General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title: E169: Ethnicity in American Literature

GE Area: S

Results reported for AY 2014/5

# of sections: 1

# of instructors: 1

Course Coordinator: BALANCE CHOW

E-mail: balance.chow@sjsu.edu

Department Chair: Shannon Miller

College: Humanities and Arts

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 to <curriculum@sjsu.edu>, by the department chair, to the Office of Undergraduate Studies, with an electronic copy to the home college by October 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 4: Students will be able to recognize and appreciate constructive interactions between people from different cultural, racial, and ethnic groups within the U.S.

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

Specific Assignments: brief description of guidelines/requirements etc.

All class activities (reading, lectures, discussions, presentations, writing, research, and exams) in the course address this and other SLOs as described in the greensheet. Part of the course grade was based on a specific essay-type question in the exam designed to demonstrate the student’s ability to accomplish SLO 4.

The question used in E169 (S2015) was as follows:

“Interactions between people from different cultural, ethnic, and social groups within the USA can in fact be constructive.” Discuss the validity of this statement by focusing on TWO of the three novels, St. Patrick’s Battalion, House Made of Dawn, and Home, in terms of how the two texts selected exemplify or demonstrate the statement quoted. Explain what is achieved in such constructive interactions, and evaluate the importance of what the authors appear to be proposing in portraying such interactions.

Exactly what students had to demonstrate on assignment to show achievement of the SLO

Students had to write an in-class essay of about 1,000 words to demonstrate their competencies as readers of literary texts, with skills developed toward the mastery of the social, historical, cultural, and literary contexts of the texts studied. Particular to this assignment is the requirement that students should be able to analyze, explore, and interpret, by means of comparative study and/or argumentation, the inter-ethnic and inter-cultural
social relationships found in the reading materials. Their discussions were to be argued vigorously and supported with evidence derived from the texts.

**How assignment was scored (rubric? Breakdown of grade assigned to show how this particular slo was targeted.**

A five-tier scale ranging from A to F was used to assess the students’ achievement of the SLO.

A (51-60 points) = Excellent; B (41-50 points) = Very Good; C (31-40 points) = Good

D (21-30 points) = Pass/Poor; F (1-20 points) = Unsatisfactory / Fail

**Quantitative data/analysis: grades/percentages/scale of high-low**

The result for E169 (Spring 2013) was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>A: Excellent</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>B: Very Good</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>C: Good</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>D: Pass / Poor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-20</td>
<td>F: Unsatisfactory / Fail</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Qualitative analysis:**

Very few students were unable to achieve the SLOs assessed. The overwhelming majority of students were able to analyze the reading materials intelligently and to articulate their ideas about the constructive interactions between people from different cultural, racial, and ethnic groups within the U.S.

**Lesson(s) Learned** -- The coordinator also notes that the assessment data for the SLO-specific assignment tabulated above correspond closely to the overall course grades: 9 students total in the A range (A for 3 students and A- for 6 students), 20 in the B range (B+ for 6, B for 6, and B- for 8 students), and 5 in the C range (C+ for 3 and C- for 2).

(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.)

No changes anticipated.
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.

(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.

Oral Presentations

In the section of the course offered, students were given specific guidelines and instructions to complete a presentation project:

To meet Department Student Learning Objective #5 (“articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts”), and to enrich the learning experience in this class, students are required to make an oral presentation on an appropriate topic of their choice by focusing on the relations among culture, history, and texts.

Examples of possible ideas / topics (must relate to Ethnic Americans):

- Notable American authors with ethnic backgrounds past or present
- Cultural / Literary movements, e.g., Harlem Renaissance
- Ethnic groups including immigrants & settlers, colonizers & indigenous peoples
- Ethnic Cultures, Languages, Religions, Beliefs, Practices, Customs
- Inter-ethnic relationships, including conflicts and cooperations / solidarities
- Myths, folklore, storytelling, and the oral tradition
- Social, economic, and political issues affecting ethnic groups
- Movements and migrations of peoples, esp. laborers and immigrants
- Gender and/or class issues unique to certain ethnic groups or across ethnic boundaries
- Social activism, civil rights struggles, and other struggles for social equality and justice
- Remarkable works of literature focusing on ethnic-American cultures
- Films and theatrical arts; musicians/singers; arts & crafts
- Ethnicity and globalization
- Ethnicity in post-9/11 society

The presentation, worth 10% of the overall grade, was assessed on a scale of A to C based on:

(A) Solid content materials, especially interesting ideas;
(B) Coherent and organized presentation;
(C) Generating interest & leading to comments/responses;
(D) Description of the presentation experience, with emphasis on what you have learned and what kind of connections you are able to make among culture, history, and texts.

The Department encourages instructors of the course to incorporate oral presentations to enhance student learning.

Writing

Students receive frequent and thorough feedback on their writing during the course as the content materials of E169 (Ethnicity in American Literature) are mastered by way of personal as well as analytical and expository written assignments. Instructors teaching E169 often conduct essay-writing and library research workshops as components of their classes; the writing center has also been used as a means to help students improve their writing skills. The use of graduate assistants, resources permitting, would likely enhance the achievement of the writing-related SLO.