Draft   # HIST 3755 - American Foreign Policy

Reporting Period   **<**   **2016-2017**   **>**

Course Description

Examines the role of the United States in world affairs, the motivations of foreign policymakers, and the ramifications of key decisions. The primary focus will be on the period after 1890, when the United States emerged as a global power. The course will also address the foundations of the country's approach to international relations and introduce the various approaches of studying foreign relations.

Program Outcomes/Goals

POG1   ### Knowledge of History

The history major produces graduates who have a sound knowledge of American and world history.

Student Learning Outcomes

SLO1   ### Historical Knowledge

Students will identify and evaluate the major forces, events, influences, or ideas that shaped American foreign policy.

Supported Initiatives

2	Standards	1	General Education	0	Institutional Priorities	14	Strategic Initiatives

Action Plans for Improvement

Action Plans for Improvement Description

In Hist 3755-01: American Foreign Policy, a traditional course taught on the Dalton campus during the Fall 2016 Semester, students did not meet the target for identify and evaluate the major forces, events, influences, or ideas that shaped American foreign policy. Only 50 percent of students (12 out of 24) successfully met the target meaning there is room for improvement on this outcome. The last time I taught this course, in Summer 2014, students met this target. Because of the previous success rate, I did not worry too much about the content or structure of the tests. I passed out

Due Date

Status
Planned

the review sheets in a timely manner and posted sample identifications on GeorgiaVIEW. Based on the results of the first test I made adjustments to ensure better alignment to the material. Students who did well on the first test saw scores go down whereas most students who did poorly on the first test saw some improvement. The next time I teach Hist 3755, I intend to use a similar format for the tests. I will revise the multiple choice questions, especially the distractors to avoid ambiguity. I will also revise the instructions for the identification portion of the exam. Instead of indicating students should explain what the term means and indicate its significance to American history, I will specify students need to specify who, what, where, when, and why in their response. (Mergel-FA16)

Measures

M1   Major Forces

Students will take three tests during the semester. They will assess familiarity with the forces, events, and ideas shaping American foreign policy. They will consist of multiple choice, short answer, or identification questions.

Methodology

Source of Evidence:

Target

A minimum of 70% of students will average an 80% or better on their three tests.

Target	Findings	Improvements Achieved from Previous Action Plans	Improvement Type	Status
70%	In Hist 3755-01: American Foreign Policy, a traditional course taught on the Dalton campus during the Fall 2016 Semester, 50 percent of students (N=12/24) averaged an 80 or better on their three tests throughout the semester. Therefore, 50 percent of the students (N=12/24) did not meet the target. The average overall score on the three tests was 80.0 percent. I based these findings on reviewing the student averages for the three tests in the grade book.	Fall 2016 represents the first time Hist 3755 has been officially assessed. Given that the last time I taught this course, 83 percent of the students met the target for their exams I did not make significant changes to the exams. Because students did not meet the target in fall 2016, I will be revising the test questions the next time I teach the course.	No Improvements: No Improvements Noted	Not Met

Target	Findings	Improvements Achieved from Previous Action Plans	Improvement Type	Status
	### Analysis of Finding and Evaluation Results For each test, students in Hist 3755-01 for Fall 2016 had 75 minutes to answer twenty-five multiple choice questions and seven identifications. At least two weeks before each test, I provided a paper and electronic review sheet with terms related to the reading and lecture material. I organized the terms by lectures so student could easily consult their notes and the readings. Students who missed more classes and/or took fewer notes during class tended to have lower averages on the exams, especially on the multiple choice questions. Students who attended class regularly and took notes beyond just writing down what the slides said tended to do better on the exams, especially the identifications. All students struggled with the multiple choice questions; the average score on each test for those questions hovered around 70 percent. The more analytical the question, the more likely students got the question wrong. Students who met the target provided better responses to the identification questions, which usually included not only what the term referred to but also its significance to the development of American foreign policy. After the first test, I went through the second and third tests to ensure the content aligned and reduced the number of terms on the study guide but scores did not improve significantly.			

SLO2
Communication/Research Skills

Students will organize and communicate knowledge and ideas about American foreign policy in a logical and purposeful way.

Supported Initiatives

2 **Standards**   **3** **General Education**   **0** **Institutional Priorities**   **14** **Strategic Initiatives**

Measures

M1
Scenario Statement & Policy Memo

Students will write a paper to assess their ability to apply the information learned about American foreign policy. As part of this assignment, students will submit a scenario statement outlining a plausible threat to American security and a policy memo where students provide a solution to the threat they identified based on their research using primary and secondary sources.

Methodology

Source of Evidence: Written assignment

Target

A minimum of 70% of students will earn an 80% or better on their policy memo.

Target	Findings	Improvements Achieved from Previous Action Plans	Improvement Type	Status
70%	In Hist 3755-01: American Foreign Policy, a traditional course taught on the Dalton campus during the Fall 2016 Semester, 74 percent of students (N=17/23) earned an 80 or better on their policy memo. Therefore, 26 percent of the students (N=6/23) did not meet the target. The average score on the policy memo was 82.0 percent. One student did not submit a project so I did not count him when calculating the findings. I based these findings on reviewing the student scores for the policy memo in the grade book.	Fall 2016 represents the first time Hist 3755 has been officially assessed. Given that the last time I taught this course, 100 percent of the students met the target I did not have plan for changes to the policy memo assignment. I did provide additional details about acceptable sources (which did not have much of an effect on student performance this semester) to increase the likelihood students would know where to look for scholarly sources. I will continue to monitor this assignment and if student achievement continues to drop in future semesters I will revamp the assignment more thoroughly.	No Improvements: No Improvements Noted	Met

Analysis of Finding and Evaluation Results

My goal for this project for Hist 3755 for Fall 2016 was to see if students could apply the knowledge they learned about the history of American foreign policy to solve a crisis the nation might face. I asked students to come up with at least four policies discussed in the course material that could be used to address the problem they identified. Students who met the target on this assignment did a better job of analyzing the policies they focused on. The students who did better on their projects also sought out additional assistance with their project before the deadline. They also tended to base their memo on scholarly sources as opposed to websites with only basic information. I provided a sample policy memo on GeorgiaVIEW for students to review, and students who met the target tended to have also reviewed the same. Based on conversations with the students before the deadline and the quality of some of the projects, many of the students who did not meet the target waited until the last minute to work on the project even though I went over the project on the first day of class. The project instructions for this semester stated that completed memos should be 2,500 words. At least three students submitted under 1,500 words meaning they did not fully develop their ideas per the grading criteria. The other students who did not meet the target tended to write too much about the crisis and the resolution. They did not put enough effort into explaining the planning

Target	Findings	Improvements Achieved from Previous Action Plans	Improvement Type	Status
	and outcome of the policies they used to formulate their recommendation. Finally, some of the students created scenarios which were harder to respond to with traditional diplomatic solutions making it more difficult to identify possible policies to solve the problem. When students submitted their scenario, I tried to point them to some policies and some sources. However, not all students used the feedback.			

Related Projects

There are no related projects to this project.

Project Collaborators

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Attachments

Syllabus-3755-FA16.pdf

Test(2)-3755-FA16.pdf

PolicyMemoInstructions-3755-SP16.pdf

Test(1)-3755-FA16.pdf

Test(3)-3755-FA16.pdf

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