General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title: EnvS 119, Energy and the Environment  
GE Area: Area R

Results reported for 2015-2016  
# of sections: 4  
# of instructors: 2

Course Coordinator: Lynne Trulio  
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Department Chair: Lynne Trulio  
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 2: Students will be able to distinguish science from pseudo-science.

(2) What were the results of the assessment of this course? What were the lessons learned from the assessment?
   Students gained proficiency with assignment such as evaluating a carbon footprint calculator and analyzing the science versus pseudoscience claims with respect to wind energy. They were assessed using these assignments. Of the 43 students assessed, 86% received an A or a B, which demonstrates excellent proficiency for this GELO.

(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.)

While students typically do quite well with respect to this GELO, overall, they continue to struggle with the units and dimensional analysis required for some of the assignments. Even though students are asked to read articles before every class, it is difficult to gauge how effective their reading and note taking strategies are and whether or not they are doing the required readings. I think it may be important to return to a textbook to ensure they have physical readings in their hands.

One-on-one advising for students who struggle early on may be effective in ensuring they are caught up and prepared particularly for the second assignment, but this is difficult with large GE classes. One instructor organized 1 or 2 workshop sessions before several assignments, which seemed to work well for the students who could attend, although many did not attend. Having an EnvS 119 tutor at Peer Connections or in ACCESS could help. The chair will explore this possibility. Also, most textbooks have been insufficient in level of detail and in covering interdisciplinary energy issues. We continue to look for a text to meet these needs.
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, they are. The course GE coordinator meets with all instructors each year to ensure all sections align with GELOs, course content and assessment requirements.

(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.

None of the sections of this course we offered exceeded the 40 student maximum by more than 10%.