

## Urban Studies

### ASSESSMENT REPORT ACADEMIC YEAR 2017 – 2018 **REPORT DUE DATE: 10/26/2018**

**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.**

**Note:** Dear Colleagues: In an effort to produce a more streamlined and less repetitive assessment report format, we are piloting this modified template for the present annual assessment cycle. We are requesting an assessment report that would not exceed eight pages of text. Supporting materials may be appended. We will be soliciting your feedback on the report as we attempt to make it more user-friendly.

#### 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)
6. Ms. Corie Schwabenland, Academic Data & Assessment Specialist- [ceschwabenland@usfca.edu](mailto:ceschwabenland@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 & PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

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).

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2. Were any changes made to the program mission statement since the last assessment cycle in October 2017? 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.

NO.

### Mission Statement

USF’s interdisciplinary program in Urban Studies provides its students with an all round understanding of cities. The program in urban studies 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.

3. Were any changes made to the program learning outcomes (PLOs) since the last assessment cycle in October 2017? 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.**

NO.

#### 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.

#### **4. Which particular Program Learning Outcome(s) did you assess for the academic year 2017-2018?**

The following Program Learning Outcome was assessed for 2017-2018:

“Students understand, discuss, and explain the histories and theories related to the complex forces that shape cities.”

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

#### **5. 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.”

**Important Note** – WSCUC advises us to use “direct methods” which relate to a direct evaluation of a student work product. “Indirect methods” like exit interviews or student surveys can be used only as additional complements to a direct method.

For any program with fewer than 10 students: If you currently have fewer than 10 students in your program (rendering your statistical analysis biased due to too few data points), it is fine to describe a multi-year data collection strategy here. It would be important to remember that every 3 years, we would expect you to have enough data to conduct a meaningful analysis.

**Important**: *Please attach, at the end of this report, a copy of the rubric used for assessment.*

### Assessment Plan

The goal is to use a direct assessment method, to assess one mid-term essay in the ARCD 204-01 History of Architecture 4, which is an approved Urban Studies course. This paper is tied to an Urban Studies Program Learning Outcome (PLO), and will assess how students fared with respect to developing mastery of that learning outcome.

For this assessment, ONE course and ONE assignment (a mid-term essay) were selected.

PLO – “Students understand, discuss, and explain the histories and theories related to the complex forces that shape cities.”




For the above Learning Outcome, students are given weekly lectures during the semester that cover the histories and theories related to the development of modern cities. In addition to the lectures, they are asked to read a particular text, Kenneth Frampton, “ Part 1, Cultural developments and predisposing techniques: 1750-1939,” from *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*. In order to meet this learning outcome, students must be able to read and summarize the main points being made by Kenneth Frampton related to “Territorial Transformation,” “Cultural Transformation” and “Technical Transformation” that took place during the period between 1750-1939, as a way to understand the development of modern cities and modern architecture. Students were asked to illustrate these points by means of case studies that were covered in class lectures. A rubric was developed to guide students in completing the essay. (The assignment directions, and the rubric are attached along with this assessment report).

### The Rubric

Each response paper was accorded 25 points and the rubric for grading was specified on Canvas. There were 5 points assigned to each element of the rubric:

- Clear introduction – 5 points
- Main body: history and theory – 5 points
- Inclusion of case studies – 5 points
- Title, conclusion and bibliography – 5 points
- Writing style – 5 points

This is how the rubric appeared on Canvas – see below:

<b>Rubric for Assignment 1 - Essay</b>   			
You've already rated students with this rubric. Any major changes could affect their assessment results.			
Criteria	Ratings		Pts
Clear introduction - what are you writing about?	5.0 to >0.0 pts Full Marks	0.0 pts No Marks	5.0 pts
Main body - history and theory Incorporation of citations from Frampton and Tignor et al	5.0 to >0.0 pts Full Marks	0.0 pts No Marks	5.0 pts
Inclusion of case studies Clear examples, or case studies, about the transformations under review	5.0 to >0.0 pts Full Marks	0.0 pts No Marks	5.0 pts
Title, conclusion, bibliography Have all these been included	5.0 to >0.0 pts Full Marks	0.0 pts No Marks	5.0 pts
Writing style Clear writing with few grammatical and syntactical errors	5.0 to >0.0 pts Full Marks	0.0 pts No Marks	5.0 pts
			Total Points: 25.0

### III. RESULTS & MAJOR FINDINGS

6. What are the major takeaways from your assessment exercise?

This section is for you to highlight the results of the exercise. Pertinent information here would include:

- how well students mastered the outcome at the level they were intended to,
- any trends noticed over the past few assessment cycles, and
- the levels at which students mastered the outcome based on the rubric used.

To address this, among many other options, one option is to use a table showing the distribution, for example:

The Results




Seventeen (17) papers were selected for assessment from the eighteen (18) students that took the class – one student did not submit a paper.

Feedback was given in the following format (see below) so that students could see how they fared on each rubric.

