General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title: NUFS 144 Food Culture: Consuming Passions  GE Area: Area V

Results reported for AY: 2013-2014  
# of sections: 25  
# of instructors: 9

Course Coordinator: Ashwini Wagle  E-mail: ashwini.wagle@sjsu.edu

Department Chair: Dr. Lucy McProud  College: CASA

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?

   During the year 2013-2014, GELO #1 was assessed. As per SLO #1, students would be able to compare systematically the ideas, values, images, cultural artifacts, economic structures, technological developments, or attitudes of people from more than one culture outside the U.S.

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

   Assessment demonstrated substantial attainment in knowledge and understanding of food cultures to be able to compare the ideas, values, and attitudes of people from more than one culture outside the U.S. Use of embedded content questions was one method used to evaluate this learning objective in all sections. Examples of exam questions are:

   1. In the Kosher and Halal traditions, animals that operated in more than one realm (earth, water, sky) were forbidden. True (a) or False (b)

   2. The following food etiquette applies to French cuisine EXCEPT:
      Always combine sweet and sour in one dish
      Never serve sweet sauces on fish
      Wine is an integral part of the meal and must always complement the foods
      Always use the freshest ingredients

   3. Besides being red, luscious etc., there were specific historic events explaining why apples and later tomatoes were considered to be "the forbidden fruit". Pick one fruit, the tomato or the apple, and describe the historic events in question.

   Interview/Observation assignment was a second method used to assess this learning objective. The purpose of this project was to familiarize students with their own culture and its food habits and with
those of one other cultural group for which they are unfamiliar. The focus was on food behavior and symbolism through the comparison and contrasting of these cultures. The assignment also included presentation of their results to the class with the aid of visuals. Examples of questions asked during the interview process included but were not limited to:

1. What food items are needed to make a meal for you?
2. What are the major holidays you and your family celebrate each year?
3. Who usually shares meals?
4. Where is the food normally consumed?
5. When is food usually eaten?
6. What outside influences impact the consumption of your cultural foods?

Finally, the Discussion/Debate assignment was another method used to assess this learning objective. The students were divided into groups and sub-groups and assigned topics relating to cultural issues pertaining to food. The students were asked to present and defend the viewpoint that they did not support in order to get an understanding of the viewpoints of others. The point of the debate was to present opposing views in debate format. The debate assignment helped students compare and contrast other views, values, and ideas especially pertaining to food behaviorism and symbolism, economic structures, cultural artifacts, technological development and attitudes of people from different cultures in the US. Examples of debate topics were:

- Advertising is the single most important influence on food habits in the U.S.
- Vegetarianism is superior to eating meat.
- Technology will solve the world hunger problem.
- Cannibalism was a nutritionally important practice for those groups that regularly consumed human flesh.

Out of approximately 780 students assessed during the AY 2013-2014, approximately 65% averaged a “B+” or better on assessment activities such as exam questions, student presentations, 25% averaged a “C” or better on assessment activities and 10% received “C-” or failed the assessment. Overall, students seemed to perform better on interview/observation assignment than embedded questions during exams with an average of 75% receiving a grade of “A” on the assignment.

Achievement of success for the GELO has been possible because of the variety of assessment methods used such as the student presentations, debates, cultural artifacts activities, and exam questions etc. Students were able to research into the history and background of food traditions for different cultures and also compare to the majority culture.

(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.)

The course was modified in Spring 2007 based on recommendation from BOGS to include a more global focus on food culture and to see how different cultures identified themselves through symbolism, values, and beliefs etc. The title for the course was also changed to “Food Culture: Consuming Passions” starting Fall 2008. The course now examines how different cultures have influenced food culture through societal issues such as gender, geography and acculturation, traditional health beliefs, socioeconomic, and others. This course also compares and contrasts the values, beliefs, and stances of different cultural groups as they are expressed through food habits and practices and the impact those beliefs have had on American culture.
Starting Fall 2012, NUFS 144 was added as a required course for all Dietetics concentration students in the Department of Nutrition, Food Science and Packaging, and meets the Dietetics concentration Program Learning Outcomes (PLO’s) KRD 3.2 and KRD 5.1.

- **KRD 3.2**: The curriculum must include the role of environment, food, nutrition and lifestyle choices in health promotion and disease prevention.
- **KRD 5.1**: The food and food systems foundation of the dietetics profession must be evident in the curriculum. Course content must include the principles of food science and food systems, techniques of food preparation and application to the development, modification and evaluation of recipes, menus and food products acceptable to diverse groups.

No other modifications have been planned for the course content, assessment activities or schedule at present.

**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 of the course are aligned with Area “V”: Culture, Civilization and Global Understanding for course content, CLO’s, GELO’s and assessment. The course has been taught by the same set of six instructors for the past 3 years and three new instructors have been added in the last two years with close supervision from Ashwini Wagle, Associate Professor and coordinator for the course and one of the instructors for the course. Currently, all instructors follow similar syllabi and course content with a few variations in the assignments, however the curriculum is in sync with Area V GELO’s and CLO’s.

(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.

NUFS 144 Food Culture course has an enrollment cap of 30 students per section and instructors may add some students based on their discretion. All students complete a variety of oral and written assignments in the form of interview/observation presentations, group presentations, debates, and cultural traditions, and food research reports. Rubrics are provided to students to guide them in writing papers and utilized by faculty in providing feedback on work submitted. The written reports, the journal assignment and the essay questions on exams along with extra credit activity account for more than the required 3000 word limit for the course.