

Program Review

Department of Sociology California State University, Sacramento

Review Team

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COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The Program Review Team assigned to review The Department of Sociology has completed its work and is pleased to file the following report. The Team has worked diligently throughout the Spring Semester of 2006, and wishes to thank the Department of Sociology for cooperating and assisting in every phase of the study. In addition, the Team also expresses appreciation to external consultant, Dr. Judith Little for her diligence and insight. The Team's findings can be briefly summarized in the form of the following commendations and recommendations.

Part I: Program Introduction, History and Overview

1. **Commendation:** The Department provides service to a variety of audiences: graduate, undergraduate, service courses, general education, applied research, as well as offering a minor. The Department is commended for its capacity to provide such a diversity of service.
2. **Commendation:** The Department is commended for its commitment to and involvement in the community.
3. **Commendation:** The Department is commended for having developed a well articulated mission statement, and a comprehensive set of goals. (Note: these goals are supported by set of learning objectives discussed in Part II.)
4. **Commendation:** The previous Review Team made 20 specific recommendations. The Department is commended for the manner in which it has addressed these concerns.
5. **Commendation:** Although scheduling remains a problem for the undergraduate Sociology major, the same cannot be said for the graduate program; the Department is commended for scheduling graduate courses in such a manner as to correspond with the preferences of the working graduate student.
6. **Commendation:** The review team is impressed with the Department's attempts to modernize its curriculum and expand its course offerings. Since the previous review, the Department has implemented a new and well designed curriculum, for which commendation is in order.
7. **Commendation:** The Department has attempted to address issues raised in departmental assessments, for example, self report scores show considerable improvement regarding the "self-in-society" goal. It is suggested that the Department's assessment program led to an increased emphasis on this topic in

- several courses, with particular reference to SOC 126 and SOC 158. The Department is commended for responding to assessment data in such an affirmative manner.
8. **Commendation:** The Department is commended for modifying its advisement procedure to ensure that students receive advising in a timely manner.
 9. **Recommendation:** Several of the recommendations from the previous review related to course offerings and scheduling. It appears the Department is sensitive to the importance of offering multiple sections scheduled at times generally thought to be convenient for the students. However, in a recent departmental survey, fully one-third of those students surveyed viewed scheduling as “poor.” Thus, even though the Department has made important strides in regard to the scheduling issue, and has increased the number of multiple sections, and has, where possible, scheduled GE courses at convenient hours, further attention to this problem is warranted.
 10. **Recommendation:** Although the Department appears to be in compliance with University assessment requirements, there may be some merit in looking at the assessment procedure with the thought of making it as efficient and effective as possible.

Part II: Academic Programs

1. **Commendation:** The Department is commended for having developed learning goals that are well written and easily understood, and that are consistent with both the goals of the University and the profession.
2. **Commendations:** The Department is commended for modifying and updating its undergraduate program. The recently revised curriculum adheres to national guidelines, is responsive to student needs, and reflects national trends in sociology curricula.
3. **Commendation:** The Department is commended for using learning outcomes as means of creating a more integrated curriculum as recommended by the previous Review Team.
4. **Commendation:** In the previous review cycle, the Review Team suggested that the Department change its graduation requirements to allow for completion by examination. The Department argued effectively against that suggestion. Upon review of the graduate program, the current Review Team commends the Department for maintaining its commitment to the high standard of scholarship implied by the thesis or project requirement.
5. **Commendation:** Overall, the Department’s assessment efforts are to be commended. Linking learning outcomes to specific courses and then using those learning outcomes as a global measure for departmental effectiveness is impressive. The Department’s

sensitivity to concepts and issues related to gender, race, and class merit further commendation.

6. **Recommendation:** Two recommendations seem germane to the topic of departmental assessment efforts: it is recommended that the Department (1) continue to explore ways of measuring effectiveness as well as refining its method of assessing student perceptions, and (2) reflect the disposition of the recommendations from previous reports to subsequent reports (see E3 as an example).
7. **Recommendation:** The Review Team concurs with the external consultant that the Department continue considering ways to enhance and strengthen the graduate program.
8. **Recommendation:** Specific to General Education assessment, in subsequent self-studies, it is recommended that the GE Assessment Plan for each GE course be included in the self-study, along with the data collected and the conclusions derived.
9. **Recommendation:** A specific recommendation emerges from the discussion on computer competence: the Department is encouraged to engage in conversations to develop strategies to achieve this goal in a more comprehensive and thorough fashion.
10. **Recommendation:** Within the past few years, the Department has employed assessment strategies and reasoned debate to create a new and stronger curriculum. It is important that this debate continue, that assessment strategies continue to be refined, and that the momentum demonstrated over the past few years continue.

Part III: Students

1. **Commendation:** As mentioned earlier, the Department is commended for having taken steps to improve the advising system.
2. **Commendation:** The Department has expanded the internship program with potential employment opportunities for their students in mind. This has entailed various discussions with the Career Center, and has set the stage for subsequent coordinated activities.
3. **Recommendation:** Retention over a seven year period exceeds the University average, but for transfers over a five-year period retention appears substantially lower than the University. It is recommended that the Department explore retention related factors to determine if any corrective action might be in order.
4. **Recommendation:** There is some concern among faculty and summarized by the external consultant that having majors take 45% of their units from courses designated for GE may result in some pedagogical problems for both students and teachers. The Review Team encourages the Department look into this matter.

5. **Recommendation:** Some faculty members have expressed concern that students were not taking courses in a reasonable sequence. The Review Team suggest the Department consider developing a pedagogical path to serve as a guideline for freshmen and transfer students.

Part IV: Faculty

1. **Commendations:** The Department is commended for moving to achieve diversity goals, the number of Ph.D.s, and performance on course evaluations.
2. **Commendation:** The Department is commended for the level preparation found among the full-time faculty.
3. **Commendation:** The Department is commended for maximizing opportunities for participation in departmental governance.
4. **Recommendation:** Even though Learning Goal #5 states that the Department encourages "...our students to develop their own interdisciplinary vision for the future of this region by becoming involved as citizens and employees in the quest to address the problems we face in the Sacramento Valley and in Northern California," little effort has been made to involve students in the governance of the Department. One suggestion, coming from the Department, is to have students informed of opportunities to attend faculty meetings through the student newsletter. The Review Team supports that idea.
5. **Recommendation:** In preparation for future self-studies, the Review Team suggests that a common format to better enable comparison. For example, it would be helpful to the Review Team to have each vita employ the same categories and have those categories reflect the format of the self-study.
6. **Recommendation:** There is some concern that service to the graduate program may not be adequately recognized in the RTP process, similarly there is concern among faculty that resources directed to the graduate program are inadequate; thus, the Department is encouraged to vigorously address these issues with the College.

Part V: Governance

1. **Commendation:** The Department values collegiality and shared governance. This "inclusive" approach to governance is commended.
2. **Commendation:** The Department is commended for maintaining a healthy and positive relationship with the College and other departments within the College.
3. **Recommendation:** Continuity in faculty governance has been facilitated through having had one individual serve as department chair for the past two decades. With

the increase in new faculty, there may be merit in documenting the Department's management philosophy and fundamental policies.

Part VI. Institutional Support Resources

1. **Commendations:** The Department is commended for being attentive to the role and importance of technology in the classroom.
2. **Recommendations:** It is unreasonable for the University to encourage large sections without providing adequate classroom space; similarly, if students are to enjoy the benefits of "teaching with technology" such technology must be made available. The Department is urged to aggressively communicate the needs for large and technology equipped classrooms to the University and College.
3. **Recommendation:** This is a global issue that extends beyond the Department of Sociology, but one that requires reiteration. It is a challenge for the faculty to balance the demands of teaching, scholarship, and service. The Review Team encourages the Department to vigorously pursue campus resources, and allocate such resources to faculty in an effort to achieve reasonable workloads and facilitate means for the faculty to successfully achieve their teaching, scholarship, and service goals.
4. **Recommendation:** It appears that library holdings may be inadequate; the Department is encouraged to address this issue to the extent that it is able to do so.

