PROGRAM INFORMATION

Date submitted: June 1, 2011

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Note: Schedule is posted at: http://www.sjsu.edu/ugs/programplanning/

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Please send any changes to the schedule or to student learning outcomes to Jackie Snell
jacqueline.snell@sjsu.edu

GOAL 1: To transmit in-depth knowledge of the structure and function of language and its use and change in various cultural and social settings.

Objective 1C: Analyze sentence structure in any language in terms of grammatical relations and constituent structure, and recognize the typological diversity of syntactic phenomena;

Initial Evidence of Student Learning:

Data were collected in LING 112 Introduction to Syntax in Spring 2010. The data consisted of grades in a variety of assessment tools (five homework assignments, two projects, midterm exam, final exam). Upon examination of the course-specific SLOs that relate to Program objective 1C, it was found that the majority of students have shown mastery of the objective. One observation that resulted is that take-home projects afford more time for thinking and deliberation in providing empirical evidence for proposed analyses resulting in improved performance, as compared to assessing the same objective in an exam situation.

Change(s) to Curriculum or Pedagogy:

The LLD Curriculum committee discussed the findings in Spring 2011 and proposed that, while the assessment tools should be retained for the given SLO, more practice should be given on providing empirical evidence for proposed analyses in class exercises to reinforce this skill. No other changes in the assessment process were planned.
Evidence of Student Learning after Change.
The proposed change will be implemented in Fall 2011.
GOAL 1: To transmit in-depth knowledge of the structure and function of language and its use and change in various cultural and social settings.

Objective 1D: Analyze the meaning of words and sentences, identify types of lexical and sentence relations, elaborate on the role of linguistic and pragmatic context in the interpretation of meaning, and understand the role of theories in the analysis of semantic data.

Initial Evidence of Student Learning:

Data were collected in LING 114 *Introduction to Semantics and Discourse* in Fall 2010. The data consisted of grades in a variety of assessment tools (six homework assignments, two projects, one midterm exam, final exam). Upon examination of the course-specific SLOs that relate to Program objective 1D, it was found that students performed well in homework assignments but their performance in the exams varied. Specifically, while they were able to apply concepts in the analysis of semantic relations, they performed poorly in defining the terms used in semantic analysis. Also, they had difficulty with some aspects of analyzing meaning in context.

Change(s) to Curriculum or Pedagogy:

The LLD Curriculum committee discussed the findings in Spring 2011 and proposed that, while the current assessment tools should be retained for the given SLO, some assignments should be introduced that give students practice not only in applying terminology to data but also in defining terms.

Evidence of Student Learning after Change.

The proposed change will be implemented in Fall 2011 when the course will be taught again.
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GOAL 1: To transmit in-depth knowledge of the structure and function of language and its use and change in various cultural and social settings.

Objective 1E: Identify phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic changes in the history of a language, discuss the contribution of social factors and language contact to language variation and change, use the comparative method to reconstruct ancestors of related languages, and explain the genetic and typological classification of languages.

Initial Evidence of Student Learning:

Data were collected in LING 125 Introduction to Historical and Comparative Linguistics in Spring 2010. The data consisted of grades in a variety of assessment tools (six homework assignments, two projects, one midterm exam, final exam). One observation in looking at student performance across various SLOs is the discrepancy between their performance on the midterm as compared to their performance using other assessment tools.

The midterm exam involved analysis of data on language change and their classification into various types of change. As compared to previous years when students had to remember the terms for the different categories of change, this year they were given a list to choose from. This did not seem to help much in facilitating their recognition of the type of change involved. Students’ performance on the final exam surpassed their performance on the midterm. The final exam consisted of short-answer questions that required students to discuss various methods of historical linguistics and critically evaluate theories of language change. Students’ performance on the midterm exam appears to be reflective of the type of questions asked. Students’ performance on the projects and homework assignments was much better as compared to similar questions on the midterm exam. This indicates that students are better at analyzing larger sets of data under low-pressure situations.
Change(s) to Curriculum or Pedagogy:
The LLD Curriculum committee discussed the findings in Spring 2011 and proposed that, in order to help students classify types of language change in their mind in ways that would facilitate their recollection, teaching materials be developed that will present organized charts of types of change with memorable examples. In addition, in order to address the time issue, it was proposed to use assessment tools for data analysis that would afford more time for the completion of the tasks.

