

## ASSESSMENT REPORT

**HISTORY**  
**MAJOR and MINOR AGGREGATE REPORT**

ACADEMIC YEAR 2019 - 2020

**REPORT DUE DATE: December 4, 2020**

This is our regular assessment template.

Given the unusual circumstances of the 2019-2020 academic year, each program/department/major/minor/certificate has two options of assessment:

(a) Usual assessment report based on this template OR

(b) Alternative assessment reflections on distance learning pivot based on the alternative attached template

Every program/department/major/minor/certificate can choose ONE of the two alternative reports to submit

- 
- Who should submit the report? – All majors, minors (including interdisciplinary minors), graduate and non-degree granting certificate programs of the College of Arts and Sciences.
  - Programs can combine assessment reports for a major and a minor program into one aggregate report as long as the mission statements, program learning outcome(s) evaluated, methodology applied to each, and the results are clearly delineated in separate sections
  - Undergraduate, Graduate and Certificate Programs must submit separate reports
  - It is recommended that assessment report not exceed 10 pages. Additional materials (optional) can be added as appendices
  - Curriculum Map should be submitted along with Assessment Report

**Some useful contacts:**

1. Prof. Alexandra Amati, FDCD, Arts – [adamati@usfca.edu](mailto:adamati@usfca.edu)
2. Prof. John Lendvay, FDCD, Sciences – [lendvay@usfca.edu](mailto:lendvay@usfca.edu)
3. Prof. Mark Meritt, FDCD, Humanities – [meritt@usfca.edu](mailto:meritt@usfca.edu)
4. Prof. Michael Jonas, FDCD, Social Sciences – [mrjonas@usfca.edu](mailto:mrjonas@usfca.edu)
5. Prof. Suparna Chakraborty, AD Academic Effectiveness – [schakraborty2@usfca.edu](mailto:schakraborty2@usfca.edu)

**Academic Effectiveness Annual Assessment Resource Page:**

<https://myusf.usfca.edu/arts-sciences/faculty-resources/academic-effectiveness/assessment>

**Email to submit the report: [assessment\\_cas@usfca.edu](mailto:assessment_cas@usfca.edu)**

**Important: Please write the name of your program or department in the subject line.**

**For example: FineArts\_Major (if you decide to submit a separate report for major and minor); FineArts\_Aggregate (when submitting an aggregate report)**

**I. LOGISTICS**

---

1. Please indicate the name and email of the program contact person to whom feedback should be sent (usually Chair, Program Director, or Faculty Assessment Coordinator).

Heather J. Hoag, Chair (until Jan. 2021)

Taymiya Zaman, Chair (after Jan. 2021)

**2. Please indicate if you are submitting report for (a) a Major, (b) a Minor, (c) an aggregate report for a Major & Minor (in which case, each should be explained in a separate paragraph as in this template), (d) a Graduate or (e) a Certificate Program**

We are submitting an aggregate report as there is not sufficient data to assess History minors at this time.

**3. Please note that a Curricular Map should accompany every assessment report. Has there been any revisions to the Curricular Map since October 2019?**

There have been no revisions to our curriculum map.

## II. MISSION STATEMENT & PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

---

**1. Were any changes made to the program mission statement since the last assessment cycle in October 2019? Kindly state “Yes” or “No.” Please provide the current mission statement below. If you are submitting an aggregate report, please provide the current mission statements of both the major and the minor program**

No changes were made.

### **Mission Statement (Major):**

The essence of historical inquiry is, simply put, to study and understand the past. The History Department at the University of San Francisco is a community of scholars and students who seek an informed and critical sense of the past and an awareness of the role of the past in shaping the present. Such an understanding is, we believe, the basis for effective and engaged citizenship in the contemporary world.

We seek to educate our students about the variety of past human experience within a global setting. Toward that end, we offer six regional emphases within the history major, and students elect a single or a double emphasis in the histories of Africa, Asia, Europe, the Islamic World, Latin America, and the United States. Our courses similarly cover the span of human history from antiquity to modern times and utilize a range of methodological approaches. History at USF offers both breadth and depth into fields and specializations that reveal the complexity of human societies, past and present.

While we hope to impart a love of history and an appreciation of its value, we also aim to prepare our students for further study and professional development in the many areas in which history majors find employment, including (but not limited to) teaching, law, business, and the public sector. The study of history—with the training it provides in close reading, logical reasoning, careful argumentation, and persuasive writing—is an ideal major to prepare for “the real world.”

### **Mission Statement (Minor):**

Same as above.

