

M.A. Program in Asia Pacific Studies

ASSESSMENT REPORT
ACADEMIC YEAR 2018 – 2019
REPORT DUE DATE: 11/01/2019

- Curriculum Map should be submitted along with Assessment Report

Some useful contacts:

1. Prof. Mark Meritt, FDCD, Humanities – meritt@usfca.edu

Academic Effectiveness Annual Assessment Resource Page:

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

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).

John Nelson, Academic Director

MAPS Program

nelsonj@usfca.edu

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

Submitting for a Graduate program

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

None at this time.

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 program

Mission Statement (Graduate/Certificate):

No changes.

Our two-year, 28 unit program provides knowledge and analysis of the societies, history, literature, economies, and politics of the world's most dynamic region: the Asia Pacific. The 28 units typically consist of three core courses, a capstone project, and three elective courses.

2. Were any changes made to the program learning outcomes (PLOs) since the last assessment cycle in October 2017? 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.

PLOs (Graduate / Certificate):

No changes.

"Students completing the MAPS program will demonstrate...

1. ...an ability to apply research tools and methods to critically analyze topics within the interdisciplinary fields of Asia Pacific Studies.

2. ...an understanding of sociocultural histories and traditions, political and economic patterns of development, organizational practices and behaviors, and contemporary events as evidenced in the Asia Pacific region.

3. ...written and oral proficiency in an Asian language corresponding to the fourth semester of USF undergraduate courses, or the equivalent level in languages not taught at USF.

4. ...practical experience in Asia-Pacific related contexts via opportunities for academic and professional development such as internships, fieldwork, conferences, symposia, public programs and other types of experiential learning."

3. State the particular Program Learning Outcome(s) you assessed for the academic year 2018-2019.
PLO(s) being assessed (Major/Graduate/Certificate):

#4 (see above)

After assessing PO #2 for two years in a row, we decided to do #4 based on a variety of activities held last year. Responses from students were invited following the event because we did not want to qualify (or compromise!) the occasion beforehand as being "assessable".

III. METHODOLOGY

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

For example, "the department used questions that were inputted in the final examination pertaining directly to the <said PLO>. An independent group of faculty (not teaching the course) then evaluated the responses to the questions and gave the students a grade for responses to those questions."

Important Note – WSCUC advises us to use "direct methods" which relate to a direct evaluation of a student work product. "Indirect methods" like exit interviews or student surveys can be used only as additional complements to a direct method.

Important: Please attach, at the end of this report, a copy of the rubric used for assessment.

Methodology used (Graduate/Certificate):

Last year was our first to try and assess Program Outcome #4's theme of extracurricular activities that we feel are important for MAPS students to attend. Depending on the logistics of living in the San Francisco Bay Area, some students attended a number of events while others attended none at all. We tried to encourage student participation by asking instructors to provide extra credit, which some did and some were ideologically opposed to.

The methodology turned out to be informal and loosely-structured. We were not assessing the events presented to our students but tried to gather information afterwards. I know this is not ideal but we did not want to burden the events while they were running with data-gathering methods. Part of this motivation is to be a good "local citizen" at USF and not annoy our sponsors, the Center for Asia Pacific Studies.

From a programmatic point of view, we were happy to have good participation for each of the events described below. From an assessment point of view, our efforts to gather information might be considered less than successful since we have few direct emails or other documentation about student participation in the events themselves. We do have

a survey which will be discussed later since it is considered an "indirect" method of gathering data.

Here are the events. I list them in general order so you can get a sense of the scope of the events, and how they supplement our students' educational experience:

Events

The actual number of public programs and events sponsored and held by the Center is sixteen total. This is a very busy program run by Executive Director Melissa Dale, Program Manager Anny Crisp, and Program Assistant Annmarie Belda at the Center. Given everyone's busy schedules, students are generally not required to attend except when a program impacts a seminar topic directly and occurs on the same evening as the seminar.

