

Sample Completed UCORE RENEWAL FORM*

*This sample is meant to serve as a model of thoroughness, with the understanding that each course and department has unique circumstances that will shape the substance of responses.

Course Prefix/Number: History 105	Department: History	Chair Initials:
Course Title: Roots of Contemporary Issues	Faculty Point Person: Jesse Spohnholz & Katy Whalen	Date: January 28, 2019

UCORE Designation [ARTS] [BSCI] [CAPS] [COMM] [DIVR]
 (highlight or underline [HUM] [QUAN] [PSCI] **[ROOT]** [SSCI] [WRTG]
 one):

Instructions: Before completing this form, visit: <https://ucore.wsu.edu/faculty/proposing-revising-renewing-courses/> and thoroughly read and follow the steps outlined under “My department wants to renew an existing UCORE course.” Then complete and submit this form, along with the following required components as a single PDF file, per the instructions on the webpage.

- An updated master course syllabus that includes (a) clear language about the course’s place within UCORE, including how the course fulfills learning outcomes for its specific UCORE designation; (b) a completed Learning Outcomes Grid for the course’s UCORE designation; and (c) up-to-date syllabus components per WSU’s syllabus requirements. See [UCORE website](#) or [Handbook](#) for resources on design or revision of a master syllabus.
- A course assignment prompt or prompts that best exemplify the course’s design to advance all of the learning outcomes required for this UCORE designation. Be sure that each outcome is addressed collectively by the prompt(s).

Section A: Department communication and faculty oversight of syllabus

1. Learning Outcomes/Syllabus

A. Who in your department is responsible for ensuring the course remains aligned with UCORE learning outcomes and for routinely communicating those outcomes and syllabus requirements for this course’s particular UCORE designation to all course instructors?

Faculty member(s) responsible: Faculty members(s) responsible: **The RCI Steering Committee (comprised of the Director, Assistant Director, Curriculum Coordinator, head of library instruction, one regular History Department faculty, an RCI instructor from both the Vancouver and Tri-Cities campuses, and one faculty member from an outside unit.**

How is this communication routinely accomplished? **The Steering Committee reviews syllabi, the major library research project assignment directions every Fall, and new lesson plans as RCI faculty develop and submit them, looking specifically for adherence to the course's stated UCORE learning outcomes. Feedback from these reviews is given directly to the faculty and if necessary, revisions are required. Faculty teaching ROOTS classes also meet for monthly faculty meetings, at which matters of common concerns are discussed, to promote overall alignment with course learning outcomes. All syllabi are also posted on a SharePoint site, so that faculty can consult other faculty members’ course materials.**

The Director, Assistant Director, and Curriculum Coordinator also communicate with new instructors before their arrival on campus, ensuring that those faculty members understand

the course requirements and learning outcomes. They share syllabi and assignments with new faculty and engage in phone and Skype conversations.

- A. All RCI faculty receive regular classroom teaching observations (generally conducted by the Director, Assistant Director, and Curriculum Coordinator). Feedback is given directly to the faculty and focuses on classroom skills that promote the UCORE learning outcomes for the course.

2. Teaching Assistant Oversight

- A. Does your department routinely communicate the learning outcomes, key assignments, and pedagogical approaches for this course's particular UCORE designation to all teaching assistants involved in the course, including as lab or breakout section leads or as instructors of record?

YES / NO / NOT APPLICABLE (course does not involve teaching assistants)

- B. If *yes*, please explain how in the space below. If *no*, please explain how this will be done in the future and who will be responsible in the dept. The Curriculum Coordinator provides regular training for all new History 105 TAs, with most occurring Fall semester. Activities, readings, and discussions are designed to provide them with more consistent grading standards across sections; manage their workloads; and present them with the best teaching practices that align with Hist 105 UCORE learning outcomes. Using the classroom observation form rubric, learning outcomes, and assigned readings as guidelines, TAs develop and present a lesson plan for a single day in RCI. They then receive feedback from their peers and the Curriculum Coordinator on how well that plan reflects the imperatives of the course.

All RCI instructors with teaching assistants meet regularly to norm papers, prepare for class, and provide general support. TAs not in the first semester of their program are required to lead class 1-3 times per semester. Instructors may use a TA teaching observation form as a guideline to provide feedback. Finally, at the end of each semester, RCI faculty are required to complete a TA evaluation form, review it with their TA, share it with the TA's major professor, and submit it to the Graduate Studies Director for review. The evaluation, shared with the TA, includes feedback on development of skills as articulated in History 105 UCORE learning outcomes (e.g. info lit, critical thinking, communication).

3. Multi-Campus communication

- A. On which campuses is this course regularly or periodically taught? Mark all that apply.

PULLMAN **VANCOUVER** **TRI-CITIES** SPOKANE EVERETT **GLOBAL**

- B. How does your department routinely communicate the learning outcomes and syllabus requirements for this course's particular UCORE designation across all campuses on which the course is taught? RCI faculty and courses on the Vancouver and Tri-Cities campuses are fully integrated into the RCI program. Representatives from those campuses serve on the Steering Committee, attend regular faculty meetings, participate in annual direct assessment, receive classroom observations and syllabi review, as well as new lesson plan review. Global campus sections are taught by regular Pullman and Vancouver RCI program faculty. Spokane and Everett students fulfill ROOT through Global campus.