Evidence of Student Learning after Change.
The proposed change will be implemented in Spring 2012 when the course will be taught again.
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GOAL 1: To transmit in-depth knowledge of the structure and function of language and its use and change in various cultural and social settings.

Objective 1F: Analyze word structure in any language in terms of morphemes, establish the status of morphemes in the language, recognize the typological diversity of word structure, and evaluate opposing theoretical position on the structure of words and the structure of the lexicon.

Initial Evidence of Student Learning:

Data from LING 162 Introduction to Morphology were collected in Fall 2010 to address this Program objective. The data consisted of grades and instructor observations in a variety of assessment tools
- Four problem sets with morphological data from a variety of languages
- One midterm exam
- Final exam

Students did well on morphological data analysis but performed better on take-home problem sets than they did on exams. Also, between the midterm and the final, students did better on midterm than on the final exam. The midterm consisted more of data analysis, as compared to the final that had more essay type questions and theoretical discussions. The instructor of the course attributed this fact on the focus of the class on honing students’ data analysis skills.

Change(s) to Curriculum or Pedagogy:

The LLD Curriculum committee discussed the findings in Spring 2011 and proposed that assignments, such as writing critical essays or giving class presentations on important papers in Morphology, be included to help students improve on the theoretical aspects of their training.
Evidence of Student Learning after Change.
The proposed change will be implemented in Spring 2012, as LING 162 is a course taught only every third semester. At that time, evidence of the effect of the proposed change will be determined.
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GOAL 2: To help students develop critical thinking skills, analytical skills, and reading, writing and research skills.

Objective 2A: Analyze phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic, and historical linguistics data;

Initial Evidence of Student Learning:

Data from LING 162 Introduction to Morphology, LING 112 Introduction to Syntax, LING 114 Introduction to Semantics and Discourse, and LING 125 Introduction to Historical and Comparative Linguistics were collected to address this Program objective. The data consisted of grades and instructor observations in a variety of assessment tools (homework assignments, projects, midterm exams, final exams).

Students in LING 162 did well on morphological data analysis but performed better on take-home problem sets than they did on exams. Also, they were better at morphological analysis than on theoretical discussions about morphological analysis.

Similarly, students in LING 112 performed generally well in all analytical tasks but showed some weakness in providing empirical evidence for their analysis.

Students in LING 114 performed well in the assignments and exams in tasks that involved semantic analysis and recognition of semantic categories. But a significant number of them 25% had difficulty with certain concepts in the final exam (sense and reference, extracting direct illocutions and providing contextual information for calculating implicature).

Students in LING 125 performed well in describing aspects of linguistic change in all assessment tools except for the midterm exam. The midterm exam consisted of a variety of examples of linguistic change.
that students had to classify according to a given set of categories. Similar tasks done under different conditions (take-home problem sets) yielded better results.

Upon examining the results from the four courses, it became obvious that time to work on language analysis is a crucial variable in student performance. Also, while students are good at applying knowledge in the analysis of language patterns, they have some difficulty with providing definitions and discussing theoretical aspects of language analysis.

**Change(s) to Curriculum or Pedagogy:**
The LLD Curriculum committee discussed the findings in Spring 2011 and proposed the following:

- For LING 162, to include assignments, such as writing critical essays or giving class presentations on important papers in Morphology, to help students improve on the theoretical aspects of their training.
- For LING 112, to include assignments and in-class work on providing evidence for proposed analyses.
- For LING 114, to include more assignment and in-class work to help students with the comprehension of certain difficult concepts.
- For LING 125, for identifying types of language change, to use assessment tools (take home assignments) that allow extra time for a more accurate identification of types of change.

**Evidence of Student Learning after Change.**
The proposed change will be implemented in Fall 2011 and Spring 2011, as some of the courses are only taught once a year and LING 162 is taught every third semester.