

**Results of 2013 History Department Assessment for HIST 1000/1062
(GE SLOs K2 and K3 Introductory), and HIST 4990 (GE SLOs K2 and K3
Advanced)**

Preliminary Report

Introduction:

Two rubrics were created by the history department to measure student initial facility and eventual mastery of evaluating major theories and concepts in the Social Sciences and relating historical literature to historical concepts.

Part One (K2):

GEK2 – HIST 1000/HIST 1062 - evaluating major theories and concepts in social sciences

GEK2 – HIST 4990 - relating historical literature to historical concepts.

How was the Rubric created?

The Rubric was created as the Department wanted to assess whether we were being successful in explaining to students the notion of historical opinion and theory as an example of thinking within the social sciences. In particular at freshman level most students come to college with the idea of history as a series of dates and facts. One of the most important pedagogical goals is to move students past this notion to the realization that history is a complex and theoretical attempt to understand and explain the past. Two of the History Departments' SLOs are for the students to be able to "articulate an interpretive framework of the complex and interrelated causes, courses, and consequences of historical events," and that the students be able to "demonstrate well-developed written and verbal skills in dissecting and creating nuanced analyses of historical events and historiographical interpretations of those events." These SLOs intersect with our GE SLO K2.

With this in mind we created a 4 point rubric (1= Poor, 2= Some Improvement, 3 = Some Mastery, and 4= Excellent.) which analyzed first if the student could write a clear thesis statement which would show an understanding of the topic and the basic historical debate. Secondly this rubric could be used to see if the student not only understood that there was historical debate but that there was a variety (difference) in the debate and that such debate shows difference, minor and major about the event.

The importance of historical debate is only as valid as the sources and so a vital aspect of the rubric was to see if the students noted the sources, primary and secondary, were able to cite them, organize them but also ensure that they had the main (canonical) writers on a particular topic included as part of the debate.

How did the faculty assess?

Faculty used the last written assignment of the semester - for HIST1000/1062 – which asked students to place a current event into an historical and global context.

Faculty also used a written assignment for HIST4990. This again was a final assessment: a 5,000 word historiography paper, complete with citations in proper format.

How many teachers, sections and students are involved?

HIST 1000/HIST 1062

During the fall 2013 semester the history department offered 8 sections in History 1000 and 19 in History 1062, a total of 27 sections. 267 Kean students took History 1000, while 625 students took History 1062. Therefore in total 892 students took HIST1000 and HIST1062. 239 students from 10 HIST 1000/1062 sections were assessed using the Rubric for GE K2-Evaluating Major Theories and Concepts in Social Sciences.

In fall semester of 2013, a total of 4 faculty taught HIST 1000 – one full time and 3 adjuncts, while 17 faculty members (7 full timers and 10 adjuncts) taught HIST 1062.

Who are the population required to take the course?

HIST 1000/HIST 1062

There are at present two different history courses offered at the General Education introductory level: History 1000 American Civil Society and History 1062 Worlds of History. The former is being phased out and will no longer be offered after the academic year AY2013-2014.

Every Kean student who enters as a freshman must take one of these courses in order to fulfill their General Education requirements. This requirement means that History 1000/1062 is an excellent place to assess GE SLOs K2.

HIST4990

The students in HIST4990 are history majors, either first or second subject, BA Teacher's Education or BA Teacher's Certificate with a concentration in history. In order to be allowed to sign up for the course, the student must have achieved a minimum GPA of 2.75, they must have taken at least 30 credits in history previously (with only 2 "C" grades in history allowed).

Expectation Level:

HIST1000/1062:

It is expected that by the end of this course, students will have an initial familiarity with historical research measured by 70% of students achieving a 2.3 on a 4 point scale.

HIST4990

The expectation is that by the end of this course, students will have mastery of historical research measured by 80% of students achieving a 3.5 on a 4 point scale.

