

Assessment Report for Academic Year 2021-2022 Honors College

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This is our first non-reflective assessment report. For the 2020-2021 report we reflected on our new curriculum and how we would roll-out assessment. Our assessment received positive feedback and we have proceeded accordingly. For 2021-2022 we focused on two specific assessments:

- First, we reviewed all syllabi from existing HONC courses to ensure they include our new PLOs (which went into effect in Fall 2021), meet our guidelines regarding PLOs, the HONC pillars, assignments, and assessment.
- Second, we selected a sample of student work from our required 2-unit Honors College Gateway courses for assessment. The Gateway is required during the first year in the Honors College and the students are supposed to receive an introduction to all four HONC PLOs.

Honors College Mission, PLOs, and Curriculum Map

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 approaches, and methods across disciplines to address challenges affecting our communities in innovative ways.
- IV. **Experiential Engagement:** The Honors College encourages an experiential educational experience that connects academic learning to the broader community – locally, nationally, and globally – 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.

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

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.

CURRICULUM & CURRICULAR MAP (24 units)

Curriculum

- 2 unit required introductory course – the Honors College Gateway (required in the first year)
- 2 unit required Capstone course (students are able to sub in a capstone or thesis in their major)
- 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 category must be from a list of courses with Historical Perspective

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 Engagement 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	D	D	D	D
Global Perspectives Courses	D	D	D	D
Experiential Education Courses	D	D	D	D
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.

ASSESSMENT PLAN

Our assessment of the Honors College curriculum will include the collection of a sampling of assignments from courses in the following categories:

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

In 2020-2021 and 2021-2022, the initial assessments for the Honors College will be completed by the Faculty Director for Faculty Experience and Global Engagement. Beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year, as the number of materials to be assessed increases, an assessment committee, composed of members of the HONC Faculty Steering Committee and Honors College teaching faculty, will assess these materials in relation to the relevant PLOs.

2020-2021 was a reflection year for the Honors College as our new curriculum was just getting started. As indicated in the report, the 2021-2022 assessment of student work will focus on the Honors College Gateway. In each subsequent year, we will add assessment of different Honors College categories, culminating with the inclusion of the Capstone course once it begins being offered in 2024-2025.

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 be added for review in future years to assess changes in understanding over the course of the semester.

Similarly, the Honors College Capstone course 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. We will begin offering the Capstone course in 2024-2025.

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 Engagement, Historical Perspective, 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 presented to our Faculty Steering Committee and 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 as needed to discuss any issues regarding meeting the learning outcomes.

2021-2022 ASSESSMENT

Syllabi Review

The first step of our assessment was to review the syllabi for existing Honors College classes to ensure they are incorporating the new PLOs, the Honors College course guidelines as outlined in the curricular map, and the Mission and Pillars of the Honors College. This review revealed that many faculty have not kept their syllabi up-to-date and/or are not following the guidelines for syllabi. Each faculty member will receive an email with required changes (regarding PLOs, assessment mechanisms, and the HONC pillars) and recommendations (on assignments).

Here is a summary of the data from this review:

- 21 syllabi were reviewed from Spring 2022 and Fall 2022
- 2 syllabi will need to have a title change because the current title is the same as a non-HONC class (which we do not allow)
- 8 syllabi need to have their course catalog descriptions updated
- 7 syllabi need to reflect more interdisciplinary language to meet the HONC pillars and PLOs
- 8 courses likely need to be moved into a different category (i.e. from Global Perspective to Liberal Arts Foundations)
- All 200-level courses need to receive new 300-level course numbers to be in line with the rest of the courses
- 13 courses need suggestions on different kinds of assignments in line with the Honors College norms
- 15 syllabi (71%!) of the syllabi did not have the correct PLOs listed, had no PLOs, and/or included no assessment plan.
 - 3 had no PLOs listed at all
 - 5 listed the old Honors College PLOs
 - 10 did not indicate how the PLOs would be assessed in their courses

All syllabi will be reviewed again the next time the courses are taught to ensure the needed changes and additions are made.

Gateway Assessment

We began our PLO assessment with our required Gateway class. The Gateway class is designed to provide students with an introduction to each of the four Honors College PLOs. All Gateway sections are run as small seminars and focus on reflections, class discussion, outside-of-class engagement, and some kind of final project. While each faculty member teaching a Gateway section is free to tie it to a theme relevant to their own area of expertise, all must incorporate the Honors College pillars into their courses and provide an introduction to all the PLOs.

2021-2022 was the first year the Gateway was offered as part of our new curriculum. Eight sections of the course were offered, five in the Fall 2021 semester and three in the Spring 2022 semester.

A common reflection assignment was reviewed from five of the right sections offered. We started with this amount of assignments because that is all we had capacity for this year in addition to reviewing the syllabi (as outlined above) and creating the first draft of our rubric (below).