**GRADING**

Rubric for Assignment 1 - Essay

Criteria	Ratings		Pts
Clear introduction - what are you writing about?	5 to >0 pts Full Marks	0 pts No Marks	4 / 5 pts
	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;">                     Your introduction was interesting, but never clearly laid out what the paper was about                 </div>		
Main body - history and theory <a href="#">view longer description</a>	5 to >0 pts Full Marks	0 pts No Marks	4.5 / 5 pts
	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;">                     The history and theory sections of the paper overlapped with the case studies. It was not clear then which were the case studies and how you were framing the paper - through what specific lens did you want to view and discuss neoclassical architecture.                 </div>		

<p>Inclusion of case studies</p> <p><a href="#">view longer description</a></p>	<p>5 to &gt;0 pts Full Marks</p> 	<p>0 pts No Marks</p>	<p>4.5</p> <p>/ 5 pts</p>
<p>It was not clear which the case studies were. If it was Piranesi, maybe a longer discussion on his sources, methods and style would have be in order. Borromini precedes neoclassical architecture, so I don't think this was an appropriate example. The discussion on Laugier was good!</p>			
<p>Title, conclusion, bibliography</p> <p><a href="#">view longer description</a></p>	<p>5 to &gt;0 pts Full Marks</p> 	<p>0 pts No Marks</p>	<p>4.5</p> <p>/ 5 pts</p>
<p>Good writing, but you need to be careful how you write terms neo-classical and neoclassical, and capitalization.</p>			
<p>Writing style</p> <p><a href="#">view longer description</a></p>	<p>5 to &gt;0 pts Full Marks</p> 	<p>0 pts No Marks</p>	<p>4.5</p> <p>/ 5 pts</p>
<p>Total Points: 22 out of 25</p>			

Detailed results were as follows:

- Nine (9) students fared well on all five rubrics (all receiving A letter grade in the assignment)
- Five (5) students fared well on at least four rubrics. For example, one student completely left out the bibliography; two students had trouble with their writing; one student did not write a conclusion. (All these students received an A- letter grade).
- Three (3) students fared well on only three rubrics. (These students received B and B+ letter grades)

Summarizing the results:

- In comparison with past results of a similar paper (the results haven't been documented but I speak from experience) the students did very well on the assignment.
- The overall level of the papers was good.
- Students clearly understood the assignment and what was expected of them.
- Students were able to connect history and theory with specific case studies. In other words, with the aid of clear examples, they were able to illustrate specific historical and theoretical developments in the development of modern cities and modern architecture.

- Almost all papers had a clear structure.
- The students in the class were mostly third-year students (juniors). They were quite well prepared, in terms of reading and writing skills, to successfully complete this assignment.

What I learned from the assignment:

- Giving clear instructions in the assignment prompt is key to ensuring success in such an assignment
- Students used their lecture notes and the lectures themselves, which were uploaded on Canvas, to provide details of the case studies
- Students also further detailed the case studies using the assigned text book for the class – *A Global History of Architecture*
- Students read the assigned chapter carefully and understood most of its content.

Level	Percentage of Students
Complete Mastery of the outcome	50%
Mastered the outcome in most parts	28%
Mastered some parts of the outcome	17%
Did not master the outcome at the level intended	5%

Some changes that I might consider for the course going forward

- I might try using one of the assignments that received an A in the course, and use it as a example of what to do, so that more students are clear about what is expected of them.

#### IV. CLOSING THE LOOP

7. **Based on your results, what changes/modifications are you planning in order to achieve the desired level of mastery in the assessed learning outcome? This section could also address more long-term planning that your department/program is considering and does not require that any changes need to be implemented in the next academic year itself.**

We have assessed this learning outcome now with two courses: URBS 100 – 01 and ARCD 204 – 01. For both courses, we have used a direct assessment tool; for URBS 100, we used response papers, for ARCD 204, we used a mid-term essay. While URBS 100 mostly consisted of first-year students (freshmen), ARCD 204 consisted of



third-year students (juniors). The Learning Outcome was far more successful at the third-year level than at the first year level. Moving forward, it may be worthwhile seeing how this particular Learning Outcome can be assessed for a third class. In this way, we will have a clear understanding of how this particular Outcome is being met across a wide-range of courses.

Moving forward, we might also consider assessing a different outcome for the program.

**8. What were the most important suggestions/feedback from the FDCD on your last assessment report (for academic year 2016-2017, submitted in October 2017)? How did you incorporate or address the suggestion(s) in this report?**

We were told that our PLO's were well thought out. Below is the feedback we received –

“Your PLOs are well thought out, well articulated, uses verbs to describe knowledge transference, that is measurable, restricted to 4. What is especially commendable is that, even though it was not required, you have taken pains to articulate which courses map on to which PLOs and why.”

Another important suggestion we received about how to go about our assessment was to take up ONE PLO and ONE course for assessment. This is the route we have been following so far.