General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title ANTH 100W Writing Workshop

GE Area Z

Results reported for AY 2016-2017

# 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 #2: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate college-level proficiency. Students shall be able to express (explain, analyze, develop, and criticize) ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse.

(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 #2 and assessed using several instruments throughout the semester to develop writing and critical thinking skills. These assessment instruments including a series of six 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 precis 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) the importance of immediate writing feedback, 2) combined use of peer and instructor feedback, 3) rewriting and editing sections of text with instructor guidance, as well as 4) developing relevant research skills that focused on small portions of a large research project. Critical thinking and engagement with multiple forms of discourse were 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 this theme, as well as wrote a series of six précis on articles they have found based on their play interest. This semester the instructor focused on teaching students to use research tools like Google Scholar, the library databases, and REFWorks. The students develop reference lists related to the way they like to play in preparation for writing a research paper on the subject. The précis form the first part of their paper which is called “borrowing and extending.” In the next section, they establish their authority by doing original research and then analyze their data in light of established research. They conclude with a summary of their findings and suggestions for future research.

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. Students continue to use software such as Grammarly to help edit paper text. The students were enthusiastic about this software, and learned from its explanations what errors they routinely made in writing. The instructor corrected the essays and term paper sections online to provide immediate student feedback, and monitored 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. Through this process, the instructor emphasized developing good research and writing habits in stages of a larger project.

(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?

Yes they are.

(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