Results

GE K2 History 1000/1062

Strengths

1. Beginning students demonstrate some mastery of writing a thesis statement and introductory paragraph (mean 2.9)
2. Beginning students demonstrate some mastery of effective essay organization (mean 2.9)

Weaknesses

1. Students struggle with using the appropriate citation method for a history essay and bibliography (mean 2.5)
2. Students demonstrate a limited ability to effectively use history sources in supporting an effective argument (mean 2.6)
3. Students demonstrate a lack of proficiency in understanding the variety of historiographical debate (mean 2.6)

Closing the Loop

1. General Education-History classes will place renewed emphasis on using and applying primary source materials
2. General Education-History faculty will offer examples of how secondary source materials are used in creating a historiographical argument
3. Department faculty will explore adopting standard writing guidelines across the History-General Education curriculum and provide instruction on the appropriate citation style and technique and understanding the university plagiarism policy
4. The Department will propose a new History GE Course based on the Freshman Seminar model to provide greater opportunities to strengthen writing and critical thinking skills
5. Partner with the University Writing Center to improve grammar and style of history majors

GE K2 History 4990

Strengths

1. A majority (82% level 4) of students demonstrate competence in the ability to relate the variety of historiographical debate to major theories in the discipline (mean 3.7)
2. 79% of the students effectively use history sources in supporting an effective argument (mean 3.6)

Weaknesses

1. A majority (47% below level 4) of students failed to demonstrate mastery of writing an effective thesis statement/introduction (mean 3.3)
2. History majors demonstrate inconsistency in utilizing appropriate citation methods and techniques. 13% only met basic level (level 1) while 26% at level 2-3.
3. History majors struggle to organize a formal essay that effectively supports their argument. 11% reach level 1-2 while 18% reach level 3. 71% met level 4.

Closing the Loop

1. The faculty will give instructions on how to write an effective thesis statement/introduction in class.
2. A common writing workshop will be required of all teaching professors in 2000 level classes upwards using common standards available on our websites. The workshop will provide specific instruction on how to teach student to write thesis statement and citation method.
3. The Department of History will look to expand workshops in research and writing in both in class and online settings with emphasis on organizing the essays that effectively support the argument.

Part Two (K3):

GEK3 – HIST 1000/HIST 1062

GEK3 – HIST 4990

How was the Rubric created?

The rubric was created to help the history department recognize if our students can understand and distinguish the notions of interpretation in historical literature. At 1000/1062 level the rubric was used to see if students had moved from a pre-college level of seeing history as a collection of historical facts and events into the college mindset of seeing history as interpretation which needs analysis.

At HIST4990 level the Department expects the student to write a 5,000 word historiographical essay, fully cited with a clear thesis statement. The rubric was used there to see if indeed the students had achieved a written mastery of understanding various opinions, and schools of thought.

We put together a 4 point rubric: 1= Poor, 2= Some Improvement, 3 = Some Mastery and 4= Excellent.

In both cases we divided the Rubric into sections: first noting the idea of historical context. Did the students show understanding not only of the topic but also the consequences of the events, both in the long and short term? Second we wanted to see if the students understood the notion of debate in literature about this topic: how it is discussed and interpreted? In order to understand historical literature the students also needed to understand the idea of sources, evidence and the importance of citing these sources, both primary and secondary. These were the third and fourth areas under

discovery and finally we wanted to see if the students writing was 'academic', written according to our discipline's standards.

How did the faculty assess?

Faculty used the last written assignment of the semester - for HIST1000/1062 – which asked students to place a current event into its historical and global context.

The written assignment for HIST4990 was the culmination of the course: a 5,000 word historiography paper, complete with citations in proper format.

How many teachers, sections and students are involved?

HIST 1000/HIST 1062

During the Fall 2013 semester the history department offered 8 sections in History 1000 and 19 in History 1062, a total of 27 sections. 267 Kean students took History 1000, while 625 students took History 1062. Therefore in total 892 students took HIST1000 and HIST1062. 239 students from 10 HIST 1000/1062 sections were assessed using the Rubric for GE K3.

In fall semester of 2013, a total of 4 faculty taught HIST 1000 – 1 full time and 3 adjuncts, while 17 faculty members (7 full timers and 10 adjuncts) taught HIST 1062.

Who are the population required to take the course?

