

Martín-Baró Scholars Program Reflection Assessment Report

Date of submission: Dec. 4, 2020

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Name of Program: Martín-Baró Scholars Program

Type of Program: Non-degree seeking

College of Arts and Sciences Division: Humanities

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This alternative reflection assessment report briefly describes a unique program for first-year students that earns five cores over one academic year (A1, A2, C1, CD, SL), and reflects upon the challenges that affected our work. The timing of the pandemic in Spring 2020 severely compromised one of our goals for last year (holding a campus-wide US Census Forum scheduled for late March). While we did not meet all of our program learning outcome goals (we met two out of three), we did at least meet all 20 of our core learning outcomes. We have made major adjustments to our outreach component this coming year to adapt to our learning environment (doing online voter registration outreach, and working on new interviews to create a second edition of a student-driven book of biographies). It is our hope that once our campus fully reopens in Fall 2021, our program will be able to truly take flight again when we can better meet our community-engagement goals.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE MBS PROGRAM

We are now in the midst of working with our 19th cohort of the Martín-Baró Scholars. I have served as director of the MBS Program since Spring 2012 and have revised the curriculum significantly over the last six years.

MBS, as we call it, eludes simple description: we are a freshman-only living-learning community, a public speaking class, a composition class, a literature class, a class on cultural diversity, and we perform significant service in one community each year. Yet MBS is truly meant to be a coalescence of all of these endeavors, to be truly interdisciplinary.

We are designed to meet the following cores: A1 (public speaking), A2 (written communication), C1 (literature), CD (cultural diversity), and SL (service learning, though we prefer the appellation “community-engaged learning” as a more accurate description of our work).

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 Holler, Program Director, dholler@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

This is a 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.

We have not made any changes necessitating a revised 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 2019? Kindly state “Yes” or “No.” **No.**

Mission Statement

The mission of the Martín-Baró Scholars Program is to introduce students to the complexities of policies that affect the underserved in San Francisco and the Bay Area. This community-engaged program inculcates advocacy and encourages students to act as well-informed, compassionate, and patient agents of change, focusing on long-term goals associated with ethically establishing social justice.*

- Adams, Bell and Griffin define social justice as both a process and a goal: “The goal of social justice is full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs. Social justice includes a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure. We envision a society in which individuals are both self-determining ... and interdependent.” (Adams, Maurianne and Lee Anne Bell, Pat Griffin. *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*. New York: Routledge, 2007)

2. Were any changes made to the program learning outcomes (PLOs) since the last assessment cycle in October 2019? Kindly state “Yes” or “No.” **No.**

Please provide the current PLOs below.

Students who complete the Martín-Baró Scholars Program will be able to:

1. Identify and analyze policies and systems in San Francisco and the Bay Area that have historically created inequities.
2. Research, present on, and work alongside underserved people in at least one neighborhood of San Francisco.
3. Co-create and implement a community-engaged project with enduring impact on the community they serve.

III. REMOTE/DISTANCE LEARNING

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

Thankfully we were able to complete our long-form (15-20 minute) presentations and work on our final papers (10+ pages), despite the serious enthusiasm drop that occurred as we adapted to our remote learning environment. Thankfully, the bonds that the class had built up as a living-learning community helped them support each other to a great degree. I ended up scheduling one hour individual meetings with students for checkin time + time to get formative feedback on their capstone projects. There were many outside of class Zoom meetings and phone calls, but we somehow managed to meet all our learning outcomes for the year, but could not meet one of our program learning outcomes (see below).

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

Sadly, we had worked on creating and leading a university-wide US Census Forum, with the leading national census historian (Dr. Margo Anderson), the leading expert on multiracial categories in the Census (Dr. Kim Williams), guest speakers from the California Secretary of State's Office, and our local Census outreach officials. We also arranged outreach tables for many local non-profits, and we had set up a student poster session with Politics students, MUPA students, and our program's students. The logistical arrangements took months (we created library displays, bought the plane tickets, had well-scripted introductions prepared by student ambassadors, promotional work, outreach to 20+ co-sponsors). We had timed the event for the last week in March after researching social justice inequities that result from Census undercounts, and we were ready to go. Sadly, as we know, March 23, 2020, was a time of transition and adjustment for all of us, and we did not have time to convert it to an online event. The students were, in most cases, truly dispirited. In terms of our PLOs, the third PLO, namely to "Co-create and implement a community-engaged project with enduring impact on the community they serve. . . ."—well, we simply couldn't make it happen in time. Morale was quite low, but we adapted our final weeks together to showcase student research and to support each other in adapting to the new environment. It is sad that we could not reach the wider audience that we had in mind. It stung for all of us. Me too, of course.

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

We conducted all of our Spring 2020 classes synchronously.

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

Given the close bonds of our class as a living-learning community, we immediately decided that meeting synchronously was a far better option. I soon discovered that we could not cover as

much material as I would have liked (I think I had to forgo three reading assignments), because students did need time to adjust to the new environment.

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

We made major adaptations to the learning environment this year. We have partnered with the Leo T. McCarthy Center for Public Service and the Common Good, and with Angie Vuong of USF Votes in particular, to do as much online outreach as possible for the 2020 elections. We took advantage of the fact that we had students working from home in many US states, and had them adapt their messages to their local audiences. We helped register many students and young people in the 18-29 age category to vote. We also had students do as much online outreach as possible to inform people about the importance of the US Census, which unfortunately had shifting final count deadlines and many legal impediments this fall.

In the spring we plan to have many guest speakers and to continue our work on the Changemakers biography project. We will be [updating our blog which now features 95 biographies](#), creating podcasts, conducting interviews, and preparing a second edition of the book, which is being considered as a textbook for SF Unified School District. (Some good news this week, by the way, was that the SF Human Rights Commission printed 250 more copies of our book to be used for their workshops.) Our current students, even though they are unhappy working from home, do know that they are part of a larger project, and they seem quite enthusiastic about contributing to it in spring. Again, thanks to the McCarthy Center, we are able to do a lot of this work: they have helped us build community bridges that predated this current crisis, and bridges and connections that will outlast this covid crisis as well.

Despite the challenges, we intend to make the most of our time this coming year. The students in my current cohort have done extraordinary work so far, though the online environment is fatiguing and quite simply not as satisfying as doing community-engagement work in the world.

FINAL NOTE

Thank you for allowing us to fulfill these assessment reports through alternative means this academic year. Data collection would have been very difficult during the end of the spring term, so I, for one, truly appreciate it.

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Dan Hill". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.