General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title ______POLS 120_________ GE Area ____________S____________

Results reported for AY ______2018-2019_____ # of sections ______3______ # of instructors _______2______

Course Coordinator: ________James Brent_________ E-mail: _______james.brent@sjsu.edu________

Department Chair: _______Melinda Jackson_________ College: _____Social Sciences_______

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 GELO(s) were assessed for the course during the AY?

GELO #4: Students will be able to recognize and appreciate constructive interactions between
people from different cultural, racial, and ethnic groups within the U.S.

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

The two faculty members who taught this course during the reporting period took very different
approaches to assessing this objective. One faculty member used an exam in which several essay
questions purport to address the objective (although not every question related to this objective, and
since students had a choice of which questions to answer, not every student was assessed). The other
faculty member said that he would require students to engage in small-group discussions several times
each class period about topics such as housing discrimination and police relations with minority groups,
and that he assessed this objective by observing their interactions. Students often wrote 1-page reaction
papers after these small-group discussions (although the papers were about the substantive topic under
discussion rather than about “constructive interactions” between different kinds of people). Regardless
of the approach, both faculty members reported that they believed all of their students met this objective.

What was learned is that both faculty members (and the course coordinator) find this learning objective
to be far more ambiguous and therefore difficult to assess than the other three learning objectives. We
are all extremely uncertain how to determine whether a student “appreciate[s]” interactions between
various groups, while their ability to “recognize” such interactions seems almost self-evident.

(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.)

Neither faculty member reported making substantive changes to the course, although one did report
increased reliance on his in-class discussion groups.
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 (GELOs), Content, Support, and Assessment? If they are not, what actions are planned?

(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 GELOs for writing.