General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title __Geology 103: Earth Science & the Environment__ GE Area __R________________

Results reported for AY __2013-14_____ # of sections ____4________ # of instructors ____3________

Course Coordinator: __Paula Messina_____ E-mail: _paula.messina@sjsu.edu___________

Department Chair: _Robert Miller________ 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, by the department chair, to the Office of Undergraduate Studies, with an electronic copy to the home college by September 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?
SLO 2: Students will be able to distinguish science from pseudo-science.

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

The aggregated data demonstrate that 92% (range = 82%-100%) of students who completed Geology 103 could discern between science and pseudo-science.

What were the lessons learned from the assessment?
Although only qualitative data were reported by instructors of this course, there was consensus among them that students generally arrive with little understanding of why, for example, *astrology* is considered a pseudo-science, while *astronomy* is a science. Instructors reported that, by the end of the semester, students found it easier to identify evidence, and found it easier to use evidence when drawing logical conclusions about a phenomenon, an event, or even (in the case of astrology vs. astronomy) a “field of study.” Therefore, instructors learned that explicitly identifying evidence (in data collection, experimentation, or even in argumentation) was helpful toward that end.

(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.)
The results from 2013-2014 are encouraging. Instructors plan to continue to elaborate on elements of the scientific process when introducing students to geosciences topics, particularly those in which multiple lines of evidence culminated in an overwhelming, scientifically-accepted conclusion.

**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?

All sections are still aligned with Area R goals and student learning objectives. No action is planned.