General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title ___ FORL 100W _______________ GE Area: __Area Z Written Communication II__

Results reported for AY: __Spring 2013__ # of sections: ___1___ # of instructors: ___1___

Course Coordinator: ___Eleanor Marsh_____ E-mail: ___Eleanor.Marsh@sjsu.edu_____

Department Chair: ___Damian Bacich______ 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: To 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?

Diagnostic Assessment: At the beginning of the course, students were given a needs analysis questionnaire which included a series of open-ended questions regarding their attitudes toward writing and their own perceptions of their English writing needs. Approximately 79% of the students in the class were non-native speakers of English. The results of this exercise provided valuable insights about the students’ writing skills. Based on these results, and in line with the Student Learning Objective being assessed, the course focused heavily on the analysis and development of arguments, the effective use of supporting data to defend ideas, and the organization skills needed to explain and criticize ideas in academic writing. There was also a focus on sentence structure issues, which are essential for the effective explanation and defense of ideas in academic writing.

Formative Assessment: Ongoing assessment of skills was performed by means of weekly writing assignments that emphasized principles of journalistic writing and persuasive (opinion) writing. The assignments also provided the opportunity to assess student improvement in skill areas related to sentence structure. With this form of constant practice, students improved their ability to develop effective persuasive essays, increased their metalinguistic awareness of English syntax, and especially developed greater self-confidence that helped them overcome their reluctance to engage in academic writing assignments in English.

Summative Assessment: Multiple essays on the readings (short stories and a brief novel from different cultures) were designed to assess the students’ abilities to express their ideas in a clear, organized, and convincing manner. These assignments included persuasive/argumentative writing and comparative essays in which students were to examine the treatment of a theme in more than one of the texts from different cultures. While persuasive/argumentative essays clearly are designed to elicit the defense of a position, comparative (or comparison-contrast) essays foster the analysis and criticism of ideas found in multiple texts. Assessment concluded with a final exam which included a section on grammar and syntax issues and another comparative essay.

(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 significant modifications are planned for the upcoming year. Since the SLO to be assessed during the upcoming year is number 3 (Students shall be able to organize and develop essays and documents for both professional and general
audiences, including appropriate editorial standards for citing primary and secondary sources.), an increase in the diversity of registers of the texts (literary, semi-academic, scholarly, and general registers) is expected. Also, techniques for finding, evaluating, and citing appropriate secondary sources are to be emphasized and assessed by means of in-class activities, homework exercises, exams, and research 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 sections of the course are aligned with the area Goals, the SLOs, Content, Support and Assessment.

Damian Bacich, Chair, Department of World Languages and Literatures