HIST 1000/HIST 1062

There are at present two different history courses offered at General Education introductory level: History 1000 American Civil Society and History 1062 Worlds of History. The former is being phased out and will no longer be offered after the academic year AY2013-2014.

As these are General Education Courses, every Kean student who enters as a freshman must take one of these courses in order to fulfill their General Education requirements, making these courses the perfect place to assess GE SLO K3.

HIST4990

The students in HIST4990 are history majors, either first or second subject, BA Teacher's Education or BA Teacher's Certificate with a concentration in history. In order to be allowed to sign up for the course, the student must have achieved a minimum GPA of 2.75, they must have taken at least 30 credits in history previously (with only 2 "C" grades in history allowed).

Expectation Level:

HIST1000/1062:

Our expectation is that by the end of this course, students will have an initial familiarity with historical research measured by 70% of students achieving a 2.3 on a 4 point scale.

HIST4990

Our expectation is that by the end of this course, students will have mastery of historical research measured by 80% of students achieving a 3.5 on a 4 point scale.

Results

GE K3 1000/1062

Strengths:

1. Beginning students demonstrate some mastery of understanding historical contexts (mean 2.9, 50% at level 3 and 24% at level 4)
2. Beginning students are able to incorporate basic grammar and style conventions in their writing (mean 2.9, 46% at level 3 and 25% at level 4)

Weaknesses:

1. Students demonstrate a lack of proficiency in properly applying discipline-specific citation methods (mean 2.6, 15% at level 1 and 48% at level 2)
2. Beginning students struggle in applying sources and evidence in a history essay (mean 2.6, 11% at level 1 and 32% at level 2)
3. Beginning students struggle in understanding historiography (literature/debate) (Mean 2.6, 12% at level 1 and 28% at level 2)

Closing the Loop

1. The Department will propose a new History GE Course based on the Freshman Seminar model to provide greater opportunities to strengthen writing and critical thinking skills
2. Department faculty will explore adopting standard writing guidelines across the History-General Education curriculum and provide instruction on the appropriate citation style and technique
3. Students will be encouraged to attend lectures and other events by Department of History faculty and invited speakers in order to strengthen their ability to understand historical context
4. Increase the number of students completing tours at Liberty Hall Museum to improve their ability to make connections between documentary evidence, material culture and historical arguments

GE K3 4990

Strengths:

1. Compared with students in HIST1000/1062 (Mean 2.0, 50% at level 3 and 24% at level 4), seniors taking HIST4990 show greater understanding of Historical Context (mean 3.8, 89% at level 4)
2. While entry-level students in HIST1000/1062 are still struggling in applying sources and evidence in history essay, (Mean 2.6, 11% at level 1 and 32% at level2), seniors enrolled in HIST4990 demonstrate increased use and understanding of sources and evidence (mean 3.6, 82% at level 4)
3. Students at advanced level report greater self-confidence in understanding Historiographical Arguments (mean 3.6, 79% at level 4) when compared with students at entrance level (Mean 2.6, 12% at level 1 and 28% at level 2).

Weaknesses

1. Students continue to struggle with discipline-specific citation method (Citations mean 3.4, 68% at level 4 while 13% at level 1)
2. History majors improve only marginally with grammar and style in their writing (mean 3.6, 76% at level 4 while 8% at level 1 and 16% at level 3) when compared with entry level students.

Closing the Loop

1. Implementation of a Junior Seminar to focus on skill development including historical methods and Chicago Manual of Style technique which will help Weakness 1 mentioned above, and to strengthen historiographical skills
2. Continue to provide Department Writing Workshops (Addresses Weakness number 2 listed above)
3. Partner with the University Writing Center to improve grammar and style of history majors
4. Department of History Faculty will continue to refine rubrics to more closely assess discipline specific skills

Appendices:

1. Rubric for GEK 2 – Evaluating Major Theories and Concepts in Social Sciences
2. Results for HIST1000/1062
3. Results for HIST4990
4. Rubric for GEK3 – Relating (Historical) Literature to Historical Context
5. Results for HIST 1000/1062
6. Results for HIST 4990

