**Assessment Report AY 2014-2015**

On May 19 and 20 a group of sixteen faculty from Global Studies, Social Justice, and Principles of Sustainability met to discuss assessment in their individual paths.

**Faculty participants by path**

Social Justice: Jessica Kim, Clementine Oliver, Citlali Sosa, Celia Simonds, Randi Picarelli, Jan Marquard, Susan Fitzpatrick Behrens (path leader)

Global Studies: James Craine, Ron Davidson, Leigh Kenicott, Ken Lee, Suzanne Scheld (path leader)

Principles of Sustainability: Amanda Harrison, Emily Paramonova, Lisa Chaudhari, Mario Giraldo (path leader)

**Goals**

This was the second assessment meeting organized by GE Paths. In this occasion, and in coordination with the Director of Assessment and Program Review Jack Solomon, we identified two main goals for the meetings:

1- Revise Student Learning Outcomes: during the past three years, paths experienced a significant increase in the number of courses. Therefore, it was important to discuss and revise existing learning outcomes to make them inclusive of all the new courses and disciplinary approaches that currently exist in the paths.

2- Create a common assignment: the objective is to create a core assignment that could be used with some modifications by different courses in a path.

**General discussion**

**Day 1**

The group met on May 19 with the Assessment Director, Jack Solomon, who gave a detailed presentation on a number of important assessment related topics such as assessment of the five core competencies, importance of language used when developing student learning outcomes, the importance of approaching assessment in an organic manner, and different ideas for core assignments.

To address # 1- Dr. Solomon suggested a revision of the wording of SLOs to show outcomes and not goals, to make them measurable, to address some of the core competencies, and to fit the current courses in the paths.

To address #2- Dr. Solomon suggested the creation of SLOs that will allow for assignments to be drawn organically from them.

**Group work and results**

The group discussed at length a number of possible options for revising SLOs. After trying to come up with common language for all three paths, it was decided that each path will work independently on revising SLOs. The following are the revised SLOs for each path:

**Global Studies**

1. Students will define globalization and key concepts relate to globalization trends

2. Students will explain a variety of globalized forms and their economic and political, socio-culture, and historical foundations

3. Students will evaluate diverse consequences to globalization including its impacts on various social formations and the environment.

4. Students will demonstrate how globalization affects and is affected by one’s own life.

**Principles of Sustainability**

1. Students will define sustainability and its connections to issues of social justice, the environment, and the economy at local, regional, and global levels.

2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of key concepts related to sustainability, such as: climate change, ecological footprint, and planetary carrying capacity.

3. Students will connect how sustainability relates to their lives and/or values, and how their actions and others impact issues of sustainability at the individual, local, regional, and global levels.

**Social Justice**

1. Students will define social justice from multiple perspectives.

2. Students will explain the importance of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and class in relation to social justice.

3. Students will identify methods people use to fight for social justice at local, national, and international levels.

4. Students will analyze the ways equality and inequality are institutionalized in social, political, and economic structures.

5. Students will connect their personal experiences to issues of social justice.

**Day 2**

The group met to discuss the possibility of creating a general assignment to be used by many courses in the paths for the purpose of assessment. The challenge was to develop an assignment sufficiently broad to be useful for faculty from any discipline, while also making it useful and a true measure of learning. The discussion revolved around the specificities of courses in each path which may complicate the possibility to create such an assignment. Global Studies and Sustainability indicated that, due to the interdisciplinary nature of their paths as well as the breath of the theme, it would be difficult for them to create common assignment to be used by different courses. The conversation revolved around the pedagogical value of creating common assignments and the need to keep in mind that assessment should be student-centered to make the most out of the strengths of GE Paths (cohesiveness and connections in GE coursework). Once again, each path worked independently to address this issue.

**Group work and results**

**Global Studies**

1. Global Studies faculty decided that when it is time for to assess their course’s contribution to the success of the path, they would work with the coordinator to write an assignment that involves converting one or more SLOs into a question that is relevant to the content of the course from which assessment data are being collected.

