Core Curriculum Assessment Annual Report

General Information

1. Name / Number of Course / Sequence:
   HONR 1027/37

2. SLO(s) being assessed:
   Student will be able to read analytically and critically, be able to critique and construct an argument effectively, and be informed and engaged citizens of the United States and the World.

3. Department:
   Honors College

4. Department Representative:
   James Hansen

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.]

   SLO2: Students were required to read a range of materials – book chapters, journal articles--covering multiple perspectives and disciplines. Readings were discussed weekly in the Thursday sections with the faculty teams helping students to understand context, meaning, and argument in each reading, and challenging students to query what they had read. Each exam in fall and spring contained essay questions which required them to demonstrate their ability to read analytically and critically. As part of their final spring
project (an analysis of the ecological footprint of an everyday object) they were required to consult peer-reviewed articles.

SLO3: Students learned to critique and construct an argument through directed discussion and writing. They were asked in each discussion period to think beyond the first level meaning of each article. They learned to develop sophisticated systems based arguments by learning about causal loop diagrams which they created in class. In fall semester their final project was to research and analyze their family’s food culture over two or three generations. They studied the food ways of the culture, the changing food market and availability over time, and the limitations and opportunities experienced by their families in order to gain a deep understanding of their own food habits. In spring the final paper required them to research the ecological footprint of an everyday object. In this project they had to make decisions about appropriate sources and construct sound explanations to explain the environmental complexity that surrounds all consumer objects.

SLO8: Lectures and readings examined local, national, and international issues surrounding environmental, economics, and social justice as relevant to sustainability. The interdisciplinarity of the team brought multiple perspectives the topics. Students learned the impact of their individual actions, the impact of community-level habits and decisions, and the role of government policies. In fall semester they completed an individual ecological footprint at the beginning of the semester, and at the end of the semester. The footprint assignment asked them to evaluate the size of their footprint and explain why it had or had not changed. The assignment further asked students to evaluate their environmental impact and propose ways to reduce their footprint. This assignment asked students to draw on what they had learned over the semester and is perhaps the best indicator of their learning in the class.

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

Findings:

Exams: objective and essay questions demonstrated that students were learning to read analytically and critically

Discussions: demonstrated that students could construct effective arguments

Written assignments: demonstrated development in student ability to think critically and to understand the world around them.
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 take as a result of this analysis?]

**Improvement:**

Next year rubrics will be more carefully constructed to enhance assessment data. Questions will be constructed in a way that instructors can track learning over the semester, for example, similar questions will be asked at beginning and end of the semester.

9. **Additional comments**: [What else would you like the Committee to know about your assessment of this course or plans for the future?]

10. **Core Curriculum General Education Committee Comments:**

    There may have been a thorough job of assessment for this course; however, the results described were very vague. The report reads almost as if no formal assessment of student learning (beyond grading for the course as a whole) has occurred. That said, I think the kinds of assessment that are in place lend themselves to assessing for the SLOs identified. The areas of improvement identified in the report, if addressed, should go a long way towards filling in the gaps in data. However, in the area of assessment findings, results, and ties to both the stated and delivered curricula are non-existent.