Assessing the Flexible Core

Jennifer Sparrow
Carl Grindley
CUNY School of Professional Studies
LEARNING OUTCOMES

In the text boxes explain the course assignments and activities that will address the learning outcomes.

Individual and Society

1. Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.

In each module, students are expected to read and critically discuss the primary text, required journal articles, opinion pieces and editorials, and view specified audio and video files as required by the instructor. Often these course readings present different points of view on an ethical issue. In Discussion Board Forums and Formal Essays (described in more detail below and in the syllabus appendix) students must gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view to complete the requirements of the assignments.

2. Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.

Short answer reflection question assignments are designed to gauge progress in acquiring critical thinking skills by allowing the student to briefly explain, identify, and apply the principles under investigation. In addition, Formal Essays (described in more detail below and in the syllabus appendix) require students to evaluate arguments in order to take and defend a position. Last, the Capstone ePortfolio Essay tracks the development of the student’s thinking as he/she works through one of the moral problems covered in the course, tracking his/her progress from “pre-philosophical reflection” early in the course to more sophisticated philosophical analysis at the course conclusion. In the capstone essay students engage in reflective inquiry into the study of bioethics by analyzing, reconstructing, and critiquing a complex argument on a contemporary issue.

3. Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.

Each course module has an associated Formal Essay that requires students to gather and evaluate evidence and arguments from primary and secondary sources in order to create their own well-reasoned written argument about an ethical issue. The boilerplate instructions for each essay are as follows: In a well-reasoned essay of at least 750 words, take a position on the issue, and defend a thesis in support of that position. The details required...
Submission Form

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## Area Matrix

### Flexible Core Area D Individual and Society

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### Learning Outcomes

1. Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.
2. Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.
3. Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.
4. Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring the relationship between the individual and society, including, but not limited to, anthropology, communications, cultural studies, history, journalism, philosophy, political science, psychology, public affairs, religion, and sociology.
5. Examine how an individual’s place in society affects experiences, values, or choices.
7. Articulate ethical uses of data and other information resources to respond to problems and questions.
8. Identify and engage with local, national, or global trends or ideologies, and analyze their impact on individual or collective decision-making.
First Findings
First Findings
## The Five-Year Plan

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*Five-Year Course Assessment Cycle Calendar*
Flexible Core SLOs 1-4 World

1. Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.
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1. Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.
2. Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.
3. Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.
4. Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of history.
Developing the Rubric

Flex Core SLO 3: Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.
Developing the Rubric

**Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments** using evidence to support conclusions.
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Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.
## Developing the Rubric

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<th>3 Proficient</th>
<th>2 Developing</th>
<th>1 Beginning</th>
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<td>SLO 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gather, Interpret, Assess Sources &amp; Evidence</td>
<td>Examines and compares information from source(s) to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis. Evaluates sources appropriately.</td>
<td>Examines and compares information from source(s) with enough evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis.</td>
<td>Examines and compares information from a few sources with some analysis, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis.</td>
<td>Uses sources without interpretation or evaluation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value Critical Thinking, Hostos Info Lit</td>
<td>Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) evaluates evidences and arguments from a variety of sources, making sophisticated connections across texts.</td>
<td>Competently evaluates evidence and arguments from a variety of relevant sources, making connections across texts.</td>
<td>Uses evidence and information from some relevant sources, making simple connections across texts.</td>
<td>Uses information from random or irrelevant sources with no evaluation and no connection across texts.</td>
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<td>SLO 3.1 Use evidence to produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments</td>
<td>Organizes and synthesizes evidence from sources to fully achieve a specific purpose, with clarity and depth.</td>
<td>Organizes and synthesizes evidence from sources. Intended purpose is achieved.</td>
<td>Organizes evidence from sources. The information is not yet synthesized, so the intended purpose is not fully achieved.</td>
<td>Information from sources is fragmented and/or used inappropriately (misquoted, taken out of context, or incorrectly paraphrased, etc.), so the intended purpose is not achieved.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLO 3.2 Use of Evidence to Support Conclusions</td>
<td>Conclusion and related outcomes (consequences and implications) are logical and reflect students’ informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and sources accurately.</td>
<td>Conclusion is logically tied to a range of evidence and information, including opposing viewpoints, related outcomes (consequences and implications) are</td>
<td>Conclusion is logically tied to information (because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion); some related outcomes (consequences and implications) are</td>
<td>Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are</td>
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</table>
Flex Core SLO 4 Development

SLO 4 same challenge as SLO3

Unpacking the language and defining the terms
Defining a Discipline

What are the fundamental concepts and methods of the discipline of art history?
Defining a Discipline

