General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title  HIST 170S: Topics in Am. History: Am. Identities & Institutions  GE Area US1

Results reported for AY 2015-2016  # 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 SLO(s) were assessed for the course during the AY?

US1: SLO 1: Students will be able describe the principal events, developments, ideas, politics, and international relations in all the territories now in the United States from the beginnings of this society until the present.

S: GELO 1: Students will be able to describe how identities (i.e. religious, gender, ethnic, racial, class, sexual orientation, disability, and/or age) are shaped by cultural and societal influences within contexts of equality and inequality.

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

The SLOs for US1 and S1 were assessed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
<th>Word Count</th>
<th>Meets Objectives</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-class midterm examination</td>
<td>1,250</td>
<td>US-1, S-1, S-2, S-4</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems based on primary sources</td>
<td></td>
<td>US-1, S-1, S-2, S-3, S-4</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative/comprehensive take-home final examination</td>
<td>1,250</td>
<td>US-1, S-2, S-3</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination of reading quizzes, polls, and discussions of course readings for credit</td>
<td>Short assignments, class discussions, quizzes</td>
<td>US-1, S-1, S-2, S-3, S-4</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective essay</td>
<td>1,250</td>
<td>US-1, S-1, S-2, S-4</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I assessed SLO1 for US1 through in-class discussions and assignments, a midterm and a cumulative final exam, a reflective essay, and a series of primary source problems. Prior to class, students analyzed primary documents individually and used that work to build on in group discussion to develop their understanding of how different diverse groups of Americans experienced the major events and developments of United States history. In the final exam, students completed identifications where they were asked to identify a major
governmental policy or event, explain its impact on the particular group of Americans, and expand on the long-term implications of this policy for this group. An essay question assessed how the approach of the course in viewing history through the lens of minority and diverse Americans changed their understanding of the postwar period and the Civil Rights era.

In this Upper-level course for non-majors, students covered the span of United States history from early settlement to the present through the perspective of diverse Americans. Students demonstrated understanding of the principal events of this history, particularly in their answers to the final exam identifications and essay question. In the final exam, 17 students showed “excellent” performance, 9 students showed “good” performance, and 2 students achieved “acceptable” or “marginal” performance on exams. Some students struggled with the identifications, and were only able to identify the government policy or event and not fully expand on its significance and impact on the particular ethnic or racial group. Students developed skills in historical analysis through the primary source problems and many showed good development in understanding through the semester. In the problems, 12 students showed “excellent” performance, 7 students showed “good” performance, and 9 students achieved “acceptable” or “marginal” performance. Some students struggled with the weekly nature of these assignments and keeping up with the work, rather than content issues.

I assessed SLO 1 for Area S through in-class discussions and assignments, a midterm and a cumulative final exam, a reflective essay and a series of primary source problems. In the Midterm exam, students had to complete an analysis of a primary document detailing the creation of racial identities in colonial Virginia. Students were assessed on their ability “to describe the document, explain its significance, and expand its context.” Students also answered an essay question concerning the creation of racial and ethnic identities through coalitions and conflicts created during the westwards expansion of white settlers and their interactions with Native Americans, African American slaves, Mexicans, and Chinese and Japanese immigrants. At the end of the semester, students completed a reflective essay that considered the creation of Mexican American identity in San Jose, CA from the Spanish settlement to the present. Students were asked to write a in-class reflective essay (time limit of one and a half hours) using a monograph that had been read throughout the semester to debate how Anglo settlement brought new patterns of conquest and resistance among Mexican Americans.

In this Upper-level course for non-majors, students showed significant progress in understanding the creation of identity in the United States through the semester. In the midterm exam, 16 students showed “excellent” performance on their papers and 12 students “good” performance. Students used the document to demonstrate overall excellent understanding of how racial identity became tied to freedom during the early colonial period, using the text of the document to illustrate this argument. They demonstrated in the essay how viewing westwards expansion from the perspective of minority groups changed their perspective on this period of history and demonstrated how conflicts between groups help to create and solidify racial and ethnic identities. The best students were able to identify the significance of the admittedly limited opportunities for coalition between ethnic groups and the reasons why these coalitions were so difficult to sustain.

(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.)

No modifications are planned.
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?

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 SLOs for writing.

N/A