

ASTRONOMY 294
Life in the Universe

Assessment Plan

Astronomy 294 is a GEC Physical Science course in the Natural Science category. It is based in large part on a 3 cr Group Studies course that was piloted in Spring Quarter 2007. Since this will be the first offering of this course as a 5 cr course that is intended to become a permanent offering, assessment will be crucial in improving the course.

We will use two main assessment tools for this course:

- (1) Questions tailored to test the students' grasp of concepts directly linked to the GEC goals for Natural Science courses will be embedded in the final exam. Students' responses to these particular questions will be scrutinized to see which goals were inadequately met, as evidenced by a lower percentage of correct answers. These areas will receive greater emphasis and class time the next time the course is offered.
- (2) An exit survey, similar to that administered at the end of existing GEC courses such as Astron 161–162 will be administered to as many students as possible at the conclusion of the course. Students will be asked whether they strongly agree, agree, disagree, strong disagree, or neither agree nor disagree with statements such as “this course helped me understand the basic facts, principles, theories, and methods of modern science. In addition to asking students whether or not the course met the Natural Science GEC goals, the exit survey will also solicit narrative evaluations. The exit survey will be used to identify those GEC goals that the students perceive as not being met; this in turn will help the instructor modify the content and presentation of the course material to better achieve these goals the next time the course is taught.

BMP

23 October 2007