Introduction

The GEOG 1010 Global Geography course was approved to participate in the Core Curriculum under the following areas:

- **GOAL**: Intercultural Knowledge and Diversity Awareness
- **Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 9**: Students will understand and appreciate the diversity of and within societies of the United States and the world.

Assessment Method (SLO 9)

Oversight Committee: Philip Chaney (chair), William Bailey, Jim Norwood, Jamie Gillen

We considered various options for conducting the assessment and settled on using an exam at the end of the semester. Our first step in developing the exam was to construct a guide for identifying how the course aligned with the three measures of the SLO (Appendix 1). Our next step was to develop test questions based on the alignment guide. The final product was a single set of 30 questions, with 10 questions for each of the three measures of SLO 9 (Appendix 2).

In our progress report (January 2011) we indicated that we were going to switch from testing every student to drawing a sample of 1 out of every 3 students enrolled in the course. The review comments asked that we address this issue (methodology) in greater detail. After further consideration, we rejected this idea and continued with the original plan to test every student in each section. Six of the 12 sections of the course offered during the 2010-2011 academic year were assessed successfully (Table 1). The remaining six sections were not assessed due to a misunderstanding about the decision to assess every section and a misunderstanding about which draft of the exam to use.

Assessment Findings: 2010-2011

A total of 434 students were assessed successfully, which was 42.4% of the 1024 students enrolled in the course in 2010-2011 (Table 2).
Mean scores for each measure of SLO 9 ranged from 42.9% to 54.5% after the first assessment conducted in Fall 2010, but increased considerably in Spring and Summer 2011 (Table 2). The explanation for this improvement is not entirely clear. However, it is generally agreed among the instructors that the process of discussing the various measures of the SLO while developing the assessment instrument during the Fall 2010 semester helped with organization and presentation of lecture material in Spring 2011.

Mean scores for the three measures of SLO 9 at the end of the year were consistent as they fell in the 70-80% range (Table 3 and Figure 1). Scores for Measures 2 and 3 were slightly lower than for Measure 1.

The results for three questions (4, 20, and 22) stand out when inspecting the mean scores for each of the 30 exam questions (Table 3, Figure 2). The low score for #20 (minimum of 9.1% correct) was not related to a grading error. There does not appear to be a problem with the wording of any of the three questions, so the problem evidently lies in communicating the information to the students (Table 2).

Table 1. GEOG 1010 Global Geography sections offered and assessed during AY 2010-2011.

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*Assessment conducted, but earlier draft of exam used so results discarded.
Table 2: Exam results for each section assessed in 2010-2011. Mean scores for each measure of SLO 9 and the overall exam are provided.

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| Meas. 1*  | 58.8              | 52.8              | 89.4              | 96.9              | 85.0              | 85.5              |
| Meas. 2*  | 51.7              | 42.9              | 86.7              | 95.4              | 71.8              | 82.3              |
| Meas. 3*  | 64.0              | 54.5              | 83.8              | 85.8              | 77.7              | 82.3              |
| Total     | 58.2              | 50.1              | 86.6              | 92.7              | 78.2              | 83.3              |

*Measure 1 (ques. 1-10), Measure 2 (11-20), and Measure 3 (21-30).
Table 3. Minimum, maximum, and mean score for each of the 30 questions included on the assessment exam, and for each of the three measures of SLO 9.

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| Meas. 1* | 52.8 | 96.9 | 78.1 |
| Meas. 2*  | 42.9 | 95.4 | 71.8 |
| Meas. 3*  | 54.5 | 85.8 | 74.7 |
| Total     | 50.1 | 92.7 | 74.8 |

*Measure 1 (ques. 1-10), Measure 2 (11-20), and Measure 3 (21-30).
Figure 1. Mean score for each measure of SLO 9, and the overall mean score.

Figure 2. Mean score for each of the 30 questions included in the assessment exam.
Plans for Improving Student Learning: 2011-2012

The areas where we most readily identified opportunities for improvement are class lectures and class projects/activities. The lectures and projects can be revised to more effectively identify cultural characteristics of places (Measure 2) and understand contemporary conflicts within and between places (Measure 3). For example, one instructor noted that a class project he assigns covers multiple Measures of SLO 9, but the way the objectives are stated could be revised to more closely align with the Measures. A second example is a class project assigned by one instructor that focuses on International Boundary conflicts (i.e., what countries are involved, why is there a conflict, what are the implications of the conflict). Although the project was recently revised to include social/cultural conflicts, the objectives could easily be revised to place greater emphasis on the cultural aspects of Measures 2 and 3 of SLO 9.

We also plan to place additional emphasis on a relatively new class activity, which is directly connected to SLO 9, that has been incorporated into the course by several instructors. This activity involves requiring the students to attend presentations made by the Consul General of the various countries who visited AU through the Internationalizing Auburn program initiated by Bob McGinnis and President Gouge. We also plan to make greater use of online news web sites such as New York Times and Christian Science Monitor to introduce students to contemporary issues and conflicts around the world, which will help to address each of the three Measures of SLO 9 at various points.
Appendix 1

GEOG 1010 Global Geography
Core Curriculum Assessment Program
Alignment Guide for Question Design and Selection
Fall 2010

GOAL: Intercultural Knowledge and Diversity Awareness

SLO9: Students will understand and appreciate the diversity of and within societies of the United States and the world.