Discussion: Part I

I. Program Introduction/History

- A. Describe your program's mission and goals (undergraduate, graduate, general education). In what way do program goals respond to community and regional needs?
- B. Assess the effectiveness of any changes (Department, College and University) made in response to recommendations from the last program review. (Include the list of recommendations in an appendix of the report).
- C. What major state and national trends (new developments in theory, research, and pedagogy) are occurring in your discipline? How does your curriculum structure and course offerings compare to those of similar programs in your discipline? What responses to changes in the discipline is your department planning and/or implementing?

A. History/Mission and Goals

Within the past seven years, notable changes have occurred in the Department of Sociology. To set the stage for a discussion on such changes, which comprise much of this report, it is useful to look at a brief history of the Department. The self-study begins with the following historical account:

Established as an independent department in 1964, the CSUS Department of Sociology grew quickly. By 1970 the department was generating about 575 FTE and had 21 full-time tenure track faculty. Shortly thereafter, following a national trend, enrollment in sociology programs began to diminish and by 1982 the enrollment in the CSUS Sociology Department had fallen to 216 FTE. Enrollment hovered around this level until the early 1990's. Low levels of enrollment resulted in a "hiring drought" that lasted for 27 years. Within recent years a new trend has emerged and sociology programs became increasingly popular. Locally, in the 1970's, enrollment began to increase, and by fall 2003, enrollment had reached and exceeded the earlier all time high of 575 FTE. Since 1997, 14 probationary faculties have been hired. Of that on faculty in 1970, only 2 now remain. Since 1997, the department has worked diligently to upgrade its program and services, and today offers a program that appears consistent with its mission and goals and largely in compliance with the American Sociological Association's Curriculum recommendations.

The self-study suggests that the Department has a history of responding to regional and community needs, and continues to do so today. For example, the Department's internship program places students with numerous agencies involved in meeting "real world" issues and problems. Several faculty members have instituted service learning components in their courses that encourage students to engage in community service related projects. Professor Liu conducts an annual "Quality of Life Survey," the results of which are published in the Sacramento Bee. In addition, the pedagogical goals of the Department are designed to prepare students for active participation in various social and economic roles common to the Sacramento region. Judith Little, external consultant noted that the faculty and students are "engaged in research activities that benefit the Sacramento region as well as the state as a whole."

The Department identifies three major mission functions and five learning goals. The self-study refers readers to the departmental website for a complete version of these functions and goals. What follows is a copy from that departmental home page.¹

Mission: To provide our students with the theoretical and substantive knowledge to participate as skilled professionals within the institutions and organizations that shape our region.

The mission of the Sociology Department involves three functions.

1. General Education - We offer a series of courses that illustrate to the student how to use the sociological perspective and tools for critical analysis to analyze both specific social issues (crime, race and ethnicity, for example), and general perspectives on society (introductory sociology, social problems). This is a significant function for us - 26 of 46 sections for Fall 1999 have G.E. status.

¹ http://www.csus.edu/psa/soc_v1/1Acad_Mission.htm.

2. Sociology Major - We offer what might be viewed as a traditional major which requires 2 lower division prerequisites, 7 core courses (in methods, social stratification, social psychology and theory), and 5 electives in sociology. The major is designed to illustrate the sociological perspective, to help students develop skills in critical thinking, and to introduce and explain the tools of sociology. These skills will be beneficial for those who may seek jobs in sociology, and also for those who seek employment in human and social service occupations in the Sacramento region.

3. Graduate Program - We offer an MA degree in Sociology. Our intent is to introduce and explain higher level skills in theory, research, social psychology, and urban, family, social organization, and social stratification. Advanced research skills and knowledge of the discipline would prepare for a further advanced degree, higher level research positions, or teaching or employment in a variety of educational and human and social service organizations in the Sacramento region or elsewhere.

The sociology curriculum should contribute to the following learning goals for the typical student who receives a baccalaureate degree in sociology at CSUS:

Help students understand the sources of racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, and gender diversity in an increasingly pluralistic California and to appreciate and respect the opportunities and consequences of that diversity. Our students should be able to demonstrate the relevance of race, class, and gender in understanding human groups and human behavior and the influence of these characteristics on the functioning of organizations they work in. They should also, for example, be able to know how to generalize and/or resist generalization across gender, race, and ethnic groups.

Assist students in developing the knowledge and tools to understand and respond to rapid changes in the social, political, technological, and economic spheres of life. Students should be able to know how factors such as urbanization and population, for example, affect social structures and individuals and how global trends are affecting the local community they live in.

Promote students' understanding of human interaction, institutions, and trends so that the sociological perspective will help them comprehend and react to the complexities around them. Our students should be able to carry with them the sociological perspective, apply it to the organizations they work in, to their community and neighborhood, and to their role as citizens in a democratic society.

Guide the development of critical thinking skills and appreciation for the social scientific method as a tool for understanding social problems and providing solutions to those problems. Our students should understand arguments about social problems and solutions to those problems, and the role that scientific research plays in constructing knowledge about these problems. They should be able to identify basic premises in arguments about social concerns and to present alternative and opposing viewpoints and hypothesis on various issues that confront them both in their world of work and in their life as citizens.

Encourage our students to develop their own interdisciplinary vision for the future of this region by becoming involved as citizens and employees in the quest to address the problems we face in the Sacramento Valley and in Northern California. Sociology is a liberal arts major. It helps prepare our students for a variety of careers, for life-long learning, and for their role as active and involved citizens in their communities.

Both the Review Team and external consultant are impressed with the Department's attempts to align its mission statement, goal and objectives, and curriculum with the precepts of the American Sociological Association's "Liberal Learning and the Sociology Major." As the consultant pointed out, "New courses have been developed...in line with the most recent ASA identified trends and issues...in compliance with ASA recommendations and similar to most sociology majors in other colleges and universities."

B. Previous Review Team Recommendations and Department Response

The previous Program Review made 20 specific recommendations. It appears the Department has looked at each one of these recommendations closely, and where feasible, and deemed appropriate, responded in an affirmative manner. Where the Department found the recommendation ill-advised, inappropriate, or unfeasible, a thoughtful explanation is offered. What follows is a summary of the recommendations from the previous Program Review and the Department's response.

Recommendation	Action
<i>1. Reconsider the mission of the department and make a frank and realistic assessment about the courses that should be offered in its curriculum to maintain the integrity and coherence of the program.</i>	The Department views its mission statement as appropriate. It provided evidence of having a practice of assessing the curriculum and making appropriate modifications.
<i>2...ensure that key courses are offered regularly.</i>	Increased faculty and FTE have resulted in an increase between Fall 2000 to Fall 2004 in key courses from 44 to 61
<i>3. Schedule course to ensure "real choices" in the four areas of study offered by the program.</i>	The Department references the increase in sections as well as changes to appear in the 2006-2008 catalogues alleviate this problem.
<i>4. ...offer courses that have recently been neglected in the department curriculum.</i>	The Department provides evidence of making progress on this recommendation.
<i>5. Provide more flexibility...by offering more evening classes and multiple sections.</i>	The Department identifies 11 courses all of which offer multiple sections ranging from 2 to 12 sections. Section offerings have expanded by 40% within the past five years.
<i>6. Provide through cross-listing more courses in such areas as race, gender, and ethnicity.</i>	The Department did not see a need to cross-list, but did demonstrate an ability to develop such courses in-house. Since the recommendation, 13 new undergraduate