**2. Were any changes made to the program learning outcomes (PLOs) since the last assessment cycle in October 2019? Kindly state “Yes” or “No.” Please provide the current PLOs below. If you are submitting an aggregate report, please provide the current PLOs for both the major and the minor programs.**

No changes have been made to either the major or minor PLOs.

- **PLOs (Major):**

The program learning outcomes for the History major are as follows:

1. Understand the breadth and diversity of human experience across time and space
2. Develop a substantive knowledge of range and depth in their areas(s) of concentration, whether regional and/or topical/thematic
3. Think critically and historically about the past
4. Understand and appropriately apply historical research methods
5. Craft and present persuasive historical arguments in both oral and written form
6. Understand how the practice of history can establish a valuable framework for considering ethical issues in the past and present

- **PLOs (Minor):**

The program learning outcomes for the History minor are a subset of those for the major:

1. Understand the breadth and diversity of human experience across time and space
3. Think critically and historically about the past
5. Craft and present persuasive historical arguments in both oral and written forms
6. Understand how the practice of history can establish a valuable framework for considering ethical issues in the past and present

**3. State the particular Program Learning Outcome(s) you assessed for the academic year 2019-2020.**

**PLO(s) being assessed (Major):**

For AY 2019-2020, we assessed the oral competency of our graduating seniors in our Fall senior seminar. This directly relates to PLO #5: Craft and present persuasive historical arguments in both **oral** and written form. Feedback on past yearly assessment reports has suggested we assess oral competency.

**PLO(s) being assessed (Minor):**

No PLO assessed as there were no graduating History minors in the senior seminar or other appropriate courses.

### III. METHODOLOGY

**Describe the methodology that you used to assess the PLO(s).**

**Methodology used (Major):**

Our direct method of assessment was as follows:

1. In Fall 2020, the department selected an assessment committee comprised of two members (raters) and the chair (who would direct the process and write the report). We had previously decided to assess oral competency (part of PLO #5).
2. For the major program assessment, we videotaped the oral prospectus presentations of the final projects in our senior seminar (HIST 430, offered in Fall 2019). For our minor program, we did not have any minor students in courses so did not collect data.
3. Next, the assessment committee created an appropriate rubric based on the competency chart the department created to articulate what skills each learning outcome refers to, basically, how we know if students meet our expectations, and in line with the specific assignment. The rubric was then reviewed and approved by the two raters and the chair. This rubric is attached.
4. Two faculty raters were Taymiya Zaman and Marty Claussen. They were provided with the rubric and the recordings of the presentations. They consulted with each other as to how to approach the rating process. Since these were oral presentations, the identities of the students could not be redacted.
5. The raters viewed the presentations and scored them using the rubric provided.
6. The raters collated the data and returned the rubrics to the chair who wrote the draft report.
7. The findings and draft report were discussed and approved at the November 4, 2020 History department meeting (see below for discussion summary).
8. The chair then revised and submitted the assessment report.

**Methodology used (Minor):**

None as there were not minors in HIST 430 in Fall 2019.

#### IV. RESULTS & MAJOR FINDINGS

**What are the major takeaways from your assessment exercise?**

**This section is for you to highlight the results of the exercise. Pertinent information here would include:**

- a. how well students mastered the outcome at the level they were intended to,
- b. any trends noticed over the past few assessment cycles, and
- c. the levels at which students mastered the outcome based on the rubric used.

**Results (Major):**

The Assessment Committee assessed the twenty presentations given on Oct. 29, 2019 based on the promise of each project and the degree to which students were asking questions that could form the basis for historical inquiry. Since these were prospectus presentations on preliminary/ongoing research, the raters did not expect the students to have clearly developed theses or findings. The students were assessed on whether they were asking historical questions that were more analytical than descriptive, if they were starting to think about continuity and change, if they had a clear research plan, and their presentation skills.

Both raters found that the quality of the recordings made it very difficult to hear the presentations clearly. Recordings were done by USF's Media Services office. The raters did the best they could with the material provided.

The breakdown of findings was as follows:

	Number of Students	Percentage of Total
Exemplary	7	35%
Competent	8	40%
Developing	5	25%

We found that 75% of the students assessed were rated as exemplary or competent. This is in line with past yearly assessments. Considering the anxiety students have when speaking publicly and being recorded, we are satisfied with these findings. Being that the research was in progress, it is understandable if some students were less confident in their findings.

