General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title: Comm 100W: Writing Workshop  GE Area: Z

Results reported for AY: 2014 – 15  # of sections 37  # of instructors: 15

Course Coordinator: Kathleen McConnell  email: kathleen.mcconnell@sjsu.edu

Department Chair: Deanna Fassett  College: Social Sciences

Part 1

To be completed by the course coordinator:

(1) What SLO(s) were assessed for the course during the AY?

Student shall be able to produce discipline-specific written work that demonstrates upper-division proficiency in: language use, grammar, and clarity of expression

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

This past year, it came to our attention that we must re-think our approach to 100W so as to keep with the spirit of the writing-across-the-curriculum model. Currently, COMM 100W does not teach genres of writing specific to our field (though, arguably, our assignments do prepare students for the types of writing they will do in communication-related fields). Our course assessment clarified for us the unique challenges we face in designing a “discipline-specific” course for our majors and the many non-majors who take COMM 100W, starting with the fact that communication studies is not a discipline. It is a field of study that bridges the social sciences and the humanities and our students do not specialize in any single tradition.

(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.)

In recent years, COMM 100W has been a writing course informed by rhetorical studies (one of the areas housed in our department). We did not teach genres of writing specific to our field. This seemed to us the best approach given the interdisciplinary nature of communication studies, the fact that more non-majors take COMM 100W than majors, and given that our instructors have a wide variety of disciplinary backgrounds. Just this year we started the process of re-thinking that approach. Our first task has been to identify existing aspects of the course that are already discipline-specific. We will then develop assignments. We have not yet
introduced any modifications to the course. We expect it will take us another school year to identify and introduce assignments.

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, the course coordinator and instructors are doing an excellent job keeping the goals, SLOs, content, support, and assessment consistent across sections. Regular communication between the coordinator and instructors and between the instructors maintains continuity within and across sections.

(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.

We cap enrollment in Comm 100W to 25 students, allowing instructors to add only two students beyond the cap. Since we do not offer larger sections, students are able to receive thorough feedback and engage in practice and revisions of their writing within the current configuration of the course and workload of the instructors.