Appendix 1

Major Theories	Excellent 4	Some Mastery 3	Needs Improvement 2	Poor 1
GEK2				
Thesis Statement/Introduction	Clear introduction/statement of purpose which explains the significance of the subject.	There is a thesis statement/introduction but its needs some clarity.	Thesis statement is unclear. Argument seems muddled.	There is no thesis statement/Introduction.
Variety of Historiographical Debate	Shows multiple levels of historiographical debate. Has read and shows an understanding of the main debates and authors.	Most of the main concepts in historiography are covered.	Has little historiographical debate.	Shows no historiographical debate.
Sources	Has read the main sources on the topic, has included them in the essay and has shown an understating of them	Shows student has read most of the sources but lacks one/two particular theories.	Most of major concepts are not here. Essay has only one or two major theorists.	No major concepts are discussed.
Organization ¹	The essay shows clear organization/purpose /flow from introduction to conclusion.	There essay has a great beginning but conclusion needs work.	Essay wanders and the argument is difficult to follow.	There is no organization or clarity in the essay.
Citations/Bibliography	Has adequate number of sources in the bibliography and these are reflected in the footnotes as well.	Most of the sources in the bibliography are included in the footnotes.	Essay's footnotes are based only on 2/3 sources, though bibliography claims many more.	Not enough sources either in bibliography or footnotes.

¹ Jonathan Mercantini, "Grading Rubric."

Appendix 2

GEK2: Evaluating Major Theories and concepts in Social Science

HIST 1000/1062.

Semester: FALL 2013

REPORT DATE: 1/8/2014

Major Theories and concepts are assessed based on the student's final writing assignment using a rubric developed by the Kean University History Department.

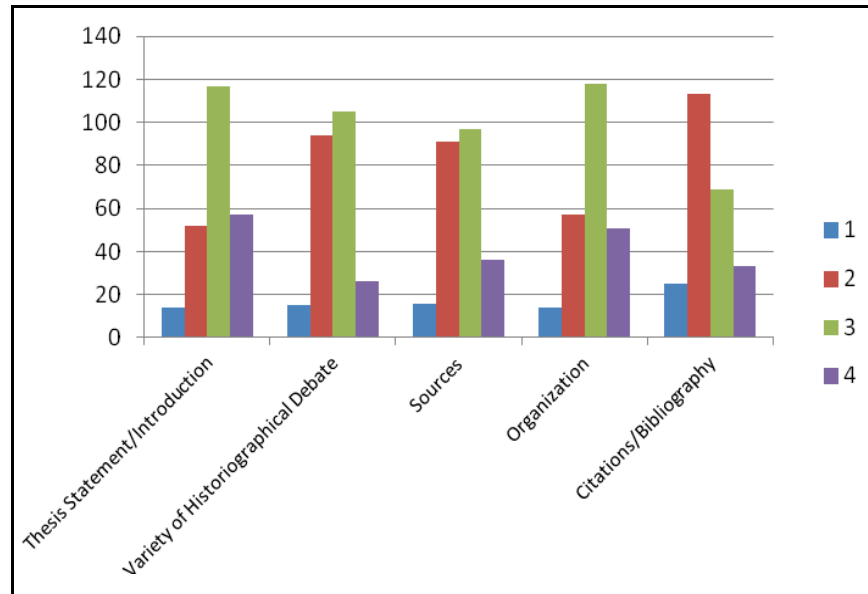
Number of students: 240

Number of sections: 10

Mean scores overall:

	mean
Thesis Statement/ Introduction	2.9
Variety of Historiographical Debate	2.6
Sources	2.6
Organization	2.9
Citations/ Bibliography	2.5

