General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title:  EnvS 010: Life on a Changing Planet            GE Area:  B2

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

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Department Chair: Lynne Trulio             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?
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?
SLO 1 was evaluated most often with case study assignments, video analysis and/or papers in which students were presented with researchers using the scientific method to test hypotheses or research questions. One instructor used participatory webinars in which students were asked questions that tested their ability to apply biological and ecological scientific concepts to "real life" situations. Another instructor used class activities including analyzing peer reviewed literature and media articles, responses to documentaries and discussions on climate change science and the Keystone XL pipeline. There were 281 students and 8 sections of this course in AY 2012-2013. An average of 82% of students received an ‘A’ or ‘B’ and 4% a ‘C’ on the assignments assessing this SLO. These results show the majority of students are performing adequately or very well on assignments assessing this SLO. Instructors found that students seemed to do well at applying scientific knowledge and inquiry, especially to current issues.

The writing objective was met in most classes with research papers although one instructor used exams to ensure student wrote at least 3000 words. One instructor used smaller assignments to build to the larger paper, which seemed effective in improving writing.

(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.)
Because each class has such a wide range of student backgrounds and interests, there are always some students who excel and others who lag. One instructor is planning to increase the use of real-world examples and case studies to engage students. Another has been experimenting with assigning more science videos, to provide students with yet another type of media to explain detailed concepts.

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 of EnvS 010 are aligned with the GE B2 SLOs and course assessment procedures. The instructors teaching the course work together on lectures and assignments and they also work with Dr. Trulio on assessment to ensure the course meets the SLOs and SLOs are effectively measured. Instructors meet with the course coordinator at least twice a year and are in regular contact with Dr. Trulio on assessment.