General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title: Philosophy 70B History of Renaissance and Modern Philosophy
GE Area: C2

# of sections: 2 # of instructors: 2

Course Coordinator: Tommy Lott E-mail: Tommy.Lott@sjsu.edu
Department Chair: Peter Hadreas College: H & A

Part 1

(1) What SLO(s) were assessed for the course during the AY Fall 2012.

SLO 2 respond to [significant works that illuminate enduring human concerns] 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?

Jim Lindahl writes: “The last time I taught it, I focused heavily on the epistemology primarily by just covering the standard rationalists, empiricists, and Kant. That was way too hard on the non-majors and I felt it just killed the class. This last Spring when I taught it, I still did Descartes, Locke and Hume but added sections on the Reformation, the Scientific Revolution, Politics, ethics, economics and the Enlightenment. Also an entire week is dedicated to developing ideas concerning race and gender in the Enlightenment. This worked much better.

For the first part, I assigned two research papers. Each assignment had 5 or 6 possible topics that required some critical analysis of one of the figures that we had covered.

For the second part, I can only say that the shift to the broader focus (not just epistemology) significantly enhanced the class discussions and class participation. In class, I tend to lecture somewhat formally for the first 45 minutes and then shift to a more seminar-based approach so that the last half-hour of the class is more conversational. I was really pleased with how the conversations went when focused on this new material. (This counts as one form of personal response.) More non-majors participate in the discussions. The philosophy majors are still able to pursue their more informed insights into the material while the others still have points of contact with the material that allow them to make interesting contributions to the discussions. That my tests are all essay questions qualifies them as additional personal responses.
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