

Goals (Learning Outcomes) for Students with a B.A. in Humanities: Students with a B.A. in Humanities will be able to:

1. read critically and analyze texts from a variety of periods and cultures
2. analyze critically a variety of cultural artifacts such as paintings, sculpture, architecture, and music
3. show familiarity with the cultures that produced these texts and artifacts
4. do research, write clearly, develop a coherent argument, and substantiate that argument with relevant evidence (citations of texts, references to cultural artifacts, etc.)
5. identify ideas that unite different disciplines
6. understand issues of historical contingency and enculturation and, accordingly, be able to reflect critically on the thought systems (e.g. economic, political, religious) inculcated in our own culture.

The HUM program has chosen to assess Learning Outcome #1 this year.

In order to read critically, students must first read. Part of assessing students' increased ability to "read critically" is to make sure that they have read the assigned material. Frequent (weekly) written responses to the assigned reading will both encourage students to read and make it possible to know that they have done so.

Second, learning to read critically texts from a variety of periods and cultures requires some basic knowledge of those various periods and cultures. The HUM program will assess the acquisition of this basic knowledge via short answer, identification, and multiple choice portions of exams and quizzes.

Finally, assessment criteria for these assignments will distinguish between summaries of contents (basic knowledge) and analytical observations that can a) identify and understand the functions of the rhetorical and symbolic strategies of a given text; and b) synthesize these analytical observations into their understanding of the way this text works.