Fall 2018

ASIA PACIFIC STUDIES FALL FESTIVAL	Tuesday, August 28
FILM SCREENING: "A SUITABLE GIRL"	Wednesday, September 12
WORLD'S LARGEST EDUCATION SYSTEM	Wednesday, September 19
DISCOVERING KOREAN BEAUTY SECRETS	Tuesday, October 2
MENTAL HEALTH IN CHINA	Thursday, October 18
PERSPECTIVES FROM THE CONSUL GENERAL'S OFFICE	Tuesday, October 30
CONTRACEPTIVE DIPLOMACY: REPRODUCTIVE POLITICS AND IMPERIAL AMBITIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN	Wednesday, November 7
ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES FACING THE PHILIPPINES	Wednesday, November 14
PANDA NATION	Wednesday, November 28
MAPS end-of-term reception	Tues, Dec. 3

Spring 2019

FILM: ON HAPPINESS ROAD	Tuesday, January 29
LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION	Tuesday, February 5

"How to Market Your Unique Skill Set and Land a Job Working with Asia"
Emily Taylor, Consultant for Next Step Careers February 8

HAPPINESS IN CHINA: FAMILY, FATE, AND THE GOOD DEATH
Thursday, February 28

Academic Conference in Honolulu Thursday to Saturday, Feb. 21-23

EAST ASIA IS NOT AS DANGEROUS AS WE THINK: US-CHINA AND REGIONAL SECURITY IN 2019
Wednesday, March 6

FILM SCREENING: CROSSING BHUTAN Wednesday, March 20

WHAT NOT TO WEAR: WOMEN'S FASHION AND BODY POLITICS IN NORTH KOREA
Wednesday, April 17

KIRIYAMA PROFESSOR Workshop, "Japan's Economic Prospects"
March 29, April 12

KIRIYAMA PROFESSOR LECTURE : PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES FOR THE JAPANESE ECONOMY
Thursday, May 2

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.

I'll start off with the rubric used to shape the assessment of these programs. This is an exercise more for the requirements of assessment than it is to improve the experience of students attending the programs. As stated earlier, there are many variables that are in play--logistics, residency near or far from USF, work-related duties, general interest, student motivation, and more--all of which have some impact on whether or not a student attends a particular program. To judge their experience as "advanced", "intermediate", or "elementary" may be helpful in the process of assessment, but it doesn't really translate into motivating the students to attend an event.

Program Learning Outcome #4	Advanced	Intermediate	Elementary
Students critically demonstrate practical experience via...	Student work shows...	Student work shows...	Student work shows...
internships, fieldwork	...a strong desire to access knowledge outside the classroom via internships, fieldwork	...a medium desire to access knowledge outside the classroom via internships, fieldwork	...a weak desire to access knowledge outside the classroom via internships, fieldwork
conferences, symposia	...a strong desire to participate, improve their paper and style, connect w/ audience	...a medium desire to participate, but paper improvement and connecting with audience is average	...a hesitant desire to participate; paper improvement and connecting with audience is poor
public programs	...a strong desire to hear and comprehend the program	...a medium desire to hear and comprehend the program	...a weak desire to hear and comprehend the program
class excursions	...a strong desire to participate and take whatever comes as a learning experience	...a medium desire to participate and take whatever comes as a learning experience	...a weak desire to participate and take whatever comes as a learning experience

Results (Graduate/Certificate):

Just to refresh your memory, the program outcome for #4 is the following:

“Students completing the MAPS program will demonstrate... practical experience in Asia-Pacific related contexts via opportunities for academic and professional development such as internships, fieldwork, conferences, symposia, public programs and other types of experiential learning.”

In seeing the list of programs available to our students, it is obvious they provide practical, experiential learning through the Center as well as through two symposia and a grad student conference in Honolulu. (As a cultural anthropologist by training, I would love to assess how well fieldwork is also a part of the MAPS curriculum, but perhaps another year.)

The Honolulu conference is organized and run by the East/West Center, a major non-profit think-tank and research institution at the University of Hawai'i. It is geared towards

grad students exclusively, with around 150 attending from all over the world. Students must submit a paper abstract and be selected in a competitive application process.

