**General Education Annual Course Assessment Form**

Course Number/Title ANTH 100W Writing Workshop  
GE Area Z

Results reported for AY 2015-2016  
# of sections: 2  
# of instructors: 1

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Department Chair: Roberto Gonzalez  
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, 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?

   Student Learning Objective #1: Students shall be able to refine the competencies established in Written Communication I (A2) and Critical Thinking and Writing (A3) courses.

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

The University basic General Education skills include cultivation of an understanding of the writing process and its goals (Written Communication, A2) and the ability to recognize, analyze, evaluate, and produce reasoning (Critical Thinking and Writing, A3). These skills were addressed through this course’s SLO #1 and assessed using several instruments throughout the semester to develop writing and critical thinking skills. These assessment instruments including nine research article reviews, a term research paper, and professional development assignments. The article reviews, or “précis,” summarized, analyzed, or critically discussed an assigned peer reviewed academic article relevant to the behavioral sciences. These reviews are meant to be short essays (ranging from 250-700 words) which conform to the *Harvard Guide to Writing in the Social Sciences*. Correct citation styles are required in the précises and most have mastered citation form by the time they submit their research paper. Students were encouraged in these assignments to think about essay structure and analysis of the hypotheses of a diverse array of articles. The précis were completed by students prior to the research paper, allowing students to develop practice with editorial and citation standards before the larger paper assignment. The term paper took the form of a 16-page (or up to 8000-word) research paper. This paper was broken down into smaller assignments of thesis statement, outline, bibliography, and discrete sections of text.

The assessment of this SLO highlights the importance of 1) critical thinking and writing the results of theme-based research; 2) thorough and immediate writing feedback for students as well as availability of writing resources on course websites, and 3) rewriting and editing sections of text with software and instructor guidance. Critical thinking and research ability was fostered through the focused theme of the course papers on the anthropology of play. Students completed small-scale fieldwork and pursued library research on their specific interest in the world of play. Broader linkages between data and interpretation in anthropology, as well as context of literature review, required critical and high-order
thinking by students. Professor feedback often focused on grammar and punctuation as well as in-text citation style and reference lists, yet also relied heavily on grading rubrics for overall form and content. The most notable change from previous semesters was an added requirement that students use the Grammarly software to help edit paper text. The students were enthusiastic about this software, and learned from its explanations what errors they routinely made in writing. This resulted in fewer errors to be corrected by the instructor in submitted papers. The instructor continued this year to use Criterion, an online assignment managing program, to correct the “précis” essays and term paper sections online resulted in immediate student feedback and opportunities for steady improvement throughout the course. In-class feedback from peers was another form of immediate feedback for students. On the course website in Canvas, students were directed toward multiple resources for grammar, punctuation, and citation form. Rewriting and editing précis as separate assignments and rewriting sections of the term paper allowed students to gradually improve their writing while realizing the value of editing and reformulating existing text.

(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 major modifications to the course, or its assessment activities or schedule, are planned for the upcoming year. Students will continue to write short essays and in-depth research reports as they learn to recognize and develop different kinds of writing in the social sciences. Future iterations of this course will continue to emphasize writing skills and demonstrate their relevant to success in college, careers, and professional settings.

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?

The department offers one section per semester and it is taught in a manner consistent with the discipline of anthropology and SJSU Area Z goals, objectives, etc. The course has long been well reviewed by students and in Fall 2016 it will be taught again by the same faculty member. No other changes are planned or necessary.

(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.