

Report on Research with Employers of Graduates with Teaching History Majors
May 16, 2011
Executive Summary

In 2009, the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) began the Tuning project, intended to determine what is most important for graduates with a major in history to know, understand, and be able to do. A team of history professors worked together to determine critical learning outcomes that would be common to all college and university programs in the state. As a follow-up to a focus group of employers of history majors, a focus group was conducted with 12 employers who specifically hire history majors to teach in high schools.

History teaching preparation in Utah is a joint effort between History departments and colleges of education. Typically, the History department is responsible for content preparation in history, asking the future teacher to do either a full degree or a history teaching minor. Students with a history major or minor spend two or three semesters learning about how students learn, the pedagogies that are specific to teaching history to high school students, and how to manage a classroom so that both teaching and learning can occur. The following summary conclusions are representative of the information found throughout the report:

- The top 5 skills desired by those hiring teaching history majors were caring for and helping refine students (particularly caring for students' academic success), content knowledge (including reading to stay up to date), work ethic, classroom management skills, and being teachable and coachable.
- While content knowledge was considered to be critical, discussion tended to center around pedagogy and attitude toward students, parents, and colleagues.
- The screening of applicants is done by the district offices. Committees at the school have access to screening scores that are used to determine specific qualifications, and then the school committee conducts interviews to determine fit. Most participants indicated that the resume was the initial screening tool, but the interview was where the decision was made. Other criteria that some use are a teaching demonstration and references.
- Most of the participants felt that more on-the-job training would be helpful, particularly with classroom management. They felt students should be in the classroom by the freshman or sophomore year.
- The strengths of recent hires have been that they are tech savvy, understand team playing, and have broad content knowledge.
- Some gaps in the training of graduates are that they lack experience in visiting other parts of the country, do not have good classroom management skill, are not trained to handle diversity and cultural differences, do not have content knowledge that is sufficiently deep, and do not have an adequate variety of teaching methods.
- Participants reported hiring from all Utah schools and, occasionally, from out of state. Graduates tend to seek employment in schools near the universities or colleges from which they graduated.

- Recommendations for improvement of curriculum in teaching history include more emphasis on cultural diversity, more classroom experience, including earlier placement in the classroom, methods to communicate with parents, training from planning to assessment, training in writing content and language objectives, and use of a variety of teaching strategies. They also suggested that having professors with field experience was important.

Report on Research with Employers of Graduates with History Majors

Introduction to the Study

Working on a grant from the Lumina Foundation for Education, the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) began the Tuning project, intended to determine what is most important for graduates with a major in history to know, understand, and be able to do. A team of history professors worked to determine critical learning outcomes that would be common to all college and university programs in the state. In order to determine what employers were seeking, the project directors conducted research using a survey similar to one that had been used in Europe. A focus group was conducted with 12 employers who specifically hire history majors. As a follow-up, a second focus group was conducted with 12 employers who hire history majors to teach in public high schools. This report is based on information from the second focus group. The focus group was conducted by Shannon Fletcher from the Lighthouse Research. The research team consisted of the following individuals:

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Norm Jones, Ph.D., Chair, Department of History, Utah State University

Janice Gygi, Ph.D., Tuning Project Associate Director, Utah

Daniel McInerney, Ph.D., Professor, Department of History, Utah State University

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Guiding Questions

In order to verify the results of the survey and to determine if other issues should be considered, the research team developed a list of seven key questions that would help guide the history team to confirm and prioritize their current learning objectives. The questions are:

1. What skills do you expect from a history major? What is unique about the training of a history major?
2. What do you look for when you are hiring a new teacher? What is the most useful indicator of what the applicant can do?
3. What type of on-the-job training do you expect to do with any new hire? Do history majors necessarily need less on-the-job training than other majors? What type of educational background makes this training easier?
4. In evaluating the education of history majors, what do you find to be the most useful skills that they possess? What are the universities doing really well?
5. Are there gaps in what you have expected and what the graduates can do? What are the specific problem areas that you would like to see improved?
6. From what colleges and universities do you hire?
7. If you were the person in charge of setting the curriculum for Utah's university and college history majors, what would you do to make sure they are successful in the marketplace?

Data Collection Process

1. The history team was composed of a history professor from each state university and college in Utah. They worked with their departments to determine the outcomes that were appropriate for history majors. Secondary research was used to examine outcomes that had been developed by professional organizations, such as the American Historical Association. A draft of the outcomes is attached in Appendix A.

