

History 394: Native and Newcomers: Immigration and Migration in American History

Assessment Plan for evaluating GEC Historical Study Requirements

Goals:

Students develop knowledge of how past events influence today's society and help them understand how humans view themselves.

1. Students acquire a perspective on history and an understanding of the factors that shape human activity.
2. Students display knowledge about the origins and nature of contemporary issues and develop a foundation for future comparative understanding.
3. Students think, speak, and write critically about primary and secondary historical sources by examining diverse interpretations of past events and ideas in their historical contexts.

Assessment tools:

We feel that the best way to determine whether these goals are being met is by evaluating student success, as measured by the following:

- Two quizzes and a midterm exam will evaluate whether students have learned key concepts in immigration and migration history, and whether they understand which social, political, economic, environmental, and technological changes have influenced the movement of people during both the colonial era and since the founding of the United States. These evaluation tools will also assess whether students understand the perspectives of Native peoples who encountered immigrants.
- The midterm exam and class discussions will require students to demonstrate their understanding of a wide range of primary and secondary sources, and to use these sources not only to gain insight into diverse interpretations of the past but also to develop their own analyses of key issues in immigration and migration history.
- Each student will be required to locate, present to the class, and analyze images of migrants and/or immigrants that express historical issues relevant to the course. For example, a student might locate magazine advertising images of Japanese people during World War II that help us to evaluate the development of stereotypes and prejudice against Japanese-Americans in the context of the war. Primary sources such as these can demonstrate specific examples of concepts such as nativism and propaganda, and can invite discussion of the role of government policies and institutions in shaping public

opinion. Or, students might locate cartoons drawn by Native American humorists illustrating indigenous critiques of immigrant behavior, to provide alternative interpretations of Euroamerican policies and expectations.

- A final quiz and class discussions will demonstrate the extent to which students have developed an understanding about current issues and their histories.
- Each student will do a final project, including a term paper and display or presentation, which will require the student to consider and analyze recent issues relevant to immigrant, migrant, and/or indigenous peoples.

Assessment of Diversity GEC Requirement

Social Diversity in the United States

Goals:

Students enhance understanding of the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States.

1. Students describe the roles of such categories as race, gender, class, ethnicity and religion in the pluralistic institutions and cultures of the United States.
2. Students recognize the role of social diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values regarding appreciation, tolerance, and equality of others.

Assessment tools:

We feel that the best way to determine whether these goals are being met is by evaluating student success, as measured by the following:

- Written assignments and presentations will require students to demonstrate their understanding of the GEC Diversity principles in the following ways.
 - First, students will complete one assignment in which they will take a European conqueror's narrative (e.g., Cabeza de Vaca, De Soto) and rewrite it from a native perspective. They will reflect on what observations a native person might make; what things might the narrator choose to emphasize; how would an indigenous person interpret newcomers' cultural practices and customs?
- Another assignment will require students to find visual images from the 19th or early 20th centuries (newspapers and magazines, posters, etc.) that represent different ethnic, religious, and minority groups. They will be asked to discuss how images of one's own group differed from images of "the other," of people who were unfamiliar. They will identify the kinds of

stereotypes that prevailed, how they were created and deployed, and how they evolved.

- The last assignment will give students two options. They may either interview someone who immigrated or migrated from one region of the world/country to another or do a visual media exhibition of contemporary immigration dilemmas. The first will ask students to analyze how individual experiences relate to broader historical patterns of migration. The latter will ask students to historically contextualize present day debates and controversies surrounding im/migration.

Continuing Assessment

Every three years we will also compile a report on the course as a whole, using all of the data from every offering in that time. In particular, we will be looking to see if the students' and our overall evaluations of the course have at least remained steady or, better, improved; if that proves not to be the case, we will attempt to use the data to make what seem the appropriate adjustments to the course content and structure.