	<p>courses have been added to the curriculum that relate to this recommendation, and 5 courses on the graduate level. The Department's response to this question also demonstrated a willingness to engage in interdisciplinary cooperation with other departments and programs.</p>
<p>7. <i>Develop an option of an exam or project for the culminating experience in the graduate program.</i></p>	<p>The Department offered evidence that the option of doing a project has been available since the 1970's. It argued effectively against offering an exam as an option.</p>
<p>8. <i>Offer some courses at the senior/graduate level so that more electives would be available for graduate students.</i></p>	<p>In updating the curriculum 5 new graduate courses have been offered. An experiment in senior/graduate enrollment (SOC 106) led to the conclusion that this was not a satisfactory solution to this problem.</p>
<p>9. <i>Hold an advising workshop...fostering stronger advising and mentoring ties between faculty and students.</i></p>	<p>The Department has modified its advising policy in an effort to increase the number of advisors available to meet advising needs.</p>
<p>10. <i>Establish a link with the career center to provide students updated information about internships, career paths, and career fairs.</i></p>	<p>The Department has appointed a Career Center Coordinator: Professor Kevin Wehr. The CC is now involved in helping place interns. Communication between the Department and CC is now viewed as effective.</p>
<p>11. <i>Consider a career fair or colloquium featuring professionals in sociology.</i></p>	<p>See above.</p>
<p>12. <i>Strengthen the existing internship program and develop more internship opportunities.</i></p>	<p>Appendix 1 shows a newly developed internship program.</p>
<p>13. <i>Revise and update the department student handbook</i></p>	<p>The Department no longer produces a hard copy version of the student handbook, but relies on a cyber-version. A look at the departmental website shows it to be current and well developed.</p>
<p>14. <i>Schedule meetings as necessary between junior faculty and the chair and the personnel committee of the department to review personnel policies, procedures and general expectations for tenure and promotion.</i></p>	<p>The Department's response suggests full compliance with College of SSIS RTP procedures which meet the intent of this recommendation.</p>
<p>15. <i>Establish a part-time liaison committee which meets regularly to manage communication between part-time faculty and department.</i></p>	<p>Part-time members may participate in faculty meetings; a part-time hiring committee deals with RTP matters. With only five part-time faculty members, the Department doesn't view the creation of a "part-time liaison committee" as having merit. Part-time faculty don't view department-related communication as a serious issue.</p>

16. <i>Encourage all faculty members to become involved in governance issues and general decision-making....</i>	The Department does not view this as a serious issue. All members of the faculty express some degree of satisfaction with their ability to influence departmental affairs.
17. <i>Establish an Institute of Social Research (ISR) coordinating committee....</i>	The Department argues there is no point to this recommendation. A healthy relationship exists between the ISR and the Department; rather than create another committee, the Department prefers to continue to strengthen the existing relationship.
18. <i>Establish a task-force to ensure that necessary computer software is consistently upgraded.</i>	The Department argues that there is no point to this recommendation. Individual faculty members make such decisions.
19. <i>Hire additional clerical staff.</i>	As of March 2005, the Department views its clerical needs to be adequately met.
20. <i>Continue to work with the library to strengthen holdings relative to the discipline.</i>	Appendix 2 addresses this issue. It suggests the current holdings sufficiently support instructional needs, but also recommends a possibly important exercise: examine Interlibrary Loan records to identify additional journal or book purchases, which is currently being done.

The Review Team is satisfied that the Department has taken each of the above concerns seriously and addressed most of them effectively. As the external consultant pointed out in her report, “Many of the concerns raised...have been addressed by the recent hiring of many new faculty, the increased administrative support, restructuring of the major and the development of many new courses, strengthening of the internship opportunities for students, and the addition of service learning opportunities in some courses.” She does go on to point out that “the graduate program is still somewhat problematic as faculty members see this as a lower priority than its undergraduate offerings...” Conversations with faculty members suggest that they are keenly aware of the value of the graduate program, and generally are in concert with the consultant's observations and concerns. Just as they have strengthened and enhanced the undergraduate program, it is presumed that they will collectively undertake the further development of the graduate program. Concerns regarding the graduate program will be addressed in more detail later in this discussion.

C. Currency with Trends and Standards

It is clear that the Department is aware of national trends within the profession as well as the current development of curricula across the country. In developing its mission statement, its curriculum objectives, and its pedagogical program, the Department has made a serious attempt to reflect the current trends and standards of the profession as well as themes that are emerging in professional sociology education. This observation is developed further in the next section.

Discussion: Part II

II. Academic Programs

- A. Describe learning expectations for your academic programs (undergraduate and graduate, Centers and Institutes)
1. Specify expectations for:
 - a. the discipline
 - b. writing and reading in the major including:
 - i. descriptions of current writing and reading requirements
 - ii. standards for general expository and discipline-specific writing and reading
 - iii. any plans for the development of writing and reading skills
 - iv. plans for the assessment of current requirements and of measures to encourage writing and reading skills
 - c. computer/information competence.
 2. Indicate on what these expectations are based (judgment of faculty, standards/trends in discipline, expectations of programs at other schools, surveys of students/alumni, etc.)
 3. Indicate how expectations are communicated to students
- B. How is your curriculum structured (including core requirements, prerequisites, and electives) to achieve your learning expectations? If your curriculum requires that majors take more than 120 units for their degree, provide a justification for the extra units.
- Include a matrix that displays learning expectations and how courses contribute to achieving the expectations.
- C. What teaching strategies has your faculty found to be particularly effective in helping students achieve your learning expectations, e.g. service learning, field work, application assignments, etc.? (Include copies of course syllabi in an appendix.)
- D. Describe your department's involvement in (if any) and evaluation of distance and distributed education courses.
- E. Describe your program's assessment plan. Include both assessment of student learning outcomes and surveys of graduating seniors, and graduate students and alumni.
- F. Using assessment data, analyze the effectiveness of your program including the ability of students to meet:
1. The department's learning expectations
 2. The University learning goals
 3. Writing and reading standards in the major
 4. Computer/information competence standards
- G. Describe how your department maintains consistency in multiple sections of courses.
- H. Discuss changes needed to enhance or improve the effectiveness of your academic program outcomes.
- I. If your department and its programs offer General Education and/or Service courses:
1. Provide evidence that courses are meeting the General Education area criteria.
 2. From the perspective of the department/programs being served, to what extent do your service courses meet their needs?
 3. Describe how your department maintains consistency in multiple sections of General Education courses.
- J. Explain how your department/program:
1. addresses the increasing cultural diversity of CSUS students in the curriculum, as appropriate;
 2. accommodates differences in student preparation and access to educational opportunities; and

3. Helps students gain an effective knowledge of how to live and work in our diverse society.
- K. If your department offers a minor, a concentration or a certificate program, provide evidence of its contribution to the mission of the department, college and university, and its viability with respect to enrollment patterns since the last program review and to the resources expended to support the program.

A. Program Goals

The Department's mission statement/program goals are clearly stated and effectively displayed on the departmental website. The learning goals or "learning expectations" are of recent development and reflect the curriculum guidelines developed by the American Sociological Association. The "learning goals" are described as follows:

- Students in sociology learn how to do social science research and how to apply the sociological imagination and perspective to their own lives, to the lives of their families and neighbors in the Sacramento region, and to the larger society and global community.
- Sociology majors learn what the sociological perspective is - a special way to look at, analyze, and understand the world they live in - by taking courses that deal with social inequality, individual and group interaction, and analytical perspectives on how groups, the society, and the global world are constructed, work, and change.
- Majors also learn a set of research skills that allow them to know how to critically think so they can formulate research questions, search for source material, do bibliographic searches in libraries and on the internet, design and carry out a research project, collect and analyze data using statistics and computer software programs, and coherently write a research report.
- The following program goals and learning expectations provide more specific information about what sociology students learn. Many of the learning goals listed below were adopted from *Liberal Learning and the Sociology Major* (1990) and from *Program Review and Educational Quality in the Major* (1992) published by the Association of American Colleges

Learning Goals and Student Learning Expectations

1: The sociology major at CSU Sacramento will be expected to study, review, and reflect on the discipline of sociology and its role in contributing to our understanding of social reality.

