

**Public Service and Community Engagement Minor
Annual Assessment Report
2021**

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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

This year, we focused on the following learning outcomes:

- 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

While we expected to see evidence of these outcomes in multiple assignments submitted in the students' portfolios and hear students' reflections on these during the exit interviews, the main artifacts designed to provide evidence of this are the portfolio narrative, the civic engagement manifesto, and the capstone group project.

We were not yet able to develop and apply rubrics for these outcomes when we reviewed the assignments over the summer. However, we were able to look for evidence of where students demonstrated relevant learning.

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 collaborative advocacy project and write a final paper or produce another work product that combines scholarly analysis and critical reflection. The students also develop and submit portfolios (Google folders) before graduation where they curate artifacts from each PSCE Minor course they have taken to

showcase their learning related to each program learning outcome. An example of a 2021 student portfolio can be found [here](#). More can be provided upon request. A short narrative accompanies the artifacts, in which students articulate their learning related to at least two of the program learning outcomes.

DESCRIPTION OF INDIRECT METHODS

We conducted 30-minute exit interviews with 17 graduating PSCE Minor students in 2021. These were facilitated by Star Plaxton-Moore, Director of Community-Engaged Learning and five interviews included members of the PSCE Minor Faculty Advisory Committee. The interview protocol includes questions that prompt students to reflect on what they've learned, but also share their feedback on the program. Interviewers took notes on interview content to identify common themes. 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

All students work products were reviewed by Star Plaxton-Moore as the director of the PSCE Minor. In addition, capstone projects were reviewed and graded by the course instructor, Amy Argenal. In the future, we intend to have faculty from the PSCE Minor Advisory Board participate in the assessment of student work products to determine accomplishment of PLO's

Students who completed the assignments demonstrated that they were able to 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, as evidenced in their culminating capstone projects and civic engagement manifestos.

Example capstone projects:

- [Racial Justice Issues](#)
- [Environmental Issues](#)
- [Criminalization and dehumanization](#)

Students who completed the portfolio narrative assignments demonstrated that they were able to evaluate ethical implications of various social change and leadership models for the common good, and related concepts of service, civic participation, and social justice.

Examples of portfolio narratives

- [Student narrative #1](#)
- [Student narrative #2](#)
- [Student narrative #3](#)

WHAT WERE THE INDIRECT DATA RESULTS

All students who participated in the exit interviews 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. Students specifically named the intro and capstone courses as significant learning opportunities and also described the value of other courses they took for the program that they wouldn't have otherwise taken. 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.

With regard to experiences of the program during pandemic times, the students greatly appreciated how the faculty teaching the PSCE intro and capstone courses were very supportive, compassionate, and flexible, and created positive experiences for students to build community with each other on zoom.

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, as well as the two learning outcomes we assessed. 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

Our program details remained stable since the changes we implemented in 2020, with the only difference being that we invited PSCE Minor Faculty Advisory Board members to sit in on the exit interviews. We intend to continue this practice and expand it so that each exit interview includes at least one advisory board member this spring.

In addition, we plan to convene the PSCE Minor Faculty Advisory Board this spring to review and vet rubrics for the two learning outcomes we assessed in 2021. The rubrics will allow us to more effectively and accurately assess student performance in 2022.

We also submitted the report on our progress toward the action plan put forward by the Dean's Office in response to our external review in 2018. The report demonstrated that we were able to act on multiple recommendations and implement most of the changes we desired for the program related to faculty governance, student recruitment, and curriculum design.