General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title: Geol 111/Geology and the Environment
GE Area: R

Results reported for AY 2013/14 # of sections 2 # of instructors 1

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Department Chair: Robert Miller 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?
SLO 2: Students will be able to distinguish science from pseudo-science.

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

Assessment of this SLO was achieved through lectures, in-class discussions, and term papers. In both sections, students wrote an essay on an earthquake of their choice. They researched and discussed the geologic aspects of the earthquake, as well as the impacts it had on the community affected. While some guidelines were given, the research was largely self-driven, and students had to determine whether sources were credible, based in scientific fact, and reliable. On this assignment, 90% of the students scored an 85% or higher and demonstrated an ability to research the topic and assess the legitimacy of the sources they found.

Additionally, students were encouraged to assess the legitimacy of scientific claims, particularly those heard in the media today. During the section on climate change, in-class discussions focused on society’s perceptions of climate change and the ways in which the media can influence this perception. By examining the role that the media plays in relaying scientific information and discussing it in class, students demonstrated the ability to sift through this information to find the science behind it.

(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.)

Throughout the upcoming semester, several articles from popular media sites will be assigned, and students will assess them for scientific legitimacy, bias, and fact. The articles will then be discussed in class and students will evaluate whether they are based on science or pseudoscience.
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 Area B1 and B3 goals and student learning objectives. No action is planned.