2. A survey, based on that used in the Bologna Project in Europe, was administered to faculty, students, alumni, and employers.
3. On May 16, 2011, 12 employers, who hire history majors to teach in public high schools, participated in a two-hour focus group session at Lighthouse Research. The session was facilitated by Shannon Fletcher, Director of Market Research, PRC (Profession Research Certification) certified as expert. Two members of the research team watched the proceedings from the engineering room. Participants included representatives of the following Utah school districts: two from Alpine, two from Canyons, two from Granite, three from Jordan, one from Provo, and two from Salt Lake. Ten were assistant principals, and two were principals. Ten were men, and two were women. The number of students in each school ranged from 1,500 to 2,500, and number of history teachers ranged from 5 to 15. Each participant was given \$75, delivered immediately at the end of the session. The session was taped and DVD copies were provided to the Tuning research team.

Major Findings and Recommendations

Each question was analyzed using the focus group responses. In some cases, the focus group responses varied depending on the way the question was posed. Each participant had a workbook in which they wrote the answers to many of the questions. All workbooks were collected after the session and were used for the evaluation. The results are discussed below.

1. What skills do you expect from a history major? What is unique about the training of a history major?

Each participant was asked to give the top skill on his or her list. Then participants were asked to offer any other skill that had not been listed. After the list was completed, participants were asked to vote for their top five. In several instances, skills that had been listed were consolidated. The subcategories below indicate the skills that were included in the major heading. The results (and the number voting for each one) are:

1. Caring for and helping to refine students (12)
 - a. Caring for students' academic success
 - b. Passion for students and for the subject
2. Content knowledge, including reading to stay up-to-date (10)
3. Work ethic (6)
 - a. Work hard
 - b. Endurance ("It's not a sprint; it's a marathon.")
 - c. Wanting to be the best in the field
4. Classroom management skills (6)
5. Teachable (5)
 - a. Coachable
 - b. Willing to accept/give peer review
 - c. Team player
 - d. Colleague friendly

An evaluation of the individual workbooks showed that the desired skills varied according to the particular institution. Participants were asked to rate the top priorities on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is not at all important and 7 is very important. Although the skill that was labeled "value

added” only received four votes, the moderator told the group that they could add that as a sixth skill for the ratings. (Value added was being able to assist with something else in the school in addition to teaching.) Eight participants rated value added, and two rated it instead of teachable. The skills desired were rated as follows:

1. Caring for the students (7.00)
2. Content knowledge (6.25)
3. Work ethic (6.92)
4. Classroom management skills (6.67)
5. Being teachable (5.6)
6. Value added (5.75)

The participants were asked not to rate every skill as a 7, but they indicated that these were all very important to them.

When asked to rate how the graduates from Utah universities and colleges actually perform on these skills, the results were:

1. Caring for the students (5.00)
2. Content knowledge (5.58)
3. Work ethic (4.92)
4. Classroom management skills (4.67)
5. Being teachable (5.10)
6. Value added (4.63)

When asked the question, “If a person with a history degree was a type of vehicle, what brand of vehicle would he or she be? Why?” most participants said a truck or SUV. They were looking for hard work, versatility, and flexibility. “Need to be able to carry and distribute a lot of different kinds of baggage, i.e., curriculum, coaching, human relations skills, flexibility, and student centered.” “Able to do many tasks.” “Easy to use, reliable, versatile, dependable, comfortable to work with, safe, holds its (his or her) value over time, easy to fix.” One who selected a hybrid SUV commented on the economy in tough times. One outlier selected a small, sporty car and commented, “Not a lot of baggage, yet room for essentials. Modern, hip.”

The only skill that was unique to history teachers was the content knowledge. The other skills discussed would be valuable for any high school teacher and relate to pedagogy rather than history knowledge.

2. What do you look for when you are hiring a new employee? What is the most useful indicator of what the applicant can do?

Because of state and federal requirements, the districts do the initial screening, and give a numerical rating. If a candidate is not qualified, he or she is not put on the list. The individual schools then select from that list, usually considering those with the highest numerical rating.

The most important part of the hiring process is the interview. “I think it’s the interview. I think it’s an opportunity to ask open ended questions and give a person a chance to share their perspective and read the body language and the tone and things of that nature.” After the district screening, “then it’s the interview process. I trust my own instincts. I’ve been doing this

for forty years and I think I have a pretty good feel for what kind of person's going to make a good teacher." "When you have the team in the interview, they'll tell you right away if it's a go or no go. They can tell in the first couple minutes."

