General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title ______ ART 100W ___________ GE Area ___ Z ________________

Results reported for AY ____2014-2015______ # of sections ____x____ # of instructors ______3____

Course Coordinator: _____ Beverly Grindstaff _________ E-mail: ___<beverly.grindstaff@sjsu.edu>____

Department Chair: ______ Anne Simonson___________ 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 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?

We assessed SLO 2: Students will be able to express (explain, analyze, develop, and criticize) ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse. This continues to seem to us to be central to our discipline and develops skills which are crucial to any university educated professional. It is a complex agenda and a life-long pursuit, easy to contain in a catch phrase with an acronym and a number, but very hard for us to sign off on.

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

It is, of course, very difficult to quantify outcomes in the humanities, but we can offer approximations:

In general, though with some variety from class to class, about 25% of the students make good progress, about 65% make some progress and perhaps 10% make no progress at all. This all depends, of course, on what they bring to the class in skill, attention span, attitude and determination. Students with an interest in improving and with somewhat better than average writing skill make the most progress, learning to pay attention to things that can make a difference. On the other side, there are always some students who simply disappear or who make no effort at all.

We are all concerned, in this class as in our other classes, at the level of reading comprehension our students exhibit. A lack of sophisticated vocabulary and a tendency to oversimplify and read for the quick take-away point, as well as a certain unwillingness (lack of patience?) to make the effort to think conceptually all contribute to this. As one of the teachers put it: “[one challenge] is persuading students that analyzing, developing, criticizing, etc., matters or concerns them, when many have the quick technological skills that seem to be exactly what the world wants.”

What have we learned? We have all taught this course many times and all continue to try to address the needs of students with effective exercises and assignments, dropping what doesn’t work and trying new things. We work on many things that can address reading comprehension: vocabulary work (with more time we could do much more of this); close analysis of arguments or of
things like paragraph structure and transitions in a well-written article; close reading of passages, analysis of writing in different contexts (for example a New Yorker article and a more popular magazine or blog) to learn about “voice.” We work closely with our art reference library Rebecca Kohn and try to help students analyze sources for research assignments. We build research assignments in careful stages and try to develop the topics as a research process both to help them understand the material they are working with more clearly and help them avoid the plagiarism temptation (or perhaps the temptation of “efficiency” as one rather defiant plagiarist explained her work). We often have the students work in groups or pairs, but know that the assignments must be well focused and well monitored to keep them on task. Group work does afford us the opportunity to roam the classroom and lean over their shoulders to work with them more directly.

We have paying particular attention to the make-up of the classes to detect any general changes, but find that the students as a group have not changed a great deal in terms of their writing skill level.

(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 100W instructors continue to meet and share ideas. We plan no major modification but certainly a course like this is continually modified as we find and share new articles to use in class, new issues in art seem pertinent and workable.

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.