General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title: Philosophy 12: Philosophy of the Person    GE Area: E

Results reported for AY 2011-2012    # of sections: 2    # of instructors: 1

Course Coordinator: Richard Schubert    E-mail: res1866@yahoo.com
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?

We assessed SLO 3: “Use appropriate social skills to enhance learning and develop positive interpersonal relationships with diverse groups and individuals.” This has the look of a meta-SLO, one that could be included in any course. Thus, meeting this objective has more to do with how the course is designed and conducted than any specific content. I begin the course by having students fill out cards with “fun facts” about themselves, pair them off to discuss these, and then introduce one another to the rest of the class. This establishes an informal atmosphere, and helps students feel comfortable speaking in class. But the comfort level diminishes when it comes to discussing texts, because some of the material is difficult, and many students are hesitant to address a question raised by the instructor. This instructor has found that the best way level the playing field between introverted and extroverted students is to assign homework questions, the answers to which become talking points for class discussion. Introverted students are more likely to participate if they have a script, and their homework answers give them this.

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

In terms of compliance, over 75% of the students in last year’s two sections completed 80% or more of the homework assignments. And it turned out that those who were prepared were more inclined to participate in class discussions. But it turned out that those who turned in assignments were not necessarily prepared before class. Some students were madly dashing off answers in class in order to have something to turn in, but without the benefit of prior reflection on the questions at hand.

I would be remiss if I didn’t say something about the SLO itself. It seems to carry the implication that it takes special skills to communicate with people from diverse groups. This may have been the case for those who wrote this objective 20+ years ago, but today’s students are beyond much of the diversity issue. Most could care less about questions of race, ethnicity, and gender. In fact, more and more we are encountering students of mixed ethnicity. That is why I’ve concentrated on the introvert/extrovert issue for getting students to develop positive relationships in the classroom.
(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.)

In order to overcome the student scam of doing homework in class, the instructor has changed his syllabus so that only word processed responses will be accepted in class.

**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, Chair, Department of Philosophy