

**Public Service and Community Engagement Minor
Annual Assessment Report
2020**

Prepared by: Star Plaxton-Moore, Director of Community Engaged Learning

Curriculum Maps:

[Original map from 2014](#)

[Map for courses added in 2017](#)

Mission Statement

The Minor in Public Service and Community Engagement (PSCE) is a 20 unit, interdisciplinary program open to USF undergraduates from any major. The course of study guides students in their development of skills and knowledge necessary to undertake effective public service and community engagement, while also helping them explore the personal values and beliefs that will guide their service commitments and the social, cultural, and political contexts that contribute to and complicate service and engagement.

This mission is clearly aligned with the University of San Francisco's mission and strategic priorities. The PSCE Minor is designed to align with *cura personalis*, or care for the whole person, by attending to students' cognitive, social-emotional, and professional development. Further, in alignment with USF's commitment to develop "leaders who will fashion a more humane and just world," the PSCE Minor provides myriad opportunities for students to learn how to make positive social change through pathways like advocacy, policy making, activism, and direct service.

PLO's

Goal

The Public Service and Community Engagement Minor is an interdisciplinary community-engaged learning program that guides students to develop, analyze, reflect upon, and apply:

- Knowledge of social, cultural, economic and political structures and systems that contribute to (and complicate) public service and community engagement in local and global contexts
- Skills necessary for engaging in equity driven and social justice based public service and community engagement
- Values that shape their civic identities and guide scholarly, personal, and professional service commitments

Outcomes

Upon completion of the Public Service and Community Engagement Minor, students will be able to:

Analyze

Analyze civic issues and social change movements in the context of relevant social, political, environmental and economic systems by synthesizing information from multiple diverse sources

Evaluate ethical implications of various social change and leadership models for the common good, and related concepts of service, civic participation, and social justice

Reflect

Examine how one's social identities, values, beliefs, and commitments to community engagement and public service shape--and are shaped by--the synthesis of formal education and other lived experience

Act

Apply principles of cultural humility, open-mindedness, equity, empathy, and ethical integrity when engaging in daily interactions, civic discourse, community engagement, social change actions, and public service

WHICH PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES DID YOU ASSESS

While we assess individual students on all learning outcomes within the PSCE Minor courses, including the Leadership for Civic Engagement course and PSCE Capstone, we did not focus on assessing student achievement of a particular learning outcome at the program level last year. Given the pandemic situation, we were pleased to be able to maintain our robust summative assessment practice of conducting exit interviews with each student and guiding them to complete their learning portfolios. For reference, I'm sharing an example of a Zoom recorded exit interview [here](#) and a Google folder portfolio for a student [here](#). More examples can be provided if desired. As we do each year, we debrief on the information and themes we glean from interviews and portfolios to guide any program adjustments. This year, we were pleased to discover that students had no major recommendations for program changes, and their work products indicated that they achieved our program learning outcomes. We intend to develop rubrics for more formally assessing the outcomes demonstrated in the electronic portfolios in the coming year.

DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT WORK PRODUCTS

Each year, we assess student achievement of the program learning outcomes through their participation in a capstone course that requires them to complete a community-engaged project and write a final paper or produce another work product that combines scholarly analysis and critical reflection. All students write a Civic Engagement Manifesto, an integrative assignment that students complete in the (intro) Leadership for Civic Engagement course. This is a culminating assessment activity for the intro course, but students in the Capstone go back to this assignment to review, revise, and reflect on their evolving understanding of civic engagement through participation in the PSCE Minor. The students also develop and submit ePortfolios before graduation where they curate artifacts from each PSCE Minor course they have taken to showcase their learning related to each program learning outcome.

DESCRIPTION OF INDIRECT METHODS

Students participate in an exit survey with Star Plaxton-Moore, Director of Community-Engaged Learning and David Donahue, Director of the McCarthy Center. The interview protocol includes questions that prompt students to reflect on what they've learned, but also share their feedback on the program. Students also engage in written and oral critical reflection in both the Capstone and Leadership for Civic Engagement courses.

Exit interview questions include:

- How have your perspectives on civic engagement and public service evolved over the course of learning in this minor?
- Describe a key experience in the minor that shaped your evolving thinking.
- As you reflect on this program 10 years from now, what do you imagine will be some of the enduring understandings or knowledge you carry with you?
- How has the "process" of this minor shaped your thinking and what, if anything, might you change?
- Anything else you want to say about the program that we haven't given you the opportunity to talk about?

WHAT WERE THE DIRECT DATA RESULTS

What we found in student work products was that they are generally able to synthesize learning from community and classroom into a coherent scholarly paper. Relatedly, they recognize that valuable wisdom emanates from individuals outside of the academy. Further, students articulated an understanding of how political, social, and economic forces shape social justice issues, as well as how these issues intersect and disproportionately affect particular groups. Students are very reflective about social identity and how it affects their own and others' participation in society. They described a critical and nuanced understanding of service and social justice as complicated concepts that may be interpreted and enacted by people in ways that can either contribute positively to the common good or perpetuate injustice.

WHAT WERE THE INDIRECT DATA RESULTS

Students all reflected on the value of the PSCE Minor as a program that fostered skills, knowledge, and dispositions for effective participation in civic life. They articulated that they were inspired by the program and it helped them build a sense of community with like-minded students. Multiple students appreciated the scaffolded approach to supporting their creation of the e-portfolio. They found it to be a useful self-reflective practice. All students described a sense of responsibility to be civically engaged, and a sense of self-efficacy related to their capacity to be agents of change.

HOW DO YOU INTERPRET THESE RESULTS?

Overall, we feel the combined direct and indirect assessment results indicate that our program is successful in accomplishing its overall vision and mission. There are clear areas where students are significantly developing knowledge and competencies, including synthesizing

community and classroom learning into analysis of social issues, analyzing the dynamics of social identity in the context of community, and developing a sense of efficacy and commitment to lives of civic engagement.

ELABORATE ON COURSES OF ACTION

Last year, we created a Faculty Advisory Council for the PSCE Minor that met three times to advise McCarthy Center staff on program curriculum, outreach, and assessment. Based on insights from the council and the ongoing assessment of student performance and experience in the program, we submitted a few program changes for approval by Curriculum Committee, which were just approved in fall 2020. The first change is to the course number for the Leadership for Civic Engagement course, faculty suggested we use a lower number to attract first and second year students. Thus, the course went from INTD 389 to INTD 202. Further, we did a review of the electives on our checklist and determined courses to eliminate and add. Courses were eliminated if they are no longer offered. Courses were added through a process of identifying alignment with PSCE Minor program outcomes, seeking approval from department and instructor, and curriculum mapping the outcomes. Further, we identified an error in the USF Course Catalog: our program learning outcomes reflected an old version of the minor. Thus, we have updated the catalog to reflect the learning outcomes proposed in our 2014 revision.

With regard to recruitment, we've implemented a practice of working with CIPE to generate a list of students who have taken at least one course that counts as a PSCE Minor elective, and send them an email to invite them to join the PSCE Minor. This outreach has yielded positive results in terms of students expressing interest and registering for the PSCE Minor. We are at a point where the distinctive PSCE Minor courses, the intro and capstone, easily fill each year.

With regard to learning outcomes assessment, we will work with the PSCE Minor faculty advisory council in the spring to develop rubrics for the program learning outcomes and select one outcome to assess in advance of our next assessment report. We intended to do this last year, but the COVID crisis put this task on the back burner.