Distribution of Scores



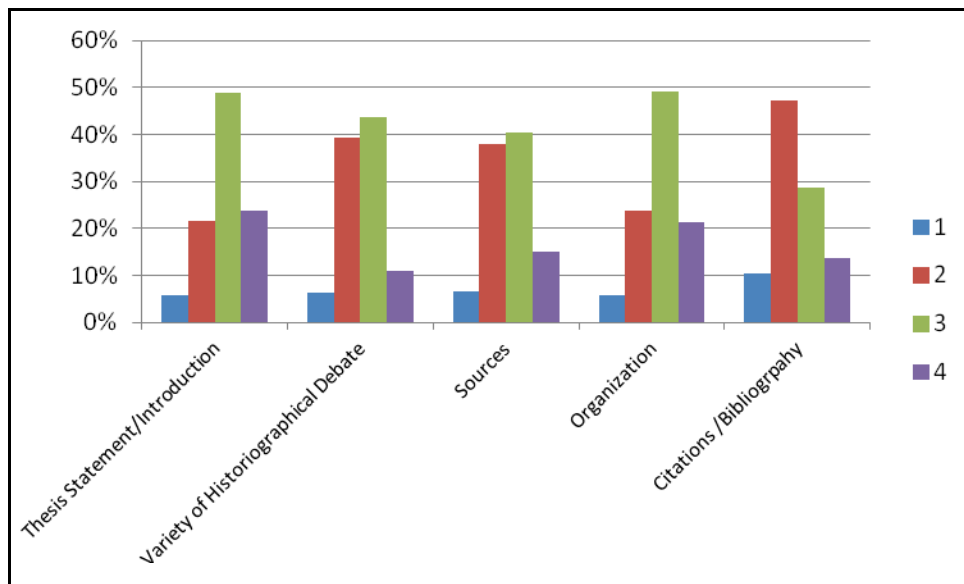
Distribution of Scores:

Frequency by score

	Thesis Statement/ Introduction	Variety of Historiographical Debate	Sources	Organization	Citations / Bibliography
1	14	15	16	14	25
2	52	94	91	57	113
3	117	105	97	118	69
4	57	26	36	51	33
total	240	240	240	240	240

**Percentages
of score**

	Thesis Statement/ Introduction	Variety of Historiographical Debate	Sources	Organization	Citations /Bibliography
1	6%	6%	7%	6%	10%
2	22%	39%	38%	24%	47%
3	49%	44%	40%	49%	29%
4	24%	11%	15%	21%	14%



Appendix 3

GEK2: Evaluating Major Theories and concepts in Social Science

HIST 4990

Semester: FALL 2013

REPORT DATE: 1/15/2014

Major Theories and concepts are assessed based on the student's final writing assignment using a rubric developed by the Kean University History Department.

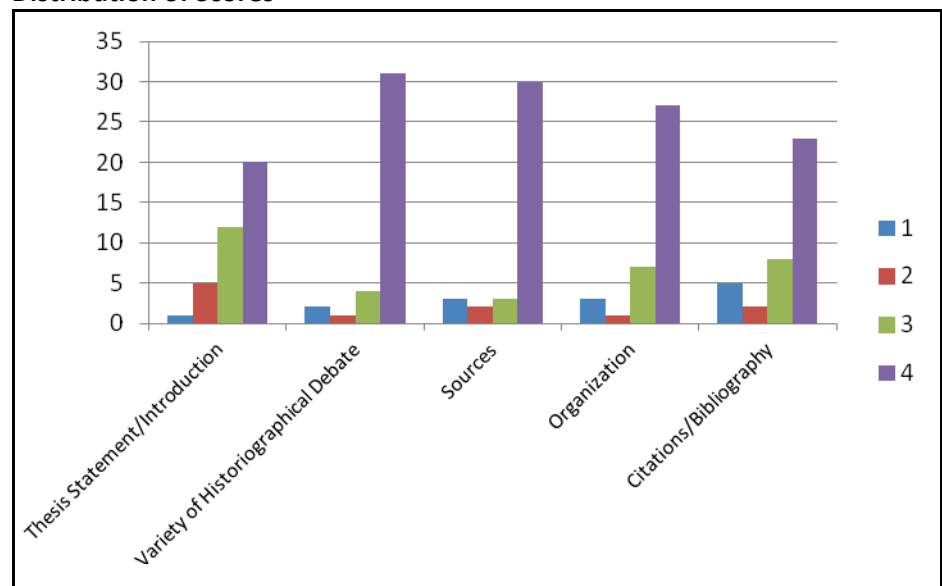
Number of students: 38

Number of sections: 3

Mean scores overall:

	mean
Thesis Statement/ Introduction	3.3
Variety of Historiographical Debate	3.7
Sources	3.6
Organization	3.5
Citations/ Bibliography	3.3