• Major schools of thought
• Historical periods
• Specialized terminology
• Threshold concepts
• Use of sources
• Types of sources
• Disciplinary thinking
• Important figures
• Disciplinary development
Disciplines for Discussion

• Sociology
• Psychology
• Anthropology
• English Literature
• Economics
• Philosophy
Our Experience
Program: General Education

American History and Culture Spring 2014
Sampled At: No date

History 102 Fall 2013, Spring 2014
Sampled At: No date

History 202 Fall 2013, Spring 2014
Sampled At: No date

History 202: Twentieth Century World History Spring 2014, Fall 2014
Sampled At: No date
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Week 3 - Foundations of the 20th Century

How did Emmeline Pankhurst justify the use of violence in the struggle for suffrage? In the early twentieth century, the British government categorized terrorism the actions of the Women’s Social and Political Union (WSPU). Do you consider them terrorist in nature? Were they justified? How did their actions compare to those of terrorist groups you are familiar with?

Due Date: Your essay is due by Wednesday, Sept 17.

Emmeline Pankhurst was a woman who believed she was neither superior nor inferior to men and desired to be treated as such. She gave her voice, time to the struggle which was the Women’s Social and Political Union (WSPU). She fought with passion and without guilt because of her unwavering belief that women have the right to vote like their male counter-part.

Evidently, Emmeline and the WSPU thought gross injustice was being meted out not being affording to them a right the men value as “their dearest possession” thought violence was justifiable because they have exhausted every other avenue. She stated “I want to say that from the moment we began our agitation to this day I have felt absolutely guiltless in this matter.” She was ready to expound on the idea that when they as women took a more relaxed approach were frowned upon and misunderstood as not hungry enough; then when they became more forceful, the critics said “You are behaving so badly that you show you are afraid for it.” Still, Emmeline remained undeterred.

As a result of their approach towards acquiring the right to vote, the actions of the WSPU were labeled as terrorism by the British government. According to the Dictionary terrorism is defined as “The use of violent acts to frighten the people...
Scoring with the rubric

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<th>A. Historical sources</th>
<th>B. Historical themes, ideas and movements</th>
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<td><strong>Accomplished (4)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Proicient (3)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Uses and critiques sources from a variety of perspectives to analyze the causes and consequences of historical events.</td>
<td>Uses historical sources from a variety of perspectives to analyze the causes of historical events.</td>
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<td><strong>Developing (2)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Beginning (1)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognizes historical sources, but establishes weak and/or inaccurate connections to the causes of historical events.</td>
<td>Cannot identify historical sources and/or their relationships to historical events.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Accomplished (4)</strong></td>
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<td>Studies the relationships between events to identify pervasive historical themes, ideas, and/or movements.</td>
<td>Identifies pervasive historical themes, ideas, and/or movements.</td>
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<td><strong>Beginning (1)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Proficient (3)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does not identify historical themes, ideas, and/or movements.</td>
<td>Identifies some historical themes, ideas, and/or movements.</td>
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**Rubric 1 Total: 13**

Previous  Save & Next
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Results of First Assessment

Percentage Attaining Performance on SLOs

- **Beginning**
- **Developing**
- **Competent**
- **Proficient**

- SLO 1
- SLO 2
- SLO 3.1
- SLO 3.2
- SLO 4
What did we do wrong?

Image Source: http://www.flickr.com/photos/carowallis1/252562895
Why did this assessment fail

In order of ease to address:
1. Inadequate norming
2. Poorly-designed rubric
3. Assignment prompt
4. Wrong assignment
5. Problems with the course’s structure/syllabus
6. Problems with instruction
7. Basic student inadequacy/unreasonable difficulty of the learning expectations
What are the fundamental concepts of the discipline of History?

Accomplished attainment

• Uses sources from a variety of perspectives to analyze the cause and consequence of historical events.
• Studies relationships between events to identify pervasive historical themes, ideas, and/or movements.
• Examines change over time and continuity in times of change.
• Weighs the importance, durability, and relevance of events, themes, and issues in the past.
• Weighs appropriateness of using the past to interpret the present.
Results of Second Assessment

Percentage of Students at Each Level of Attainment

- SLO 4.1
- SLO 4.2
- SLO 4.3
- SLO 4.4

Pathways Flexible Core SLO 4 for Global Culture

- Beginning
- Developing
- Competent
- Proficient
What we have learned so far

- Standardized our report structure
- Use of ePortfolios
- Closing the loop(s)
Thank you!

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Carl Grindley  cgrindley@hostos.cuny.edu