Form E-1-A for Boston College Undergraduate Programs

Program:  HISTORY

1) Have formal learning outcomes been developed? What are they? (What specific sets of skills and knowledge does the department expect its majors to have acquired before they graduate?)

1. Students should acquire a breadth and depth of knowledge about the world we live in, about other times and places whose distinctiveness helps them understand the variety and complexity of human experience, and about historical change.

(a) Students will have a broad grasp of human history, the processes of historical change, and a depth of knowledge in at least one historical period, geographical area or topical field.

2. History majors should develop the ability to think critically about arguments and stories, and should learn in particular to question the empirical groundings of narratives and analyses and about the assumptions that guide, inform and deflect the move from fact to interpretation or from hypotheses through documentation to conclusions.

(b) Students will be able to critique the use and interpretation of evidence in historical works.

3. Successful students of history should acquire the skills necessary to locate, organize, present, and interpret data, to draw conclusions from these efforts, and to write a coherent and analytical narrative.

(c) Students will be able to develop their own historical research questions and research hypotheses and carry out an historical research project.

2) Where are these learning outcomes published? Be specific. (Where are the department’s learning expectations accessible to potential majors: on the web or in the catalog or in your dept major handouts?)

On the department’s website, at
http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/schools/cas/history/undergrad.major.html

3) Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine whether graduates have achieved the stated outcomes for the degree? (What do you use to assess which of the student learning outcomes are being achieved more or less well?)

Research and/or discussion papers written by seniors are evaluated (on a scale of 1-5) for each of the learning outcomes by faculty supervising the preparation of this material.

In 2011-2012, Honors theses and Scholar of the College projects are being evaluated. In 2012-2013, Honors theses, Scholar of the College projects, and written materials prepared in the
optional Senior Colloquia and Senior Seminars will be evaluated. In 2013-2014 and thereafter, with Senior Colloquia or Senior Seminars now required of all History Majors, the written work of all senior History Majors will be evaluated, with specific learning outcomes being the focus of evaluation in different years.

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?)

The director of undergraduate studies will assemble the data and, in consultation with the department’s electives committee, will prepare a report to the faculty for the first department meeting of each fall semester, summarizing the results and offering recommendations for remedial action as needed. The conclusions of the faculty discussion will be summarized in the department’s annual report.