UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO | College of Arts and Sciences

ASSESSMENT REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR 2020 – 202

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 Ryan
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   Master of Arts in Professional Communication Program
   Certificate in Professional Communication Program
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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 & Minor (in which case, each should be explained in a separate paragraph as in this template), (d) a Graduate or (e) a Certificate Program**

   This report is an aggregate report for MAPC and our Certificate in Professional Communication program.

3. **Please note that a Curricular Map should accompany every assessment report. Has there been any revisions to the Curricular Map since October 2020?**

   es, changes have been made to e pand the degree requirement from 0 to 2 units. Our revised Curricular Map is attached to this report.

1. Were any changes made to the program mission statement since the last assessment cycle in October 2020? 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</u> <u>major and the</u> <u>minor program</u>.

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o changes were made to the Mission Statement.

P   ss   :

The Master of Arts in Professional Communication MAPC program provides students with theoretical grounding and practical e periences to apply rhetorical and ethical communication concepts needed to succeed in a range of professions, including organi ation, industry, business, and academic communities.

This mission statement and PLOs were vetted in   all 201   and early spring 2017 by the MAPC Steering Committee and were submitted on   1 17.

P   ss   CPC

Program Mission Statement:
The Certificate in Professional Communication program provides students with the practical e periences to apply rhetorical, ethical, and communication concepts needed to succeed in a range of professions, including organi ation, industry, business, and academic communities.

2   Were any changes made to the program learning outcomes (PLOs) since the last assessment cycle in October 2020? 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.

o changes were made to the mission statement.

PLOs (   ):

MAPC Program Learning Outcomes PLO : Our four PLOs are:
- Core Knowledge: graduate students will define, identify, and apply the rhetorical conventions and strategies appropriate to communicating effectively and ethically to varied audiences;
- Scholarly Communication: graduate students will write and edit a substantial amount of revised prose, meeting standards and applying conventions defined by the field of communication;
- Professionalism: graduate students will produce written, oral and digital communication of high quality consistent with their professional concentration and focus;
-   esearch: graduate students will conduct s illed and ethical research in the field of communication and contribute original   nowledge in their chosen industry and profession.

PLOs (Certificate):

These PLOs were reviewed, revised, and submitted by the MAPC Steering Committee in Spring 2017. CPC Program Learning Outcomes:
- Core Knowledge: students will define, identify, and apply the rhetorical conventions and strategies appropriate to communicating effectively and ethically to varied audiences;
- Professionalism: students will produce written, oral and digital communication of high quality consistent with their professional concentration and focus.

3. tate the particular Program Learning Outcome(s) you assessed for the academic year
    -    . PLO(s) being assessed (Graduate):

After assessing the first three PLOs in the three previous years, we decided to continue our assessment of PLO   for this year in relation to our capstone class:

- PLO   :   esearch: graduate students will conduct s illed and ethical research in the field of communication and contribute original   nowledge in their chosen industry and profession.

PLO(s)   ss ss   (Certificate):
Similar to previous years, we decided not to assess the certificate program because we are gathering data. Thus far, we have had four certificate students graduate from this program.   e are waiting to graduate five students before assessing their wor . At the end of   all 2021, we will have our fifth graduate, so ne t year, we will assess the certificate program.

Describe the methodology that you used to assess the PLO(s). For   example,   "the   department used questions that were   inputted   in   the   final   examination pertaining directly to the <said PLO>. An independent group of faculty (not teaching the course) then evaluated the responses to the questions and gave the students a grade for responses to those questions."
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This year, our method of data collection is the focus group; our methodology is content analysis (as unit analysis) to account for patterns and themes.

Context: three years ago, we initiated a three part, multi year annual review of capstone pro ects.
 or Pt. 1, the review committee e amined 20 capstone oral presentations in relation to PLO   3
 Professional Presentation .   or Pt. 2 last year, the review committee reviewed 30 written capstones to relate to PLO   . This year, with the oral and written assessment data, the review committee convened a focus group to discuss the data re: capstones and has decided to move away from research projects as the primary culminating pro ect and focus on developing reflective professional portfolios for the ma ority of students. To partially understand our findings, please refer to the previous two years Annual Review report.

