General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title: Philosophy 70A: Ancient Philosophy

GE Area: C2

Results reported for AY 2013-2014

# of sections: 2

# of instructors: 2

Course Coordinator: Tom Leddy

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Department Chair: Peter Hadreas

College: H & A

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 2: Letters courses will enable students to respond to significant works by writing both research-based critical analyses and personal responses.

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

Professor Shaw writes: “In my Philosophy 70A class for Spring semester 2014, I addressed SLO 2 by having students write eleven short essays on various reading assignments (which assignments also formed the basis of class discussion on the day the essays were due). These readings were from the pre-Socratic philosophers, from Plato’s Socratic dialogues and his Republic, from Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics and Politics, and from representatives of the Hellenistic schools of Epicureanism, stoicism, and skepticism. There were also three exams during the course of the semester as well as a final examination. However, it was through the essays that students directly responded to these important works. The wording of some of the assignments inclined students toward personal responses to the readings while the wording of others pushed them more toward critical analysis and appraisal of the arguments contained in the readings. All the students seemed to take these essays seriously; hardly anyone ever tried to bluff their way through them, and even those whose exam performance tended to be relatively weak did a creditable and often insightful job on the essays.”

Professor Williams writes “The earlier paper was weighted less since it was “warm up” for the later paper. They were asked in both papers to address a major philosopher from the Ancient/Hellenic schools of thought; e.g. Plato or Marcus Aurelius. The earlier paper dealt with earlier work such as the Pre-Socratic Parmenides. Students were asked in both papers to address a theme in the philosopher chosen, rather than just a really general paper about a philosopher; e.g.: What was Plato’s Theory of the Forms? Or, more popular with the students in the later paper: What was Plato’s view of the human? Why was balance so important, balance of what? 34 were enrolled. I did not get 34 responses on either paper entirely: The first paper results: A 1, B+ and above 8; B 17; C+ and above, 6. The second paper results: A 2; B+ and above 18; B 9; C+ and above 2. The students did improve and in a philosophically appropriate manner.”
(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)

This course works well the way it is, so no modification is needed.

**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?

Yes - Peter Hadreas, Department Chair

(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 instructor of record provides feedback and grades all writing assignments. The instructor of record, welcomes, if not requires, first drafts of all writing assignments and provides feedback on drafts. If sections are exceptionally oversized they are graded by the instructor of record with the assistance of an Instructional Student Assistant. The Instructional Student Assistant must be approved both by the Instructional Assistant Coordinator and the Philosophy Department Chair for their excellence in both composition and their expertise in the field of the philosophy at issue. Whenever an Instructional Student Assistant (ISA) aids in the grading of a large course, s/he provides feedback along with grading. In all cases, when the help of an ISA is employed, the instructor of record must explicitly notify the students of the class that some writing assignments have been graded and feedback has been provided by an ISA. The instructor of record then, if so requested by a student, must reread, provide additional feedback, and regrade the written assignment, if a grade revision is warranted."