De Anza College

SLO Assessment Cycle for GEO 4

Cultural Geography SLO Modified: [05/24/2010]

Purba Fernandez's Team Members:

Outcomes:

Outcome 1: Statement Modified: []

Map global variations in human cultures and analyze the origins and diffusion of those cultures.

Assessment Cycle Records:

Outcome 1: Assessment Planning Modified: [05/24/2010]

Assessment Strategy Used:
Quarter: Spring 2010
Assessors: Fernandez, Purba (GEO)
Assessment Tools: Exams
Sections being assessed: 01

Outcome 1: Reflect & Enhance Modified: [06/07/2010]

Number of people involved in Phase III: 1

Changes:

Methods:
The assessment tool for this SLO was an essay question on the 2nd mid-term exam. The question was worth 35 points (the exam was worth 100 points), so the score was tracked separately from the overall exam score. The essay question was given to students in advance, so they had time to prepare for it. The topic was the origin and diffusion of a major world religion. In class, we discussed the beliefs, the origin and the worldwide diffusion of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Each student had a worksheet in her/his course packet with a set of leading questions which we discussed and then students proceeded to complete the worksheet in class in small groups of 4-5. We did this exercise for each of the religions listed above. The students also filled out outline maps of the world showing the diffusion (spread) of religions. For the mid-term, the students got to choose any one of the religions and write an essay about it. The format of the essay was shaped after the worksheet and I handed students a rubric with detailed instructions on the specific sub-topics to include in their analyses.

Summary:
The average score for this question for the class (39 students) was 28.7 out of 35 points, which is 82% or a B- grade. A third (33%) of the class scored an A- grade or higher, 3 students (8%) had a D or F grade.

In general, I was satisfied with the descriptions and analyses, since most students included details and specifics of events that had shaped the diffusion of these religions. I attribute this partly to the fact that some students visited me during my office hours to review drafts of their essays. I was able to give these students detailed feedback and suggestions for improving their essays.

Some of the students whose scored below average, ran into time constraints on the exam; they did not have enough time to complete their essays. It is possible that they spent too much time on the short-answer section of the exam or that they were not as well-prepared and had to spend time thinking about what to write or both.

Enhancement (Part I):
I will continue to use the worksheet with questions, the small group discussions and analyses and the map exercise in preparation for the essay on the exam. I will also continue to give the students a choice of which religion they want to explore more deeply.

Enhancement (Part II):
Detailed comments on each essay exam and the worksheets (in preparation for the exam) is necessary to provide feedback to students

and that makes it very time-consuming. Student tutorial support would be beneficial for students in need of reading and/or writing assistance.

Outcome 2: Statement Modified: []

Analyze global demographic trends and patterns and their relation to other elements of culture.

Outcome 2: Assessment Planning Modified: [05/24/2010]

Assessment Strategy Used:
Quarter: Spring 2010
Assessors: Fernandez, Purba (GEO)
Assessment Tools: Papers/Essays
Sections being assessed: 01

Outcome 2: Reflect & Enhance Modified: [06/07/2010]

Number of people involved in Phase III: 1

Changes:

Methods:
The assessment tool for this SLO was an essay assignment where students described and analyzed population pyramid graphs and population data about two countries, Spain and the Philippines. Prior to the take-home essay assignment, we discussed in class, the various demographic indicators used to analyze population trends. We discussed how the the population pyramid graph is constructed. We examined population policies of China, India, Kenya and the United States, and students did an in-class graded activity where each group was assigned a population pyramid graph for a particular country and had to describe and analyze the trends. The students worked in groups of 4-5.

For the take-home assignment, students described, analyzed and contrasted the population trends for the two countries. They had to apply the demographic indicators data set as evidence to support their analysis. They also had to make recommendations about population policies based on their findings. To help keep students focused, I handed out a detailed rubric with the grading criteria described for the entire assignment.

Summary:
The average score for this assignment was 40.5 out of 50 points (B-grade). 5 students or 13% (out of a total of 39) received a D or F grade, out of which 2 students did not submit the assignment. Most students did a good job of describing the trends and patterns, most were able to co-relate the different demographic variables such as total fertility rate with birth rate, and life expectancy with death rate and infant mortality rate. They were also able to describe how the graph reflected changing demographic patterns over time.

An area that needs improvement is the section where students had to come up with specific recommendations regarding population policies. A few students were able to view population policies critically and recognized the difficulties of dealing with the complexities of economics and cultural factors. Most students however were rather simplistic in their analyses; they called for "a strict one-child policy" or "heavy penalties" for those who had "additional children," without addressing the moral and ethical issues and the underlying economic and social issues involved.

Enhancement (Part I):
For a more nuanced understanding of population policies and their impacts on lives of individuals and societies, we need to have more detailed discussions using case studies. It is important for us to focus on the cultural and societal implications of population control and expansion. For that we need to include a more detailed look at the role and status of women in a society, the role of education and co-relate these variables with the prevailing economic conditions.

Enhancement (Part II):

Outcome 3: Statement Modified: []

Apply knowledge of cultural differences and resource distribution to possible solutions of global, regional and local conflicts.

Outcome 3: Assessment Planning Modified: [05/24/2010]

Assessment Strategy Used:
Quarter: Spring 2010
Assessors: Fernandez, Purba (GEO)
Assessment Tools: Exams
Sections being assessed: 01

Outcome 3: Reflect & Enhance Modified: [06/07/2010]

Number of people involved in Phase III: 1

Changes:

Methods:
The assessment tool for this SLO was an essay question on the 2nd mid-term exam. The question was worth 25 points (the exam was worth 100 points), so the score was tracked separately from the overall exam score. The essay question was given to students in advance, so they had time to prepare for it. The students had 2 choices for this question and they had to select one of the two. The topics were as follows. 1. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict analyzed from geographic perspectives such as, resource distribution (e.g.fresh water) and the location of holy sites in Jerusalem and "migrant" settlements in territories. 2. African American internal migration patterns in the United States during the 20th Century, and how/why it differs from mainstream migration trends.

Prior to the exam, we had discussed both these topics in class. For the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in addition to the class discussion, we watched a section of a documentary entitled "Jerusalem, Center of the World." For the African American migration patterns, we used maps to discuss migration patterns.

Summary:
The average score for this question for the class (39 students) was 21.5 out of 25 points, which is 86% or a B grade. 20 students (51%) of the class scored an A- grade or higher, 3 students (8%) received a D or F grade.

Most students were able to address multiple factors leading to the conflicts and were able to co-relate the conflicts over land and resources with cultural differences and attitudes around race. A couple of students who are English language learners, found it more challenging to express their ideas in paragraph format. They were allowed the use of a dictionary in class and I will continue that practice in the future.

Enhancement (Part I):
I do not have any particular recommendations for this SLO except that I will continue to use this format since it seems to be fairly successful.

Enhancement (Part II):

[Number of Outcomes for GEO 4: **3**]