For this cycle, with two fewer review committee members than previous years, we scaled back our plans for this year's annual review. Originally, we were to implement a research inquiry that explores the plurality of written capstones by examining its arguments. However, our analysis of last year's data has led to us to conclude that MAPC should emphasize the option of having students develop a professional portfolio that best reflects their learning and development as their culminating project.

For the record, reflective portfolios have been an option in our student handbook since the beginning of the program, but because we linked the Research Methods course to the Capstone course, the overwhelming majority of students have chosen to implement a research proposal (they developed in Research Methods) rather than compose a reflective portfolio.

Though the review committee believes research projects have strong merit for our students, they also believe that the professional development of most of our students would be better reflected in the artifacts they showcase in a portfolio. Overall, of the 75 or so capstone projects our graduates have created over the years, approximately five have been portfolios.
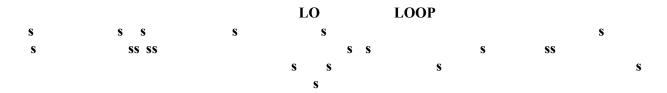
This year, our review committee convened a focus group of its committee members (two of whom teach capstone courses) to gather feedback and input on how to proceed with our the data created from the last two review cycles to improve the capstone experiences of our graduate students. These meetings provided both structured and unstructured contexts for discussion, and the results are presented in the next section.

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The unanimous result of our focus group is for the program to transition its capstone class from a research-focused capstone to having the majority of students create reflective, professional portfolios. The committee recommends these portfolios will be academically and professionally oriented, united by a central theme related to learning and communication.

From our discussions, a planning document was created, vetted, revised and affirmed to address the short-term objective of encouraging more students in the following semester to create professional portfolios. This portfolio guide provides planning and implementation information and directions for faculty and students. It is meant to compliment existing information on research-oriented papers in our student handbook. The committee believes that having this information will increase the number of portfolios produced by students, and these portfolios will better demonstrate their professional growth and development for a market place that prefers practical artifacts to understand student skills and competencies.

From this applied approach, the committee plans to collect data from its spring 2022 capstone students to help inform and plan its longer-term objectives to have the portfolio be the dominant work product created for the capstone/culminating experience class.
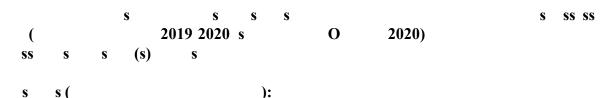
LO   LOOP

Closing the Loop raduate :

ith the rationale and results provided in the previous sections, we have three ob ectives to closing the loop: first is short term: amend our MAPC raduate Student andboo to include e panded information on reflective portfolios to support capstone faculty and students; this information was approved by the MAPC Steering Committee and is presented in the Appendix of this report. To help with quality control, our plan is to also provide a few completed portfolios to support the development and completion of the work products in spring capstone classes.

Second objective: to support the longer-term development of portfolios, our committee (over this spring) will address specific program questions related to the implementation of this initiative. For example, we will discuss revising our Program Learning Outcomes to include language inclusive of reflective portfolios. If the committee decides to revise the PLOs, then we will complete this process in time to implement for AY 22-23.

Third, whether or not PLOs are revised, we will discuss revising the esearch Methods class. Research Methods is linked to the capstone, so RM solely focuses on developing research-oriented capstones. As part of our analysis and deliberation, we will either change the M class to coordinate the teaching of both research agendas and reflective portfolios, or revise the course to focus solely on supporting the development of portfolios—and have research-related methods be taught in specific (and required) concentration courses. There are, of course, other options to consider, and the committee will develop questions and activities to address the longer-term issues related to this program initiative for the spring semester.

(2019 2020 s   O   2020)
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ecause our capstone inquiry is ongoing, the C recommended from previous years we continue with our efforts to collect data and evidence. Any program changes await further analysis of this discovery, particularly in the ne t step where we implement changes to the capstone class. Also, FDCD recommended we wait to review our certificate program until we get a useful number. Next year, we will have graduated five certificate students, and this number seems usable as a basis for a program review.

Portfolio Guidelines

Below are guidelines to help shape the content and scope of the reflective portfolio. Each student portfolio will be different, so below are some key guidelines to be discussed and agreed to between capstone students and their instructors.