The student should be able to

- describe how sociology differs from and is similar to other social sciences
- and give examples of these differences; and apply sociological imagination, principles, and concepts to her/his own life.

2: The sociology major at CSU Sacramento will be expected to study, review, and reflect on the role of theory in sociology.

The student should be able to

- define theory and describe its role in building sociological knowledge;
- compare and contrast basic theoretical orientations;
- show how theories reflect the context in which they are developed; and describe and apply basic theories or theoretical orientations.

3: The sociology major at CSU Sacramento will be expected to study, review, and reflect on the role of evidence and quantitative and qualitative research methods in sociology.

The student should be able to

- identify basic methodological approaches and describe the general role of methods in building sociological knowledge;
- compare and contrast basic methodological approaches for gathering data;
- design and complete a research study; and
- critically assess a published research report. understand and apply basic statistical tests sociologists often use.

4: The sociology major at CSU Sacramento will be expected to have basic computer skills necessary to find, communicate, create, and apply sociological knowledge and information.

The student should have the ability

- to use computerized and on-line data bases to find published research;
- to use the internet to communicate to others and to find information; and to use standard software packages, such as SPSS, to analyze data.

5: The sociology major at CSU Sacramento will be expected to study, review, and reflect on basic concepts in sociology and their fundamental theoretical interrelations.

- The student should be able to define, give examples, and demonstrate the relevance of culture, socialization, stratification, social structure, institutions, and differentiations by race/ethnicity, gender, age, and social class.

6: The sociology major at CSU Sacramento will be expected to study, review, and reflect on how social structures operate.

The student should be able to demonstrate

- how institutions interact in their effects on other and on individuals;
- how factors such as population or urbanization affect social structures and individuals; and how culture and social structure vary across time and place.

7: The sociology major at CSU Sacramento will be expected to study, review, and reflect on reciprocal relationships between individuals and society.

The student should be able to explain

- how the self develops sociologically;
- how societal and structural factors influence individual behavior and the self's development;
- how social interaction and the self influences society and social structure; and how to distinguish sociological approaches to analyzing the self from psychological, economic, and other approaches.

8: The sociology major at CSU Sacramento will be expected to study, review, and reflect on the internal diversity of American society.

The student should be able to

- describe the significance of variations by race, class, gender and age; and understand appropriately how to generalize or resist generalization across groups.

9: The sociology major at CSU Sacramento will be expected to study, review, and reflect on the place of American society in the global world and community.

The student should be able to

- understand that local happenings are shaped by events occurring miles away and that their life and the lives of others are to an increasing degree being affected by events and processes everywhere, that they are experiencing an emerging global form of social life;
- understand and critique the Eurocentric-U.S. pattern and conception of globalization and development;
- understand that politics, economy, law, labor, culture, communications, and social movements have become globalized; and understand that they live in an interdependent and unequal society and world.

10: The sociology major at CSU Sacramento will be expected to think critically.

The student should be able to

- move easily from remembering through analysis and to synthesis and evaluation;

- recognize underlying assumptions in theoretical orientations or arguments;
- identify basic premises in particular arguments; and present opposing viewpoints and alternative hypotheses on various issues.

11: The sociology major at CSUS will be expected to have the writing skills necessary to communicate effectively with persons whom they encounter in their work, civil obligation and personal life.

The student should be able to

- write a clear and concise report of the findings from sociological data analysis; and write a clear and concise sociological analysis and account of a social event, topic, issue, or problem.

The following is found on the website and reflects the Department's epistemology. It offers a common understanding of the pedagogy to be expected as one goes through the program. It implies a standard of instructional expertise and methodology that can be used by faculty to guide their efforts in the classroom, as well as assess their instructional ability.

How Do Students In Sociology Learn?

Most faculty state on the syllabus of each course they teach what the learning goals and expectations are for that course. Knowing the learning expectations of each course and of the sociology program in general helps students to focus on the key ideas, concepts, and knowledge they are expected to learn. In addition, students in the sociology department encounter a variety of teaching and learning styles and homework assignments.

Students are required to write in most classes. Writing assignments vary. Some are the traditional term paper. Others involve writing a "one minute" paper summarizing what was learned from a particular lecture, or writing drafts of project proposals, field notes from observations, take-home and in-class essays, and small group writing projects.

In sociology students will also encounter a variety of tests: the traditional multiple choice exam, announced and unannounced quizzes, in-class and out-of-class exams, and oral presentations. They will be expected to engage in debates, do participant observations outside of class, use the computer to analyze data and engage in statistical analysis. In some classes they will view films and videos and write answers to questions based on them. All students will take a lab in statistics and research methods where specific assignments will be given that involve the application of ideas and concepts to problems. They could also be asked to develop a research file of relevant information, such as newspaper and academic articles on a particular topic, or be assigned a visual sociology project where they must bring photographs to class that illustrate a sociological concept or idea. They may also be asked to interview research subjects or members of their family or a member of a community-based organization.

One of the key learning assignments is doing an original research project over two semesters. This involves formulating a research question, designing the research project, gathering original data or using an existing database, analyzing and interpreting data, writing the report, and presenting it publicly. This assignment represents the capstone experience for the sociology major. This project is meant to provide the major at the senior level with an opportunity to integrate three key learning expectations: knowledge about sociological theory and the sociological perspective, skills in research methods, and knowledge about a substantive area - crime, education, poverty, religion, race and ethnicity, and so forth.²

B. Structure of the Program

Within recent years, the Department has worked very diligently to modernize and update its program. Furthermore, using the recently developed learning outcomes, the Department has attempted to better integrate and strengthen its pedagogical lattice. This has culminated in a new curriculum unveiled in the 2006-2008 University Catalog. The Bachelor of Arts in Sociology as described in the 2004-2006 University Catalog requires completion of 120 units, 43 of those being in the major courses. An outline of the degree requirements follows along with comments relating to the differences between the current catalog copy and that planned for 2006-2008. Note, due to several reasons, the Department has eliminated the concentrations described in the current catalog. The principle reason for this action may have been the relatively low number of students declaring options (27%) as compared to 73% that pursued “general sociology.”

In the following chart, the 2004-2006 curriculum is compared to the 2006-2008. It is clear that the program has been streamlined and simplified.

Undergraduate program

The Bachelor of Arts in Sociology requires completion of 120 units, 43 of those being the major courses.

An outline of degree requirements follows.

A. Required Lower Division Courses (6 units)

(3) SOC 001 Principles of Sociology

(3) Select one of the following:

SOC 003 Social Problems

SOC 005 Marriage and Its Alternatives

SOC 008 Sense and Nonsense in Social Issues and Research

² http://www.csus.edu/psa/soc_v1/1Acad_Goals.htm (February 3, 2006)

SOC 010 Issues in Crime and Social Control

B. Area Division (22 units)

- (4) SOC 101 Introduction to Statistics for Sociologists
- (4) SOC 102A Research Methods in Sociology (SOC 101)
- (2) SOC 102B Research Methods Lab (SOC 101 ; SOC 102A)
- (3) SOC 125 Social Inequalities (SOC 001 or equivalent)
- (3) SOC 150 Social Psychology
- (3) SOC 192 Sociological Theory (SOC 001 or equivalent)

Select one of the following Core Study:

- (3) SOC 122 Immigration Studies**(New courses/changes in **bold**.)
- (3) SOC 130 Political Sociology (SOC 001 or equivalent)
- (3) SOC 133 Sport in a Global Perspective**
- (3) SOC 138/ ENVS 138 Environmental Sociology**
- (3) SOC 140 Sociology of Education (SOC 001 or equivalent)
- (3) SOC 166 The Family
- (3) SOC 171 Sociology of Religion

Note: Soc 175 moved and 166 deleted from new curriculum.