Before attending, we always hold a research presentation workshop led by myself to help students accommodate to a more rigorous style of giving a public presentation. Their verbal comments are always positive upon their return, and photographs seem to attest to their diverse experiences in presenting their research.



For the various public programs sponsored by the Center, the indirect assessment method of a **survey** is part of this report. I created a series of questions to assess student involvement and motivations for participating. Here are the seven questions, with full answers on the accompanying PDF file attached to this report:

1. Please check the programs you attended (a full list is provided, one that mirrors pp. 4-5 of the report)
2. What was the total number of events you attended?
3. Which three events were you particularly glad you attended?
4. Check as many of the reasons for attending the event as you like
 - a. The talk was closely related to a seminar in which I was enrolled (15% of responses from eight students)
 - b. The talk was timely and relevant to contemporary issues in the Asia Pacific today (25%)
 - c. The presentation related to significant disciplinary areas: culture, history, economics, international politics, and so on (30%)

- d. The talk helped me learn information relevant to my career path (15%)
- e. Other (15%)

- 5. What special topics or programs would you be interested in seeing during the next academic year?
- 6. Did you volunteer at any programs or special events?
- 7. Which events did you volunteer for?

Once again, full answers to the questions can be found in the survey PDF which is attached to this report.

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 (Graduate/Certificate):

I don't think the term "mastery" applies to this particular learning outcome. We want our students to be versatile as "subject-matter experts" in the Asia Pacific, with "mastery" a term reserved for their seminar research and writing (especially the final Capstone seminar). We make an effort to contact them via email and sometimes a flyer whenever a major program is coming up, and encourage them to attend *if* the topic is close to their interests or relevant in other ways of which they may not be aware. For example, if a program is focused on travel in Bhutan, it might seem less central to a student interested in Chinese medicine. But if the student knew there is a scene in the film related to traditional Bhutanese medicine, s/he would be motivated to attend the screening.

2. What were the most important suggestions/feedback from the FDCD on your last assessment report (for academic year 2016-2017, submitted in October 2017)? How did you incorporate or address the suggestion(s) in this report?

Suggestions (Major/Graduate/Certificate):

First, I'd like to thank Mark Meritt for reading the report from last year and providing a few suggestions, which are copied and responded to below:

"The MAPS report understandably indicates that student achievement of their selected outcome was difficult to assess using traditional methods. Assessing participation in out-of-class activities presents challenges, and assessment leaders in the college should assist MAPS in developing ways to meet these challenges."

Thanks for your understanding!

"The following are two initial suggestions (ones that probably will require further discussion). First, those students who meet the outcome by participating in internships or similar programs may be asked (or required) to obtain a letter of evaluation (or similar document) from supervisors. Alternatively or in addition, all students in the MAPS program may be required to submit reflective essays (perhaps brief and informal) regarding their participation in an activity related to the fourth learning outcome each year or semester."

In the "good old days" when internships could be counted for course and professional credit, this was a normal practice to obtain letters from supervisors. Now that the policy has shifted, very few students engage in internships until after their graduation. There is simply no immediate reward or payback for the time and energy spent to make an internship successful, especially in a place like San Francisco.

Please see the next answer for our view on "reflective essays".

"Though student reflections are typically considered "indirect" evidence, for such an experience-based learning outcome, the students' reflections on their own experiences would constitute direct evidence."

We have considered using short essays as assessment vehicles, but decided against it given the heavy writing requirements in seminars. We like adding an essay to the enjoyable experience of participating in a program or event will be burdensome and perhaps be seen as a negative requirement from program administrators. We have, however, tried a short paragraph as a way to summarize impressions, feelings, and

thoughts about a program, such as this September's class visit to a theatrical production in downtown Berkeley. We plan to post these reviews on our MAPS Facebook site and then use them in next year's assessment report.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

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

Please see the Survey Data in the PDF attached to this file and uploaded to the website for assessment. This will be (once finalized) my final assessment report to the university since I'm ending my administrative association with MAPS as of Fall 2020 when I head out on sabbatical. I hope to continue leading a fall seminar once I return and look forward to a few more years of enjoyable teaching.