ASSESSMENT REPORT REMOTE/DISTANCE LEARNING
ACADEMIC YEAR 2019 - 2020
REPORT DUE DATE: December 4, 2020

This is an alternative 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 attached template OR
(b) Alternative assessment reflections on distance learning pivot based on this template
Every program/department/major/minor/certificate can choose ONE of the two report formats to submit

Please make sure to fill out Page 1 – Questions 1 and 2

- 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. If you choose to submit a remote learning reflections document, it should also have separate segments for major and minor
- Undergraduate, Graduate and Certificate Programs must submit separate reports. An aggregate report is allowed only for major and minor of the same program
- 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
2. Prof. John Lendvay, FDCD, Sciences – lendvay@usfca.edu
3. Prof. Mark Meritt, FDCD, Humanities – meritt@usfca.edu
4. Prof. Michael Jonas, FDCD, Social Sciences – mrjonas@usfca.edu
5. Prof. Suparna Chakraborty, AD Academic Effectiveness – 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

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).

Kouslaa Kessler-Mata, Chair

ktkesslermata@usfca.edu

2. Please indicate if you are submitting report for (a) a Major, (b) a Minor, (c) an aggregate report for a Major and Minor (in which case, each should be explained in a separate paragraph as in this template), (d) a Graduate or (e) a Certificate Program.
Please also indicate which report format are you submitting –Standard Report or Reflections Document

Aggregate Report for Major and Minor

Reflections Document

3. Have there been any revisions to the Curricular Map in 2019-2020 academic year? If there has been a change, please submit the new/revised Curricular Map document.

We have made several changes to the curriculum (removing the concentrations), but this did not change our curriculum map. Effective for the 2019-2020 academic year we streamlined the major by removing our "concentrations" for upper-division students and instead made it a unit requirement of 5 300-level four-unit courses in the major (rather than 3 concentration courses, plus 2 300-level courses). Attached is the major and minor course checklists for reference. No changes were made to the minor.

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 <u>an aggregate report, please provide the current mission statements of both the major and the minor program</u>

   ## Mission Statement (Major/Graduate/Certificate):

   No changes to the mission statement were made.

   From the USF Politics Catalog page:

The controversies that grip our world make the study of politics more intriguing now than ever before. Our program encompasses the examination of traditional government structures and processes, as well as other key sites of political activity, from non-governmental organizations to social media.

We want our students to develop skills in critical thinking, modes of analysis, and research that will last long after graduation. This means that within the classroom, we want to expose students to both government and politics, to formal institutions and processes, as well as the dynamics of the power and politics, both inside and outside of government structures, that run our system.

We also want to convey to our students a sense of civic responsibility by providing them with opportunities for experiential learning outside the classroom.

Consistent with the university's mission, our program is concerned with issues of peace, economic development, and human rights both at home and abroad.

   ## Mission Statement (Minor):

The minor mission is the same. The difference in programs is that there are fewer learning outcomes.

3. 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 <u>an aggregate report, please provide the current PLOs for both the major and the minor programs.</u>

Note: Major revisions in the program learning outcomes need to go through the College Curriculum Committee (contact: Professor Joshua Gamson, gamson@usfca.edu). Minor editorial changes are not required to go through the College Curriculum Committee.

No Changes to POLS major or minor Learning Outcomes were made between the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 catalog years.

PLOs (Major/Graduate/Certificate):

Students will:

- master and critically analyze key political concepts, systems, and institutions in global, national and local contexts
- demonstrate critical thinking skills and formulate and defend a thesis in written and oral form
- design, implement and communicate original research
- develop skills in collective deliberation, through collaboration and engaging diverse viewpoints
- examine the relationship between the theories and practices of politics through structured service learning opportunities

PLOs (Minor):

- Master and critically analyze key political concepts, systems, and institutions in global, national and local contexts
- Demonstrate critical thinking skills and formulate and defend a thesis in written and oral form
- Develop skills in collective deliberation, through collaboration and engaging diverse viewpoints

III. REMOTE/DISTANCE LEARNING

1.   **What elements of the program <u>were adaptable</u> to a remote/distance learning environment?**

Faculty identified several elements of their courses that were adaptable to remote/distance learning. Specifically, lectures and audio/visual materials were generally possible to make available, though there was some disagreement with regard to the accessibility of audio/visual materials as some faculty were unable to make their films, for example, widely available without taking class time due to limited access of the materials in question.

Small group discussions in seminar courses were also possible, as were peer writing workshops and individual meetings and presentations.

2.   **What elements of the program were <u>not adaptable</u> to a remote/distance learning environment?**

Faculty noted that, in general and even in courses where elements were adaptable to the remote context, class participation was incredibly challenging. Moreover, faculty report that question and answer periods after lectures were lackluster, though the incorporation of poll everywhere and padlet were somewhat helpful too get feedback. In general, however, there was little engagement.

Internship courses in particular suffered as many internship sites closed down when the City shut down. Students lost work time onsite and in the case of POLS 396, the entire semester's plan had to be scraped and reconstructed in a week.

3.   **What was the average proportion of synchronous versus asynchronous learning for your program or parts thereof? A rough estimate would suffice.**

The vast majority of courses were synchronous, though perhaps 15% were asynchronous. Some courses were partially asynchronous, such as the internship courses, though 85% of those courses were synchronous so do not count as a part of the 15% asynchronous courses. Only adjunct faculty opted for asynchronous courses in the Spring.

4.   **For what aspects of learning is synchronous instruction effective and for which ones is asynchronous instruction more effective?**

Faculty suggested that synchronous classes likely increased the chances that students were not only receiving the material (if they show up for class), but also engage with it better. The assumption amongst full time faculty is that, similarly, asynchronous courses increase the chance that students aren't actually tuning in. Regardless, however, student engagement was lower overall in remote learning.

Asynchronous instruction can be done well, but we were not prepared or supported for solid asynchronous courses. This was also true for the Fall 20 semester. We do have one adjunct who is experienced in this regard and so some of us have learned about what goes into building asynchronous courses. Significantly, the instructor indicated that departments had their own support IT person that assists in compiling their course content (snips videos and integrates into the platform, etc.), in addition to compensated trainings.

5.   As remote/distance learning continues in the current environment, what changes has the program instituted based on experiences with remote instruction?

Faculty noted that they are relying more on one-direction lecturing, with considerably reduced class participation. Internship instructors noted that internships have begun remote internships, but students are not able to do some of the networking or taking up opportunities that would normally come up during an in-person internship. Faculty are now dedicating many more hours to office hours per week through individual appointments with students. Also, some faculty are utilizing new platforms in their course (padlet, etc.), though not most or even all faculty are familiar with these tools.

Many faculty are exhausted with the demands of remote learning and the increased demands of the students and university. We are on the computer all day long for both small and large matters.

NOTE: The minor and major responses to the above questions are the same. The minor courses map directly onto the major and no faculty identified any discrepancies or differences between programs.