***Historical Inquiry and Analysis***

**Definition**

Historical Inquiry and Analysis is a systematic process of exploring issues, objects or works from the past through the collection and analysis of evidence that results in informed conclusions or judgments. Analysis is the process of breaking complex topics or issues into parts to gain a better understanding of them (AAC&U Inquiry and Analysis VALUE rubric). Historical Inquiry and Analysis involves inquiry specifically into questions and issues that rely on evidence about the past through an analytical process that integrates historical context, chronology, causation, and previous historical interpretations and historiography. This process requires a unique set of skills that set it apart from inquiry and analysis into other realms of human experience and endeavor.

**Rationale and Intent**

Historical Inquiry and Analysis provides the means to develop historical methods, build historical knowledge, and understand historical change. Instruction in Historical Inquiry and Analysis prepares students to frame and to answer vital questions about the human past and to see how we contest and debate the past.

**Goal**

Fitchburg State University students will: Engage with and answer questions about the past by evaluating historiographical interpretations; identifying, contextualizing, and critically reading historical evidence; and considering the relevance of chronology, causation, and perspective.

**Potential Course Objectives**

The objectives below are recommended as models for general education course syllabi. The list is not meant to be complete. Faculty should feel free to adopt these as course objectives, or they may develop their own.

* Identify, read and analyze historical sources, extracting explicit and inferred information to identify historical perspectives.
* Formulate historical questions, collect and interrogate evidence, place analysis in historical context.
* Understand cause-and-effect relationships considering the importance of individuals, ideas, and chance.
* Recognize contingency and avoid teleological fallacies, lineal thinking, and presentism.
* Craft historical arguments by generating informed hypotheses based on historical evidence.
* Understand competing historiographical interpretations with attention to argumentation and the use of evidence.
* Communicate historical thinking clearly and effectively through writing and for a variety of audiences.
* Utilize historical analysis to inform civic learning and engagement.