

# EWU

## Memorandum

To: Dr. Natalia Ruiz-Rubio, General Education Coordinating Committee Chair

From: Dr. James K. Kieswetter, Professor Emeritus of History

Date: June 19, 2013

Subject: ~~Assessment of History 301, History of the Present as a General Education~~  
International Studies Course

History 301, which is better known as the historical background of contemporary problems, is usually taught twice a year, in fall and spring quarters. To demonstrate compliance with Goal 1 ("For students to understand at least one modern problem or topic linking societies within the global community."), I assessed History 301 using the attached Assessment Instrument as a pre- and post-test. The pre-test was administered on April 2, 2013 and the post-test on June 6. History 301 is a topics course which deals with a number of current international issues such as the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Arab Spring, the Cold War and its aftermath, the three Gulf Wars, etc.

The attached Assessment Instrument consists of ten objective multiple-choice questions. There are also four short essay questions from which students are instructed to select and answer any two. The objective questions are scored on the choice of the one correct answer from among the four options. The short answer essay questions are scored as passing if the student exhibits a grasp of the ideas, concepts or issues involved within their historical context.

Comparison of the scores on the pre- and post-tests in both the objective and short essay groups evidences some improvement on all questions and considerable improvement on most, with passing rates increasing by from 9% to 68% in percentage points. Please see the attached statistical summary for details. The short answer essay questions, which many students chose to avoid on the pre-test, also reflected marked improvement in the number of students willing to attempt them. This number increased on all four questions and doubled or tripled on three of the four. Likewise correct scores on these four questions increased by 30 to 68 percentage points.

One of the difficulties students encounter in this course is lack of familiarity with Arab or Middle Eastern names in the Middle Eastern topics. I have tried giving extra attention to this in class, with some improvement. The next step perhaps should be a printed handout with a list of the dramatis personae of these topics.

### History 301 Assessment

The History Department requests your assistance in evaluating History 301, the course in which you are enrolled. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. Select only one answer for each of these ten questions. You are not graded on your answers, so do not provide your name.

1. The consequence of the siege of Dien Bien Phu was:
  1. the humiliating defeat of the French which ended the French Indochinese War.
  2. a resounding French victory.
  3. the victory of the Huk rebels in the Philippines.
  4. the elimination of Buddhist opposition to communism in Viet Nam.
2. ~~One consequence of the anti-communist rampage by Senator Joseph McCarthy in the early 1950's was:~~
  1. the discovery that Dwight D. Eisenhower was a communist agent.
  2. the uncovering of hundreds of communist spies in the U.S. Navy.
  3. the firing of almost all those State Department employees who knew Asia.
  4. the assassination of Joseph Stalin in March, 1953.
3. What did Gamal Abdel Nasser, the Ayatollah Khomeini, Hafez el Assad, and Saddam Hussein have in common:
  1. each posed as the leader of the Arab (or Moslem) world.
  2. they were all puppets of the Soviet Union.
  3. they were all crypto-Jews.
  4. they were all involved in plots to assassinate the President of the United States.
4. U.N. Resolution 181, which authorized the creation of a sovereign Jewish state in Palestine also called for:
  1. an equally sovereign state for the Arabs of Palestine.
  2. a permanent U.N. Peacekeeping Force to defend Israel.
  3. the forced transfer of Jews from other countries into the new Jewish state.
  4. the expulsion of Jews from the Arab state and of Arabs from the Jewish state.
5. The rise of independence movements in many parts of Africa after 1945 reflected:
  1. the effects of World War II which had cut off these areas from their former imperial masters.
  2. the acquisition of nuclear weapons by colonial independence fighters.
  3. meddling by the CIA.
  4. the decline of need for natural resources from these African territories.
6. NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) was created in 1949 as a result of:
  1. a severe economic recession in Europe.
  2. a sweeping "Red Scare" in Europe and America.
  3. the development by the Soviet Union of the intercontinental ballistic missile.
  4. a split between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R over war crimes trials of Nazis.
7. There is a maxim with regard to post-1947 Arab-Israeli wars that "Without Egypt there can be no war, but without Syria there can be no peace." This maxim basically reflected the fact that:
  1. Syria has captured the Ark of the Covenant and refuses to return it.
  2. Iraq has a majority of Shi'ite Moslems who are extremely anti-Israeli.
  3. Egypt is militarily the most powerful of Israel's immediate neighbors.
  4. Egypt cuts off the oil supplies to the other Arab states to prevent them from going to war against Israel.

8. Kuwait has been involved in several recent Middle Eastern conflict because:
1. it controls entrance to the Persian Gulf from the south.
  2. its population is largely Christian.
  3. it was for decades a Soviet outpost.
  4. it has vast oil reserves.
9. In late 1989 a Soviet official remarked that Mikhail Gorbachev had replaced the Brezhnev Doctrine with the "Sinatra Doctrine" (a reference to a Sinatra hit song "My Way"). Which of the following reflect how the Sinatra Doctrine impacted Soviet affairs:
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1. ~~it allowed American popular music into the USSR.~~
  2. it made Brezhnev a popular cult hero in Soviet music circles.
  3. it freed Central and Eastern Europe from Soviet domination.
  4. it created the Warsaw Pact.
10. What did Fidel Castro, the Sandinistas, Juan Bosch and Salvador Allende have in common:
1. they opposed OPEC controls on oil production and prices.
  2. they were left-wing nationalists who opposed U.S. domination.
  3. they were leaders of the communist government in Cuba.
  4. they were all right-wing Latin American leaders dominated by Manuel Noriega.

Short Answer Essay Section

Please answer any TWO of the following questions in short essay form (one paragraph each of no more than one-half page maximum).

1. Briefly explain the origins of the modern Zionist movement in the period from 1850 to 1914.
  2. Discuss the phenomenon called the "missile gap". What brought it about and what were its consequences?
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3. Briefly explain the development of the "Third World" in the 1950's and 1960's and discuss its consequences.
  4. Summarize the false premise on which were based the "Truman Doctrine" and the subsequent famous "Mr. X" article.

PLEASE BEGIN YOUR ANSWERS HERE AND USE THE REVERSE SIDE OF THIS PAGE IF NEEDED.

# History 301

## Assessment Instrument Results

### Objective Questions

Question Number	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Change in Percentage Points
	Percentage Correct	Percentage Correct	
1	44%	97%	+53%
2	38%	94%	+56%
3	58%	97%	+39%
4	27%	71%	+44%
5	28%	82%	+54%
6	58%	79%	+21%
7	46%	76%	+30%
8	48%	79%	+31%
9	50%	59%	+9%
10	35%	71%	+36%

### Short Answer Essay Questions

Question Number	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Change in Percentage Points
	Percentage Correct	Percentage Correct	
1	50%	80%	+30%
2	20%	88%	+68%
3	29%	94%	+65%
4	40%	83%	+43%

Note: Objective Question data are tabulated on the basis of the total number of students who took the test, i.e. 48 for the Pre-Test and 34 for the Post-Test. Short Answer Essay data are tabulated as a percentage of the number of students who wrote each of the four questions and answered the question correctly.