

DATA DRIVEN DECISIONS

Since 2000 the History Department has been using information about its students and courses to improve the curriculum. Because of what we learned, several changes have been made to our programs. Here are the most significant:

1. Rewrote and reconfigured the requirements for the Bachelor of Science in History to prevent confusion, making it easier for students to self-advise.
2. Following surveys of graduates and discussions with the Secondary Education Department, we reformed the History Teaching Major and Minor, in order to prepare students to do well on the PRAXIS exam, and to prepare them to teach the high school unit on American government newly required in Utah.
3. Opened the new Latin Teaching Minor in response to established student need.

In the spring of 2009 the History Department revised its goals for history majors and created a rubric for its capstone courses. The rubric, first applied in the spring of 2009, has already pinpointed some issues that must be addressed in our curriculum. In August of 2009 the Department began the process of reconfiguring its curriculum using the goals, the rubric, the surveys of student and faculty understanding of departmental and gen ed goals, and surveys of employers and graduates. With the support of a Lumina Foundation grant, History is doing this in consultation with all the other history programs in the Utah System of Higher Education.

The discussion is pointing History toward a revamping of its lower and upper division history curricula and a rethinking of its general education offerings. In particular, there will be a new emphasis on critical thinking and writing taught more directly, and upon clear distinctions between gen ed and History courses.