Content knowledge is critical, and a candidate would not be interviewed without having had the requisite discipline classes. However, the ability to convey the excitement of history was a key issue. "What I'm looking for in the interview is not how much history you know. I'm looking for how well will you connect with kids, how well will you connect with us. Will the kids who take your class come out liking history enough to want to pursue it or will they come out of your class hating history? Kids might forget 99 percent of what they learned in high school, but they will remember how they felt in your class, and if you turn them on to history, you've done your job, but if you turn them off of history, you've done the exact opposite of what we want."

Given the nature of the activities in a high school, all participants were seeking what they called value added. "We have too many needs. We don't have the luxury of having someone who's just a pure historian, but they can't teach geography, or they can't teach economics, or they can't teach financial literacy. They can't coach. They can't do student government. They've never had any interaction with kids even when they were a kid. We're just not interested." At one school, they examine the district scoring "and so then from there, we use our department to sit in on our interview with them, and then we rescore based on what we observe and how well they may get along with the faculty or students or if they can add some value, maybe coaching or teach a dance class or something to that effect."

Often the value added is the deciding factor. One participant reported, "I was getting ready to offer a job today, but then the football coach came in and said, "I'm in trouble. Three of my sophomore football coaches cannot help. I have somebody I have in mind." And so, now we're going to interview him and see if he fits what we're looking for because in a high school, you can't leave them hanging. So we're looking at someone who has a history major. He's going to go through the qualification process, which is not always the best, but I don't want to leave my coaches hanging."

When asked if value added was critical for all teaching candidates including math and science, the reply was that it depends on the demand. "If you've got a shortage of one type of teacher, then you can't be as choosy, but when you've got folks coming with history degrees or more liberal arts types of degrees, then you tend to have a little more of an abundance of those to choose from."

Participants were asked if a teacher with a degree in history could teach something else, and the reply was that they cannot. However, flexibility was important. "One thing that we have found this year, because we've got declining enrollment and declining FTE, is that everybody is teaching something they're qualified to do, so we've got history teachers doing math if they have a math endorsement, and they've got to be flexible." They also noted that history teachers already have a lot of preps within their discipline.

A good work ethic was considered to be very important. "We've had a couple that have come in and said, "Let me teach. I don't want to do anything else." It's the added value that we need from some of these teachers, and that's what I'm seeing that missing. Some of them can't or won't." "And I'm always shocked when an attitude is expressed with some of our younger or newer hires that, "Do I get comp time if I come to this after school event?" or "Can you come

and present at our awards program this week?" "Well, will I be on the clock?" I'm a little shocked at the work ethic that that's just not part of what you're doing as a teacher.

"I also think the idea of educational charity has changed. In our society I think teachers, of course, never have been paid what they're worth, but I think that there are more students coming out of college who compare themselves to business graduates, or the engineering graduates, or the premed graduate and expect to be compensated similarly, and they're not."

"My experience is probably more limited, but everybody that I've interacted with, that we've had a chance to hire or interview, have been really diligent workers. They've had that added value, and if they haven't been as dedicated maybe in the classroom, they've been dedicated in some other area."

"I think they need to be subject to peer review. I think teachers have to be able to risk with each other, getting honest feedback and giving honest feedback without getting upset with each other. A good team can do that." "I think they need to be teachable and coachable. They can't just say, "I'm coming out of college. I know everything, and get out of my way.""

"There's one more that's high on my list, and it's the ability to teach in a variety of different methods. Sometimes you have your Power Point slappers that just slide slap the whole time; others just do book work the whole time; and so there needs to be a variety of ways to reach the variety of kids that we have in our classrooms."

Other qualities that were listed, but were not in the top five were: being flexible, having a second language, being positive and cheerful, having a sense of humor, being a skilled assessor of what students know and using data driven assessment, being able to follow policies and procedures, having good organizational skills, including time management, being a great communicator, having diplomacy, and having a professional appearance. "When we get down to the last two or three candidates, it is the little things toward the end that make the difference in the hire. Maybe it's the added value, or maybe it's something else that they have that we need. When we get down to the final end, those last few things do count. That's why I think you saw such a smattering of qualities."

Some additional indicators of skills

References and previous experience can be important. "We look at references and student teaching, because some people can do great interviews, but let's see what they've done in the classroom."

