General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title  AMS 1A/1B American Civilization  GE Area  C1, C2, D2, D3, US 1, 2, & 3

Results reported for AY 2016-17  # of sections 12  # of instructors 12

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Department Chair:  Shannon Rose Riley  College:  Humanities & 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?

There were two:  GELO 12 (US2): To fulfill the requirements for U.S. Constitution and California Government, students should study how political decisions are made; their consequences for individuals and society; and how individuals and groups may affect the decision-making process; as students study the meaning and content of the democratic process as it has evolved in the United States and California.

And GELO 13 (US3): Students should also demonstrate: an understanding of tools of political action and collective decision-making at the local, state, national, or global level; and the ability to articulate the values and assumptions that inform their civic engagement.

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

The GELOs were assessed across four different teams (Each team shares one lecture period twice a week followed immediately in the next period by three breakout seminars, one for each of the team teachers.) One team used a “Founding Documents” quiz to assess GELO #12, another team used a project report, and two teams used variant forms of the same essay assignment built around selecting one of the then current propositions on the ballot for amendment to the California Constitution an assignment designed specifically to help cover this GELO. Statistical findings from 11 of the 12 sections were turned in and are on record with the Course Coordinator. (One lecturer took a new job and moved away before submitting relevant data.)

The team that used the Founding Documents quiz reported a majority of students in the Developing range, “Our analysis of the activity results showed a combination of students moving too quickly through the questions and not understanding the basic terms of the questions. In the future, we plan to model how to answer such questions and walk students through one or two sample questions to improve comprehension and learning.” The team with the project report had a three tier review, Weak/Competent/Strong, with the vast majority clustering in the Competent category, and decisively more in Strong than Weak. The two teams with variants of the same essay assignment used a 4 tier review, and together reported the same balance
replicated across five reporting teams, with a total of 12 students at the Beginning level, 38 students at the Developing level, 80 students at the Accomplished level, and 36 students at the Exemplary level for this GELO.

For assessment of GELO 13, the first team used an essay question on how earlier social movements informed the concept of “refuse, resist, protest,” in 21st century America while the second team embedded an essay question to describe and analyze the California initiative process. The third team used a journal assignment related to analysis of Populist and Progressive activities in American governance modifications and the fourth had a paper assignment on civic engagement and cultural change that required students reporting their findings as first a news report and second as an editorial expressing their opinion based upon this research. Responses well mostly acceptable or superior across the categories, though on team two one commented “Not all in my seminar engaged with this topic but nearly all did. Too many confused the process with what the state legislature does. More were able to adequately describe the process but did not adequately analyze how wealth and partisan politics might distort the democratic intentions of the process.” The third and fourth teams shared the same tier level rubric again: Respectively, at Beginning level they had 5 and 0 students; at Developing level 16 and 8, at Accomplished 43 and 32 and at Exemplary, 21 and 25. Both weigh in heaviest at Accomplished and then a lot at Exemplary.

(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.)

We have introduced an AMS 1A/1B Program Canvas shell where this faculty can all meet online and we will be developing there, through group discussion and agreement, a shared rubric that all teaching faculty will use across the sections for our next GE assessment, which will be on C1 this current academic year. Having two teams collaborate with variants of the same assignment and the same rubric tiering system this year was a step in the right direction. This new online meeting place and a collaborative shared rubric for the specific GE assessment across all the teams will continue our assessment advancement. The assessment schedule has been updated with the dates rolled forward to fit the program schedule plan and that calendar is attached with this document.

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? **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 GELOs for writing. **NA**