Core Curriculum Assessment Annual Report

General Information

1. Name / Number of Course / Sequence:
   HIST 1010 / HIST 1020

2. SLO(s) being assessed:
   Student will be informed and engaged citizens of the United States and the world and understand and appreciate the diversity of and within societies of the United States and the world.

3. Department:
   HISTORY

4. Department Representative:
   Charles Israel

5. AGSC Content Alignment:
   AREA IV: History, Social, and Behavioral Sciences

Assessment Information

6. Assessment Method: [Explain how assessment for the measures associated with this SLO – not grading for the course as a whole was conducted.]

   For 2010–11 we used both an indirect and a direct method to assess student progress on the learning objectives above. Initially we had intended only a "pilot" study in Fall 2010 before the CCGEOC changed the timeline and we had to implement; thus we only conducted the direct assessment in Fall 2010. We repeated this assessment in Spring 2011 and added an indirect assessment as well. These were the methods we proposed in our initial proposal and reported in our interim progress report. The results of both
methods were presented to the faculty in print and then discussed at an assessment meeting for all instructors.

Direct Assessment

The Program Coordinator worked with each instructor to link a selection of specific questions from their in-class examinations to specific elements of the SLOs. Students took these examinations late in the semesters, instructors compiled the results on the specified questions, and forwarded the information to the Program Coordinator. The Program Coordinator compiled the results from all sections (over both semesters) and calculated a summary report for the faculty on student performance on the SLOs.

Indirect Assessment

The Program Coordinator developed a student survey asking them to self-report on a 5-point Likert scale their agreement that the course had aided in their achievement of the SLOs. The survey was administered via email from Qualtrics, allowing for easier compilation of results. The downside was the relatively low response rate since the survey could not be completed during the class. The Program Coordinator prepared a summary of the survey results for the faculty assessment meeting.

7. Findings: [What assessment data did each assessment method produce?]

Direct Assessment

The exam questions were tied to specific sub-elements of the SLOs, and the results demonstrate a difference in student achievement on the SLOs between HIST 1010 and 1020. Overall, students assessed in HIST 1010 appear to perform better on SLO 8 (Informed and Engaged Citizenship) than they do on SLO 9 (Intercultural Knowledge and Diversity Awareness). Students in HIST 1020 have an overall higher performance on both measures, but this may be a result of students in HIST 1020 most likely being in their second history course (we teach more 1020 in Spring semester and for 2010-11 students still had to take the 2-course sequence). Or it may be a function of the more modern focus of HIST 1020 (begins about 1750 with heavy coverage of the 19th and 20th centuries). Still, the differences in performance on the two were only slight.
The overall results (combined from HIST 1010 and HIST 1020) of student success on questions tied to the particular measures in the direct assessment were:

SLO 8.1 (Demonstrate knowledge…)  77%
SLO 8.2 (Demonstrate ability…)  77%
SLO 8.3 (Demonstrate awareness…) 76%
SLO 9.1 (Recognize roles … )  69%
SLO 9.2 (Appreciate soci-economic…) 73%
SLO 9.3 (Demonstrate understanding…) 78%

Indirect Assessment

The response rate of this survey was only 14% (490 students responding). Respondents were disproportionately female (62%) and 74% were first year students. These students were primarily in HIST 1020 as this survey was only conducted in Spring 2011 and almost all sections in that semester are HIST 1020. The findings were not separated by HIST 1010 and HIST 1020.

Students were asked the degree to which they agreed with the following statements. The answer choices were a 5-point likert scale with 5 representing strongly agree and 1 representing strongly disagree. The results are reported below as a mean followed by the statement.

2.14  This course made me aware of how societies develop and change.
2.21  As a result of this course I am more confident in my knowledge of cultures and peoples outside of the United States.
2.56  As a result of this course I am more confident in my knowledge of cultures and peoples inside the United States.
2.24  This course taught me that people of the past faced challenges like those we face today.
2.42  This course helped me apply the lessons of the past to contemporary issues.
2.03  I learned that the choices people make have social and political consequences.
2.10  This course made me more aware of how individuals can change society.
2.47 This course gave me a new appreciation for my own culture and religion.

2.39 This course gave me a new appreciation for cultures and religions other than my own.

2.31 This course made me aware of the need to recognize intercultural diversity when relating to others in various cultures and situations.

8. How did you or will you use the findings for improvement: [What questions / issues/ concerns did your data raise for the faculty teaching the course? What discussion did the faculty have about the findings? What future actions to improve student attainment of this outcome will the department / program takes as a result of this analysis?]

The results of these assessments were provided to the whole faculty of the department, with special emphasis on those teaching in these courses, in preparation for the department assessment meeting. The World History Program Coordinator made some suggestions for possible conclusions from the evidence and directions for improvement. After sustained discussion and slight modification, the faculty endorsed the conclusions.

Method:
While there are some lingering doubts about the methods for the direct assessment, the faculty concluded that it was still the best possible option given the course format. We discussed the possibility of coming up with a bank of questions common to all courses and tied to the SLOs, but the concern was that we would then need to mandate an unnecessarily intrusive level of new standardization of content in the courses sections that would not prove helpful to student learning. So we agreed to continue the same direct assessment methods in the coming year.

Implementation:
Because of the accelerated time-line and haphazard implementation process necessitated by CCGEOC actions, the department did not feel that this first year of assessment could give particularly clear information on student performance or directions for change. Still, there was a more general agreement that for the second year of the assessment process we would intervene by having instructors be much more intentional in their approach to the SLOs in the course design, syllabus construction, and content delivery. In other words, instructors would more clearly and more frequently name the SLOs, related them explicitly to course content and activities, and remind
students of how the course is connected to larger goals. The Program Coordinator will review syllabi to ensure the SLOs are explicitly listed.

Future:
With a full year of implementation of the assessment process we hope to have more reliable results to discuss at the conclusion of the 2011–12 academic year. At that point we may find it possible to identify a single element or elements from the SLOs that may be amenable to an altered approach to instruction or assessment.

9. Additional comments: [What else would you like the Committee to know about your assessment of this course or plans for the future?]
none

10. Core Curriculum General Education Committee Comments:
The faculty have taken the task seriously in terms of addressing it with their teachers and students. More information (actual activities/items students are asked) would be useful in determining their ties to SLOs and what the data show. One concern, however, is the use of one multiple choice question per SLO measure (assuming that’s what the Dept is using; details are lacking in the final report), which seems rather slim. This data is supplemented by the student self-assessment survey, but there was a low participation rate on that; moreover, I wouldn’t rely on such a survey to capture student performance on SLOs. This reservation aside, other components of the assessment cycle appear to be in place.