General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title 100W

Results reported for AY F13 – S14

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Department Chair: Ron Rogers

College: Social Science

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 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?

**GE SLO1:** refine the competencies established in Written Communication IA and IB.

**Assessment tool:** online 18-item Research Skill Proficiency pre- and posttest (http://tiny.cc/psycskills)

**GE SLO2:** express (explain, analyze, develop, and criticize) ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse

**Assessment tool:** final paper rubric categories (organization & synthesis, analysis & use of evidence)

**GE SLO3:** organize and develop essays and documents for both professional and general audiences, including appropriate editorial standards for citing primary and secondary sources.

**Assessment tool:** final paper rubric categories (grammar & clarity of expression, APA style)

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

SLO1 assessment was done using an online 18-item Research Skill Proficiency test, developed in conjunction with Bernd Becker, Sr. Assistant Librarian (http://tiny.cc/psycskills). Students completed a pretest (beginning of the semester) and a posttest (end of semester). A total of 16 sections from both Fall 2013 and Spring 2014 were represented, with 280 students completing both the pretest and posttest. Previous analysis showed that better performance on the posttest was associated with better grades on the final term paper for the course (see Psychology 100W GE Annual Assessment Report AY 10-11 and AY11-12), supporting the validity of this test as an indicator of the ability to summarize, synthesize, and analyze within our disciplinary standards.

**Average Pretest score** = 75% ($SD = 12\%$, range $6 - 100\%$)

**Average Posttest score** = 85% ($SD = 10\%$, range $50 - 100\%$)

Students displayed developing mastery of research skills and improved significantly after completing Psychology 100W (which included a library tutorial session led by Mr. Becker), $t$ (677) = 11.6, $p < .001$. The difference in post- and pre-test scores corresponded to a “large” effect (Cohen’s $d = 0.93$)

The current Research Skill Proficiency test has been used since Fall 2010, and there are emerging trends in student performance. There is a high degree of consistency thus far in pre- and posttest performance.
Pretest scores across the annual reports have ranged from 75 – 77%, and posttest scores ranged from 85 – 88%. There is a general improvement of about 10% across the 4 years of reports.

**SLO2 and SLO3** assessments were done by examining instructors’ grading rubrics for students’ final paper in the course (major literature review). Rubric categories which corresponded to SLO2 and SLO3 were identified in each rubric. These categories included SLO2’s synthesis and analysis (organization, synthesis, analysis, and use of evidence) and SLO3’s use of appropriate editorial standards (grammar, clarity of expression, and APA style). All scores were converted to a common percentage scale. Data from 5 of 8 sections offered in Spring 2014 were analyzed.

After intensive feedback and multiple opportunities to revise their major paper, students are reaching an acceptable level of editorial competence, and they achieved a level of organization and synthesis appropriate for college-level work (see below).

**SLO2:** Average Editorial Standards (grammar & APA style) score = 82%

**SLO3:** Average Synthesis and Analysis (organization and use of evidence) = 93%

Two instructors gave students “as if it were the final paper” grades on the first major draft of their paper (n = 38). That is, students were given feedback as to what grade they would have received if they had turned in their first draft as the final paper. This allowed meaningful assessment of improvement between draft and final papers. There was significant improvement from draft to final paper, with average grades moving from below standards (< 72%) to meeting standards (≥85%). These differences were statistically significant, as shown through t-test analyses, and represented a “large” effect (Cohen’s d’s > 1)

**SLO2:**

- Editorial Standards: Draft = 71%  Final = 87%, t (79) = 5.3, p < .001
- Synthesis and Analysis: Draft = 71%  Final = 85%, t (79) = 5.9, p < .001

(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.)

Stable assessment procedures have been in place for several years and provide evidence that by completing Psychology 100W students are markedly improving their writing skills within the discipline. Areas for building upon the existing strengths include (a) making assessment more efficient and systematic by moving data collection to the Canvas LMS and using assignment rubric → course outcome → program outcome linkage features, and (b) improving data collection participation rates. In AY 13 – 14 we received data from 12 of 17 sections (71%), which can be improved upon in the coming years.

**Part 2**

To be completed by the department chair (with input from course coordinator as appropriate):

(3) 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 are aligned with the area Goals, Student Learning Objectives (SLOs), Content, Support, and Assessment based on a review of syllabi. As noted above, participation rates for assessment data collection can be improved. I recommend the coordinator make follow-up contacts with instructors who do not provide data, and a “cc” to the chair for further action as needed.

(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.

The following are the comments of the 100W Course Coordinator in response to this item:

This is a very poorly worded and confusing item. In trying to understand what is being asked, I parsed the request in the following way:

1. 100W has a stated enrollment, but it is not a “larger section,” that is it is not A1 so regarding oral presentation evaluation = n/a
2. “larger section” is not defined here, but I assume (??) 100W is not a “larger section” so evidence of practice and revision in writing for larger sections = n/a
3. BUT, there is a minimum word count for 100W, and it is a writing intensive course, so documentation that students are meeting the GE SLOs for writing = (a) the report I filed above, and (b) every syllabus has a word count breakdown of assignments and they total ≥ 8000 words. There are multiple occasions for feedback and revision during, which meet the requirements for Area Z, as detailed in the syllabi. However, these Area Z requirements should not be confused with SLOs.