**Results (Minor):**

N/A

**V. CLOSING THE LOOP**

**1. Based on your results, what changes/modifications are you planning in order to achieve the desired level of mastery in the assessed learning outcome? This section could also address more long-term planning that your department/program is considering and does not require that any changes need to be implemented in the next academic year itself.**

**Closing the Loop (Major):**

The department discussed these findings at the November 4, 2020 department meeting. Below is a summary of the discussion:

- The department was pleased that 75% of our students were found competent in oral presentations.
- It was noted how difficult it is for students to be recorded while presenting their work. The department found they did a good job considering their nervousness.
- The department unanimously approved the draft report.

**Closing the Loop (Minor):**

We will continue to collect work products from our minors until we have enough to assess. We envision that this will continue to be an issue as we usually only have a few minors graduate each year, and most of them complete their requirements prior to their final year. Unlike the majors, there is not one course that minors have to take, making it difficult to collect work products systematically.

**2. What were the most important suggestions/feedback from the FDCD on your last assessment report (for academic year 2018-2019, submitted in October 2019)? How did you incorporate or address the suggestion(s) in this report?**

**Suggestions (Major):**

Our 2016-2017 Yearly Assessment Report stated that “History has thus developed and implemented an effective method for assessing the success of students in the major in presenting written historical arguments. The program could also develop methods for assessing oral presentation of historical arguments.” This was the focus of this year’s annual report.

Oral competency was also mentioned in the comments from our 2018-2019 Yearly Assessment Report:

*Summary Comments from 2018-2019:* The History department has clearly engaged in carefully conceived direct assessment of outcomes achievement by students in its major. Assessment results suggest an effective curriculum enabling virtually all students to meet program outcomes. History faculty also reviewed and refined assessment methods and are considering future assessment of oral presentations. Assessment of the minor remains a challenge due to enrollment issues and the resulting inability to collect student work products. Last, History raises important questions about assessment workload. In response, assessment leaders might help the department find ways to streamline the assessment process.

As to other comments from previous Yearly Assessment Reports, the main unaddressed comment regards the updating of our curriculum map. After the new chair comes in January 2021 and the university returns to normal operations, we will discuss if and how these revisions should be done.

It should also be noted that History underwent an Annual Program Review in 2018-2019. The reviewers found that:

the unique value of the history department at USF rests in the quality of its curriculum, the high caliber of its full-time faculty members, the dedication of its PHP faculty, and the energy and passion of its students. Materials provided by the department demonstrate that students in classes offered by this department are learning historical content, how to think historically about primary sources, and how to write well-argued and coherent interpretations of the past. Evaluations of teaching design and performance, as well as student engagement, show that history department courses consistently rank highly within the college. This is due, in no small part, to the dedication of faculty who have refined or adopted pedagogical strategies to become more effective instructors, especially in lower-division classes.

We have already made our plan for the AY 2020-2021 Yearly Assessment. We will assess PLO 6: Understand how the practice of history can establish a valuable framework for considering ethical issues in the past and present. To assess student learning, we will collect the papers from the Fall 2020 senior seminar (HIST 400). More broadly, we have begun departmental discussions of the role of historians in relation to current events and how we might better achieve this learning outcome in our individual classes, our curriculum, and in department events and activities.

**Suggestions (Minor):**

We still have challenges as to how to assess our minors. We suggest that the CAS leadership provides specific examples of ways to do this.

<b>Presenter: 1</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Competent</b>	<b>Developing</b>
<b>Presentation Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Presenter spoke clearly throughout the presentation.</li> <li>•Presenter stayed within the allotted time limit and/or used time well.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation was clear most of the time</li> <li>• Presentation was occasionally rushed or too short.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation was unclear/confusing to the point where intelligibility was compromised.</li> <li>• Presenter did not use time well.</li> </ul>
<b>Organization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The presenter's thesis was clearly stated.</li> <li>• Presentation proceeded in a logical discussion of the topic</li> <li>•The significance of the project was clear.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The thesis was unclear, unstated, or not stated directly.</li> <li>• The presentation proceeded in a mostly logical manner</li> <li>• The significance of the project was alluded to but not entirely clear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The presentation lacked a defensible thesis.</li> <li>• The presentation was not coherently organized.</li> <li>• The significance of the project was unclear.</li> </ul>
<b>Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The presentation showed a plan for conducting solid historical research.</li> <li>• Research questions were analytical and showed historical consciousness.</li> <li>• The presentation named relevant sources and explained how they were relevant to the project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• showed the beginnings of a plan for conducting research.</li> <li>•Research questions were descriptive.</li> <li>• The presentation named relevant sources but did not discuss them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The presentation did not indicate the presenter had a plan for conducting research</li> <li>• Research questions were not formulated well.</li> <li>• The presentation did not name any sources.</li> </ul>