Classroom demonstrations are sometimes used. In addition, substitute or part time teachers may be observed and hired. "Sometimes we will hire a part-time or fill-in teacher if someone gets sick or is out for a long term stay. This is what we did with our last history teacher. When a previous teacher resigned, we put another person there as a temporary, and we went in and observed him, very much like the classroom demonstration in another district, except we're watching real students in real time. And we watched him, not only in a classroom setting, but in computer settings, and even after school; he was helping out with our debate team. So we'd go in and see how they were reacting to it, and then we'd do the same thing by asking a teacher just to drop by and say hello and talk to him within the department." They asked the district if they could hire him. "So they let us bypass doing the complete screening process. It saves us a little time, and we've already seen what he can do with our students."

3. **What type of on-the-job training do you expect to do with any new hire? Do history majors necessarily need less on-the-job training than other majors? What type of educational background makes this training easier?**

The participants discussed the types of programs that they have to help new teachers. "In our school, we have a mentor specialist. She just hounds me every day. "Have you hired someone? Have you hired someone?" It doesn't matter what department; she wants their phone number and all their information so she can contact them immediately and get that individual involved with mentoring and making them feel welcome. She'll help that individual know who to contact at other schools, so they don't have to reinvent the wheel on everything and can have contact with different schools so. We're fortunate we have a great mentor program within the school and the district."

"We have what we call a professional development team, made up of teachers selected by the staff, and they each assign themselves as a mentor to our new teachers plus each department assigns a mentor to the teacher, and so I have a double layer there plus each administrator takes a certain number of the new teachers, and it's our responsibility to observe, mentor, and help them as we go through the year."

"An administrator does an evaluation near the first of the year to see if things are working out right in their classroom, and we'll know right off the bat if things aren't right. Kids will come down and tell us. Other teachers will tell us. Then we'll start looking. If they need help, we'll get them a mentor, but that evaluation is critical to know if things are going well in their classroom."

"Personally, when the teachers are setting up their classrooms, especially our new teachers, I go around, and I spend half an hour with them during the first few days. I'm trying to give them someone they can and talk to if they have discipline problems. I talk to them about classroom management. It's difficult for first year teachers. When they're in the classroom, I will go back several times."

The participants felt that more on-the-job training, such as practica and student teaching, would be helpful, particularly in the area of classroom management. "If this was a plumber that we were hiring, they have to have an apprenticeship, and we don't have enough of an apprenticeship in my opinion. We need more time. They need experience in the classroom. They have student teaching, but they never feel truly in control of that class." "It's never their class. It's someone else's, and they're in the background. "

Extensive internships would not be without problems. "I don't know how we do that without making it longer for these students, but somewhere along the way if they can get an internship for even just a half of a year, it would be helpful. I'd like to make it a year, but we know how expensive college is. Then we could observe them and let them get the full value of that. For administrators like us, that's going to be hard because you will start getting the parents coming in complaining about these folks. "They're just getting their feet wet, and it's my kid's grades that you're messing with.""

Having classroom experience early had another benefit. Students would have the opportunity to see if this was a good career choice. "One of the things that we've been able to do at our school is have a university reading clinic hire college kids, juniors and seniors. They came in and learned

how to do the reading material and many of them decided, "I don't think I want to teach." That's from that experience."

4. In evaluating the education of history majors, what do you find to be the most useful skills that they possess? What are the universities doing really well?

Responses to this question were often university specific. "I'd say out of BYU that the sheer ability to glean off the top intelligent, academic based students is a strength. They're very intelligent, very bright because they have such a high ACT entrance. You get a top tier, but then they leave us." "I would say UVU prepares them well, because they have educators teaching them. They're from the field and have been in the field recently. So I find their preparation of the students very real." One of the administrators from the Canyons District indicated that most Utah County graduates did not wish to "come north" to teach.

"I think our students are coming out tech savvy." "They understand being a team player and collaborating, so they are doing a good job, I think, in teaching those." "What I've seen with out-of-state applicants versus in-state is the in-state seem to be well versed in content, but the out-of-state also seem to be well versed in pedagogy."

They also commented that graduates were all different. "We're trying to take all of these custom jobs that we interview all the time, and no two candidates are the same. They can be in the same cohort in the same college and be completely different. Every single candidate is a custom job."

5. Are there gaps in what you have expected and what the graduates can do? What are the specific problem areas that you would like to see improved?

One weakness that was expressed was lack of experience in visiting historical sites. "Teachers have a hard time with the special content of history, because it took place on the east coast. I had one teacher tell me, "It wasn't until I went back to Boston that I really understood what was going on," and so they have a hard time trying to figure out how the events took place. They're hundreds of miles away, and back there it's five, ten miles, and you're next to that next site. So, especially talking about U.S. history, that's a real problem for them." "One of the things in the resume of the coach that I am considering hiring is that he's been to a lot of battlefields of the civil war and experienced them first hand. That's huge. When you teach that, the passion you're going to teach it with is different than what I read out of three paragraphs in a book."