2. Some faculty would like to take a pre and post-test approach to assessment. They are willing to undertake a pre-test with all of the students in their courses, regardless of whether or not they are following the GS path. Others would not like to impose a pre-test on students who are not in the path; therefore, they would not opt to undertake a pre/post-test approach to assessment, but would be willing to undertake a different approach to assessment.

**Principles of Sustainability**

Faculty decided to take a different approach to assessment. Instead of creating a common assignment, they identified two different SLOs and developed rubrics that can guide faculty in assessing those specific SLOs. Faculty will be invited to develop individual assignments and to use the rubrics in their creation.

1. Students will define sustainability and its connections to issues of social justice, the environment, and the economy at local, regional, and global levels.

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| **Criteria** | **Excellent (4)** | **Good (3)** | **Fair (2)** | **Poor (1)** |
| **Students will define sustainability.** | Students can define sustainability in the formal definition as well as engage in the definition in a complex or in depth manner related to the assignment, course, or subject. | Students can define sustainability in the formal definition as well as engage in some understanding related to the assignment, course, or subject. | Students can somewhat define sustainability in the formal definition or somewhat engage in some understanding related to the assignment, course, or subject. | Students are not able to define sustainability and are not able to engage with the concepts in their assignment, course, or subject. |
| **Student will connect sustainability to at least one of these issues: social justice, the environment, and the economy at local, regional, and global levels.** | Students clearly connect sustainability in relation to issues in social justice, the environment, or the economy at a local, regional, or global level.  Additionally, they go beyond to explore in depth and complexities resulting from the issue discussed.  Multiple facets of the issue are discussed. | Students have mixed ability to connect sustainability in relation to issues in social justice, the environment, or the economy at a local, regional, or global levels. | Students have mixed ability to connect sustainability in relation to issues in social justice, the environment, or the economy at a local, regional, or global levels.  Student may not fully explore all issues. | Students are not able to connect sustainability in relation to issues in social justice, the environment, or the economy at a local, regional, or global levels. |

**Social Justice**

Faculty in this path created an assignment that could be used by all courses in the path.

The goals of the assignment are to introduce students to the practice of writing formal emails, which will serve them well in their classes and lives, while also allowing them to share their knowledge of a social justice issue addressed in your class.

The assignment will also test the following General Education Social Justice SLO’s

1. Students will be able to define social justice from multiple perspectives

3. Students will be able to identify methods people use to fight for social justice at local, national, and international levels.

5. Students will connect their personal experiences to issues of social justice.

Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) or Core Competencies:

1. Intellectual and Practical Skills: CSUN graduates can effectively engage in inquiry and problem-solving, critical analysis, and creative thinking; they have quantitative literacy, are information competent and appreciate the role of these as life-long learning skills.

2. Communication Skills: CSUN graduates can communicate effectively through written, signed or spoken languages, through visual and audio media using text, video, graphics, and quantitative data, both individually and as a member of a team.

3. Personal and Social Responsibility: CSUN graduates are actively engaged in diverse local and global communities, have multi-cultural knowledge, and use ethical principles in reasoning and action when solving real-world challenges.

**Assignment: The Email as a tool in Social Justice Advocacy**

Please write an email that explains a social justice issue addressed in class and/or appeals to the recipient to do something specific that might help to transform a social injustice. Your email should be formally written and should include a clear subject line. In it you should include the following points:

• Explain why you selected the individual or organization to whom you are writing. Why does the recipient of your email need to know the information you want to convey to them? What position are they in to help address social justice? Why did you choose this person or group?

• Define the social justice issue that you want to explain, using the knowledge you gained in class, your personal experience of the issue, and any additional evidence or support you can find for your point. You could cite statistics about the number of people affected by this issue, you could refer to an expert who has written or spoken extensively about the topic, or you could find other persuasive evidence to make your point.

• Make a clear appeal to your audience for a specific action. This action might simply be a call for understanding and awareness of the importance of the social justice issue you address or it could be for a specific action that you want the recipient to undertake to help address the problem.

• Write clearly, passionately, and persuasively and use evidence to make your point.