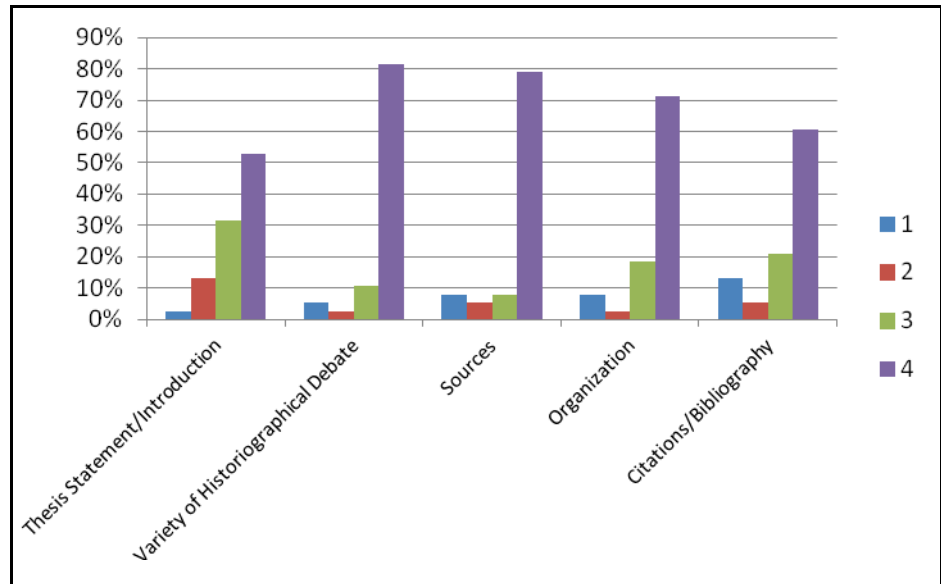
Distribution of Scores



Distribution of Scores

	Thesis Statement/ Introduction	Variety of Historiographical Debate	Sources	Organization	Citations/ Bibliography
1	1	2	3	3	5
2	5	1	2	1	2
3	12	4	3	7	8
4	20	31	30	27	23

Distribution of Percentages



Distribution of Percentages:

	Thesis Statement/Introduction	Variety of Historiographical Debate	Sources	Organization	Citations/Bibliography
1	3%	5%	8%	8%	13%
2	13%	3%	5%	3%	5%
3	32%	11%	8%	18%	21%
4	53%	82%	79%	71%	61%

Appendix 4

Historical Content	Excellent 4	Some Mastery 3	Needs Improvement 2	Poor 1
GEK3				
Understanding Historical Context	Understand the subject but also shows the consequences of the topic in the long and short term	Shows some understanding of the consequences of the events.	Shows very limited understanding of consequences of the event.	Shows no understanding of the topic outside of its own time period.
Understanding Historiography (Literature/Debate)	Shows an clear understanding of historical debate within the area in question.	Shows some understanding of historical debate, but needs to further clarify other historical viewpoints/literature.	A little understanding of debate but unclear about variety of viewpoints on the topic.	No understanding of notion of debate or variety of historical literature/debate.
Sources and Evidence ²	Excellent use of sources which show a clear argument.	Uses an adequate number of sources but there are some gaps in the argument.	Some evidence provided. Argument however is almost lost through lack of sources.	Little or no evidence provided through sources to maintain the argument proposed.
Citations (Technical)	All sources are cited according to Chicago Style Manual.	All sources are cited but some have incorrect formatting.	There is a need for many more citations	Few if any sources are cited.
Grammar and Style ³	Writing has complete sentences, with correct grammar, spelling and punctuation.	Some grammar and spelling errors but argument remains clear.	Spelling and punctuation errors take away from some clarity. Additional proof reading needed.	Major editing and proof-reading needed. Sentence structure leaves argument unclear.

² Jonathan Mercantini, "Grading Rubric."

³ Op. Cit.

