**General Education Annual Course Assessment Form**

Course Number/Title: **Linguistics 20: The Nature of Language**  
GE Area: **Area D1**

Results reported for AY: **2015-2016**  
# of sections: **3**  
# of instructors: **3**

Course Coordinator: **Scott Phillabaum**  
E-mail: **scott.phillabaum@sjsu.edu**

Department Chair: **Swathi Vanniarajan**  
College: **Humanities & 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 3**: Students will be able to evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues.

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

   A variety of assignments address GELO 3. Each is detailed below along with the lessons learned from assessment of those assignments.

   A. **Exam questions**: One way that students in Linguistics 20 fulfilled GELO 3 is through exam questions that required them to linguistic information and relate it to contemporary social issues. One such question asked students to reflect on the legitimacy of Ebonics as a dialect of English and argue for or against its use in schools with large numbers of speakers of Ebonics. More than eighty percent of students were able to produce thoughtful responses to this question with the reminder of the students producing adequate responses.

   B. **Speech event paper**: For this paper, students collect spoken data of a particular conversation sequence (for example, ordering a coffee) and examine it according to the varying social factors that affect its realization. This project requires students to apply concepts from discourse analysis and pragmatics and then connect it to real world use of language. After collecting their data, students analyze the social factors that contributed to how language was used in each instance. Three students struggled with this assignment and received grades of C, while all others received grades of A and B, having made effective connections between language use and social factors.

   C. **Text analysis paper**: For this paper, students analyzed two advertisements for similar products that were targeted at different audiences. Students were expected to notice how language,
imagery, and other elements are used differently when addressing different social groups. This
assignment increased student sensitivity to how language can both reflect identity and
simultaneously be used to manipulate. Overall, students were successful with this assignment,
with scores primarily in the A and B range.

(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.)

At present, no modifications are planned for this course. Each semester, instructors will continue to
strive to create assessment activities that require students to work with actual language data as a
means to make sense of course concepts. As these assessment data show, students learn best
when they are able to relate course concepts to their actual lived experiences.

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?

There were only 3 sections for the whole academic year and these are all well aligned with the course
goals, SLOs, content, support and assessment.

(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.

The class has an enrollment cap of 25 and never exceeds by more than 2 or 3 students.