Section B: Assessment and improvement of course

Courses up for renewal have been taught – and refined by department faculty – for at least five years. Renewal of UCORE designated courses requires departments to show how the course is

functioning in WSU's general education curriculum, especially to advance student achievement of the required learning goals and outcomes, at an appropriate level (e.g., 100, 200, 300, or 400 level course expectations). Read more on [UCORE's website](#). Refer to the syllabus with Learning Outcomes grid, and sample assignment prompt you attached as part of your responses to these questions, and discuss responses with other faculty teaching this course.

4. In the department's view, what is the strongest aspect of this course and its contribution to the student learning outcomes for this UCORE designation? The strongest aspect of this course is that it is the only one offered that introduces students to 5 of the 7 UCORE learning outcomes; and with over 6,000 students per year in over 90 sections on all campuses, ROOTS courses are the highest impact course at WSU. The semester-long, scaffolded library research assignment project taught in all sections of Hist 105/305, which culminates in a final research paper, serves to integrate of the skills students have practiced and gained throughout the course, in that the separate assignments for the research project have been carefully constructed to reflect the student learning outcomes. As such, students are receiving the kind of critical instruction within their first 2-3 semesters that they will build upon throughout their career at WSU.

5. What have been the most challenging aspects of UCORE to work into the course? How has your department addressed these challenges, or how does it plan to address them? It is challenging to address five UCORE learning goals in such high enrollment courses. To do so effectively has required careful attention to the way in which we streamline in-class activities and assignments to always reflect a variety of the UCORE learning outcomes and allow students to repeatedly practice them. This has included a general move away from a more traditional lecture-style class to one that embraces active learning and skill-building exercises.

6. Briefly describe how in recent semesters department faculty have assessed the learning outcomes for this course's UCORE designation. Since 2012-2013, the Roots of Contemporary Issues program has maintained a three-pronged approach to the assessment of teaching and learning in History 105 (and 305). These include direct assessment of student writing; peer observation of faculty effectiveness, and indirect assessment of teaching effectiveness and course design via syllabus and lesson plan review/feedback (described above). In 2016, the Director prepared a ten-year assessment plan, which the Assistant Director manages and executes in collaboration with the Office of Assessment of Teaching and Learning. The plan carries the program's assessment efforts through 2026.

Summer 2018 marked the program's sixth annual direct assessment of student progress toward UCORE learning outcomes, and as in past years was coordinated by a collaboration between RCI faculty, the head of library instruction and members of the Office of Assessment of Teaching and Learning.

Over the years, ROOTS faculty have assessed either the final research papers or a shorter writing assignment on Critical and Creative Thinking (CCT), Information Literacy (IL), Communication (COMM) and/or Diversity (DIVR). All papers are anonymized, assessed by two raters who were normed using anchor papers with proven high degrees of inter-rater agreement. Every year, for all direct assessments of student assignments, we conduct a study of inter-rater reliability, which we use to make decisions about the selection and training of raters for the subsequent year.

The semester prior to an assessment, ROOTS faculty review the prior year's report, prepared by the Assistant Director. The report breaks the findings down by different demographics, including academic level, age, sex, minority status, international status, first generation status, admit type, course trade, term GPA, and Q value, as well as campus designation.

7. Briefly describe a significant improvement made to this course, its assignments and/or pedagogical approach in recent deliveries that was informed by assessment findings. RCI faculty participating in the annual summer assessment project treat the experience as professional development. The experience results in revisions to writing assignments, the deployment of rubrics that better align with UCORE learning outcomes as articulated in the assessment rubric, and new classroom activities designed to facilitate progress toward those learning outcomes.

In terms of programmatic changes, when we learned that students assessed in 2013-2014 struggled to articulate an argument (COMM/CCT), RCI faculty developed sets of in-class exercises designed to help students identify strong arguments in assigned readings and then to practice developing their own arguments based on in-class discussion of readings, mini-lecture materials, or other activities. Repeated practice improved student performance on this CCT learning outcome, which has held steady at a higher level than that initial year. We also moved the thesis construction portion of the library research assignment series to later in the series, which allowed students more front-loaded time to gather and analyze source materials before making claims.

8. Is there any other information the department would like the UCORE committee to consider about this course? Not at this time.

Section C: Enrollment and Instructional Management for CAPS courses (CAPS renewals only)

Per UCORE policy, departments are asked to keep CAPS enrollments to less than 50 students in order to provide adequate time for appropriate feedback on student work needed to develop disciplinary thinking, communication skills, information literacy, integrative thinking and application. Departments are strongly advised against assigning high-enrollment CAPS courses to graduate student instructors and faculty new to teaching UCORE CAPS courses. Advisors are discouraged from advising juniors into high-enrollment CAPS courses as well.

1. If your department chooses to offer a CAPS course with an enrollment ceiling of more than 50, please indicate in detail here how instructor placement/scheduling and the evaluation of student work will be structured to meet the learning outcomes and to deal with the realities of faculty time and experience.

This is not a capstone course, but we are sensitive to the need to keep section caps manageable for faculty, teaching assistants, and for student engagement and outcomes.