General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title LLD 100W Writing Workshop GE Area: Z

Results reported for AY 2013-2014 # of sections 2 # of instructors 1 (one)

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Department Chair: Dr. Swathi M. Vanniarajan College: Humanities & the 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, 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?
   SLO 1: Students shall be able to refine the competencies established in Written Communication IA and IB

   IA Student Learning:
   - Students should be able to perform effectively the essential steps in the writing process (prewriting, organizing, composing, revising, and editing).
   - Students should be able to express (explain, analyze, develop, and criticize) ideas effectively.
   - Students should be able to use correct grammar (syntax, mechanics, and citation of sources) at a college level of sophistication.
   - Students should be able to write for different audiences (both specialized and general)

   IB Student Learning:
   - Students should be able to use (locate, analyze, and evaluate) supporting materials, including independent library research.
   - Students should be able to synthesize ideas encountered in multiple readings.
   - Students should be able to construct effective arguments.

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

Assignment #1:
An assignment that has been successful in helping students understand and utilize the steps in the writing process is the initial diagnostic essay, administered in the first week of the semester. Students write an in-class timed essay (approximately 500 words) describing their major as well as their reasons for selecting it. Their perceived audience is prospective students in their field. After submission of the first draft, they receive ungraded feedback from the instructor. For homework, they must access their departmental websites and other online sources to gather relevant information about their major field of study, important theories/theorists, prospects for future employment, etc. At the next class meeting, they
are placed in small groups with others of the same major and share their information, develop their points, and discuss ways to refine their texts. The essay is then revised and expanded outside class based on the brainstorming activities.

This assignment is then carried on into the next stage when students, after completing the second draft of the essay (approximately 800 words), engage in a peer review session. But prior to the session, using a sample essay placed on the overhead projector for all to see, I conduct a whole class session on how to provide meaningful feedback on both content and form. At the next class meeting, following a structured set of questions to keep them on track, students respond to each other’s writings offering comments on development of points, supporting examples and illustrations, clarity of thought and expression, organization, appropriate word use, and conventions of standard written English. A third version of the essay is, then, drafted based on peer responses and receives written feedback from me. The final draft (1200 words) is prepared based on both instructor/peer comments and submitted for evaluation and grading purposes. This activity covers several class periods and takes approximately 3-4 weeks to complete satisfactorily.

Assignment #2:
Students write a 12-20 page research paper on a relevant topic in their field. A series of activities are designed to ensure that they actively read and understand scholarly sources and conduct independent library research. First, they brainstorm a research topic and develop research questions for library and internet exploration. They, then, participate in a workshop conducted by the library liaison for the Linguistics department. The workshop combines an orientation lecture that explains how to access and make optimal use of print and electronic sources and a hands-on session when students actually sit at a computer and are led through a series of activities on how to search for resources on particular topics via electronic databases.

The writing of the research paper calls for students to consult a minimum of ten scholarly sources. Many students, prior to taking this class, do not have a clear sense of what a scholarly source is and often confuse popular/general literature with scholarly ones. Therefore, I devote at least one or two class sessions to an interactive lecture and detailed explanation/illustration of what defines a piece of work as scholarly and how to distinguish between the different levels of scholarship.

After students have been instructed on the characteristics of scholarly books, journal articles (both refereed and non-refereed), and online documents, they are required to produce an annotated bibliography of a minimum of seven scholarly sources dealing with their paper topic. Each annotation is required to be one or two well-developed paragraphs describing the content, the intended audience, methodology of research study, reliability of data, and, finally, its relevance to the student’s paper. This is particularly useful for students because it enables them to compare the relative strengths and weaknesses of their sources. Students receive feedback from the instructor on the range and quality of their selections as well as their written annotations of the texts.

Out of approximately 50 students assessed, what percentage would you estimate:
Mastered L01 at a high level 40%  (averaged a “B+” or better on assessment activities)
Mastered L01 at an average level 55%  (averaged between a “C” and a “B+” on assessment activities)
Either failed to master L01, or did so at a marginal level (“C-” or below on assessment activities) 5%

As everything is going well, no modification to the course is suggested at this time.
(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.)

Nil

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?

Chair’s comments: Only one section is offered each semester, and the course is well aligned with the GE Area Z goals, SLOs, Content, Support and Assessment.

(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.

The course has an enrollment cap of 25 only. Managing oral presentations for this course is not a problem.