

# Department of Sociology - Program Goals and Objectives

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## **A. Goals related to skills**

### **1. Be able to think critically**

- 1.1 Be able to identify the elements of an argument (premises, supporting evidence, conclusion)
- 1.2 Be able to identify the weaknesses (if any) in the structure of an argument, its background assumptions, and its evidence
- 1.3 Be able to identify fallacies of reasoning relevant to sociological theory and analyses, such as: appeal to ignorance, the gambler's fallacy, hasty generalization, false dilemma, slippery slope, and ad hominem attacks
- 1.4 Be able to analyze social phenomena, processes and events, wherein students are able to make connections between social, political, economic, and environmental issues and institutions

### **2. Be able to demonstrate basic technology and research skills necessary to find, create, apply and communicate sociological information**

- 2.1 Be able to use on-line data bases to find published research
- 2.2 Be able to use the internet, e-mail, and Web pages to communicate with others and to find information
- 2.3 Be able to use standard software packages to analyze data, create spreadsheets and write papers

### **3. Be able to read, write and speak effectively**

- 3.1 Be able to read and understand sociological reports
- 3.2 Be able to write a clear, grammatical, well-organized report of the findings from sociological data analysis
- 3.3 Be able to make oral presentations focused on course content

## **B. Goals related to understanding core sociological concepts and theories**

### **1. Be able to define the basic concepts of sociology**

- 1.1 Be able to define and use meaningfully basic concepts such as: culture, status, role, norm, stratification, social structure, sociological imagination, prejudice, and discrimination

### **2. To understand the structure of societies**

- 2.1 To be able to explain and critically evaluate major theoretical positions which are currently advanced to explain social stratification
- 2.2 To be able to explain and critically evaluate major theoretical positions which are currently advanced to explain group relations
- 2.3 To be able to explain and critically evaluate major theoretical positions which are currently advanced to explain ethnic and gender relations
- 2.4 To be able to explain and critically evaluate major theoretical positions which are currently advanced to explain globalization, multicultural and social change processes

2.5 To be able to demonstrate familiarity with key social institutions such as: the family, health care, and formal organizations

**3. To understand the reciprocal relations between individuals and the small groups in which they are embedded**

3.1 To be able to explain and critically evaluate major theoretical positions in social psychology

3.2 To be able to explain and critically evaluate observational and experimental research in social psychology

**4. To understand and apply theory in sociology**

4.1 Be able to describe and apply the major 19th century foundations of modern sociological theory (such as the work of Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, and Karl Marx)

4.2 Be able to describe and apply major modern theoretical orientations such as: conflict, symbolic interactionism, feminism, structuralism, post-structuralism, and social constructionism

**C. Goals related to research methods in sociology**

**1. To understand and analyze both qualitative and quantitative data**

1.1 To be able to ascertain and employ an appropriate methodological approach based on the type of research question being asked

1.2 To be able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of a research method being employed for a study or assignment

1.3 To be able to analyze and evaluate data using sampling design

1.4 To be able to identify possible measures of concepts and assess reliability and validity

1.5 To be able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative methods of data collection

**2. To understand ethical issues that may arise in the course of research**

2.1 To be able to identify the critical ethical issues in research such as confidentiality, informed consent, and minimization of risk to subjects

2.2 To be aware of various professional codes of ethics such as the code of ethics from the American Sociological Association

**D. Goals related to community engagement**

**1. To develop a concern about the welfare of others and society**

1.1 To be able to apply the sociological imagination, connecting personal/private troubles to the larger/social issues, resulting in a deeper understanding of the relationships between personal experience and the social world

1.2 To be able to examine and reflect on their beliefs about community life, including issues of poverty, diversity, and social justice

