General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title  HIST 10B: Western Civilization   GE Area _______ D2 _______________________

Results reported for AY 2015-16 # of sections ______1_______ # of instructors _____1_________

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Department Chair: Glen Gendzel College: Social Sciences

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 will be able to place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts.

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

Methods used for assessing the GELO included multiple-choice questions, and written identification essays embedded in three midterm exams and one final exam. Whereas in the past, I have used primary sources provided by the main textbook, The Making of the West: Peoples and Cultures, Vol. 2, this semester I have begun assigning new secondary and primary source material from the Bedford St. Martins Series in History and Culture that narrowly focuses on a key historical topic or problem. I used these key topics as springboards for in-class discussions that enabled the students to relate them to contemporary developments in cultural, environmental, and spatial contexts. Student comprehension was first assessed by means of a short quiz on the topic and the students were also given guide questions to be used in both group discussion and class-wide discussions. I found particularly helpful submitting the students to a quiz beforehand using the on-line learning management system Canvas to assure that they were well versed on each subject and prepared for the in class discussion. One of the several topics chosen involved a detailed examination of the Thirty Years’ War, a conflict that foreshadowed many aspects of war and diplomacy in the modern period. Students were able, by means of small group and class-wide discussion and analysis, to reach an understanding of how this event anticipated processes and instruments of international mediation that continue to influence modern international relations. I was impressed with the seriousness and intensity of emotion and empathy with which the students engaged this critical and often tragic episode in European history. The narrow and detailed focus on such historical “pivots” served both to immerse the students in key episodes of the western tradition, and to compel them to draw connections with present-day concerns and issues. To evaluate student comprehension and retention of I included questions on both midterm examinations and the final that touched on important analysis and insights that came out of these discussions. Based on the results using
these criteria, 80 to 85 percent of the students attained “good” or “excellent” performance on the quizzes, and overall, remained in the 80-85 percentile range on midterms and the final.

(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.)

I intend to continue and expand the use of narrowly focused primary source material covering other key historical events or trends, and to use them for guided discussions to increase their awareness and comprehension of key events and how they affect modern Western and World history. I also intend to incorporate more use of tools available on the LMS (Learning Management System) Canvas, such as Iclicker, in the classroom to conduct polls in order to elicit immediate feedback and student opinion on questions arising from the topics under discussion.

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.

N/A