



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

**ASSESSMENT REPORT REMOTE/DISTANCE LEARNING  
ACADEMIC YEAR 2019 - 2020**

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

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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

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- 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](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

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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).

Bruce Snider, Chair, [bhsnider@usfca.edu](mailto:bhsnider@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

c. aggregate report, 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.

No revisions.

## II. MISSION STATEMENT & PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

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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

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

No changes. The following mission statement has been used since 2008:

The study of literature and writing has long stood at the center of humanistic education. In that tradition, the department of English educates students in the rich intellectual and creative values embodied in literary works. Because literature by its very nature expresses the complex “intellectual, spiritual, moral, social and psychological” life of human cultures, its study is integral to the Jesuit mission of valuing “learning as a humanizing, social activity.” Our inclusive curriculum fully supports “a diverse, socially responsible learning community of high quality scholarship and academic rigor sustained by a faith that does justice.”

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

Same as above:

The study of literature and writing has long stood at the center of humanistic education. In that tradition, the department of English educates students in the rich intellectual and creative values embodied in literary works. Because literature by its very nature expresses the complex “intellectual, spiritual, moral, social and psychological” life of human cultures, its study is integral to the Jesuit mission of valuing “learning as a humanizing, social activity.” Our inclusive curriculum fully supports “a diverse, socially responsible learning community of high quality scholarship and academic rigor sustained by a faith that does justice.”

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 an aggregate report, please provide the current PLOs for both the major and the minor programs.

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

**PLOs (Major/Graduate/Certificate):**

No changes (last revised in 2013):

1. Students will demonstrate in writing and speech the ability to develop clear and coherent interpretive essays and original creative writing; they can articulate in writing and discussion/workshop their responses to literary and/or peer texts.
2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of and sensitivity to pluralism in response to texts that focus on diversity and social justice issues, i.e. writings that underscore the complexity of race, ethnicity, gender, class and sexual orientation.
3. Students will learn to read texts from multiple perspectives: e.g. learn differentiated readings via various contemporary critical theories.
4. Students will identify characteristics of different literary genres: novel, short fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama.
5. Students will identify differences between various historical periods and literary movements.

**PLOs (Minor):**

Same as above/ No changes (last revised in 2013):

1. Students will demonstrate in writing and speech the ability to develop clear and coherent interpretive essays and original creative writing; they can articulate in writing and discussion/workshop their responses to literary and/or peer texts.
2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of and sensitivity to pluralism in response to texts that focus on diversity and social justice issues, i.e. writings that underscore the complexity of race, ethnicity, gender, class and sexual orientation.
3. Students will learn to read texts from multiple perspectives: e.g. learn differentiated readings via various contemporary critical theories.
4. Students will identify characteristics of different literary genres: novel, short fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama.

5. Students will identify differences between various historical periods and literary movements.

### III. REMOTE/DISTANCE LEARNING

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

Generally, since most literature and writing courses involve discussion-based pedagogical approaches, faculty felt English classes were quite adaptable—if not always ideally suited—to a remote/distance learning environment. Faculty used Zoom for lectures, in-class discussions, and student presentations. Zoom breakout rooms were useful for small group and partner work while Canvas was utilized for outside discussion threads. For many faculty, the biggest challenge has been learning the relevant technologies, familiarizing themselves with Zoom, Canvas, and other platforms they had not previously used (or at least not to the extent that remote learning requires). For the most part, faculty were able to continue effectively with their planned class activities. In fact, at least one faculty member acknowledged that meeting over Zoom made it possible for him to arrange class visits by writers/scholars from outside the Bay Area, whose travel expenses would, in normal circumstances, have made visiting prohibitive.

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

While the English Department's discussion-based classes translated relatively easily to an online format, most English faculty agreed that the quality of discussion suffered. Many felt it was difficult to reproduce the same levels of energy and student engagement generated in an in-person face-to-face environment. Some students seemed less comfortable participating via

Zoom and, of course, WiFi signals created some accessibility issues. Faculty also noted a loss of “the easy camaraderie and banter” that’s produced when everyone is around a seminar table or in a circle.

In addition, some in-person aspects of classes had to be changed dramatically or cancelled altogether. These included things like group trips to Bay Area literary sites, class attendance of theatrical performances, student internships, and various experience-based writing prompts. Some faculty also noted that, with students unable to check out materials from the library, sources for research papers were limited to use of E-books and online articles

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

Over half of English faculty continued everything synchronously. Others chose to incorporate some asynchronous work in varying proportions, in part due to concerns of Zoom fatigue amongst students. On average, the latter group devoted 30% (a rough estimate) of their classes to asynchronous learning.

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

Many faculty found synchronous instruction effective for activities previously done in person, such as class discussion, small group work via Zoom break-out rooms, peer reviews, in-class writing exercises, and brief lectures. Some felt it worked especially well when bringing a module or unit of the course to its culmination by having students discuss major themes and problems or by having them give live presentations.

Many felt asynchronous learning worked best for recorded long lectures, module quizzes and other types of formative assessment tools. Asynchronous use of Canvas discussion boards were

especially helpful for giving students a place/opportunity to work out ideas before coming to class. It also provided another tool for helping students build community.

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

As remote/distance learning has continued, faculty have worked to ameliorate some of the downsides experienced last spring. They've articulated clearer Zoom etiquette to help create a more effective online learning environment. To lessen student Zoom fatigue, some have introduced asynchronous work. Others have tried to build a greater variety of activities into their in-class lesson plans, including more in-class writing, small group work, video watching, and the use of more Power Point to give students a visual reference. Some faculty have introduced longer or more frequent one-on-one conferences.

They've also extended deadlines, shortened some papers, and pared down readings. In general, many agreed that a greater sense of understanding and flexibility has been key.

With the elimination of non-curricular in-person programming, the department has also re-imagined many of its in-person events as virtual events. This includes our end-of-semester student study groups, Word Night (the writing concentration's monthly open mic event), the *Ignatian* magazine's launch party, and the end-of-the-year senior seminar conference. The department has also co-sponsored two "Writers of Discontent" Zoom readings/fundraisers—one in July 2020 and one in November 2020—in support of racial equity and the Black Lives Matter movement. Going forward, the department agrees these events are crucial for building community and encouraging a deeper engagement from students and faculty alike.

## **OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL MATERIALS**

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