UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO | College of Arts and Sciences

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).

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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

This is the alternate Reflections document for the Music minor

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 changes

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):

N/A

Mission Statement (Minor):

The Minor in Music program recognizes students' passion for the discipline and builds on it to deepen their knowledge and skills and to inspire them to use their art for the betterment of society.

PLOs (Major/Graduate/Certificate):

PLOs (Minor):

No changes:

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Analyze musical trends, works, and methodologies within their socio-historical context.
2. Apply musical skills in performing, teaching, composing, writing, or presenting.
3. Understand and articulate how music is integral to a humane and just society.

III. REMOTE/DISTANCE LEARNING

I have to preface the discussion with an explanation: Music classes come in different formats and modalities and the answers to the questions will be drastically different for each group of courses:

a) "academic" classes, that is classes that are traditional in format and taught in a classroom to a group of students. Most of those are core classes but a number are not. These academic classes also come in multiple "flavors" ranging from lecture style (a minority) on a continuum to purely seminar style (discussion based and with study of scores or other such.

b) "Workshop" or "lab" classes, which are typically the music theory classes where after an explanation by the teacher the students engage in practical work in music theory—analyzing scores, composing music, doing math-like exercises identifying chords, keys, rhythms, counterpoint, and a myriad such technical things. They also involve a certain amount of ear training. These classes, like most of the academic ones as well, require a classroom with a piano.

c) Technique classes: these are lessons, one-on-one meetings of a teacher and a student, with an instrument or the voice. These are tailored to each student.

d) Ensemble classes: these are group learning and rehearsing ensembles, both vocal (choirs) and instrumental, or mixed. Some are called band.

NOTE that the answers below come from instructors teaching in the different modalities.

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

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

Like the other performing arts, music had a hard time delivering the same quality of instruction in a remote environment.

a) **"academic" classes**: These were a mixed bag. Obviously, lecturing on a remote platform works insofar as it is a "passive" activity for the student. However we have precious little of that. The real problem for all academic music classes is that even lectures revolve around playing/showing music examples, and while there is a lot on YouTube, one cannot often find the performance that best illustrates the point, and Zoom won't allow one to show excerpts from one's DVDs. We tried all manner of software, including paying $200+ for Camtasia, trying to record off of one's DVD and then showing that to the class, but Zoom doesn't allow that either (greying out the whole screen). That proved particularly problematic for the two opera classes, since the stuff that is available on Youtube most often doesn't have subtitles, and thus is useless.

The other thing that worked only in part is the discussion part of seminar-like classes. In part it's hard for students to freely discuss things because zoom only allows one voice at a time and so if they speak over each other or get animated, which is common in real life, that gets killed by the technology. In part it's also because we can't see the body language and thus respond to cues indicating discomfort or other such.

That having being said, breakout rooms often worked fine and the feedback on that was positive from the students. From the instructors there is the frustration of not being able to be in multiple places at one time.

One tough element was the impossibility to gauge student involvement: when sharing the screen to show PowerPoint presentation one couldn't see if students were following or gone for coffee, which one can do in a class. In all cases there was also the distraction that students faced by not being in an educationally dedicated space but rather in a space that was

multipurpose and often shared (one faculty reports having been subjected to a roommate changing behind the student during class).

b) **"Workshop" or "lab" classes (music theory and composition)**: Some Music Theory was challenging to adapt to remote learning as the in-class quizzes were not able to be implemented on Canvas. Much of music theory is handwritten, so students continued to receive handouts for exercises and exams in PDF format. They had to figure out ways to fill these in digitally. Similarly, in class activities such as sight- reading and analyzing music did not transfer well. Students felt disconnected and had to rely on themselves and me as their instructor more than each other. Other music theory classes, such as songwriting essentially became private lessons where students worked with the instructor on their individual projects.

c) **Technique classes (lessons)**: these were perhaps the easiest to adapt: students connected with the instructors through some platform (zoom, skype, or facetime, or similar) and the lessons more or less proceeded. Problems included the lag, reliable internet connections, as well as the problem of not being able to be physically touched (to position a hand correctly or correct a stance or a fingering) as well as not being able to be accompanied by the instructor due to the lag. All in all, however, these worked quite well.

