General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title _____Biol 20, Ecological Biology__________  GE Area _B2 & B3____

Results reported for AY _____2015-2016______ # of sections _2 lectures, 4 labs_ # of instructors __1__

Course Coordinator: ___Stephanie Trewhitt_____  E-mail: __stephanie.trewhitt@sjsu.edu____

Department Chair: __Dr. Jeffrey Honda___________ College: ___Science__________________

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 SLO(s) were assessed for the course during the AY?
GE SLO 2: Students should be able to demonstrate ways in which science influences and is influenced by complex societies, including political and moral issues.

(2) What were the results of the assessment of this course? What were the lessons learned from the assessment?
In the Fall of 2015 students were required to choose a scientific journal article that discussed how an issue in ecological biology had been influenced either politically or morally by humans and present their findings in class to their classmates and then run a discussion on their issue. In the Fall the average grade for this assignment was 83% with only 1 person failing to complete the assignment. In Spring 2016 the average grade for this assignment was also 83% with 2 students failing to complete the assignment. In Spring of 2016 all students were assigned a 1500-word research paper that also examined how an ecological biology issue had been influenced by society or that science had influenced, politically or morally, complex societies. The average for the 43 students was 83% with all students successfully completing the assignment. Also in the Fall 2015 and the Spring 2016 students were given a quiz at the end of the semester, asking specific questions about ecological biology concepts and the impacts of complex societies. During each semester the quiz questions were different, but all focused on how ecological biology concepts impact complex societies. In the Fall 2015, of the 41 enrolled students 90% of them passed this quiz with a C or better. In the Spring 2016, of the 43 enrolled students 70% of them satisfactorily passed this quiz with a C or better. The results of the Spring semester influenced the decision to change the text book and to use a text that would relate to these students on a personal level, encourage the students to get involved and to make a difference. I believe if students can relate on a personal level to the issues and feel that they can make a difference then they will learn the subject better.
(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.)

Beginning in Fall 2016 a new text book is being used that not only teaches students the science and the current issues surrounding the science, but also provides solutions to the issues for students to think about. This text book allows students to see their direct connection to the issues and offers suggestions on how students can make a different in the future. New labs that enhance the student’s understanding of the science and current issues are being developed. Students are also experiencing real world solutions to the issues through field trips to local businesses and nature reserves, which show the science and solutions in action.

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 (SLOs), Content, Support, and Assessment? If they are not, what actions are planned?

Yes

(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 SLOs for writing.

This is an Area B2/B3 course with a lecture enrollment increasing to 60-80 students. Lab sections are taught by graduate student level TAs who grade their section assignments that ensures thorough feedback for each student.