Measure 1. Recognize the roles various people play in their culture: be able to relate the contributions of groups and individuals to cultures, societies, or history; to critically analyze one's own culture, history, or society; and to critically analyze other cultures within and outside the United States.

Geography Approach:

Spatial diffusion of humans and cultural traits over time (example: through such processes as European exploration and colonialism, Slave Trade)...Contemporary diffusion issues also acceptable...

Spatial diffusion of...
  • Religion
  • Language
  • Race/ethnic heritage
  • Other cultural traits and characteristics...

Measure 2. Appreciate socio-cultural and international diversity among people: be able to demonstrate knowledge of issues in the United States and the world that concern people of different races, ethnicity, nationalities, religions, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or those with disabilities or from different geographical locations; and be able to demonstrate knowledge of cultures outside the US, including knowledge of values, beliefs, traditions, and customs within other nations.
Geography Approach:

Contemporary cultural characteristics of major world regions, countries, and places…

Contemporary spatial patterns of…
- Religion
- Language
- Race/ethnic heritage
- Other cultural traits and characteristics…

=====================================================================

Measure 3. Demonstrate understanding of the need for awareness of intercultural diversity when relating to others in various cultures and situations.

Geography Approach:

Contemporary conflicts within, and between, major regions where cultural differences play a critical role…

Conflicts associated with spatial aspects of…
- Religion
- Language
- Race/ethnic heritage
- Other cultural traits and characteristics…
- Additional Terms of Conflict:
  - Secession and Devolution
  - National identity
  - Irredentism
  - Discrimination
  - Ethnic cleansing
  - Etc…
Student Learning Objective (SLO) #9: Students will understand and appreciate the diversity of and within societies of the United States and the world.

SLO 9, Measure 1: Spatial diffusion of humans and cultural traits over time (example: through such processes as European exploration and colonialism, Slave Trade)…*Contemporary diffusion issues also acceptable…

1. The famous statue Christ the Redeemer is a modern-day symbol of the spatial diffusion of Christianity associated with European colonialism during the 1500’s. In what region is the statue located?

   a. Africa
   b. Southwest Asia (Middle East)
   c. South America
   d. Southeast Asia

2. What country in South East Asia is predominantly Christian today as a result of spatial diffusion associated with European colonization in the region during the 1500s?

   a. Indonesia
   b. Philippines
   c. Malaysia
   d. Thailand

3. The famous religious shrine in Jerusalem known as the Dome of the Rock, constructed in the late-600s, is a symbol of the spatial diffusion of what religion?

   a. Buddhism
   b. Hindu
   c. Islam
   d. Sikhism

4. The Taj Mahal, constructed in the 1600s by the leader of the Mughal Empire during its reign over India, is a symbol of the spatial diffusion of what religion?

   a. Buddhism
   b. Hindu
   c. Islam
   d. Sikhism
5. The famous temple known as Angkor Wat, constructed in Cambodia during the 1100s, is a symbol of the spatial diffusion of what religion?

   a. Christianity  
   b. Hinduism  
   c. Islam  
   d. Judaism

6. Portuguese is the official language in what South American country as a result of spatial diffusion associated with European colonization in the region during the 1500s?

   a. Argentina  
   b. Brazil  
   c. Columbia  
   d. Ecuador

7. English is the official language in what Central American country as a result of spatial diffusion associated with European settlement and colonization in the region from 1600s to 1800s?

   a. Belize  
   b. Costa Rica  
   c. Honduras  
   d. Panama

8. What European colonial power was defeated by the British during the Seven Years War in the mid-1700s, which resulted in many of the defeated European settlers moving from their homes in the Acadian region of northeastern Canada to south Louisiana where their descendants are presently known as Cajuns?

   a. Dutch  
   b. France  
   c. Spain  
   d. Portugal

9. Voodoo religion in the Caribbean region is a classic example of the spatial diffusion of people and their culture associated with European colonialism and the African Slave Trade. What Caribbean country is most closely associated with Voodoo today?

   a. Cuba  
   b. Haiti  
   c. Jamaica  
   d. Puerto Rico
10. The diffusion of religions across the world has brought with it many holidays and celebrations. In New Orleans, one of the most popular celebrations is Mardi Gras, which was introduced by the French and is based on the calendar of which religion?

a. French Catholic  
b. French Protestant  
c. French Voodoo  
d. French Jewish

11. The general population of Europe revolted against the Catholic Church’s involvement in politics in the 1500s-1600s, which led to a major split in the Christian religion. What is the predominant religion of northern Europe today as a result of that breakup?

