

## General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title: METR 100W

GE Area: Z

Results reported for: AY 11-12

# 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#2: "Students should be able to express (explain, analyze, develop, and criticize) ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse." 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?

The students had weekly writing assignments, generally focused on the particular aspect that was being discussed in class. But to address SLO2 and to evaluate the students, they wrote two term papers for a total of 20 written pages, one as a mid-term and one as the final. The students chose their topics, but the topic for each paper had to be different. They also made two presentations, one on each of the topics of the papers.

The prompt for the papers was that they should be written as though they would be the background or literature review section of papers to be submitted to professional journals. They were to cite peer-reviewed journal articles, books and government reports. They could use online sources, such as Wikipedia, to get ideas for topics or to understand concepts. However, they could not cite online sources that are not peer-reviewed.

The students were instructed to write their papers to show they understood the topic they chose and that they could identify where more research might be warranted. They were given the guideline that there should be approximately one reference per written page, with the objective of assimilating ideas coherently. Therefore, it was emphasized that their papers review concepts not simply publications.

Thirteen students were graded in the class. One student performed very well on the first paper and presentation, two acceptably, four marginally, and the other six unacceptably due to major flaws. The

flaws included grammar and punctuation errors, poor organization especially in paragraph construction, inadequate references, and poorly developed ideas.

By the final paper, three students performed well, defined as at the level of professionals in the discipline publishing journal articles. Five students performed acceptably, defined as above average college level writing that would need significant polishing for professional publication. Five students' papers were marginal, defined as the level of an average college upperclassman. These students would need to improve markedly to consider submitting their writing to a professional journal.

The students' progress, especially regarding SLO2 from the midterm to the final, is shown in the following table.

	Number of students (midterm)	Number of students (final)
<b>Very Good</b> (Students reviewed concepts while integrating several sources well.)	1	3
<b>Acceptable</b> (Students were able to integrate sources, but sometimes the main concept was not clear.)	2	5
<b>Marginal</b> (Students had trouble integrating their sources into a review of concepts, so their papers were more a review of sources. An adequate number of sources was included.)	4	5
<b>Unacceptable</b> (The paper was totally disorganized without a central theme, or there was an inadequate number of sources.)	6	0

(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.)

The goal of the course is to prepare students to succeed in writing assignments in their professional careers or in graduate school. But approximately 40% of the students achieve only a marginal level of competency. These students continue to have difficulty organizing presentations and documents into a coherent product. This is especially true when they draw information from multiple sources.

We will continue to emphasize the importance of organization within a document or presentation, focusing particularly on paragraph construction and transitions between paragraphs. We provide multiple examples in class, while also giving frequent assignments to enhance their skill.

## 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.