- Digital or e-portfolios will be composed of (1) artifacts and a (2) reflective analysis of the artifacts; below is more information designed to help students and faculty plan and implement the capstone portfolio:

  - **Artifacts**: the portfolio should possess a variety of communication-focused artifacts, such as reports, papers, essays, podcasts, video, etc.; these artifacts should be collected and composed in a portfolio format;
  - these artifacts can consist of:
    - previous undergraduate courses;
    - professional work
    - MAPC-focused artifacts;
      - choice of artifacts should be governed by communication-related work rather than non-communication specific artifacts;
      - some emphasis of artifact choice should be given to MAPC work;
      - to provide context for each artifact, there should be an explanation, such as providing the prompt or a summary for each artifact (or both) because prompts show intent and purpose and the artifacts show student response;
      - length of portfolio and number of artifacts: should be substantial; negotiated between student and instructor;
  - **Reflective Analysis**:
    - artifacts should be organized in some coherent way, whether by chronology—or some other unifying principle or practice;
    - reflection can occur in two stages:
      - first, artifact collection: **what do portfolios usually contain?** Portfolios contain selective samples of your work, such as reports, papers, essays, designs, podcasts and videos; samples of artifacts should focus on communication-related topics.
      - second, content analysis: **what do you do once you collect samples?** Once choosing specific artifacts for inclusion, students measure the artifacts for its content to discover communication-related patterns or themes; for example, students could list the kinds of artifacts (essays, reports, podcasts, videos, etc.) and the types of analysis (analyzing arguments, examining evidence, looking at other kinds of content, etc.) that appear in the artifacts; this part inventories, lists and describes the kinds of artifacts and notes any pattern or theme within the artifacts themselves;

- third: rhetorical analysis: **what do you do once you have described the artifacts?** Reflection narratives should move beyond summary and description to interpret the artifacts and relate this work to student learning, experiences and achievements as a basis for explaining the artifacts' meanings; this reflection could also connect student learning to MAPC Program Learning Outcomes; overall, reflections point discuss personal, academic and professional challenges in order to understand personal and professional growth.
  - **What do reflective portfolios look like?**: the portfolio is one part artifact collection and one part reflective analysis; most of the time, portfolios integrate the list of artifacts (and prompts) within a longer, reflective narrative. This integration is key

- **Choice of portfolios**: most portfolios possess significant amounts of writing and reflection; however, portfolios can be delivered in the form of audio (podcast) or video—or some combination of digitized writing, audio and video. Choice of portfolio format is determined by both student and instructor.
- **Posting of Portfolio**:
  - completed portfolios can be submitted as internal artifacts where only the instructor sees the work; or
  - can be posted externally—where the work is posted on a public site, such as LinkedIn or youtube; or
  - portfolios can also be balanced between internal and external methods of submission; and
  - these decisions are negotiated between instructor and student.

List of portfolio platforms is below. This brief list is meant to give students ideas regarding where to post their work.

1. LinkedIn

The LinkedIn link above details how you can turn your LinkedIn profile into an e-portfolio. This is a nice option for students who have had communication work experience prior to entering MAPC. Students can attach artifacts to specific jobs on their LinkedIn profile. Additionally, they can attach course work to their education section.

2. Portfolium

Portfolium is a free e-portfolio resource produced by the same company the makes Canvas. The video connected to the link above explains the resource in greater detail. Students create profiles, and can attach resumes, certificates, etc. Students can also build projects to display individual artifacts. Portfolium also allows students to link projects to skills. For instance, if a

student puts "video production" as a skill, they can link a video produced for an MAPC course to this skill.

3. <u>Squarespace</u>

Website builder Squarespace offers a portfolio template. Unlike some of the e-portfolio sites, Squarespace is a good candidate for people who want to continue building their e-portfolios after graduation. Squarespace is a more expensive option.

4. <u>Wordpress</u>

USF has a WordPress membership, though our membership has limited features. Wordpress is not always easy to use and does require some technical knowledge.

5. Canvas

Canvas is integrated in USF as a content management platform and has a "Folio" and "Digication" option that leads to portfolio creation.