October 10, 2014

History Department Outcomes Assessment

The History Department met for its annual review and discussion of the Assessment Data for AY 2013-14.

The department had data from ten senior students to analyze. One of those students took an incomplete which left nine Senior Thesis paper rubrics to consider along with ten exit statements. Enrollments are down again and the number in the graduating class is again noticeably smaller than in the past. This situation was the first thing that the faculty discussed. Faculty concluded that the department will need to work more to recruit students to the BA program in History by reaching out more in the lower division surveys and reaching out to students in the local high schools.

Next, the faculty the Senior Thesis Rubric aggregate. In the past, the faculty determined to emphasize the proper use of CMS in written assignments and how to write conclusions to term papers. This year’s results were an average of 8 out of 10 in the first instance and 12 out of 15 in the second instance. These numbers are down slightly from last year. But one student scored extremely low and given the small sample to assess, the outcome is somewhat skewed. If the one low rubric is removed the number shows some improvement. The other score averages on the rubric are quite acceptable and the faculty concluded that they did not require any changes to the curriculum, beyond the changes implemented in the previous two years.

History Department faculty also looked at the graduating seniors’ exit statements for the year 2013-14. With one exception, the class graded the History BA program to be either a 5 or a 4 on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the best. The scoring on advising was a wide range from no response to every score between 1 and 5. Course options ranked between 5 and 3. Students were generally pleased with the faculty’s efforts on their behalf and saw History faculty as a main strength in an otherwise limited program. Most of the comments on weaknesses centered on the limited number of course offerings and the fact that CLA has moved to cancel more under enrolled course in recent years. Finally, Most of the graduating class plans to continue their education or to go into teaching.