Core Curriculum Assessment Report  
2013_14

Department: Honors College  
Representative: Gerard Elfstrom  
Course Name / number: UNIV2710 / HONR2717

1. AGSC Content Area of Alignment: Area II: Humanities

2. SLO(s) being assessed: Student will:

   SLO 8: Students will be informed and engaged citizens of the U.S. and the world.
   SLO 9: Students will understand and appreciate diversity of an within societies of the U.S. and the world.

3. Assessment Method(s):

   [Explain how assessment for the measures associated with this SLO - not grading for the course as a whole - was conducted. You may cut/paste rubrics for inclusion here, identify faculty reviewing committees, or identify specific kinds of test questions important to your method. Is this the method you initially planned to use? Provide a separate paragraph for each method.]

   The Human Odyssey Committee has identified two readings from Human Odyssey I that address SLO 8 and two readings that address SLO 9. For each reading chosen, students will address a prompt that will be the same for all Human Odyssey sections. The responses are assessed using a standard rubric for SLO 8 and for SLO 9. (The rubrics are attached below.)

   Human Odyssey Assessment Instrument: Prompts for Reading Responses in HONR2717

   - Social and Political Engagement # 1 (Rome readings)
   - When you are doing your response, please be sure to address the interaction between religion and government in Roman times and how they might relate to our world today.

   - Diversity #1 (Muslim scientific advancements reading)
   - When you are writing your reading response, please include a commentary on how Muslim culture/science impacted Western civilization in the early Middle Ages and how this impact continues to influence our world today.

   - Social and Political Engagement # 2 (Renaissance readings, week one)
   - When you are writing your reading response, please discuss the economic, governmental, cultural, and philosophical trends in Western Europe that contributed to the Renaissance and how these trends endure in Western thought today.

   - Diversity #2 (Renaissance readings, week two)
   - When writing your reading response, please address how the power structure of the Christian church was challenged by individuals in the late Renaissance on scientific and ethical/religious grounds and how these changes endure today.

   A sample of 3 responses to each of the 4 prompts was selected from the 4 Honors Human Odyssey sections and the two University Human Odyssey sections was chosen by random means. Each response was evaluated by 4 measures:
   - 1) Summary—Did the student present the material in the texts accurately and completely?
   - 2) Synthesis—Did the student draw material from different texts to address the topics of the prompt?
   - 3) Analysis—Did the student critically examine major themes from the texts?
   - 4) Applications—Did the student drag themes from the texts to comment on contemporary issues?

4. Findings: What assessment data did each assessment method produce?

   A sample of 3 responses to each of the 4 prompts was selected from the 4 Honors Human Odyssey sections and the 2 University Human Odyssey sections were selected randomly. As in past terms, the students had significant success summarizing the texts. That is their task for the other reading responses they submit. In some cases, students were able to apply the themes and ideas of the texts to contemporary issues. As previously, of those who addressed the prompts, many had good success with synthesis and analysis.

5. 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?]

   As in the previous semester, many students ignored the prompts and simply provided summaries of the
assigned readings. In consequence, they often did not provide the syntheses, analyses or applications the prompts requested. In consequence, the assessment scores for those matters were commonly low.

The faculty will employ additional means of reminding students to address the prompts for the appropriate weeks. One difficulty of this arrangement of prompts is that it requests students to provide responses that are quite different from those they usually offer. They simply responded as they have habitually done in the past. We will continue to devise means to address that difficulty. However, since we plan to move to a different set of SLOs in the fall of 2013, we may have limited success in improving scores.

6. **Additional Comments:**

   [What else would you like the Committee to know about your assessment of this course or plans for the future?]

   In May of 2012, the Human Odyssey Program Review Committee recommended that the Human Odyssey Program adopt SLO 2 (Students will be able to read critically and analytically.) and SLO 3 (Students will be able to critique and construct an argument effectively.) in place of SLO 8 and SLO 9. Both present and past students and faculty agree that SLOs 2 and 3 are a better fit for Human Odyssey than SLOs 8 and 9. In consequence, the Human Odyssey faculty is now devising appropriate goals and measures of assessment for SLOs 2 and 3. We hope to have these approved for the fall of 2013. We will continue with SLOs 8 and 9 for the spring of 2013.

7. **Committee Comments**

   Mean of rubric score = 2.90 (out of 4) Faculty have decided that they are assessing for the wrong SLOs and are making revisions to the class in anticipation that they will receive permission to make that change. Since they have discovered that students summarize the readings, and do not respond to the prompts, I am not sure how changing the SLOs assessed actually improves student learning. The report is complete, but the issues with data collection and what that data means will probably continue unless another assessment method is developed.