We created the following rubric for the assignment. This is the first attempt at a rubric and will be refined as we continue to review our assessment processes.

**The goal is for the students to meet or exceed expectations on understanding all four PLOs at an introductory level.	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
PLO 1: Ask critical questions relevant to an interdisciplinary liberal arts education, with an emphasis on the role of the global humanities	<i>To exceed expectations students must demonstrate a clear understanding with examples and relevant analysis of the fields which comprise the global humanities and be able to frame relevant critical questions.</i>	<i>To meet expectations students, demonstrate an understanding with examples of the fields which comprise the global humanities and be able to frame relevant critical questions. In this category, analysis may not yet be present at the introductory level.</i>	<i>Students that are below expectations are not able to clearly demonstrate their understanding of what a liberal arts education encompasses.</i>	<i>A student does not meet expectations if there is no reference at all to the liberal arts or critical inquiry.</i>
PLO 2: Apply global and cross-cultural perspectives to scholarly inquiry	<i>To exceed expectations students must demonstrate an understanding of global perspective broadly defined with examples and also provide examples of cross-cultural perspectives in their work.</i>	<i>To meet expectations students must show they are thinking about a global and cross-cultural perspectives, even if not deeply integrated in critical analysis.</i>	<i>Students that are below expectations do not provide clear examples of global perspectives or cross-cultural understanding in their work. .</i>	<i>A student does not meet expectations if there is no reference to global perspectives or cross-cultural inquiry in their work.</i>
PLO 3: Analyze liberal arts content using diverse approaches and methodologies	<i>To exceed expectations, students must show a beginning use of at least two different approaches or methods in their work and clearly show why they have chosen these approaches.</i>	<i>To meet expectations students must show a beginning use of at least two different approaches or methods in their work.</i>	<i>Students that are below expectations to clearly use at least two different approaches or methods in their work.</i>	<i>A student does not meet expectations is they do not clearly identify approaches or methods in their work.</i>
PLO 4: Utilize a diverse array of theoretical and practical tools to engage with mission-driven issues and work with communities.	<i>To exceed expectations students must demonstrate a clear connection and provide analysis between the materials covered in class and at least one of the experiential activities.</i>	<i>To meet expectations students must demonstrate a clear connection between the materials covered in class and at least one of the experiential activities.</i>	<i>Students that are below fail to make a clear connection between the in-class and experiential work.</i>	<i>A student does not meet expectations is they fail to relate experiential out-of-class work to the course at all.</i>

A Reflection Essay was reviewed that was common across the sections of the Gateway. The Reflection prompt was:

Reflect on the mission and pillars of the Honors College. As you begin your time at USF, how do you anticipate you will incorporate these pillars into your educational experience, your major, and your future career goals? What aspects are you uncertain about and why? What does your educational plan incorporating the HONC mission and pillars look like as you start your first semester?

Three sections of HONC 100 from Fall 2021 and two section from Spring 2022 were reviewed. As the reflection essay directly addresses the four pillars of the Honors College, which in turn reflect the PLOs, this essay provides direct evidence of how well the students are beginning to understand at an introductory level the four PLOs.

In general, the students across all five sections seemed to be understanding the PLOs at an introductory level. The PLO which seems to need more work is experiential engagement. There is also some overlap or perhaps a mixing of understanding between the liberal arts foundations and the mean of interdisciplinarity, which is understandable as they do overlap. The two students who did not meet expectations did not turn in the assignment.

PLO 1 – Liberal Arts Foundations

Category	Percentage of Students
Exceeds Expectations	71% (50 of 70 students)
Meets Expectations	26% (18 of 70 students)
Below Expectations	0
Does not meet expectations	3% (2 of 70 students)

PLO 2 – Global Perspective

Category	Percentage of Students
Exceeds Expectations	73% (51 of 70 students)
Meets Expectations	23% (16 of 70 students)
Below Expectations	0
Does not meet expectations	4% (3 of 70 students)

PLO 3 – Interdisciplinary Inquiry

Category	Percentage of Students
Exceeds Expectations	70% (49 of 70 students)
Meets Expectations	23% (16 of 70 students)
Below Expectations	3% (2 of 70 students)
Does not meet expectations	3% (2 of 70 students)

PLO 4

Category	Percentage of Students
Exceeds Expectations	50% (35 of 70 students)
Meets Expectations	41% (29 of 70 students)
Below Expectations	6% (4 of 70 students)
Does not meet expectations	3% (2 of 70 students)

Our next steps will be to bring together all faculty teaching the Gateway classes and brainstorm on ways to improve how we bring in material to the class that will help students develop an understanding of the PLOs. Beginning with next year’s assessment report we will also begin assessing the final projects from the Gateway classes, in addition to this reflection, to provide a broader look at how the students are truly absorbing the PLOs at an introductory level.