- 2. To be prepared to be committed public citizens and leaders who take an active role in building stronger communities and societies**
  - 2.1 To be able to have an opportunity to directly link sociological theories and concepts to the community, especially through academic service-learning, internship, and applied research activities
  - 2.2 To be able to describe sociological contributions to capacity building, policy engagement, and social practice
  - 2.3 To be self-aware and have knowledge about one's values, skills and interests; about how one's identity can shape one's world view; and cross-cultural knowledge about the meanings of the concepts "self," "other," and "community"
  - 2.4 To be able to work with people who may be very different from oneself in terms of values, skills and interests as well as identities and world views
  - 2.5 To be able to analyze a public problem or issue, understand the problem, assess the resources for addressing the problem, and recognize the range of strategies for solving the problem
  - 2.6 To be able to identify opportunities for being an effective active citizen, including opportunities that span direct service to social change and include the workplace, the political arena, volunteer activities, and the private, public and nonprofit sectors

11/1/07

# TIMELINE FOR ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT OUTCOMES: 2007-2012

## 2007-2008

### *Fall, 2007*

A. Pre-test and post-test data gathered in Soc 131 will be analyzed for the purpose of identifying changes in perceptions of gender issues and concepts [B2.3]. Student responses will be scored on a 1-5 scale (with 5 indicating excellence); the Assessment Coordinator will write a summary of these findings. Any changes in curriculum or evaluation procedures that may be indicated by these results will then be discussed.

B. Data gathered from Alumni Survey of American Humanics students will be analyzed to identify student perceptions of program strengths and weaknesses [D1, D2]. Any changes in curriculum or evaluation procedures that may be indicated by these results will then be discussed.

### *Spring 2008*

A. Faculty will meet in late fall semester 2007 to design pre-test/post-test questions to be administered to Soc 1 students in Spring 2008 [and possibly other classes?] and to design a question to be administered as part of final exams in either Soc 151, 153 or 162. These are all part of our top tier core courses, and most of the students are juniors or seniors in the major.

B. Data from Soc 1 pre-test and post-test will be analyzed to determine changes in perceptions of basic sociological concepts and issues [B1.1] Student responses will be scored on a 1-5 scale (with 5 indicating excellence); the Assessment Coordinator will write a summary of these findings. Any changes in curriculum or evaluation procedures that may be indicated by these results will then be discussed.

C. Data from Soc 151, 153 or 162 will be analyzed to determine ability to evaluate and apply stratification theory, 19th c or modern sociological theory, or social psychology [B. 2.1, B4.1, 4.2, B2.2, B3.1,3.2]. Papers will be scored on a 1-5 scale (with 5 indicating excellence); the Assessment Coordinator will write a summary of these findings. Any changes in curriculum or evaluation procedures that may be indicated by these results will then be discussed.

## 2008-2009

### *Fall 2008*

A. Before the start of the Fall, 2008 semester, faculty teaching Soc 175 will meet to decide how their final examinations or term papers (if appropriate) can best be designed to measure the objectives of writing effectively [A3.2], understanding research design [C1, C2] and analysis of data [C1.3].

B. Papers/responses will be scored on a 1-5 scale (with 5 indicating excellence); the Assessment Coordinator will write a summary of these findings. Any changes in curriculum or evaluation procedures that may be indicated by these results will then be discussed.

### *Spring 2009*

A. In Spring 2009, faculty will conduct a “pipeline study” of student progress through the major. A sample of student records/transcripts will be drawn and analyzed to identify areas of concern (courses or patterns of taking courses) that presented obstacles to students successfully completing the major as well as areas of strength (courses or patterns of taking courses) that seem to enable advantages to those students. Through this analysis, we hope to obtain information on our students’ ability to move through the objectives that are parts of Goals A, B, C and D

## 2009-2010

### *Fall 2009*

A. An alumni study of Department graduates who are currently enrolled in a graduate program will be conducted. Faculty will design an instrument to be distributed to these alumni that will gather information on how well-prepared these students were for the demands of their current coursework. What did we do right and what could we have done better to prepare them for the rigors of graduate-level work?

B. Comments will be compiled and summarized by the Assessment Coordinator and then distributed to faculty who will then meet to discuss potential alterations to curriculum or evaluation procedures.

