General Information

1. Name / Number of Course / Sequence:
   HIST 1210 / HIST 1220

2. SLO(s) being assessed:
   Student will be informed and engaged citizens of the United States and the world.

3. Department:
   HISTORY

4. Department Representative:
   Charles Israel / Angela Lakwete

5. AGSC Content Alignment:
   AREA IV: History, Social, and Behavioral Sciences

Assessment Information

6. Assessment Method: [Explain how assessment for the measures associated with this SLO – not grading for the course as a whole was conducted.]

   The program assessed achievement of SLO 8 that “students will be informed and engaged citizens of the United States and the world.” The three secondary goals included assessment of students’ general knowledge of the socio-cultural and economic contexts of world history, ability to analyze “systems and relationships” within those contexts, and to “demonstrate awareness” of social and individual responsibility and the avenues as well as the limits of change.

   Direct Measure
Technology and Civilization faculty members composed essay questions, delivered at the final, designed to assess directly the degree to which the program succeeded in these goals. For both fall 2010 and spring 2011 terms approximately two hundred students enrolled in the classes. At the end of each term, the program director selected twenty essays (10%) from students chosen by using a random number algorithm. Faculty members photocopied the essays from the finals and submitted them to the program director that then assessed them using the attached rubric.

Indirect Measure

For the indirect assessment measure, the program director, with input from Technology and Civilization faculty, devised a survey comprised of seven statements designed to elicit students’ feelings about the course and course content. The statements reflect the goals of the program and its faculty as much as the university SLOs.

1. The course made me aware of how societies develop and change.
2. The course helped me appreciate the role of technology in society.
3. The course taught me that people of the past faced challenges like those we face today.
4. The course helped me apply the lessons of the past to contemporary issues.
5. I learned that the choices people make have social and political consequences.
6. The course made me more aware of how individuals can change society.
7. The course gave me a new appreciation for cultures and religions other than my own.

Faculty distributed the survey in the classroom on the day of the final exam. The lower total number of surveys for the spring 2011 terms reflects the absence of data from one section, that did not take the survey, although it submitted essays.

Students marked a scantron ranking from 1 to 5 their level of disagreement or agreement with the statement. The value 1 registered “disagree strongly,” value 5 registered “agree strongly.” This structural arrangement followed conventional practice. The program director had the scantrons collated and interpreted the results.

7. Findings: [What assessment data did each assessment method produce?]
Direct Measure

The results, aggregated in the table below, show that in both fall and spring terms students were generally informed, able to discuss broad concepts using concrete evidence and citing it correctly in relevant contexts. They were only slightly less analytical. While the majority succeeded in approaching their topic critically and applying past processes to present predicaments, many struggled to make connections. Significantly students exhibited the same degree of engagement on the subject of their essays in the fall term and only slightly less in the spring term.

Essay Assessment Averages on 5 to 1 Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>8.1 (informed)</th>
<th>8.2 (analytical)</th>
<th>8.3 (engaged)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The subject content may explain the differences between semesters across the three measures. The fall term covers antiquity to early modern Europe of generally less relevance to students, while the spring term begins with the industrial revolution and continues through the present covering issues of more current interest to most students.

Indirect Measure:

The data showed that in general students felt as if the program and faculty met their goals—as articulated in the seven statements—better in the first half of the course than in the second half. This appears to contradict the results of the essay assessment. They indicated a slight increase in all three assessment measures in the spring term over the fall term.