GE K3: Relating Literature to Historical Context

History 1000/1062

Semester: FALL 2013

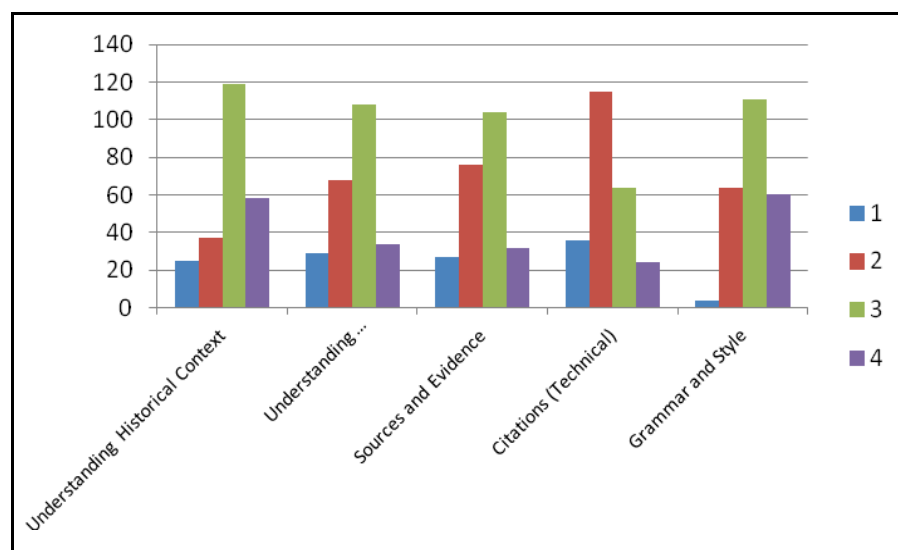
REPORT DATE: 1/8/2014

Historical Context is assessed based on the student's final writing assignment using a rubric developed by the Kean University History Department.

Number of students: 239

Distribution of Scores

Number of sections: 10



Mean scores overall:

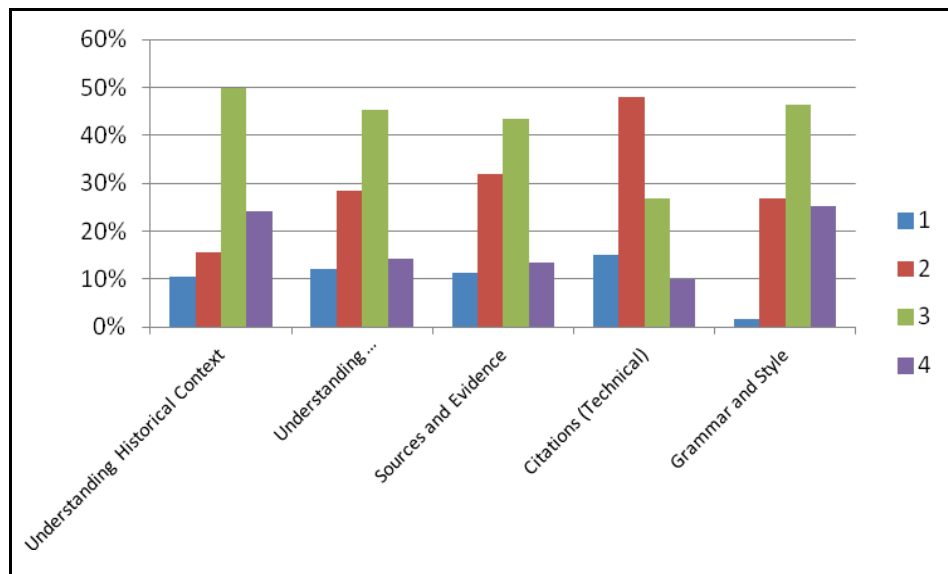
Distribution of Scores:

Understanding Historical Context	2.9
Understanding Historiography (Literature/Debate)	2.6
Sources and Evidence	2.6
Citations (Technical)	2.3
Grammar and Style	2.9