C. Additional Upper Division Requirements (15 units)

Select 15 units of any upper division Sociology courses. In the previous curriculum this read: *Select one of the following areas of study in consultation with a department advisor. Apparently these areas were the concentrations that were eliminated. They were: Criminology and Deviance, Family and Socialization, Race and Ethnicity, and Urban Studies. In all cases 9 units were required and 6 units of electives were required for a total of 15 units.*

1. Crime and Deviance

- (3) SOC 155 Criminology
- (3) SOC 156 Delinquency
- (3) SOC 157 Issues in Courts and Prisons
- (3) SOC 158 Sociology of Deviance

Note: "Select two of the following" has been deleted.

2. Diversity and Inequality **Note: This replaces Family and Socialization.**

- (3) SOC 118 Chicano Community
- (3) SOC 120 Ethnic & Race Relations
- (3) SOC 123 Black Studies in Sociology
- (3) SOC 124/
ID 124 Social Justice in Interdisciplinary Perspective
~~(Sophomore standing or instructor permission)~~
- (3) SOC 126 Sociology of Gender
- (3) SOC 127 Men, Masculinity and Society
- (3) SOC 160 Asian Studies

(3) SOC 162 Middle Eastern Societies and Culture

3. Socialization and Interaction **Replaces Race and Ethnicity**

- (3) SOC 128 Sociology of Sexuality
(SOC 001 or permission of instructor)
- (3) SOC 134 Sociology of Film
- (3) SOC 135 Sociology of Pop Culture
- (3) SOC 146 Sociology of Aging
- (3) SOC 168 Self and Society (Passing score on WPE)
- (3) SOC 170 Sociology of Children and Adolescents
- (3) SOC 190 Sociology of Small Groups (SOC 001 or equivalent)

4. Globalization and Social Change **Replaces Urban Studies**

- (3) SOC 106 Births, Deaths and Borders
- (3) SOC 110 Urban Life & Problems
- (3) SOC 136 Social Movements (SOC 001 or equivalent)
- (3) SOC 144 Sociology of Health and Illness
- (3) SOC 163 Conflict, Oil and Development in the Middle East
- (3) SOC 164 Sociology of Globalization
- (3) SOC 169 Changing American Family
- (3) SOC 175 Work and Occupations
- (3) SOC 176/ LBR 100 Labor and the American Social Structure
(Passing score on WPE)

5. General

- (3) SOC 194 Special Topics in Sociology
(SOC 001 or permission of instructor)
- (1-3) SOC 195 Internship & Fieldwork (permission of instructor)
- (3) SOC 196 Experimental Topics
- (1-3) SOC 199 Individual Study Projects

*Note: SOC 195 or SOC 199 can be taken for 1-3 units of credit.
A maximum of 3 units in SOC 195 or SOC 199 may be counted toward the major. Students may take up to 3 units of upper division courses outside the department in consultation with their undergraduate advisor.

The Undergraduate Minor in Sociology 21 Total Units Required

SOC 1 Principles of Sociology (g.e. D1A)3 units

Select one of the following:

SOC 3 Special Problems (recommend SOC 1) (g.e. D2)3 units

SOC 5 Marriage and Its Alternatives3 units

SOC 8 Sense and Nonsense in Social Issues and Research (g.e. A3)3

units

SOC 10 Issues in Crime and Social Control (g.e. D2) 3 units

Select 15 units of upper division electives from one of the areas of study above;
Sociology 125 and 150 may be substituted for any course in the above areas of study for the minor.

The Graduate Program

Sociology Graduate Studies Modified: January 11, 2006

The Master of Arts in Sociology requires completion of thirty (30), units of course work including a Master's Thesis, with a minimum 3.0 grade point average. An outline of degree requirements follows:

Required Core Courses (15 units)

Sociology 200A Orientation to Graduate Studies in Sociology and the Profession 1 unit

Sociology 200B Prospectus/Proposal Preparation Seminar 2 units

Sociology 214 Research Methods 3 units

Sociology 215 Data Analysis (Soc 101 or equivalent or instructor permission) 3 units

Sociology 235 Social Psychology 3 units

Sociology 240 Seminar: Sociological Theory 3 units

Additional Courses Chosen from the Following Graduate Seminars (9 units) Sociology

210 Seminar: Urban Sociology 3 units

Sociology 220 Seminar: Social Change 3 units

Sociology 225 Seminar: Stratification 3 units

Sociology 230 Seminar: Social Organizations 3 units

Sociology 238 Seminar: Environmental Sociology 3 units

Sociology 260 Contemporary Issues of the Middle East & North Africa 3 units

Sociology 265 Race and Ethnic Relations 3 units

Sociology 266 Sociology of the Family 3 units

Sociology 295 Internships and Fieldwork (instructor permission) 1-3 units

Sociology 299 Special Problems / Independent Study 1-3 units

Culminating Experience (6 units) Sociology 500 Thesis 6 units

Notes: Because required courses and optional seminars are not offered every semester, most students should plan on three or more semesters to complete course work. Required courses should be taken first, whenever possible. Students are limited to 3 units of Sociology 299 OR 3 units of Sociology 295. Both courses cannot be counted toward graduation.

A foreign language is not required for the degree. However, students who plan further graduate study are encouraged to study French, German, or Spanish since proficiency in one of these is sometimes required in doctoral programs. Information on the department, including requirements, etc. can be obtained by contacting Prof. R. Macintosh (916.278.7961) Amador Room 455B

The external consultant recommended that the Department “develop the same type of framework for the master’s program, including mission, goals, learning expectations/outcomes, mapping of expectations/outcomes on the graduate curriculum, and devising relevant embedded assessment activities.” The Review Team’s recommendation is less specific. Rather, it is our recommendation that the Department continue its discussion on ways and means to strengthen the graduate program, and implement reasonable changes when appropriate.

C. Effective Teaching Strategies

This was not directly addressed by the self-study; however, it can be inferred from the relatively high scores that professors in this Department receive on their end-of-the-semester evaluation that their teaching strategies are proving effective. The average score for Fall 2004 was 4.6 on a 5 point scale, a score that is reflective of past semesters as well. In addition, the 2002 University Program Assessment Questionnaire includes a question asking the degree to which the Department is receptive to new “ideas and ways of doing things.” The Department scored 3.7 on this item as compared to 3.04 for the University. Although the link is not explicit, it can be inferred the Department values pedagogical innovation and currency. The Department scored 3.8 on the question regarding the degree to which different points of view are stressed. Again, this may relate to pedagogical strategies. It certainly suggests a pedagogical environment in which debate and discussion are not avoided. Finally, professors unanimously agreed that the Department fostered academic freedom. Again, not a direct link, but an important ingredient in promoting innovation in the classroom.

The Department website gives further insight into the teaching methodologies characteristic of the courses offered in the Department of Sociology.

Most faculty state on the syllabus of each course they teach what the learning goals and expectations are for that course. Knowing the learning expectations of each course and of the sociology program in general helps students to focus on the key ideas, concepts, and knowledge they are expected to learn. In addition, students in the sociology department encounter a variety of teaching and learning styles and homework assignments.

Students are required to write in most classes. Writing assignments vary. Some are the traditional term paper. Others involve writing a "one minute" paper summarizing what was learned from a particular lecture, or writing drafts of project proposals,

field notes from observations, take-home and in-class essays, and small group writing projects.

In sociology students will also encounter a variety of tests: the traditional multiple choice exam, announced and unannounced quizzes, in-class and out-of-class exams, and oral presentations. They will be expected to engage in debates, do participant observations outside of class, use the computer to analyze data and engage in statistical analysis. In some classes they will view films and videos and write answers to questions based on them. All students will take a lab in statistics and research methods where specific assignments will be given that involve the application of ideas and concepts to problems. They could also be asked to develop a research file of relevant information, such as newspaper and academic articles on a particular topic, or be assigned a visual sociology project where they must bring photographs to class that illustrate a sociological concept or idea. They may also be asked to interview research subjects or members of their family or a member of a community-based organization.

