

## General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title: [METR 100W](#)

GE Area: [Z](#)

Results reported for: [AY 13-14](#)

# of sections: [1](#)

# of instructors: [1](#)

Course Coordinator: [Alison Bridger \(as dept chair\)](#)

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Department Chair: [Alison Bridger](#)

College: [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 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#1: "Students shall be able to refine the competencies established in Written Communication IA and IB as summarized below" We offer one section of METR 100W per year. It is taught in Fall, per our roadmap. Raw data is stored in the office of the instructor \(Leach\).](#)

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

[Ten students were enrolled in METR-100W for the fall of 2013, including one graduate student from physics. Eight of the undergrads were meteorology majors and one was a geology student. All of the students improved during the course of the semester – some only marginally while others improved a great deal. One student stopped attending and received a WU.](#)

[The initial assessment of the students indicated that all students had issues with writing clearly. The primary issues included wordiness, lack of paragraph structure, overuse of passive voice, and inconsistent use of verb tense. It's not completely clear to us how flawless a college student's writing should be as they enter the junior year, but among these students there was definitely room for improvement. The instructor does not give grades on the initial writing assessment, but had he done so, only one student would have received a B. All other students would have received a grade lower than B.](#)

[The grades earned in the class were primarily based on two assignments that each consisted of two parts: an in-class presentation and a paper. The students had to choose different topics for the two assignments. The students also had several other assignments during the semester that emphasized particular aspects of writing \(e.g. concision\). These were not graded but were returned to the students with comments and suggestions.](#)

After the mid-term, had grades been assigned they would have been: one B+, two B's, two C+, and four C's. The final class grades were: four A's (including the grad student), two B's, one B-, and two C+'s. The grades were heavily weighted by the final paper and presentation – in other words the final grades assessed where the students *finished* the semester as writers and public speakers.

The student who started as a B writer earned an A. One of the A's was a student who was one of the poorest writers at the beginning of the class. The student who earned a B- made a strong presentation, but his writing was poor. One of the C+ students continued writing with lack of concision, i.e. lots of “filler” words that added no meaning. The other C+ student still had difficulty with paragraph structure. The improved performance of most of the students suggests that the instructor was effective at getting the students to improve their written communication, and thus “refine the competencies established in Written Communication IA and IB” as desired. For two students, one either could not or would not learn to avoid the use of “filler” words, and one either could not or would not learn proper paragraph structure.

The instructor notes that he believes that students get into bad habits from so-called “minimum word” assignments. They are so used to having to get to that minimum limit, they tend to put in lots of those “filler” words.

- (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.)

By and large, the class seems to have gone well, and SLO#1 was met for all but two of the students. This reviewer has no idea what prompts some/most students to learn and apply the concepts presented in class, while others either cannot or will not learn. In the sciences there is certainly some resistance to writing! I will remind the instructor (not that he needs reminding!) to consider referring reluctant students to the Writing Center. Otherwise, no changes 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?

The chair is satisfied that this course is being delivered with full and appropriate attention to all area “Z” goals, SLOs, content, support, and assessment. The chair is particularly satisfied that our 100W instructor (Dr. Marty Leach) is fully engaged and passionate about helping our students develop their technical writing skills.

Footnote – yes we are aware that area Z LOs have changed, and will factor this into the next round of assessment.