	Understanding Historical Context	Understanding Historiography (Literature/Debate)	Sources and Evidence	Citations (Technical)	Grammar and Style
1	25	29	27	36	4
2	37	68	76	115	64
3	119	108	104	64	111
4	58	34	32	24	60
total	239	239	239	239	239

**Percentages
of score**

	Understanding Historical Context	Understanding Historiography (Literature/Debate)	Sources and Evidence	Citations (Technical)	Grammar and Style
1	10%	12%	11%	15%	2%
2	15%	28%	32%	48%	27%
3	50%	45%	44%	27%	46%
4	24%	14%	13%	10%	25%



Appendix 6

GE K3: Relating Literature to Historical Context

History 4990

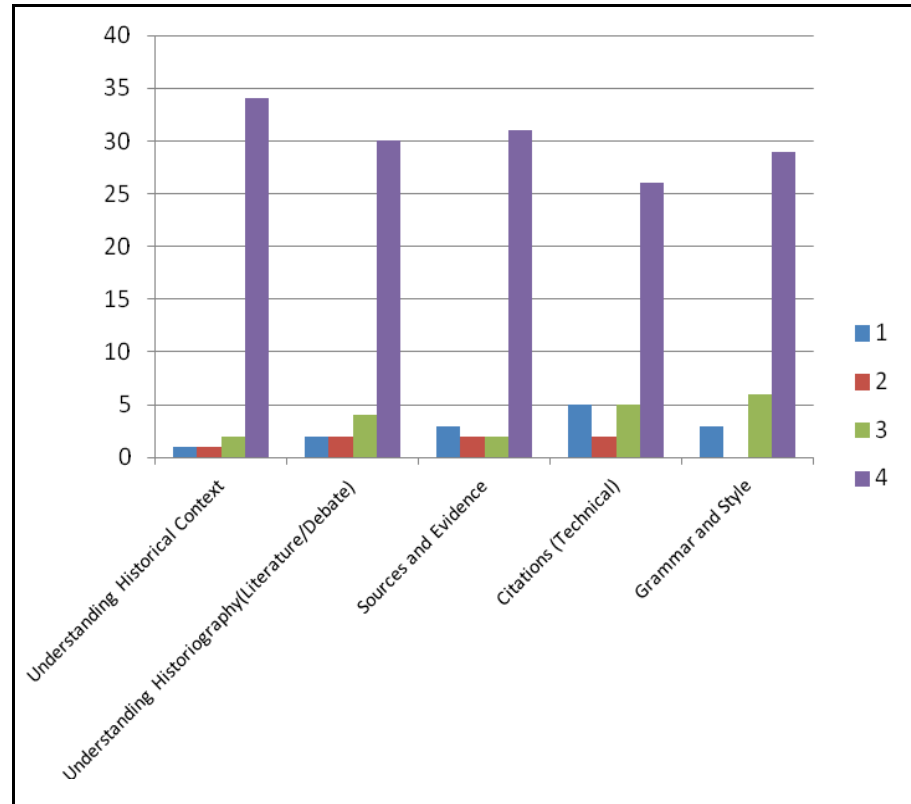
Semester: FALL 2013

REPORT DATE: 1/8/2014

Historical Context is assessed based on the student’s final writing assignment using a rubric developed by the Kean University History Department.

Number of students: 38
Number of sections: 3

Distribution of Scores



Mean scores overall:

Understanding Historical Context	3.8
Understanding Historiography (Literature/Debate)	3.6
Sources and Evidence	3.6
Citations (Technical)	3.4
Grammar and Style	3.6

Distribution of Scores:

	Understanding Historical Context	Understanding Historiography (Literature/Debate)	Sources and Evidence	Citations (Technical)	Grammar and Style
1	1	2	3	5	3
2	1	2	2	2	0
3	2	4	2	5	6
4	34	30	31	26	29

Distribution of Percentages

	Understanding Historical Context	Understanding Historiography (Literature/Debate)	Sources and Evidence	Citations (Technical)	Grammar and Style
1	3%	5%	8%	13%	8%
2	3%	5%	5%	5%	0%
3	5%	11%	5%	13%	16%
4	89%	79%	82%	68%	76%

Distribution of Percentages

