

## 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**

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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).

Tanu Sankalia – Program Director, Urban Studies – Email – [tssankalia@usfca.edu](mailto:tssankalia@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

I am submitting a report for the Urban Studies **major**. I will be submitting 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.

NO.

## 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 were made to the mission statement.

Urban Studies at USF is an interdisciplinary program that seeks to understand cities in all their complexity. The program explores the past and present of cities from political, economic, social and cultural perspectives. It provides students with the knowledge, hands-on experience, and communication skills necessary to make a positive impact on people’s lives in cities across the world.

**Mission Statement (Minor):**

There is no Urban Studies minor.

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 were made to the PLO’s.

### Program Learning Outcomes

1. Students recognize, define and articulate the social, economic, political, cultural and environmental issues and challenges facing cities locally and globally.
2. Students understand, discuss, and explain the histories and theories related to the complex forces that shape cities.
3. Students develop research methods and tools to analyze and interpret urban phenomena.
4. Students communicate effectively in graphic, written and oral form, and provide solutions to specific urban issues and problems in professional settings.

### **PLOs (Minor):**

## **III. REMOTE/DISTANCE LEARNING**

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

Some of the small seminar/lecture courses, especially URBS 100 Introduction to Urban Studies, were suitable to being adapted for remote/distance learning. For this to shift to remote learning to entirely work, the class size should be somewhere between 10-15 students and no more.

Conducted on a Tuesday/Thursday schedule, remote learning via Zoom worked quite well for the URBS 100 course where weekly modules on specific topics could be taken up on a weekly basis. On Tuesdays, readings could be discussed in class using “break

out” rooms and with the whole class, and on Thursdays, material discussed in class could be further emphasized using lectures or videos.

That said, the final assignment, which is a “place study” where students take up a public space, a park, a street or part of it, a part of a neighborhood and so on, and work in pairs, was not as easily adaptable to distance learning. While we had to change this assignment from groups or pairs to individuals, student still did not get out enough, given the pandemic, and even when they did, they mostly encountered conditions that were not normal—streets and neighborhoods that were sparsely populated and lacking in everyday life activities—which may have skewed their observations and analyses.

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

Two courses in our major: URBS 230 Urban Planning and Design and URBS 390 Photo Practice and the City, were not that easily adaptable to a remote/distance learning environment.

URBS 230 Urban Planning and Design relies on assignments where students have to study and analyze a particular plan for a proposed urban project. For example, the specific plan for the Oracle Arena in Oakland, or the built project for the new Transbay Terminal. In order to observe and analyze these projects, students have to get out into the field and conduct field observations, which were not possible because of the pandemic, and the distance learning environment. URBS 230, however, was not offered during the 2019-2020 AY.

URBS 390 Photo Practice and the City, which is a staple of the Urban Studies program, relies entirely on city/street photography and the ability of students to get out into the city. This was not possible. Moreover, in this class, students learn skills of analog photography and dark room techniques. For this training, we team up with the Harvey

Milk Center for use of their dark room facilities, and this was not possible given the pandemic and distance learning. In fall 2020, we had switch to digital photography, and could not have a final exhibition that we typically hold at the end of this class.

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

We conducted almost all our classes that were offered during the second half of spring 2020, and fall 2020, entirely synchronously. For discussion/seminar classes this is the best, especially where there are no recorded lectures as such. Moreover, from our experience from the second half of the spring 2020 semester, we found students responded well, and actually wanted to have synchronous classes. This helped them keep a clear schedule and commit time to classes. There were NO asynchronous classes.

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

All classes should have some synchronous component. Asynchronous does not really work for Urban Studies courses.

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

We have had to take the drastic step of not scheduling certain classes or find other classes to schedule that might be better suited to remote instruction. For example, URBS 390 Photo Practice and the City fulfilled the Urban Cultures requirement of the Urban Studies program. For spring 2021, in order to still offer an Urban Cultures class, we are instead offering URBS 390 Cities and Environment in Literature and Cinema. This will be seminar course, more focused on reading and watching films, analyzing them, and writing about them, which can be done in a remote setting.

## **OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL MATERIALS**

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