Mission Statement Annual Assessment Report

Departmen: Museum Studies, aligned with the School of Art
College: LCA

Degree Program(s) M.A. in Museum Studies

Information about the purpose of mission statements and how to write them can be found on: http://air.sfsu.edu/assessment/resources along with some links to SFSU statements.

Mission Statement Rubric – developed and used by the University Academic Assessment Advisory Committee (UAAAC) to provide feedback to programs about their mission statement.

The program's mission statement concisely articulates its guiding purpose and identity, clarifies the educational value of its curriculum, and aligns with the university's broader public mission.

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<td>Clear statement of program’s purpose and identity, the educational value of curriculum, and its link to university's mission</td>
<td>Mission statement articulates program’s purpose but may lack broader context</td>
<td>Vague mission statement with little connection to specific program</td>
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1. What was your most recent mission statement prior to any revisions?

The mission of the Museum Studies Program is to develop future museum professionals through highly structured coursework in a setting where museums’ educational efforts, collections and interactions with community are of central concern. Students are engaged in a 21st-century landscape, where responsiveness to the significant changes taking place in the museum profession are integrated into curriculum, activities and professional development.

2. Please describe the process of revising or developing your mission statement. What informed your discussions about your new or revised mission statement (e.g. changes in the profession, new focus of the department)? How were department faculty members involved? Was it developed in department meetings or other gatherings?

Please note that for the past two years, there has been one tenure-track/tenured faculty in Museum Studies, who is also Director of Museum Studies. Until recently, the Director of Museum Studies was also the Director of a new Research Service Organization on campus, the Global Museum, which works closely with the Museum Studies Program, to ensure that the Global Museum serves as a “learning lab” for students (please see http://museum.sfsu.edu/content/global-museum).

In a typical semester in the MA Program in Museum Studies, four graduate seminar courses are offered, as well as several supervised courses, including theses, internships, and practicum courses. From Fall 2017 through Summer 2018, for example, the Director chaired all supervised course sections, and was the Committee Chair and primary thesis reader for 17 graduating students, all of
whom are now employed and working in the field. The Director also chaired all Museum Studies committees, including the governance and assessment committee, and participated in faculty issues concerning the School of Art. Moreover, as Chief Curator of the Global Museum, the Director of Museum Studies continues to play an oversight role for how Museum Studies curriculum intersects with the Global Museum.

The Museum Studies mission statement that had been provided to the Committee above was first evaluated by faculty over the 2017 academic year, in light of written comments from UAAAC from September 2016, as outlined below.

The Director of Museum Studies initially sought clarification from UAAAC representatives concerning how the Committee defined “mission statement,” as the Committee’s comments indicated that its approach differed significantly from how mission statements in the museum and related non-profit world are structured.

With these helpful clarifications from UAAAC in mind, and based on the Committee’s initial comments, the Director revised the mission statement for the MA Program and distributed an Initial Draft for review to all Lecturers in the summer of 2017. Please note that Museum Studies Lecturers were consulted because there is only one tenured faculty member in Museum Studies. Because all Museum Studies Lecturers also work as full-time professionals, it is not possible to have in-person faculty meetings; as a result, the revision process was conducted over email.

Comments received from Museum Studies faculty concerning the Initial Draft were evaluated and integrated by the Director into a Revised Draft. Faculty were asked to assess the mission statement in light of the significant challenges facing the museum profession, including the absence of diverse employees and the need for museums to engage a range of communities, and to consider the challenges facing Museum Studies Programs in North America, including the need to produce self-reflective practitioners, even as Museum Studies MA degrees with much less stringent requirements proliferate.

Because of the delay in notifying the Director of the deadlines for this report, and because of changes in how Museum Studies related to the Global Museum, as detailed below, the Director decided to distribute the Revised Draft for review during summer of 2018, to produce a Final Version of the mission statement.

Specifically, the Museum Studies Program experienced significant positive change in Spring 2018 with the opening of the Global Museum, which as outlined above, is integrated with the curriculum of Museum Studies. For example, nearly every course taught in Museum Studies from 2016-2018 was involved with some aspect of developing the Global Museum, in areas ranging from audience development and collections care to educational programming and exhibit development and design. As a result, it was decided to place additional effort into the mission statement in the summer of 2018 to ensure that it reflected recent developments.

The Final Version of the mission statement, which is supplied below, therefore integrates comments from faculty who were also involved in developing the relationship between Museum Studies and the Global Museum.
(Please note the Museum Studies also possesses a Vision, placed on web page here http://museum.sfsu.edu/content/about)

3. What is your revised mission statement?

The mission of the Museum Studies Program at San Francisco State is to develop resourceful museum professionals engaged in the important role museums play in our increasingly global and diverse world. The program integrates practical coursework and theoretical inquiry to foster museum professionals committed to the power of museums as places of inspiration, community learning, and ethical collections stewardship for all segments of society.

As the only Master of Arts degree program at a public university in the state, and one of the few in the world integrated with a university museum, the program provides unique value by reflecting the concerns of 21-st century museum professionals, who recognize that connecting to communities and engaging diverse audiences are paramount concerns of museums today. Coursework combines theoretical background in the history, functions, and social and political contexts of museums, plus hands-on, practical training in caring for and engaging visitors with authentic cultural collections in the campus’ new Global Museum. Classes are taught by leading museum professionals and scholars who emphasize ethics, engagement, and global citizenship.

The capstone experiences of internships and theses/creative work projects allow students to actively contribute to museum professionalism and scholarship. By nurturing the intellectual and practical needs of contemporary students, the Museum Studies Program builds upon the mission of San Francisco State University to inspire the courage to lead, create, and innovate as museum professionals.

4. Please post your revised mission statement on your department web page.

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Given that this year you revised your mission statement, the next step would be to review of your program learning goals in the 2018-19 academic year.