d) **Ensemble classes (choirs, bands, ensembles)**: these were the hardest because they are predicated upon rehearsing together, building ensemble, blending and playing/singing *together*. Most were just canceled (which creates a problem for the majors since they are required), but some instructors found alternate ways to cover some material and meet the learning outcomes. For example they had students practice their own parts and record them separately, and then edit them together. They also met on zoom to create group cohesion and for all the discussion, planning, etc. One ensemble managed to have small groups rehearse together remotely, though no group performance was possible. As I said, however, the point of this part of the curriculum is collective music making, which is antithetical with remote learning, at least with today's technology (because of the lag).

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

a) **"academic" classes**: most of the classes were synchronous, with a small portion being asynchronous (at most ¼) as instructors were able to record lectures or presentations. For seminar classes the asynchronous portion was negligible, obviously. Of course, the problem with asynchronous material is that there is no way to check if it has been done other than adding yet more assignments.

b) **"Workshop" or "lab" classes (music theory and composition)**: from one instructor "The only thing that worked synchronously was maintaining a sense of community. Course lessons had to be learned mostly asynchronously or with individual tutoring, which was synchronous between individual students and me." From another class "This became fully asynchronous for each lesson with individual synchronous tutoring as needed. If I was less organized, this upper level theory course would not be able to address student aspirations and needs."

c) **Technique classes (lessons)**: 100% of the lessons were synchronous. Obviously the practicing between lessons was individual and thus asynchronous, but not the instruction.

d) **Ensemble classes (choirs, bands, ensembles)**: this from one instructor: "50/50. Practicing in small groups worked well synchronous, even with the technical limitations. Assigning sections to record and submit asynchronous worked well for hearing progression of individuals, as did a group project that involved piecing together recordings of individuals." Most ensembles were canceled

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

a) **"academic" classes**: I would say that what can work asynchronously is the lecturing part at times, or the presentation part. However, even so the lecturing or presentation of slides is more effective synchronously since it becomes live and dynamic, allowing for student questions and feedback in real time. Asynchronous watching of some videos and performances is, however, effective as students can pace themselves.

b) **"Workshop" or "lab" classes (music theory and composition)**: see above

c) **Technique classes (lessons)**: asynchronous lessons can't exist

d) **Ensemble classes (choirs, bands, ensembles)**: asynchronous rehearsals are called practice, they can't exist either.

I wouldn't say that changes have been implemented structurally or systematically. We have all adapted to this new environment (with hours of additional work for everyone) and have made as much lemonade from lemons as possible. However, in the performing arts some things just don't translate. It is a common feeling that we have learned some techniques to have on line and remote presentations or performances, but we also all agree that they are a poor substitute for performances. In music, which students have been able to record themselves performing, it has been first of all a performance without an audience (and that is not the same thing by any means, as ALL performances are affected by the "vibe" of the audience, and, second, it has only been a solo event, with one person alone in a room (in the best case with a pre-recorded accompaniment track).

A negative change has been the necessity to cancel most ensembles, and trying to find substitutes for graduating students.

In academic classes instructors have adapted by using technology and other systems and platforms, and perhaps some are here to stay (for example, recording some lecture material or assigning students to watch an opera on their own), but every single instructor without fail has reported being very unhappy with the remote instruction, particularly because of:

1. The unreliable connection some students have, putting them at a disadvantage
2. The impossibility to respond to body language
3. The difficulty of keeping students engaged (and checking if they are) when they are in shared, non-instructional spaces
4. The complication in administering fair and appropriate testing.

The only positive aspect of teaching remotely seems to have been the much more assiduous attendance of students, though that does NOT mean they were *actually* there (multiple people reported the difficulty in knowing if students were "there" or were watching a show on the screen while appearing to be staring at the zoom window—eye movement betraying them).

a) **"academic" classes**:

b) **"Workshop" or "lab" classes (music theory and composition)**:

c) **Technique classes (lessons):**

d) **Ensemble classes (choirs, bands, ensembles):**

OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

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