



<Environmental Studies>

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).**

David Silver, ENVA Program Director, dmsilver@usfca.edu

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

We are submitting a report for the ENVA major.

When ENVA Program Director David Silver began program-wide discussions about assessment, he completely forgot about assessing our minor. As such, we set up a process to assess our major through two classes – Environmental Justice and Capstone – but established no such process to assess our minor. David apologizes profusely and we will be sure to include our minor in next year’s assessment.

- 3. Please note that a Curricular Map should accompany every assessment report. Have there been any revisions to the Curricular Map?**

No, there have been no changes to our Curricular Map.

II. MISSION STATEMENT & PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. **Were any changes made to the program mission statement since the last assessment cycle in October 2018? 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 programs**

No.

Although the Environmental Studies Program has not formally adopted a mission statement, we operate the major and minor in accordance with the following statement:

The Environmental Studies Program is interdisciplinary in nature, reflects the current state of the field, recognizes the relationship between human behavior and nature in ecological issues, and responds to the Jesuit call to promote environmental justice and ethical stewardship of the natural world.

3. **Were any changes made to the program learning outcomes (PLOs) since the last assessment cycle in October 2018? 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.

PLOs (Major):

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the roles of humans and institutions in creating and responding to environmental issues;
2. Integrate perspectives of multiple disciplines to understand the complexities of human-environment interactions;
3. Apply scientific principles to environmental problems;
4. Critically analyze socio-culturally appropriate strategies to address environmental problems; and
5. Connect environmental problems to issues of social justice through study and community engagement.

PLOs (Minor):

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the roles of humans and institutions in creating and responding to environmental issues;
2. Apply scientific principles to environmental problems; and
3. Connect environmental problems to issues of social justice.

4. State the particular program learning outcome(s) you assessed for the academic year 2018-2019. What rubric did you use?

Assessed PLO: "Connect environmental problems to issues of social justice through study and community engagement."

We used the following two rubrics to assess work from two different classes:

ENVA 367 (Environmental Justice) Essays	Complete mastery of the outcome	Mastered the outcome in most parts	Mastered some parts of the outcome	Did not master the outcome at the level intended
<i>How well does the student connect environmental problems to issues of social justice?</i>				
<i>How effectively did the student use academic research methods or community engaged learning methods to demonstrate their knowledge of this connection?</i>				

ENVA 450 (Capstone) projects	Complete mastery of the outcome	Mastered the outcome in most parts	Mastered some parts of the outcome	Did not master the outcome at the level intended
<i>How well does the student connect environmental problems to issues of social justice?</i>				
<i>How effectively did the student use academic research methods or community engaged learning methods to demonstrate their knowledge of this connection?</i>				

III. METHODOLOGY

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

In spring 2019, an Assessment Committee was formed that included professors Adrienne Johnson, David Silver, and Steve Zavestoski. The Assessment Committee agreed to use two spring 2019 classes – Adrienne Johnson’s Environmental Justice and Steve Zavestoski’s Senior Capstone – for our assessment activities. Committee members agreed to meet in summer to evaluate student work.

The Assessment Committee met face to face in late summer 2019. We focused our attention on two categories of student work products: 1) a sample of responses to a final essay assignment in Environmental Justice (ENVA 367) that pertained directly to the PLO; and 2) group projects from Environmental Studies Senior Capstone Seminar (ENVA 450), or Capstone,

where students work in groups to devise and implement a community-engaged project.

We chose two student work products because the PLO being assessed is double-barreled, requiring assessment of both student ability to connect environmental problems to issues of social justice and the ability to use academic research methods or community engaged learning methods to demonstrate their knowledge of this connection. In ENVA 367 (a class of 26 students), random sampling was used to select work products to be assessed. Every 3rd final essay was selected, for a total of 12 essays. In ENVA 450, there were 6 student group projects and all of them were assessed.

We collectively developed our rubric and then piloted it by selecting a small sample of both student work products and scoring them individually. We discussed our scores and made minor tweaks to the rubric. With calibration complete, we jumped into assessing our students' work.

IV. RESULTS & MAJOR FINDINGS

What are the major takeaways from your assessment exercise?

