General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title: _Music 120 Worlds of Jazz  
GE Area: __S________________

Results reported for AY: _2012-13________ # of sections: __4__ # of instructors: _3____

Course Coordinator: __Aaron J. Lington________ E-mail: aaron.lington@sjsu.edu

Department Chair: _Joseph Frank_______ College: _____ Humanities & the 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, 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?  
   Fall 2012: SLO 6 (unique to MUSC 120): students will compare and contrast the ways in which European and African musical traditions differ, and how the fusion of these two styles forged a new musical identity for the U.S. at the turn of the twentieth-century.

   Spring 2013: SLO 3: Students will be able to describe social actions which have led to greater equality and social justice in the U.S. (i.e. religious, gender, ethnic, racial, class, sexual orientation, disability, and/or age).

   Spring 2013: SLO 5 (unique to MUSC 120): students will understand the musical aesthetics specific to African, Caribbean, and Indian musical traditions, and how these help identify their cultures and differentiate them from the musical culture of the U.S.

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

The results of assessment for SLOs 3, 5, and 6 continue to be positive, with the vast majority of students demonstrating understanding of these SLOs by the end of the semester. There are some students who struggle with some terminology used in the course (musical terminology that they may have not encountered before such as: tempo, dynamics, etc.); but these problems generally disappear by midterm.

Writing assignments (concert reports and a major research paper) continue to be of utmost importance in this course for helping students to understand the course’s SLOs. The concert reports the students write are based on live jazz concerts they are required to attend, which allows the students to see firsthand and in real time the musical end result of some of the cultural fusions upon which MUSC 120 focuses.
One major issue continues to arise each semester in virtually every section of this course:

A large percentage (about 35-40%) of students come into the course with apparent deficiencies in basic writing skills and demonstrate problems with spelling, grammar, syntax, etc. As this course is assessed primarily through writing, this poses a significant challenge to these aforementioned students. The instructors of this course have found that the best way to help these students is to offer them the option of submitting assignments to the instructor early in a “rough draft” format, so that they may receive feedback on their writing before submitting the assignment for class credit.

(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.)

Currently, there are no plans for modification of the curriculum of the course. There was a significant staffing change affecting two of the four sections of this course: in March 2013, Frank Sumares, a longtime adjunct instructor of many of the sections of this course, passed away unexpectedly. Sumares’s sections were taken over by adjunct music professors Jeff Lewis and John Shifflett, who have both done a remarkable job in making the transition from Sumares’s legacy seamless.

Part 2

To be completed by the department chair (with input from course coordinator as appropriate):

I hereby certify that all sections of MUSC 120 are still aligned with the SLOs, Content, Support, and Assessment.

--Joseph Frank, Director, School of Music and Dance