"Classroom management skills, I thought, were really a weakness." "I had a University of Pennsylvania graduate come in, and she said, "I never struggled with classroom management until I came here." And she's a ten-year teacher." The group felt that large class sizes was a major part of the problem.

"My experience is that they come in with the content and some of that, but it takes a lot from that point to work on the classroom management, and so they get that more at the school when they are hired than they do at the university. When I went to school, I don't remember anything about classroom management, and a lot of the teachers still come into the school with no clue what they're getting themselves into, so it takes that mentoring and showing them different ideas to manage the classroom."

"I think one of the major weaknesses is that they don't do language objectives. They are strong in content, but they don't describe how the student is going to learn it. Are they going to read it? Are they going to write it? Are they going to listen? What are you going to do?"

"I come from out of state. Literally half of my school was minority students. We interacted so much on our campuses, because I was an athlete and played on the football team, and we were used to the culture and the food; it was all different. I didn't see it here, so that lack of diversity, I think, is a weakness, and that's changing in this state, but that lack of diversity is still here."

"I don't think we have cultural awareness. Maybe we're too ethnocentric here and don't look at the other side of things, and maybe some of these teachers are so confined to the culture and the mores of our culture here, that they don't see the other side."

Although the group felt that the content knowledge was broad, there was concern that it was not deep. "I just think when I interview them, they're very shallow. They have not been back east." "They give surface lesson plans. They have no clue. Their stories are just really off task, uninteresting. They don't delve below to really unravel it. I think it's too broad and not deep enough."

"I'd say the same thing. I think they're very bright in terms of having a broad history background, and I don't think that's all their fault. I think it is because of the way their state core's written and how much they need to get into this space of time, so they can't really go deep like they need to, and more and more the literature is saying that in every subject, not just history, they need to go deeper."

Another concern was that teachers need to keep reading to update their knowledge of history. "I think we ought to recognize that history written today is a little different. They're constantly getting new sources, so you'd better stay up on it. Don't read your parents' history book."

6. From what colleges and universities do you hire?

The group indicated that they hired from all Utah universities and colleges, and the qualifications of the candidate were more important than the school. "Well, I just look at the individual. I rarely look at what college they come from. It's an individual thing."

Some comments were made about individual schools." I like Utah State. They have excellent, excellent education programs. It's not my deciding point, but that's definitely a plus if I see Westminster or Utah State." "I think you should have your piece of paper and wow us with your actions and your interview. I think the one university that has a strong program is going to change over time. Right now it might be Utah State and Westminster, but I would like to think it was SUU at one time in history, and we're getting some really great candidates even out of UVU of late." "I like Westminster, because sometimes the candidates are somewhat older. You get a more mature adult. Sometimes they're more committed, and sometimes Westminster just has cutting edge." "University of Phoenix is coming on too. They're starting to turn out some really good candidates." "BYU Idaho is quite good about supervising their student teachers as well as turning out really good candidates later."

"From out of state I like UNLV. They have an incredible teacher preparation program. They usually have them in the classroom from sophomore year on up." Another participant

commented, "Your experience must be better than mine. Mine was not good." Again this stresses the importance of the individual, rather than the school.

7. If you were the person in charge of setting the curriculum for Utah's University and college history major, what would you do to make sure they are successful in the marketplace?

Cultural diversity was cited as an important element that needs to be added. Another skill that graduates need is how to communicate with parents.

"Mine was that they need more classroom experience, but earlier on in the teaching cycle. Usually you have the student teaching right at the end, and so these people don't have anything else to do by the time they get to student teaching." "Once they choose teaching as a major, one of the first classes they need to have is classroom experience, right off the bat." "I think it is crucial that they are in a classroom day one and do the full semester or start at the second semester and go the rest of the year, not this kind of in between stuff, so they really feel like they are in charge of the classroom, and they are the teacher and no one's in the background."

"One of the critical skills is organizing the instruction from the preplanning piece clear through the identifying and assessing, and intervening for kids who aren't learning, for all students to be able to learn, all types of learners. You can't pop in and pop out and accomplish that." "I think the students should learn how to do content and language objectives. I think that should be first and early, so it's not just what you're teaching, it's how you're going to do it."