This section asks 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.**

ENVA 367 Essays	Complete mastery of the outcome	Mastered the outcome in most parts	Mastered some parts of the outcome	Did not master the outcome at the level intended
<i>How well does the student connect environmental problems to issues of social justice?</i>	67%	33%	0%	0%

<i>How effectively did the student use academic research methods or community engaged learning methods to demonstrate their knowledge of this connection?</i>	17%	75%	0%	8%
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ENVA 450 projects	Complete mastery of the outcome	Mastered the outcome in most parts	Mastered some parts of the outcome	Did not master the outcome at the level intended
<i>How well does the student connect environmental problems to issues of social justice?</i>	50%	33%	17%	0%
<i>How effectively did the student use academic research methods or community engaged learning methods to demonstrate their knowledge of this connection?</i>	50%	33%	0%	17%

Through this assessment process, we learned many valuable lessons about our students. First, our students are eager to engage (in a philosophical as well as hands-on manner) with broader communities around their understanding of the

connections between social justice and environmental issues. They become particularly inspired when conceptual, academic learning is paired with interactive 'real world' experiences. Second, on a methodological plane, we as faculty could and should work a bit more on literature reviews and, in particular, work with students to learn the value of literature reviews and the purpose they serve. Additionally, we should review 'best practices' with students before they engage with community members. Third, we learned that although our students are eager to connect environmental problems with social justice, many students want more attention paid to cultural and other types of difference (gender, ethnicity, race, class) and how these axes of power shape environmental experiences.

V. CLOSING THE LOOP: ACTION PLAN BASED ON ASSESSMENT RESULTS

1. Based on your analysis in Section 4, what are the next steps that you are 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 any changes to be implemented in the next academic year itself.

It is important to note that our assessment activities go hand-in-hand with our multiple efforts to gauge our students' ideas and aspirations for Environmental Studies. Throughout last year, we had multiple student-led projects and events that gave students the opportunity to voice their concerns and desires for the ENVA major. For example, In fall 2018, an ENVA student organized a student-led forum by and for environmental studies students of color that highlighted the whiteness of the environmental movement and brainstormed ways that ENVA can better meet the needs of students of color. The results of this forum as well as a subsequent survey for all ENVA majors were compiled into a paper and presented by the student at an ENVA faculty meeting in fall 2019. Another example of student-led assessment and surveys happened in spring 2019, when a group of Capstone students organized and led a students-only town hall meeting and series of surveys to gather students' frustrations with and aspirations for ENVA at USF. Findings included students' desire for more community-engaged opportunities and more classes about race, gender, sexuality, and the environment. These findings were presented during Capstone's final forum and shared with all ENVA faculty.

In response to the students and our assessment activities, ENVA recruited prominent bay area food activist and academic Antonio Roman-Alcala to teach a special topics class in spring 2020 titled "Race, Gender, & Food Justice." Further, ENVA faculty member Adrienne Johnson agreed to develop a special topics class "Gender and Environment" offered in spring 2020.

Further, we have reconfigured our Sustainability Café speaker series – our main community-building event – to include more female speakers, more speakers of color, and, for the first time, student speakers. We have also worked hard to transform it from academic-based works to both academic activist-based work. Last year alone featured USF students from the Transparency Campaign and UC Berkeley students who founded Black Earth Farms and led a successful campaign to ban toxic herbicides on Berkeley’s campus.

But perhaps the most important step we took in closing the loop is engage in a year-long discussion and debate about our curriculum – in particular, working to decrease it from 58 units to 46 units and thereby allowing our students to supplement required classes in social science and science with cultural diversity and community-engaged learning classes.

Going forward, we have two objectives. First, as a newly formed core faculty unit/group consisting of ENVA faculty members (since January 2018), we are committed to continuing ongoing discussions about how to reconfigure the ENVA curriculum in ways that better suit the needs of our ever-changing student base. Second, we are committed to developing new classes that reflect student interests in the links between nature and diversity, and actively revising existing courses so they reflect this new direction as well.

2. What were the most important suggestions/feedback from the FDCD on your last assessment report (for academic year 2017-2018, submitted in October 2018)? How did you incorporate or address the suggestion(s) in the more recent assessment discussed in this report?

The most important suggestions/feedback from our last assessment report focused on the need to consider our learning outcomes and PLOs when revising our curriculum. This feedback was hugely helpful during our year-long discussion and debate regarding our curriculum and was considered as we crafted our curriculum revision proposal (passed 9-1 by our ENVA faculty and approved recently by the College Curriculum Committee). We will continue discussing the relationships – and possible need for changes – among our learning outcomes, PLOs, and our new curriculum.

VI. BIG PICTURE

What have you learned about your program from successive rounds of assessment? Is a picture of the whole program starting to emerge? For example, what areas of strength have emerged? What opportunities of improvement have you identified?

We are excited by our students' commitment to discovering the intersections among environmentalism and social justice and their willingness and capacity to share their interest in and knowledge of this intersection with larger audiences. We hope to build more opportunities for this outreach among our other classes.

We also need and will continue discussing the relationships – and possible need for changes – among our learning outcomes, PLOs, and our new curriculum.

VII. Feedback to your Assessment Team

What suggestions do you have for your assessment team (the Faculty Directors of Curriculum Development and the Associate Dean for Academic Effectiveness)? What can we do to improve the process?

Is it really necessary to do this every year? Could this process be performed once every two years?

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

(Any rubrics used for assessment, relevant tables, charts and figures should be included here)