

# Assessment Report for Academic Year 2020-2021

## Honors College

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The template for assessment requirements states that our accreditors require “that each major, minor (including interdisciplinary minors), graduate program, or certificate program have an active, continuous, and current assessment plan.” The Honors College is none of those things, so does not fall within what are the stated parameters of the assessment requirements that are being published on the website. However, we have been informed that we do indeed need to submit an assessment report, so here it is.

### **History, Mission, PLOs, and Curriculum**

The Honors College did not conduct any direct assessment in the 2020-2021 academic year. Therefore, this will be a reflective assessment report, which works well because we just did a major overhaul of our curriculum and PLOs in spring 2021.

The Honors College began operating in Fall 2018, so the 2020-2021 academic year was the third year of operation. For those first three years, the Honors College included a 30 unit curriculum with the following PLOs:

1. Students articulate at least three major themes of the humanities across disciplines.
2. Students explain how social and political concerns influence and intersect multiple disciplines.
3. Students compare and contrast at least two different critical methodologies or cultural traditions in a global context.
4. Students complete analytical, interpretive, or research-driven essays or projects in writing, speech or performance.
5. Students investigate real-world topics or problems from multiple disciplinary perspectives to conduct projects or propose solutions.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, we completely revamped the Honors College. We created a new mission statement, new PLOs, and a new 24-unit curriculum. These are as follows:

#### **MISSION**

The Honors College at the University of San Francisco is a scholarly community grounded in a culture of collaborative inquiry and the Jesuit educational mission of social justice, global perspective, and *cura personalis*. Our mission is to inspire and prepare future leaders to think critically and foster an interdisciplinary understanding of the world around them and the tools to effect change.

The mission of the Honors College comprises four pillars:

- I. **Liberal Arts:** The Honors College provides a well-rounded liberal arts education as the cornerstone of the student experience, with an emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- II. **Global Education:** The Honors College emphasizes global education to build cross-cultural awareness, a diverse array of perspectives, and an understanding of the impacts and importance of the global-local connection.
- III. **Interdisciplinary Inquiry:** The Honors College recognizes the importance of building an understanding of a diverse array of theories, approaches, and methods across disciplines to address challenges affecting our communities in innovative ways.
- IV. **Experiential Education:** The Honors College encourages an experiential educational experience that connects the academic learning environment to the broader community in the pursuit of social justice and effective engagement as persons for others.

The Honors College strives to provide members of the USF community with a transformative and innovative education. Through small seminars, interdisciplinary inquiry, and engagement with communities on-campus, in San Francisco, and around the world, students will broaden their intellectual perspectives and develop a sense of ethical responsibility as global citizens. In keeping with USF's mission, the Honors College offers students a holistic learning experience and prepares them to address the challenges of the 21st century.

### Curriculum (24 units)

- 2 unit required introductory course – the Honors College Gateway
- 2 unit required Capstone course (students are able to sub in a capstone or thesis in their major or the 4 unit HONC capstone option)
- 4 units Liberal Arts Foundations (1 course)
- 4 units of Global Perspectives (1 course)
- 4 units of Experiential Education (1 course)
- 8 units of Honors College Exploration (2-4 courses)
- One of the courses in any of the categories must be from a list of courses with Historical Perspective

This new curriculum began with the entering class in fall 2021. Below is pasted the curricular map and assessment plan we submitted along with the curriculum change. We are beginning our collection of assignments for assessment with the fall 2021 semester.

## *Curricular Map for New HONC Curriculum & Assessment Plan*

### **Curricular Map**

The curricular map for the proposed new Honors College curriculum was carefully thought about in conjunction with the creation of our new PLOs.

I = Introduction to PLOs

D = Developing competence in PLOs

M = Mastery of PLOs

For the 'D' (development of competence), all four-unit courses offered in the Honors College must contribute to development of at least two of the four PLOs in the following manner:

- Liberal Arts Foundations courses must develop at least PLOs 1 and 3 (in bold).
- Global Perspectives courses must develop PLO 2 (in bold) and at least one other PLO.
- Experiential Education courses must develop PLO 4 (in bold) and at least one other PLO.
- Exploration courses may develop two PLOs from PLO2, PLO3, and PLO4.

	PLO1	PLO2	PLO3	PLO4
Honors College Gateway Course	I	I	I	I
Liberal Arts Foundations Courses	<b>D</b>	D	<b>D</b>	D
Global Perspectives Courses	D	<b>D</b>	D	D
Experiential Education Courses	D	D	D	<b>D</b>
Honors College Exploration Courses	--	D	D	D
Honors College Capstone Course	M	M	M	M

### Gateway & Capstone Classes

The Honors College Gateway class and the Honors College Capstone class are bookends to the HONC curriculum. In each of these classes, students will be exposed to all four PLOs and these are the classes that will be used for assessment of an introduction to the learning outcomes and mastery of the learning outcomes.

### New Honors College PLOs:

1. Ask critical questions relevant to an interdisciplinary liberal arts education, with an emphasis on the role of the global humanities.
2. Apply global and cross-cultural perspectives to scholarly inquiry.
3. Analyze liberal arts content using diverse approaches and methodologies.
4. Utilize a diverse array of theoretical and practical tools to engage with mission-driven issues and work with communities.

## **Assessment Plan**

Every semester a sampling of assignments will be collected from courses in the following categories:

- Gateway
- Capstone
- Liberal Arts Foundations
- Global Perspectives
- Experiential Education
- Honors College Exploration

An assessment committee, composed of members of the HONC Faculty Steering Committee and Faculty Advisory Board (the Advisory Board is a broader unit of all teaching faculty in the Honors College), will meet once per semester to assess these materials in relation to the relevant PLOs.

As shown in the curricular map, the Honors College Gateway class, which will share common course learning outcomes across all sections, will introduce students to all four of the HONC learning outcomes. All Gateway sections will include a reflection essay that has students write about their understanding of the HONC pillars and PLOs that will be collected and reviewed as a baseline. A sampling of the final projects from each Gateway section will also be reviewed each semester to assess changes in understanding over the course of the semester.

Similarly, the Honors College Capstone course, whether the two or four unit versions, will be used to assess student mastery of the four Honors College learning outcomes. A sampling of final projects from each Capstone section will be reviewed each semester.

For the remaining categories of classes, a sampling from several of the 20-25 courses offered each semester will be selected from across the categories of Liberal Arts Foundations, Global Perspectives, Experiential Education, and Honors College Exploration. Faculty teaching these courses will be asked to identify an assignment for collection and assessment by the assessment committee. The expectation, as shown above in the curricular map, is that courses in each of these categories provide student development in at least two of the Honors College learning outcomes.

This assessment data will be held in a common location in our Google Drive and available for faculty review and used to write our annual assessment report. The results of the assessment each year will be made available to Honors College faculty, and a meeting held at least once per year to discuss any issues regarding meeting the learning outcomes.