**Major Assessment Report for Sociology 2017-2018**

Please download this document and provide a response to each question in the appropriate section. Send your assessment reports to the Director of Assessment, Dr. Melissa Jordine (mjordine@csufresno.edu). (Reports can be sent to Dr. Jordine via campus mail to mailstop SS 21). Please complete a separate report for each B.A/B.S. and M.A/M.S. program offered by the department.

|  |
| --- |
| 1. **What learning outcome(s) did you assess this year?** List all program outcomes you assessed (if you assessed an outcome not listed on your department SOAP please indicate explain). Do not describe the measures or benchmarks in this section Also please only describe major assessment activities in this report.

**SLO # 4:** The student will be able to utilize quantitative and qualitative techniques for the purpose of interpreting and communicating research results.**SLO # 6**: The student will be able to compile coherent, well-organized written and oral reports applying sociological analysis. |
| 1. **What did you discover from the data?** Discuss the student performance in relation to your standards or expectations. Be sure to clearly indicate how many students did (or did not) meet the standard for each outcome measured. Where possible, indicate the relative strengths and weaknesses in student performance on the outcome(s).

Scores for the two reviewers were fairly consistent; the first evaluator’s average score for the 20 papers assessed was 4.3 while the second’s average score was 4.0. Between 10% and 15% of students did not meet the above standard of 3.5/5. But we did meet the benchmark of 80% of students achieving a score of at least 3.5 on the rubric.Overall, the papers were very good: students demonstrated familiarity with and appropriate use of relevant terminology, competent use of research technique, and solid reporting of their analysis. They seemed to be comfortable with their data and confident in their conclusions.The papers that did not meet the standard were generally lacking in multiple elements, from analysis to interpretation of data to the compiling of a coherent report on their findings. One observation that emerged from this assessment was the brevity (if not absence) of the *Conclusions* section of the papers. While only a few papers neglected this section entirely, several papers literally had one sentence (“The results show there is an association.”) with no discussion of the association or interpretation of what that meant in terms of their research question. Part of one of the indicated learning outcomes for this assessment involves “…*communicating research results*,” while the other notes an expectation that students will be able to “*compile…. reports applying sociological analysis*.” Both outcomes seen to indicate that students should be able to interpret their finding and, as noted, several papers failed to indicate that the authors had a clear understanding of what their findings meant.  |
| 1. **What assignment or survey did you use to assess the outcomes and what method (criteria or rubric) did you use to evaluate the assignment?** If the assignment (activity, survey, etc.) does not correspond to the activities indicated in the timeline on the SOAP, please indicate why. Please clearly indicate how the assignment/survey is able to measure a specific outcome. If after evaluating the assessment you concluded that the measure was not clearly aligned or did not adequately measure the outcome please discuss this in your report. Please include the benchmark or standard for student performance in your assessment report (if it is stated in your SOAP then this information can just be copied into the report). An example of an expectation or standard would be “On outcome 2.3 we expected at least 80% of students to achieve a score of 3 or above on the rubric.”

As indicated in our timeline of assessment activities, we assessed the above learning outcomes using a representative sample of 20 final papers/projects from Soc 125, *Statistics for the Social* *Sciences*. This paper required students to select an empirical question for which data was available on the General Social Survey, identify their independent and dependent variables as well as level of measurement, and recode data as necessary. Student then produced frequency tables, cross-tabulations, and chi-square tables to analyze the data and provide conclusions. This project is well aligned with the learning outcomes, and it provided ample opportunity to assess the indicated outcomes which include the use of research techniques, the ability to interpret results and the ability to effectively compile reports utilizing data. Two faculty members (the course instructor and the SOAP coordinator), using the attached rubrics (one for point values of each component within the papers and one for evaluating overall level of paper), scored the papers. For this course, on both indicated outcomes, we expected 80% of students to score at least 3.5/5. |
| 1. **What changes did you make as a result of the data?** Describe how the information from the assessment activity was reviewed and what action was taken based on the analysis of the assessment data.

Information from the analysis of our SOAP activities is discussed at faculty meetings and specifically with faculty members teaching the courses on which the assessment centered. Some suggestions for changes to be made as a result of the data include labeling the final section of this paper “Conclusions *and Implications*,” indicating the expectation that the students will think more broadly about their findings could help encourage students to expand this section. The instructor could also include a requirement on a homework assignment or classroom exercise in which students interpreted results and explained the meaning of the associations they discovered or disproved. In this introductory course, it seems likely that the students are more engaged in mastering the techniques, the vocabulary and the processes involved in crafting social science research rather than actually interpreting or applying the results of that research but a reminder of the ultimate purpose of doing research along with some practice at communicating their conclusions could help as these students move into their next research methods course. |
| 1. **What assessment activities will you be conducting in the 2018-2019 AY?** List the outcomes and measures or assessment activities you will use to evaluate them. These activities should be the same as those indicated on your current SOAP timeline; if they are not please explain.

As per the timeline in our SOAP for 2018-2019, we will be assessing the same learning outcomes (SLO’s 4 and 6) in our qualitative research course, Soc. 176 (*Qualititative Research Methods*). A sample of 20 final research papers/projects will be evaluated and scored by two faculty members. We anticipate that 80% of students will achieve a score of at least 3.5/5. This activity, following the one this year in the introductory course in statistics, should provide valuable information on our students’ progress toward achieving competence in utilizing qualitative and quantitative research techniques to analyze data and ascertaining the appropriate methodology to be utilized for their research. |
| 1. **What progress have you made on items from your last program review action plan?** Please provide a brief description of progress made on each item listed in the action plan. If no progress has been made on an action item, simply state “no progress.”

 The Sociology Program has made progress on our **Program Review Action Plan** in several areas: 1. **Work to improve tenure density**: We completed a search and have hired one new tenure-track faculty member. We also have one transfer faculty teaching for us in Fall 2018. We are also experiencing other significant transitions, including changes in staff. Two full-time faculty members were also awarded sabbaticals for this year (Helsel in Fall 2018 and Randles in Spring 2019) which requires shifting of teaching assignments.
2. **Require both classical and contemporary sociological theory and make them sequential:** The hiring of our new tenure-track faculty member to teach theory will enable us to re-examine and discuss this suggested curriculum revision and decide how and when it can be implemented.
3. **Commendations for growth in majors and minors and excellent graduation rates among first-time freshmen and under-represented minority students (among others):** We continue this pattern of excellence, utilizing information from the alumni survey completed last year to identify academic skills with which our alumni reported they had struggled as undergraduates and identify strategies to strengthen those skills in our classrooms today.
4. **Elucidate and articulate the educational purpose of our service-learning and** **community-engagement projects (including Humanics**): We are committed to continuing these projects and are working to identify ways to incorporate them more fully into our sociology program
 |