Assessment Data is from what semester? Spring 2014

Faculty Name(s): Naomi Vanderkindren

1. Course Name and Number:

History of Photography, ART - 131

2. List all Course SLOs from the Course Outline of Record:

1. Identify specific examples of inventiveness in early 19th century photographic processes, and apply them to social and political events of the time.

2. Differentiate those elements in photographs that delineate historical content from those marking aesthetic expression.

3. Identify at least three important historic photographers, and three contemporary photographers and articulate the contributions of each.

4. Explain the role of economic, political and social influences on photographic trends and expression.

5. Distinguish the differences between, and motivating factors behind, the various uses to which photography has been put by people prioritizing different social, cultural, economic, and political concerns.

6. Identify and describe contributions to historical and contemporary photography made by individuals and groups outside of Europe and the United States.

7. Analyze the production of visual images and the image-making and image-disseminating

3. Specific Course SLO(s) assessed as part of this project:

4 and 5

4. Is this course on GE Plan A?  x  Yes  ___  No  (See Catalog pages 49-51 & page 55)

If Yes, identify what area. (All GE course assessments count as GE assessments.)

_____ Area I Natural Sciences

_____ Area II Social and Behavioral Sciences

x  Area III Fine Arts/Humanities

_____ Area IV Language and Rationality

_____ Area V Physical Education/Wellness

_____ Area VI Intercultural/International Studies
5. How did you assess the SLO(s)? (Attach any related documents at end of form.)

This assessment is based on student writing samples, student feedback and my own impressions of course effectiveness. For guidance, I reviewed SLOA Committee Completed Assessment Page, and utilized both and “A Handbook on Outcomes Assessments for Two Year Colleges” by Edward Morante and “A Handbook for Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty and Teachers of Adults” by Greive & Lesko.

The specific assignment utilized is titled “Analysis 2”. In the assignment, students selected one Civil War era photograph and produced a 1-2 page essay discussing it. Students were encouraged to utilize a variety of strategies in their writing, which were covered in course lectures and reading assignments. Those strategies include discussion of historic developments in technique, social influences, period style, etc.

6. Results and analysis of the data. (Attach any related documents at end of form.)

It is not possible to assess all attempts of the assignment because students who dropped were automatically removed from the online grade center. This also removed their assignment attempts and may skew grade distribution. Of the remaining attempts, score distribution was approximately: 21% (4) F due to no work completed, 16% (3) F with work completed, 11% (2) C, 21% (3) B, 31% (6) A.

There were many examples where students successfully demonstrated the goals listed in SLOs 4 and 5. In fact, in order to successfully analyze the photographs, students had to demonstrate these SLOs. For example, to describe Civil War era photographs, students had to articulate political influences of the time, cultural and social views and how those images were used to influence the public.

The essays more broadly addressed SLOs 1, 2, 3 and 7, but this was more related to how students integrated research rather than the essay requirements. For example, some students referenced important historical photographers, development in aesthetic styles, the distribution of images and methods of photographic technique.

Because the assignment specifically challenged students to demonstrate key concepts of the SLO 4 & 5, those students who demonstrated those concepts were also those who scored highest. These students were able to identify and articulate the significance of the techniques available at the time, discuss political and social influences, and explore the impact of those images, etc. They used college level writing skills and were able to integrate information from research.

While there were many examples of success, some essays were below expectations. However, it does not appear to be simply a matter of not grasping the course content. Some students often failed to follow directions and thus the writing did not adequately address the assignment. The essays also reveal significant problems with reading and writing skills.

7. What are you going to do based on the results of the data? (Any planned revisions?)

I found the SLOs to reasonably describe what should be expected from a student completing this course. However, it was helpful to review the student essays and seek out areas that I could improve learning. There are two areas that I plan to focus on: addressing basic skills and changing how online content is delivered.

Addressing basic skills has been an ongoing goal for me as an instructor. Students come to my classes
from a variety of backgrounds and many have not had training in reading and writing. While there is not a prerequisite, these skills are necessary to achieve course goals. Students who do not have adequate skills struggle to read the textbook and follow directions. These students also struggle to demonstrate knowledge through writing, which is a significant part of the course. I have attempted to address the issue in a few ways.

First, I created writing guides and asked students to follow a checklist. This allowed students to clearly see each step in the writing process and identify what areas needed work. The second strategy I employed was to required students to get feedback on writing. They visited a writing tutor and were assigned to small online peer groups. Each of these strategies seemed to bring modest improvements.

Several course activities have also been added to help students with the challenges of writing. For example, I offered extra credit to students who passed a “plagiarism identification” quiz online through Purdue University. I also included a worksheet that allows students to practice writing skills. In 2014, a “writing workshop” lecture was added to the schedule. The lecture discussed methods of research, how to check for plagiarism and effective writing strategies. Multiple students reported that the workshop had been very helpful because they had little or no training. The overall quality of writing improved and plagiarism due to citation errors declined.

I wanted to address how online content is delivered because I recognized that many students were not reading the static course pages. This relates to writing assignments because students were not getting the information, not understanding instructions, and thus not responding appropriately. Overall, I felt that capable students were missing out on valuable course content. This could indicate a number of things, which students occasionally told me, such as having difficulty with language, problems with using the online system, skimming rather reading, rushing, skipping over pages, etc.

In response, I created slide presentations that students navigated. These slideshows presented the lecture line by line, to help set a slower pace and prevent skimming. The slide format also allowed me present a more naturally flowing lecture and dynamic use of images. Students responded that the slideshows were more inviting and easier to understand than static pages. For Spring 2015, I plan to expand upon that success and produce video based lectures. I anticipate the videos will be even more effective at reaching students. They will also provide a more welcoming course experience.
Assignment 5: Analysis 2
Analytic essays critically evaluate a topic through reason. The writer seeks dialogue and deeper understanding of the topic. This type of essay actively engages the subject and expands upon classroom learning. This is the type of essay is preferred in this class over essays that are purely informative or opinion based.

Instructions:
Write a 1 - 2 page essay discussing one historic image or related to the American Civil War. It can be an image of the battlefields, the clean up after the war, prisoners of war, etc. If you are not sure if your image will work, please send me a message. The Library of Congress is a wonderful place to look for images.

Guidelines:
• Use facts, quotes and paraphrasing to support your arguments. Be sure to use proper citations. Please include a citation for the image and include a direct link for all online sources. Do not use course lectures as a source.
• Use MLA format, 1 inch margins, double-spaced, Times or Times New Roman font.
• You can use your textbook as a source, but not lectures. Also make sure your source is credible. That means, please don’t cite another student paper or Wikipedia. Academic sources are great and museum websites are a good too.
• If you’re not sure about something, post to the writing forum for help from classmates.

Tips:
Instead of just writing basic facts, focus on ideas. Who made the photograph? Why did they make it? How was the photograph viewed at the time it was made? Are there any controversies involving the photograph, such as opposing opinions about it? Are there any controversies about the photographer? Does the photograph represent a particular turning point for the photographer or society at that time in history?

Grading:
See the grading rubric to learn more about how your writing is evaluated.