General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title: Bio 10  
GE Area: B2: Science

Results reported for AY 2012/2013  
# of sections: 8  
# of instructors: 4

Course Coordinator: Mary Poffenroth  
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Department Chair: Dr. Michael Sneary  
College: Science

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?

   Based upon our updated General Education Assessment Schedule, submitted on October 2, 2012, the following SLO was assessed in AY12-13:

   SLO 1: Students should be able to use the methods of science and knowledge derived from current scientific inquiry in life or physical science to question existing explanations.

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

   Based upon the data collection and feedback from instructors, SLO #1 was assessed in a variety of ways. Namely, in Poffenroth’s section, a specific activity was created and delivered for the first time in AY12-13 to directly assess SLO#1. This activity required students to use their basic research skills and power of deductive reasoning to construct a solution to addressing the problem of global climate change. Using the scientific method as the skeleton structure, students devised an experiment to study the effects of global climate change. They were given an unlimited budget with which to work with and could bring in the world’s best experts. Students were graded based upon a rubric that highlighted their command of the English language, their basic ability to perform background research, and the general scientific soundness of their proposed experiment. Poffenroth, along with Mackie and Hawkins, also utilized exam items and in-class activities to assess the student’s ability to master SLO#1. All instructors found that on average, 85-90% of the class was able to master SLO#1 at a C or better.

   Biology 10, as an introductory course, generally has the majority of students able to master each learning objective with a C or better. The writing and literature research component continue to provide the greatest challenge for all instructors.
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.)

Modifications continue to be made to improve Biology 10 every year. New faculty members have been brought onto the AY13-14 team, and a common syllabus and core curriculum/rubrics have been made available to instructors to use as they wish. The fully online section of Biology 10 continues to be a success with numbers averaging 100-125 students per full semester and a strong growth during special sessions. For AY13-14, an effort will be made to increase the ability for Biology 10 faculty to accurately assess SLOs utilizing well crafted, focused assignments with detailed rubrics.

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?

All sections are still aligned with the area Goals, SLOs, Content, Support and Assessment.