful for Social Science Education majors taking standardized tests. Dr. Sampson developed a substantive course on baseball in American history. Far from resting on our laurels, History faculty have shared their intellectual interests and research with students in the form of exciting new classes, bringing them remarkably diverse course offerings.

Snapshot

In 2011-12 the full time History Department faculty are Dan Monroe, Ph.D. University of Illinois (U.S., Islamic World and Latin America), Timothy Kovalcik, Ph.D. University of Suffolk (Europe and related subjects), and Brian Mullgardt, Ph.D. University of Connecticut (U.S. and Social Science Education)

Part-time faculty are Robert Sampson, Ph.D. University of Illinois (U.S., British, and Labor), William Keagle, Ph.D. University of Illinois (U.S., World, Religion), and Ellie Perelman, Ph.D. University of California-Berkeley (Asia, Ancient World)

The spring 2012 seminar on the American Civil War enrolled sixteen students. The department chair collected and evaluated sixteen research papers on whether the department's five learning goals were met.

Seminar Research Paper

Student papers that met department standards to a high degree were assigned 5 points, those to a moderate degree 3 points, those to an insufficient degree 1 point.

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| High degree: 7 students | 35 points |
| Moderate degree: 9 | 27 points |
| Insufficient degree: | |
| TOTAL: | 62 points |

Analysis of Assessment Results

The data suggests that students overall performed reasonably well on the research paper assignment. Still, the results indicate that history students need more experience working with primary sources before enrolling in capstone courses.

Improvement Plans

The department instituted a formal system of artifact collection last year whereby papers are retained from either the seminar or historiography courses for assessment purposes. The chair collected the relevant artifacts for the purpose of assessing the department's content courses.

The department also needs to consider a method to give students greater familiarity with primary sources before they reach the seminar course in junior or senior year. One possibility is to create a course at the sophomore level on research methods that would introduce students to the uniquely rigorous process of historical research which requires judgment and discernment in the use and employment of primary source material. We have had discussions regarding the creation of such a course, but have yet to form a consensus on what precise form it should take and when to offer it. Our conversation is continuing and will be resolved soon.

Dr. Brian Mullgardt completed the annual assessment of the Social Science Education major. His report is attached.