a. Catholicism  
b. Islam  
c. Protestantism  
d. Judaism

12. The majority of Muslims belong to the Sunni branch of the religion (80-85%) while most of the remaining members belong to the branch known as Shia, which claims direct descent from the founder Mohammed. What 2 countries are unusual in the Muslim world in that the majority of their citizens are Shia?

a. Egypt and Israel  
b. Iran and Iraq  
c. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait  
d. Turkey and Iran

13. Arabic is the most common language in the Middle East and thus serves as a strong unifying force. A political organization known as the Arab League was formed in 1945 to promote unification of Arabic-speaking countries in the region. What powerful Middle Eastern country is not a member of the Arab League because its most common language is Farsi, not Arabic?

a. Egypt  
b. Iran  
c. Iraq  
d. Saudi Arabia
14. Iran is different from many Middle Eastern countries in that the ethnic heritage of most citizens is not Arabic. What is the ethnic heritage of most people in Iran?

   a. Kurdish  
   b. Palestinian  
   c. Persian  
   d. Jewish

15. When India was granted independence from Britain after World War II, the treaty divided the region into the countries of India and Pakistan based on the most common religion in each place. The predominant religion of India was Hindu. What was the predominant religion of Pakistan?

   a. Buddhism  
   b. Christianity  
   c. Islam  
   d. Judaism

16. What country is not considered a part of the region known as Scandinavia by some people because its native language is not a member of the Northern Germanic language group?

   a. Denmark  
   b. Finland  
   c. Norway  
   d. Sweden

17. The area commonly known as Indochina is considered to be a group of countries with a similar colonial background. Which country colonized this area in the 1600s and shaped it for the subsequent 350 years?

   a. Germany  
   b. Russia  
   c. France  
   d. Belgium

18. In 1949 Mao Zedong and his Communist Party defeated Chiang Kai-shek and his National Party for control over China. While Mao controlled China until his death in 1976, Kai-shek and his followers fled where and established a new government?

   a. Mongolia  
   b. Pakistan  
   c. Japan  
   d. Taiwan
19. The influence and diffusion of the Islamic religion extends beyond the Middle East. Which region of the world is also predominantly Muslim?

a. North America  
b. South America  
c. Southeast Asia  
d. North Africa

20. Following the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, several newly independent former USSR republics began to create allegiances with the European Union. Which of these former USSR republics is a current member of the European Union?

a. Kazakhstan  
b. Ukraine  
c. Estonia  
d. Belarus

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SLO 9, Measure 3: Contemporary conflicts within, and between, major regions where cultural differences play a critical role…

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21. What group in the Quebec province of Canada is supporting the movement to secede from the rest of Canada in an effort to preserve its language and culture?

a. Cree Tribe of Native Americans  
b. English speaking residents  
c. East European Immigrants  
d. French speaking residents

22. The country of Ukraine has internal political problems with an ethnic minority group living on the Crimean Peninsula by the Black Sea. What is the ethnic heritage of that minority group?

a. Arabic  
b. French  
c. Polish  
d. Russian
23. The Uyghur people of northwest China are often harassed by the government and accused of promoting a separatist movement and acts of terrorism. The religion of the Uyghur people is thought to be the basis for this persecution. What is the religion of the Uyghurs?

a. Buddhism  
b. Christianity  
c. Islam  
d. Judaism

24. Switzerland recently passed a law restricting certain architectural features of religious buildings in the country over concerns about the growth and influence of a particular religion. What religion was this law designed to restrict?

a. Buddhism  
b. Christianity  
c. Islam  
d. Judaism

25. At the end of World War II, the British and U.S. governments created the country of Israel to provide a homeland for the Jewish people in an effort to help them recover from the persecution they suffered during the war. Unfortunately, many local residents of the area were displaced as Jewish people moved into the new country. What group of people was displaced by this process?

a. Kurds  
b. Palestinians  
c. Persians  
d. Turks

26. Many people in the U.S. favor passing laws that make it illegal to use any language other than English in official government documents over concerns about the growth and influence of a particular ethnic group. What group of people are these laws designed to restrict?

a. Asians  
b. African-Americans  
c. Eastern Europeans  
d. Hispanics
27. France, concerned about the rise of terrorism and in an effort to create a stronger, more equitable nation, passed a law banning what to be worn in public schools?

a. Any religious attire
b. Neo-Nazi symbols
c. Attire with profanity
d. Attire with gang symbolism

28. A major unresolved matter in the European Union is:

a. The question of membership for the United States
b. The question of membership for Russia
c. The question of membership for Switzerland
d. The question of membership for Turkey

29. Maquiladoras are manufacturing plants that are located on the border of which two countries?

a. Brazilian/Paraguay borderland
b. US/Mexico borderland
c. Colombia/Venezuela borderland
d. Mexico/Peru borderland

30. While many countries in the world ban whale hunting, Japan continues to resist international demands to stop or suspend its whale hunting. For what purpose are these whales hunted?

a. Sport
b. Food
c. To make Japanese waters safer for other fish
d. For scientific research purposes