General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title  Phil 134/ Computers, Ethics & Society  GE Area ___V____

Results reported for AY 2016-17  # of sections  11  # of instructors  2

Course Coordinator:  Elizabeth Sonnier  E-mail: Elizabeth.sonnier@sjsu.edu

Department Chair:  Janet Stemwedel  College:  Humanities and 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 shall be able to explain how a culture outside the U.S. has changed in response to internal and external pressures.

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

This course surveys philosophical-ethical concepts and their relationship to society and computer technologies. Part of this is accomplished by asking students to apply ethical theories to questions about how computers influence behavior: individually and socially, and domestically and abroad. For example, students are asked to explain the differences in approach to government regulation and restriction in China as compared to the U.S., in light of a number of social media and internet companies that do business with both countries. Also, the students discussed the rise in use of VPNs throughout China and Russia as a means of curtailing government surveillance, while also investigating the recent policy changes brought about by the FCC with respect to Net Neutrality regulation.

(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 concepts taught in this course are perennial, though the applications to case-studies are contemporary. Each semester there is new material gleaned from public and social events involving computer technologies and industry developments that make possible the public and private use of these devices. Many of the students are familiar with this pace of change, and this course models that pace very well. We will continue to use contemporary events as discussion points for a number of ethical concerns that arise as a result of continuous technological advancement.
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 – Janet Stemwedel

(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 highest number of students for any of these sections was 42. So we are required to provide an explanation of how students get practice and feedback in writing. The instructor of record provides feedback and grades all writing assignments and welcomes, if not requires, first drafts of all writing assignments and provides feedback on drafts. If sections are exceptionally oversized they are graded by the instructor of record with the assistance of an Instructional Student Assistant (ISA). The ISA must be approved both by the Instructional Assistant Coordinator and the Philosophy Department Chair for their excellence in both composition and their expertise in the field of philosophy at issue. Whenever an ISA aids in the grading of a large course, s/he provides feedback along with grading. In all cases, when the help of an ISA is employed, the instructor of record must explicitly notify the students of the class that some writing assignments have been graded and feedback has been provided by an ISA. If a student is unhappy with an ISA grade the instructor of record will reread the paper, provide additional feedback, and regrade the assignment (if that is warranted.) Generally speaking, any instructor who is teaching more than 100 GE students in a semester receives ISA help.