General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title __ENGL 1A: First-year writing (including Stretch)___ GE Area __A2____________

Results reported for AY ___2015-2016____ # of sections ___121_______ # of instructors ____71_______

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Department Chair:   Shannon Miller                      College:  Humanities and the Arts

Instructions: Each year, the department will prepare a brief (two page maximum) report that documents the assessment of the course during the year. This report will be electronically submitted to <curriculum@sjsu.edu>, by the department chair, to the Office of Undergraduate Studies, with an electronic copy to the home college by October 1 of the following academic year.

Part 1

To be completed by the course coordinator:

(1) What GELO(s) were assessed for the course during the AY?

GELO 1: Students shall demonstrate the ability to read actively and rhetorically.

(2) What were the results of the assessment of this course? What were the lessons learned from the assessment?

We assessed a random sampling of student essays (see attached rubric). The results yielded the following data:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Totals</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exceeds</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meets</td>
<td>514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fails</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Assessed</td>
<td>1069</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is the third year in a row that we have assessed this GELO as we have moved toward more authentic assessment measures. Three years ago, the assessment was conducted by way of a multiple choice test, which did not provide sufficient opportunities for students to demonstrate their abilities to read actively and rhetorically. Two years ago (2014-2015), students produced short essays, which were the basis of the assessment. This provided a more authentic assessment of what students learn and practice in 1A classes, but the specific details of the writing assignment were left to individual instructors. This year, we distributed a common reading with common questions with the idea that it would give us a better comparative basis.

The results from 2015-2016 were remarkably similar to the results from 2014-2015. Students largely demonstrated they were capable of analyzing a text rhetorically. Nevertheless, one-third of students struggled to read an article and respond successfully to a series of short prompts. In both years, students succeeded at a higher rate in the fall than in the spring—in large part we attribute this to the reality that students who are not as far along in their development as readers and
writers are more likely to take English 1A in the spring, whether because they are repeating the class or because they are coming from a developmental course. We also believe that the results reflect the fact that students in English 1A are primarily taught how to plan, draft, and revise their work with meaningful feedback from their instructors and peers. Since the assessments have been timed essays, students are not afforded opportunities to plan, get feedback, and revise. We expect that the format effects the quality of the writing and some students’ ability to demonstrate their reading and writing capacities.

(3) What modifications to the course, or its assessment activities or schedule, are planned for the upcoming year? (If no modifications are planned, the course coordinator should indicate this.)

This year, we will transition away from in-class, timed testing toward a portfolio that students can generate and revise with the guidance of classmates and instructors. This form of assessment corresponds more closely to the type of writing we teach in English 1A and is therefore a better measure of students’ capabilities in these courses.

Part 2

To be completed by the department chair (with input from course coordinator as appropriate):

(4) Are all sections of the course still aligned with the area Goals, Student Learning Objectives (GELOs), Content, Support, and Assessment? If they are not, what actions are planned?

(5) If this course is in a GE Area with a stated enrollment limit (Areas A1, A2, A3, C2, D1, R, S, V, & Z), please indicate how oral presentations will be evaluated with larger sections (Area A1), or how practice and revisions in writing will be addressed with larger sections, particularly how students are receiving thorough feedback on the writing which accounts for the minimum word count in this GE category (Areas A2, A3, C2, D1, R, S, V, & Z) and, for the writing intensive courses (A2, A3, and Z), documentation that the students are meeting the GE GELOs for writing.