One of the key learning assignments is doing an original research project over two semesters. This involves formulating a research question, designing the research project, gathering original data or using an existing database, analyzing and interpreting data, writing the report, and presenting it publicly. This assignment represents the capstone experience for the sociology major. This project is meant to provide the major at the senior level with an opportunity to integrate three key learning expectations: knowledge about sociological theory and the sociological perspective, skills in research methods, and knowledge about a substantive area - crime, education, poverty, religion, race and ethnicity, and so forth.³

D. Distance Distributed Education Courses (No such courses are offered.)

E. Department's Assessment Plan

Regarding the assessment of the general curriculum, three strategies are employed: (1) Entering Sociology Major Questionnaire, (2) Graduating Senior Assessment Questionnaire, and the Alumni Survey. These instruments tend to evaluate departmental effectiveness on the basis of student perceptions. The Department's assessment program does a better job of measuring pedagogical effectiveness in regard to General Education courses, and is working to achieve a similar level of success across the curriculum. The Department provides evidence that it has

³ http://www.csus.edu/psa/soc_v1/1Acad_Goals.htm (February 3, 2006)

made assessment a priority and has been engaged in both department-wide assessment and is in compliance with the mandated General Education Assessment.

For the past several years, the Department has engaged in deliberations regarding aligning the curriculum with the newly developed proposals for the major published by the American Sociological Association. The learning outcomes that now guide the direction of the Department's curriculum are based on these proposals.⁴ The Department displays its learning outcomes as related to each course in matrix form. This demonstrates an effort to link courses with learning objectives. The presentation in the actual self-study document is difficult to follow; however, the display shown on the departmental web site is much clearer, and shows that to some degree all of the courses reflect a measure of the learning outcomes. As stated in the report, in the revision of the curriculum, one of the guiding principles was to organize the curriculum around the Department's goals and objectives. This appears to have been done in a reasonable manner, and thus provides a general basis for the assessment of departmental learning outcomes. To this end the Department has developed an exit survey which includes reference to the Department's learning goals.

F. Effectiveness of the Program.

1. On Department's learning objectives. The Department reports that on a self-report instrument measuring student perceptions of the degree to which learning objectives were met, the Department does very well; however, this only reflects student opinions, and fails to measure actual learning. The Department is aware of this and indicates that it is making plans to address this problem. In regard to this concern, the external consultant suggests that a global assessment of learning outcomes is too much to ask of the faculty. Rather she suggests that a few learning outcomes be assessed each year. The Review Team views this as a reasonable strategy, but prefers to simply encourage the Department to address assessment in a manner consistent with their resources and perceived assessment needs.
2. On the University learning goals. There is reference to GE Goals/Assessment and it appears that departmental goals in general subsume University goals.
3. Regarding writing and reading standards in the major. Writing standards in the major have not been published; however, the Department is in compliance with GE policy with respect to GE courses (they all have writing requirements at upper- and lower-division). The Department has developed a culture that appears to highly value academic freedom, and thus tends to give greater autonomy to the faculty member regarding curricular matters. There is departmental consensus regarding Sociology 102A/B, a capstone sequence in which there is a heavy writing requirement.

On page 97 of the Self-study the writing portfolio is described. Regarding the use of the portfolio to evaluate student writing, we read, "The department addressed these issues during Spring 2002 and the faculty of core courses discussed how to improve student writing." There appears no reference to student writing in the subsequent assessment report, nor is there

⁴ American Sociological Association Liberal Learning and the Sociology Major: Meeting the Challenge of Teaching Sociology in the Twenty-first Century (January 2005).

reference to the reading competence (comprehension) strategy to be employed later as referenced in the 2002 report. As noted under "Commendations and Recommendations," it is suggested the Department develop a strategy to ensure that the recommendations from earlier reports are reflected in subsequent reports.

4. Regarding Computer information/competence. The Department identified this as an area meriting attention. The absence of smart classrooms was viewed as detriment to achieving this goal. Faculty members have been encouraged to develop WebCT courses to further student engagement with technology, but of course WebCT requires smart classrooms. One concern raised by several faculty members is the tendency of SPSS versions loaded into computers used in teaching SPSS to be subsequent to supporting texts.

G. Multiple Sections

The Department makes an effort to maintain consistency in the GE program through making certain that all instructors of a common course are familiar with both department and GE learning expectations. No common syllabus is employed, but a GE Coordinator is charged with ensuring that all instructors are aware of departmental and University expectations.

In the case of non-GE courses informal discussions between faculty members is the preferred method of enhancing consistency between similar different sections of the same course.

H. Needed Changes

Before discussing needed changes, it is useful to point out that the Department has demonstrated a capacity to utilize assessment data in a productive way. For example, there is evidence that the assessment surveys have resulted in changes: The Department recognizes that it needs to work harder to achieve department learning outcomes regarding "computer competence" and "global perspectives" (see p 27 of the self-study), and has seen an increase in scores regarding "self and society." Not necessarily the result of the data derived through the three formal questionnaires, significant change has occurred through the efforts of the faculty to align the curriculum to national guidelines. The Department should be credited with conducting such an important overall assessment of curricular currency.

Regarding current needs identified by the self-study to enhance the effectiveness of academic program outcomes, four specific items have been identified: more smart classrooms, larger classrooms, increased institutional support (see Part VI), and continued attention to the advising process.

I. General Education and Service Courses

The Department offers 20 General Education Courses spanning Areas A3, C1, C4, D1a, D1b, D2, and E. In addition, the Department offers several service courses.

1. Evidence that courses are meeting the GE criteria. The Department initiated its Self-study prior to the implementation of the current GE Assessment Guidelines, and was verbally assured

by the Academic Affairs office that the current guidelines would not apply to them. However, the Department indicated that it is aware of the current guidelines, has met the requirement to develop a GE Assessment plan, and is currently collecting data for presentation in the subsequent self-study.

2. To what extent do your service courses meet departmental needs? There are no Sociology courses that are required by other departments.

3. Describe how your department maintains consistency in multiple sections? The Department achieves this informally in the cases where the number of multiples sections are few, and by a identifying a coordinator where there are several sections.

J. Diversity Issues

1. Addresses cultural diversity. As the Self-study points out, issues of race, class, and gender are central to this curriculum. The revised curriculum adds additional weight to the concepts related to race, class and gender.

2. Accommodates difference in student preparation and access to educational opportunities. The Department appears to be keen on this topic and doing a reasonably good job.

3. Helps students gain an effective knowledge of how to live and work in our diverse society. Learning goals 5 and 8 are emphasized throughout the curriculum.

K. The Sociology Minor. The Department offers a minor, but makes no effort to monitor the number of students who participate.

Part III: Discussion

III. Students

A. Student Profile

Data for the last six years is available on the Office of Institutional Research web site for the items below (<http://www.oir.csus.edu/>). Analyze the data, including a comparison of your majors to majors in your College and the University. If the data indicates a need for a response by your department, describe your plan of action.

1. Enrollment patterns in the majors, minors, concentrations, credentials
2. Gender and ethnic composition
3. Retention and graduation rates
4. Part and full-time enrollments
5. "Native" and transfer students

B. Student Academic Performance

Data is available on the Office of Institutional Research web site (<http://www.oir.csus.edu/>). Compare the data for your program with that of other programs in your College and the University. If the data reveal issues that merit your attention, describe the issues and plans for action.

1. Grading distribution
2. GPA's
3. Students on probation
4. WPE pass rates
5. Preparation for upper division/graduate coursework (no comparison data available under this heading)

C. Student Academic Support

1. Describe how the department provides academic and career advising. Are faculty and students satisfied that the advising needs of students are met? (Data from SNAPS and Program Assessment Questionnaire is available on the Office of Institutional Research web site at <http://www.oir.csus.edu/>). If data indicates a need for response describe your action plans.
2. What support does your department provide for students in need of extra assistance? To what extent are your faculty and students satisfied with the support available at the department level: At the University level? If your analysis reveals a need for changes, describe plans.