Fall 2010

In fall 2011, 55.7 percent or 107 students “agreed strongly” that the course made them “aware of societies develop and change” (Statement 1). This was the highest level
of agreement for any statement in either term. However, I would have expected an even higher percentage since the first half of the course follows more than twelve discreet societies across the globe from the Neolithic to about 1450. Given the global and chronological coverage to which students were exposed, I would have expected higher student agreement with the statement. By three tenths of a percent, a majority of students in the fall term “agreed” that the course helped them “appreciate the role of technology in society” (Statement 2). As above, given the effort faculty make to include technologies, broadly defined, in the course material higher student satisfaction in this area would have been expected. For the remaining questions, the highest percentages clustered under column 4, with an average of 44.5 percent of students checking “agree” to the remaining five questions. Percentages of students expressing neutral positions or degrees of disagreement ranged from 29.3% (56 students) to .5% (1 student). The 29.3% response, “Neutral” on Statement 4 was noteworthy. It reflected students’ sense that they had no sense of whether or not the course helped them apply the lessons of the past to contemporary issues. In a program where that is an explicit goal and addressed explicitly in plenary lectures, reading assignments, and discussion sections, the response was surprising.

Spring 2011

The spring term typically challenges faculty to maintain a global perspective while addressing the events and processes from the sixteenth century to the present as the East wanes and Europe waxes into dominance. However coverage of the Industrial Revolution, the World Wars, the Cold War, and discrete but global technologies of transportation and communication carry through the socio-cultural heterogeneity that characterized the first term. Still there was less agreement among students on whether the program achieved its goals.

A bare majority of 50.3% or 92 students registered “strongly agree” to Statement 2 that the course “helped me appreciate the role of technology in society.” This was the highest level of agreement for the spring term. Just short of a majority were the 87 students (49.7%) who registered “agree” responses to Statement 3 that the course “taught me that people of the past faced challenges like those we face today.” This response is a critical indicator of engagement and balanced students’ appreciation of (or fascination with) twentieth-century technology with sensitivity to the struggles of others.
Data from combined surveys, however, show that students believe that the program succeeded more in the fall than in the spring term to meet its goals. The table attached below combines survey data from both terms and compares the averages under each of the five categories by the seven statements.

8. **How did you or will you use the findings for improvement?:** [What questions / issues/ concerns did your data raise for the faculty teaching the course? What discussion did the faculty have about the findings? What future actions to improve student attainment of this outcome will the department / program take as a result of this analysis?]

The Technology and Civilization faculty have already begun to adjust curriculum and classroom pedagogy in response to the assessment results. The essays demonstrate that faculty effectively conveys historical information and that students retain and recall it. The faculty intends to do more in the Monday lecture and in discussion sections to increase students’ ability to analyze the information, to draw comparisons and contrasts, and to “analyze systems and relationships.” They also plan to incorporate material, particularly in the second half of the course that will address the category of engagement. Some of our students already have a strong sense of social responsibility through their involvement in church and volunteer activities and through military service. The challenge is to tap those choices and relate them back into historical contexts, emphasizing the consequences of certain choices. The second more than the first term lends itself to this implementation.

The faculty is collectively disturbed by students’ responses to the second half of the program. Students typically appear to enjoy the second semester more than the first, as it covers the World Wars, aviation, automobility, and other iconic technological topics. Faculty marks that by, among other indicators, increased attendance and attention. Faculty members, however, intend to scrutinize what they do in lecture and discussion sections to examine how they might address the issues the seven statements evoke without sacrificing content, which students paradoxically enjoy and retain.

9. **Additional comments:** [What else would you like the Committee to know about your assessment of this course or plans for the future?]

The collaborative format of the Technology and Civilization program lends itself to implement the changes the assessment calls for. The faculty intends to address the
report directly, discuss how the program can improve assessment rating, better meet the program goals, and make the changes needed to realize our collective goals.

10. Core Curriculum General Education Committee Comments:

The faculty has taken the task seriously in terms of addressing it with their teachers and students. More information (actual activities/items students are asked) would be useful in determining their ties to SLOs and what the data show. A huge caveat needs to be put in here about relying on student report of what they think they know- research studies almost universally show self-report is high and not necessarily accurately tied to what students can actually do. It is clear the faculty have learned from what they have done, and are putting new measures in practice to try to improve next time. Samples of final essay questions together with the rubric used to assess essay questions would be most helpful for evaluating the report.