### *Spring 2010*

A. Faculty will meet and decide on topic for research paper to be assigned to students in Soc 151, 153 or 162 (course that was *not* evaluated in assessment activity of Spring 2008)

B. Papers will be distributed to and read by faculty to analyze student ability to write a clear, well-organized research paper and process information from sociological reports (A2.1, 3.1, 3.2) and explain social stratification theory [B2.1]. Papers will be scored on a 1-5 scale (with 5 indicating excellence); the Assessment Coordinator will write a summary of these findings. Any changes in curriculum or evaluation procedures that may be indicated by these results will then be discussed.

## 2010-2011

### *Fall 2010*

A. Faculty who teach Soc 3 and Soc 130W will meet in early Fall 2010 to determine a common question to be used as part of the final exam or as a paper topic. Question/topic will be designed to measure critical thinking, reasoning, writing, and the ability to perceive and analyze multiple dimensions of social phenomena [A.1, A.3, ]

B. These data will be collected and read by faculty. Papers will be scored on a 1-5 scale (with 5 indicating excellence); the Assessment Coordinator will write a summary of these findings. Any changes in curriculum or evaluation procedures that may be indicated by these results will then be discussed.

### *Spring 2011*

A. Faculty who teach Soc 147, Soc. 165, Soc 169, Soc 143 and Soc 163 will meet in early Spring 2011 to construct a question to be administered on the final exam for each of those course that measures the students' understanding of the more general role of organizations and institutions in society and specifically the roles and interactions of those specific institutions and/or organizations they have been studying [B. 2.5].

B. These data will be collected and read by faculty. Papers will be scored on a 1-5 scale (with 5 indicating excellence); the Assessment Coordinator will write a summary of these findings. Any changes in curriculum or evaluation procedures that may be indicated by these results will then be discussed.

## 2011-2012

### *Fal 2011*

A. In Soc 1 (or other courses?) with a service-learning component, students will keep journals throughout the semester recording their experiences within the service setting to which they have been assigned

B. At the end of the semester, those journals will be collected and copies of the work will be analyzed by a faculty committee to determine any changes in the students' levels of awareness of community needs, their ability to utilize the "sociological imagination," and the impact of this service-learning experience on their attitudes and perceptions

### *Spring 2012*

A. Instructors in Soc 122 and Soc 111 will meet and construct a question to be administered to students as part of the final exam in both courses to ascertain students' understanding of connections between social change, ethnic group relations, and multiculturalism [B.2.4].

B. The responses to this question will be compiled by the Assessment Coordinator and read by faculty. Papers will be scored on a 1-5 scale (with 5 indicating excellence); the Assessment Coordinator will write a summary of these findings. Any changes in curriculum or evaluation procedures that may be indicated by these results will then be discussed.





<b>Objectives</b>	<b>2007-8</b>	<b>2008-9</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
A. 1.1 (argument <b>structure</b> )					
A. 1.2 (argument <b>weakness</b> )					
A. 1.3 (fallacies)					
A.2.1 (find research)					
A.2.2 (use Web)					
A.2.3 (use software)					
A.3.1 (read <b>profess.</b> □ Writing)					
A.3.2 (write effectively)					
A.3.3 (make oral <b>repts.</b> )					
<b>B.1.1(use concepts)</b>					
<b>B.2.1 (strat. theory)</b>					
B.2.2 (ethnic theory)					
B.2.3 (gender theory)					
<b>B.2.4 (institutions)</b>					
B.3.1 (social psych. theory)					
<b>B.3.2 (social psych. research)</b>					
<b>B.4.1 (19th cent. theory)</b>					
<b>B.4.2 (modern theory)</b>					
<b>C.1.1 (sampling)</b>					
<b>C. 1.2 (measurement)</b>					
C. 1.3 (reliability and validity)					
<b>C. 1.4 (data collection)</b>					
C.2.1 (interpret <b>tables</b> )					
C.2.2 (use <b>qualitat. data</b> )					
C.2.3 (write research <b>rept.</b> )					
C.3.1 (dist. <b>program monit. and impact assess.</b> )					
C.3.2 (dist. <b>exper. And quasi-exper. design.</b> )					
C.3.3 (comp. <b>groups in eval. research</b> )					
C.4.1 (identify <b>ethical issues</b> )					
C.4.2 (know codes of ethics)					
C.4.3 (examples of <b>ethical issues</b> )					