UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO | College of Arts and Sciences

ASSESSMENT REPORT REMOTE/DISTANCE LEARNING

NAME OF YOUR PROGRAM/DEPARTMENT/MAJOR OR MINOR/CERTIFICATE <INSERT HERE>

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).**

   Program Director: Cathal Doherty SJ (cdohertysj@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

   (b)

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.**

   No.

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):

Mission Statement (Minor):

No.

Mission Statement:

The Minor in Catholic Studies explores the Catholic tradition in all its cultural diversity and universal scope. Catholicism (from Greek *katá + holos*: 'relating to the whole') is arguably the first 'globalization' having an immense impact on human society worldwide. In this minor, students achieve critical insight into the self-understanding of Catholicism as transcendent actor for the common good and human flourishing, in the intellectual enterprise, the arts and its relations with other religions.

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. Although the program title has been officially changed from "Catholic Studies and Social Thought" to "Catholic Studies".

PLOs (Major/Graduate/Certificate):

PLOs (Minor):

Students will:

1. *Catholic Social Teaching:* Demonstrate an understanding of how Catholic social teaching interfaces with religious and secular culture.

2. *Catholic Intellectual Tradition:* Articulate the major intellectual, social, historical, and aesthetic perspectives of the Catholic cultural tradition.

3. *Pluralism & the Common Good:* Articulate how Catholic social teaching interfaces with other religions in a pluralist society.

III. REMOTE/DISTANCE LEARNING

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

   The general consensus among faculty was that teaching can be quite effective in the online environment, but with significant limitations. Delivery of lectures, student engagement exercises, discussion seminars and the administration of examinations are all quite adaptable to the remote environment, as are the submission and grading of written work through the Canvas platform.

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

   Primarily, professors reported that the relational aspect of teaching suffers in the absence of real classroom interaction, both the relationship between student and professor and the relationship between students themselves.

Student engagement is also much more difficult to monitor, given that the environment itself makes it difficult for students to concentrate entirely on synchronous learning. Instead, the computer screen offers a variety of distractions. This is also a feature of the in-person classroom environment, however, when electronic devices are permitted.

In general, professors reported that student engagement is optimal in smaller seminar-type groups (less than 20 students), in which discussion plays a central role in the class. One described how it is important to be able to see all the students faces on the same screen. Another professor reported that in a class of 40+ students, which consisted of a mixture of lecture, video and discussion, the breakout room feature on Zoom was largely a pedagogical failure and simply served as a means to provide some socialization among students.

Zoom, in particular, suffers from some significant technological limitations, due partly to bandwidth issues, some inherent to the platform itself:

- The breakout room feature is somewhat rigid and does not easily replicate the plasticity of real-life student groups, e.g. showing different images or texts to different groups at the same time. There is also a significant time lag when dropping into and out of student groups, making it more difficult for instructors to hop back and forth between groups.
- The quality of images and videos 'broadcast' during class is degraded. High density electronic images of artwork are not reproducible in the Zoom environment making it difficult to use artwork as a pedagogical tool in a synchronous class.
- Similarly, the visual quality of film shown over Zoom is often quite poor with 'jerky' frames that display time lag with the audio.

For these reasons, one professor preferred Echo360 for the preparation of asynchronous lectures.

Finally, a common complaint was the difficulty in showing video clips from DVD or protected streaming sources (e.g. AppleTV) on both Zoom and Echo360 (although a 'fix' was found during the year, thanks to Ken Yoshioka).

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 professors chose to teach synchronously, using Zoom.

One professor, since over a third of students were located around the globe in widely divergent time zones, chose to teach 2:1 asynchronously, preparing two asynchronous lectures on Echo360 per week, and holding one synchronous Zoom class, which was recorded and made available to the entire class. In this way, about one third of this class experienced 100% asynchronous teaching.

Another professor reported that the ratio of synchronous to asynchronous teaching depended on student need and the difficulty of the week's material.

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

Most professors reported that synchronous teaching was more attractive both to instructors and to students. The same professors, however, did not experiment with any significant asynchronous elements in their courses.

The two professors who did have recourse to asynchronous teaching, to varying degrees, argued that a blend of synchronous and asynchronous teaching works particularly well. The asynchronous element allows students to be in control of their learning, while the synchronous element facilitates the relational and spontaneous aspect of teaching.

One professor, however, offered the observation that asynchronous teaching gave some students (perhaps distressed or less motivated) a false sense of security, leading them to believe they could catch up on weeks of work in the few days before an examination.

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

As this is an interdisciplinary minor which is serviced by a variety of departments, no changes have been made at the program level because of the Covid-19 emergency.

OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

(Any relevant tables, charts and figures, if the program so chooses, could be included here)