D. Student Professional Development

What opportunities does your department provide to socialize students into the discipline or provide them with professional opportunities?

A. Student Profile (enrollment patterns, gender, ethnicity, retention rates)

1. General Enrollment. Since fall 2000 the number of Sociology majors has increased by 32%, from 293 to 389. This compares favorably to the 11.6% increase for the College and 8.9% for the University during the same time period. The Department no longer offers concentrations, but does offer a minor. No attempt is made to track minors.

2. Gender and Ethnicity. Enrollment among women has increased; the proportion of women in the department constitutes 70% of the enrollment. This is on par with the College of SSIS but significantly above the overall University percentage of 57%.

White representation in the major is at 40%, a slight proportional decline since fall 2000 due to increased enrollment by Latino students and Asian students. African-American student enrollment has remained fairly constant, but with the increase in enrollment over the past 4 years their proportion has dropped from 15% to 11%. Latino students and Asian student enrollment has increased dramatically. Latino student enrollment has increased by 65% and Asian student enrollment by 130%.

3. Retention and Graduation. 75% of Sociology graduate students complete their degree within seven years. This exceeds both the College and University rate, which is about 60%. Conversely the major retains a smaller number of entering transfers, and the five-year retention rate is lower than the University (29% versus 43%). The Department offers no explanation for these figures.

4. Part- and full-time enrollments. Generally similar to the University and the College:

	FT	PT
Sociology	75.5%	24.5%
College	77.0%	23.0%
University	77.3%	22.7%

5. Native and transfer students. About 20% are transfer students.

B. Student Academic Performance

1. Grade Distribution. The Department reports that grade distribution doesn't substantially differ from that of the College of SSIS.
2. Grade Point Average. The Department states the "OIR data indicate the GPA of sociology students is remarkably similar to that of the college and university as a whole."
3. Regarding students on probation. This is not viewed as a problem by the Department.
4. Performance on the WPE. The majority of majors pass the WPE. This is true of both native and transfer students.
5. Preparation for Upper Division/Graduate Coursework. The Department requires all students to complete at least 6 units as preparation for upper division work including Sociology.

C. Student Academic Support

Advising was a topic of concern of the previous Review Team. The Department acknowledges that student advising has been an issue, and has taken steps to improve their advising program. By way of explanation for having the department chair do all of the advising, the self-study states: "Primary reliance on the chair is explained by (a) the preference of the chair for this arrangement and (b) the greater assurance of consistency and uniformity of advising when concentrated in the hands of one person." Nevertheless, recognizing the difficulty associated with only having one advisor, the Department has instituted a new advising program that includes additional advisers and thus more opportunities for students to receive timely advisement.

D. Student Professional Development

The Department sponsors a student club open to anyone interested in sociology. Those who qualify may join the national honor society for sociology students (AKD). The external consultant said this of the student club, "...while small in size, is providing...students opportunities for excellent leadership skill development. The club activities provide a mechanism that helps many more students learn about career options and applying to graduate

school.” It also serves to enhance the reputation of the Department through various campus wide activities.

Part IV: Discussion

IV. Faculty

A. Faculty Profile

Data on faculty are available on the WEB (<http://www.oir.csus.edu/>). Analyze these data, including a comparison of your faculty profile to the faculty profiles in your College and the University. If the data indicate a need for a response by your department, describe your plan of action. Include analysis regarding:

1. Full and part-time faculty
2. Gender and ethnic composition
3. Student-faculty ratio, class size

B. Assess faculty profile for the ability to offer the curriculum and to support program goals. Describe plans for addressing any identified issues.

C. Faculty as teachers:

1. Analyze data available from the College Outcomes Survey (COS) and Program Assessment Questionnaire (PAQ) [*Available from the Office of Institutional Research*] to identify any issues that need action. Describe plans for addressing issues.
2. Describe how the faculty are involved in professional development activities to improve and enhance their teaching effectiveness.
3. To what extent are faculty using "best practices" in their roles as teachers? How are faculty offering students a variety of learning experiences to address the diversity of student learning styles? (see COS data)
4. Comment on your faculty's' innovations in pedagogy and their knowledge of current trends in their academic specialties.
5. Describe the department's process for evaluating teaching effectiveness (in the major and in general education offerings). How are data used to enhance or improve teaching?

D. Faculty as Scholars

1. Describe the department's specific expectations for scholarly, creative activities
2. Describe scholarly and creative activities of faculty in the last six years (vita).
3. Analyze the extent to which the faculty meet the department's expectations for scholarly/creative activities. Identify issues in need of improvement and describe action plans.

E. Faculty Service to the University and Community

1. Describe faculty involvement in service to the University and Community in the last six years.
2. Analyze the extent to which the faculty meet the department's expectations for service. Identify issues in need of improvement and describe action plans.

A. Faculty Profile

1. Full- and part-time faculty

Gender/Ethnicity	Full-time	FERP	Part-time	Totals
Male	11	3	2	16
Female	5	0	3	8

Arab	1			
African American	1			
Asian	3		1	
Hispanic	2	1		
White	9	2	4	

2. Hiring Pattern. Since 1997 there have been 14 new hires: 7 white and 7 non-white, of this number 5 have been white male. This hiring pattern shows substantial success in achieving the University’s diversity goals in hiring.

3. Student-faculty ratio, class size. This relates to the question under Financial Resources regarding enrollment’s support of the curriculum. Presumably this is an FTE/budget question. The student-faculty ratio in Sociology is greater than either in the College or the University. For example, the ratio for Sociology courses is 28.3:1 compared to the college with 25:1, and the university with 21.1. Similarly average class-size to instructor ratio is higher in Sociology than in the University or College.

B. Assessment of Faculty Profile

1. The Department has hired 14 new hires in the last eight years. All 14 hold the Ph.D. These professors have brought new energy into the Department along with expertise relevant to the curriculum.

2. The expertise and qualifications of the faculty put the Department in a strong position to offer a curriculum that relates well to the Department’s stated learning outcomes.

C. Faculty as teachers

1. Data available from the College Outcomes Survey (COS) and Program Assessment Questionnaire (PAQ) [Available from the Office of Institutional Research] indicates that the professors in the Department of Sociology are highly satisfied with the Department on all of the measures. In general, scores are substantially higher than the average scores for the University as a whole.

2. The Department provides evidence that many faculty have engaged in workshops and other activities designed to enhance teaching effectiveness (see Section C p. 39 of the self-study).

3. The Self-study guidelines ask, “To what extent are faculty using best practices in their roles as teachers?” This question was not answered directly in the Self-study, but it is clear that the Department is going a good job in the classroom. A related question asks, “How are faculty offering students a variety of learning experiences to address the diversity of student learning styles?” Again, this question was not answered directly in the Self-study, but it is clear from

PAQ that faculty members view their colleagues as being student centered, and diligent in their pedagogical duties.

4. This item asks for comment “on your faculty's innovations in pedagogy and their knowledge of current trends in their academic specialties.” This was not addressed directly; however, a perusal of the vitae suggests that faculty have a wide array of interests and expertise, and as noted above, the new faculty bring to the Department expertise requisite to offering the courses required by the Department’s learning goals.

5. The Sociology faculty does very well on course evaluations. But course evaluations are only one part of the evaluation process. A unique feature of the evaluation process is the Faculty Development Plan (FDP). Both the FDP and the evaluation questionnaire are discussed as follows:

- a) Background: The College of SSIS is possibly unique on campus in requiring all probationary faculty to complete a 3 year Faculty Development Plan. This plan lays out the faculty member’s intended activities in all 4 areas of evaluation to which the department responds by indicating its endorsement or recommendations for modification. RTP evaluations always include a committee statement on the acceptability of the FDP. This document must be revised every 3 years and can be revised every year at the individual faculty member’s discretion.

One of several advantages of this approach is that it gives the faculty member the opportunity, at her/his own initiative, to revise the FDP and address directly any low teaching scores. The problem can be identified and the faculty member indicates what s/he intends to do about it, and that, in turn, can be responded to by the RTP committee during the next review cycle.

