General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title CA 100W  GE Area Z

Results reported for AY 10-11  # of sections 1  # of instructors 1

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Department Chair: Chris Jochim  College: Humanities and 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?

   SLO 2: express (explain, analyze, develop, and criticize) ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse.

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

   During the first class meeting Creative Arts 100W students write an in-class diagnostic essay on the topic of specific areas of writing in which they most see the need to enhance their skills. These (ungraded but returned with commentary & corrections as required) are then used by the instructor as a basis for developing a teaching strategy aimed at best addressing common concerns as well as specific needs of individual students.

   In Fall 2010, slightly more than half the students identified skills relating to the organizing of topics and the explanation, analysis, and development of ideas as ones they most sought to improve. This knowledge was particularly valuable to the instructor in allocating class time to discussion topics and selecting assignments. Further, the diagnostic essay becomes a touchstone for measurement of class and individual progress in improving writing skills and meeting course learning objectives so that teaching strategies can remain flexible and open to modification as needed.

   It should be noted, however, that because all Creative Arts courses require significant amounts of writing, almost all our self-selected majors already have at least satisfactory writing competence, and some are already quite good. Importantly, many state that they like to write; this is a distinct asset because these students will much more readily dedicate their time and concentration to course writing assignments.

   In Creative Arts 100W students gained experience in meeting SLO 2 through a range of assignments including critical reviews of arts events, analysis of perspectives on contemporary issues in the arts, and supporting arguments for a grant application. Our central vehicle for accomplishing SLO 2 is the research essay. A measure of its significance in the Creative Arts Program can be seen in its...
placement in mid-semester and its division into segments. This is to allow our students maximum time for thorough research and preparation and to enable them to receive ongoing evaluation from the instructor. It should be particularly noted in relation to this learning objective that because our interdisciplinary program spans a range of areas in the arts, course assignments in CA 100W emphasize student acquisition of knowledge of different forms of discourse.

In addition to our tutorial meeting in the MLK Library with the Creative Arts librarian, our writing workshop schedules a second full class session with an experienced researcher and author who covers research strategies and modes of presentation in writing about the arts. Our guest author last semester, Professor Mike Adams, former chair of the then-Department of Television, Radio, Film, and Theatre, underlined in explaining his approach to his newly-published book on a controversial figure a researcher's responsibility to provide readers with thoroughgoing analysis and a well-substantiated critical perspective. In subsequent discussions we returned repeatedly to this theme and its role in evaluation of student writing.

Semester grades confirmed initial impressions from the diagnostic essays. The overall level of performance was high, with half the class receiving grades of A or A-. Significantly, at least four of these students were able to raise their course grades by demonstrating continual improvement in their writing throughout the assignments. The largest percentage of the course grade was from the research essay, which perhaps most specifically addresses SLO2.

(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 modifications are planned.

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.