General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

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

Results reported for AY 2017-2018  # of sections: 2  # of instructors: 1

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Department Chair: Roberto Gonzalez  College: Social Sciences
(Acting Chair Jan English-Lueck)

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 #3: Students shall be able to organize and develop essays and documents for both professional and general audiences, including appropriate editorial standards for citing primary and secondary sources.

(2) What were the results of the assessment of this course? What were the lessons learned from the assessment?
   The SLO #3 was assessed for this course using several instruments throughout the semester, 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.
   Students were encouraged in these assignments to think about essay structure and analysis of the hypotheses of a diverse array of articles. The students completed the précis prior to the research paper, allowing students to develop skills with editorial and citation standards before the larger paper assignment.

   The précis and other notes on the readings are required before writing the research paper. Students are taught to locate scholarly papers related to their area of play and analyze them in terms of their thesis, content, and usefulness in their personal research. The first set of notes and the first précis are based on a theoretical work on the anthropology of play which is discussed in class. It provides the model for future notes and précis. The next five sets of notes and précis are chosen by the student. The notes follow a set format and include supporting quotes from the chosen article. The précis s are in essay format and include formal analysis. These notes and précis form the basis of the theoretical part of their major research paper. The students also present their hypotheses and personal research in the form of a PowerPoint at the end of the semester. Easing the students into theoretical analysis through the use of a series of assignments like the notes and précis allows the instructor to guide the student in their analysis in incremental fashion, rather than giving them only one chance to understand and
expound upon the process of borrowing and extending from the thoughts of others as is the case with most research papers. Since students have a wide variety of experience with writing and analysis, this is a more successful way to reach all the students.

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. Professional development assignments include resumes, statements of purpose, and professional cover letters.

The assessment of this SLO highlights the importance of 1) thorough and immediate writing feedback for students, 2) availability of writing resources on course websites, and 3) rewriting and editing sections of text with instructor guidance. 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 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. They also completed readings on academic integrity regarding things such as a “fair paraphrase.” 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 2018 it will be taught again by the same faculty member. No other changes are planned or necessary.