University faculty qualifications was also an issue. "I think there has to be a balance because universities are driven towards research, and so you have professors that are geared towards that. They absolutely have to bring in field experience, whether it's panels, whether it's teaching specific aspects, but if you're always in the ivory tower, you can't teach how to handle the classroom of thirty seven kids with fifteen different languages."

Specific pedagogical strategies were also stressed. "I would say a variety of teaching strategies to get these kids engaged and keep them engaged."

The number one skill that the participants selected for graduates was caring about the students. They disagreed about whether or not students could be taught to care. "I don't think you can teach someone to care for students. It's innate." "I disagree with that point, because I think if you go through an experience in the university or maybe what you went through in high school, and people don't treat you that way, you can become sensitive to it." "You might learn it by the way professors treat you, as a student."

"I had a thought based on how they're coming not prepared to let the students know they care. On the one hand, we're asking them to be so in control of the classroom management, and maintain every peep and sound and structure in the room that that becomes such a huge task that I'm wondering if they forget to individualize and know that the education of the young man that just arrived from Somalia and his goals for today absolutely have to be different. So there's room in education still to individualize."

"I think the universities, frankly, are way behind. Where we're trying to be in the public high schools and elementary schools now is to have a culture of learning rather than a culture of teaching, and the graduates are coming out of a system that's the old Pontius Pilot idea." "I teach

you. If you don't get it, then I wash my hands of you." So, the culture's changing. But they're not changing."

"I think the last two teachers we hired have that, and again, we're going back to the cutting edge. I think we're seeing that change, and are they lagging behind? Yes. Everything lags behind, but I've seen that with the newer ones. I think they are trying to catch up to where we are."

One of the issues that was discussed was the advisement of students. Participants felt that students should be aware of what is involved in teaching. "Quite frankly, there are a lot of people going through educational programs that we would never hire, and how they get through the program is amazing to me, because they don't have a lot of these skill sets." "Someone needs to advise them that "this might be not a good career for you.""

"I really strongly believe that the professors need to step in and say, "This is not your area, and you really don't have the aptitude for this. You don't have the work ethic for this. You're in the wrong area." So I think that's where they're lacking is being brutally honest."

Future Research Suggestions and Limitations of the Present Study

- 1) Participants in the present study represented employers who hire graduates to teach history. Many graduates find positions in firms or institutions where their skills are valued, but where they are not involved in projects concerning history. Other focus groups might be conducted with employers who have hired history majors, but who do not work in history.
- 2) A survey could be useful to determine needs of schools. For this particular study, the survey should be focused specifically on skills needed to teach history.
- 3) Because of the small number of participants, findings from a focus group cannot be generalized. However, often a contribution of even one individual can provide valuable insight into the issues of concern. The focus group provided good information about the important learning outcomes, but it also provided suggestions for improvements that could be helpful to the universities and colleges. Future use of focus groups in other disciplines is recommended. Faculty, students, and alumni, in addition to employers, could offer valuable insights.

Appendix A
Learning Outcomes – History
Draft – 12/16/2010

HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

- I. (Range of historical information)
 - A. Identify the key events which express/define change over time in a particular place or region.
 - B. Identify how change occurs over time
 - C. Explain historical continuity and change
 - D. Describe the influence of political ideologies, economic structures, social organization, cultural perceptions, and natural environments on historical events
 - E. Discuss the ways in which factors such as race, gender, class, ethnicity, region, and religion influence historical narratives

HISTORICAL THINKING

- II. (Recognize the past-ness of the past)
 - A. Explain how people have existed, acted, and thought in the past
 - B. Explain what influence the past has on the present
- III. (Emphasize the complex nature of past experiences)
 - A. Interpret the complexity and diversity of situations, events, and past mentalities
 - B. Compare eras and regions in order to define enduring issues
- IV. (Emphasis the complex and problematic nature of the historical record)
 - A. Recognize a range of viewpoints
 - B. Compare competing historical narratives
 - C. Challenge arguments of historical inevitability
 - D. Analyze cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causation

HISTORICAL SKILLS

- V. (Develop skills in critical thinking and reading)
 - A. Evaluate debates among historians
 - B. Differentiate between historical facts and historical interpretations
 - C. Assess the credibility of primary and secondary sources
- VI. (Develop research skills)
 - A. Formulate historical questions
 - B. Obtain historical data from a variety of sources
 - C. Identify gaps in available records
- VII. (Develop the ability to construct reasonable historical arguments)
 - A. Construct a well-organized historical argument
 - B. Support an interpretation with historical evidence from a variety of primary and secondary sources