- b) In the event of problematic low scores in a class, and the faculty member does not choose to develop a revised FDP as exemplified above, then it falls to the Chair of RTP to address the matter in person with a one-on-one meeting. This has only been necessary on one occasion and at that time the Chair of the committee called for a mid-year evaluation and provided the faculty member with a 4 page memo. indicating the kinds of activities that could be engaged in to address the problem, along with identification of helpful university resources (teaching and learning workshops etc.). That faculty member has never had a comparable problem in another class since that time (ditto for the two faculty mentioned in “a” above.)⁵

D. Faculty as Scholars

1. Departmental expectations regarding scholarly activity are defined by the departmental RTP policy which weights scholarly activity second to teaching. Scholarly activity comprises 15% of the evaluation process.

⁵ Personal communication to team chair from Rodney Kingsforth, April 3, 2006.

2. The guidelines ask that the Department describe scholarly and creative activities of faculty in the last six years. The Self-study focuses on the activities of the past two years; however, the Review Team was referred to the faculty vitae for further information. In reviewing the vitae, it was difficult to make a reasonable assessment of the quality of the scholarly and creative activities. For example, not all faculty distinguished between refereed and non-refereed publications. In addition the terminology and format differed from one vita to another. For example, one professor lists 22 publications/presentations from 1998 to the present. However, there is no effort to organize the publications/presentations by category. Another professor lists 4 “refereed” publications and 11 presentations or abstracts for the period 2001-2004. Just as there is variance in format, there is significant difference in the number of publications and presentations reported by the faculty. One professor, whose vita relates generally to work done prior to arriving at CSUS, for the past six years lists 16 funded research studies, 8 journal publications, 10 monographs, and 16 funded research awards, all but one of which were done prior to joining the CSUS faculty. This contrasts with a professor who lists 2 journal articles (1997-1998) 9 research reports, and 9 presentations from 1998-2005. Recognizing that there is substantial variance in the quantity, and presumably quality of work reported, the review team can only respond to this item by pointing out that the Department is generally satisfied by the level of work being produced.

3. This item calls for the analysis of the extent to which the faculty meet the Department’s expectations for scholarly/creative activities. It states, “Identify issues in need of improvement and describe action plans.” The Department relies upon the standards implied in its RTP documentation. These standards are clearly stated, of a qualitative nature, and approved by the College. There appears no significant need to require the creation of “action plans.” However, this does not mean that planning is not taking place. Among probationary faculty, planning is an important RTP requirement. Faculty members are held to the expectations cited in the Faculty Development Plan.

E. Faculty Service to the University and Community

1. The guidelines call for a description of the faculty in terms of faculty service for the past six years. A perusal of faculty vitae suggest that the faculty is generally quite involved in both community and University service. Several faculty members are involved in professional organizations.

2. This items calls for the department to analyze the extent to which the faculty meet the department's expectations for service. It was noted that the Department RTP procedure places 10% emphasis on service to the institution and 5% on community service. The impression is given by the Self-study that the Department is satisfied with faculty involvement with the institution and service to the community. A review of the vitae suggests this to be the case.

F. Additional Concerns

There are other concerns identified by the external consultant that may go beyond the scope of this review, but merit voicing. She reports, “The major issues for faculty are heavy teaching workload (as evidenced by the high departmental SFR and correspondingly high class size),

trying to find the time to also engage in their high levels of scholarly and service productivity, and being able to afford to live in the Sacramento area given their salaries. These are not issues the Department itself can address. These are systemic issues within the CSU system.”

Part V: Discussion

V. Governance Process at the Program, College and University Levels

- A. Describe faculty involvement in planning, developing, and implementing department policies;
 - 1. Indicate the role of the chair/coordinator in department governance
 - 2. Indicate whether the department has a formalized set of rules or procedures for departmental governance (if so, please include such guidelines as an appendix to the self study).
- B. Describe student involvement in the departmental governance process
- C. Comment on the relationships of your department/programs with your College and the University

A. Faculty Involvement

It appears that the faculty is involved in departmental governance. (Note the PAQ survey cited earlier.) The organizational structure consists of a department chair “supported by the chairs of a number of standing committees.” The standing committees consist of the following: Graduate, Curriculum, Human Subjects, Assessment, and RTP committees. The Department’s practice is to maximize opportunities for faculty to serve. Essentially faculty members may participate in any committee for which they are qualified. This suggests an inclusive approach to committee involvement. Chairs are elected.

Continuity in faculty governance has been facilitated through having had one individual serve as chair for the past two decades. Thus, formal documents describing departmental protocol may not be as important now as in the future. There may be some merit in documenting the Department’s management philosophy and time-tested procedures.

B. Are student’s involved?

The Department makes no effort to involve students in departmental governance; however, there is some discussion ongoing regarding the possibility of establishing a policy of informing students regularly that they are invited to participate in all faculty meetings save those that involve personnel issues. The Review Team views this as a worthy idea.

C. Relationship to University and College of SSIS.

The Department reports that it has a satisfying relationship with the College.

Part VI. Discussion

VI. Institutional Support/Resources

Please describe adequacy of support, strengths, and concerns about the following resources and services:

- A. Library
 - 1. Curriculum support offered by the collection
 - 2. Services provided by library for faculty and students
- B. Computer/Technology
 - 1. Technology/resources for meeting program and faculty needs
 - 2. Services provided by media center and computer center for faculty and students
- C. Student Support Services (e.g. Admissions and Records, Advising Center, Learning Skills Center, Union, Multicultural Center, Educational Opportunities Program, Writing Center)
- D. Faculty Support Services (e.g., Center for Teaching and Learning, Computing, Communications, and Media)
- E. Physical Facilities and Equipment
- F. Financial Resources (faculty, staff, operating expenses)
 - 1. Enrollment and faculty numbers support of the curriculum
 - 2. Program staff
 - 3. Total operating expense budget (include statement about processes used for effective use of budget)

A. **Library Holdings and Services**

A review of the Sociological Abstracts database indicates that of the 1809 journals indexed, CSUS has a total of 759 journals or 42% of available periodicals. Further it was noted that while generally subscriptions were reduced, those related to Sociology were not, and indeed, faculty recommendations and research needs resulted in two new titles. The Department is currently working with Professor Ellen Berg, the Sociology Librarian to assess the need for new holdings per recommendations from the previous Program Review. (See “Self-Study Appendix: Kathryn Blackmer Reyes, Reference Librarian Sociology”) The external consultant viewed library resources as “barely adequate.” She stated, “The problem again is a systemic one in the CSU; there simply are not enough resources to adequately maintain a library that meets the scholarship needs of undergraduates, much less faculty and graduate students, and there simply are not enough resources to meet the IT needs of faculty and students.”

B. **Computer and Technology**

The Department views computer needs as largely being met. However no reference is made to how these needs are met. As mentioned earlier, there is a concern that textbooks supporting SPSS software is rendered ineffectual due to new versions of the software being constantly replacing software for which textbooks are available.

The Department is concerned at the lack of smart classrooms.

1. Do media services prove helpful, are they adequate, etc? The Department says “yes.” Regarding computer labs: faculty teaching statistics complain that SPSS versions found on new computers are ahead of the literature being used in the classroom. This needs to be addressed.

C Student Support Services

The Department views student support services as adequate.

D. Faculty Support Services

Assumed adequate.

E. Physical Facilities and Equipment

There is a serious shortage of large classroom space. The College is encouraging the Department to offer large sections (80+) however there are only a few classrooms sufficiently large to make this possible. Existing classrooms are often described as lacking lecterns etc. Office space appears adequate. As noted earlier, smart classrooms seem to be insufficient.

F. Financial Resources

1. Faculty. There appears to be faculty adequate to meet program needs. The Dean has provided sufficient funding to employ part-time faculty, as needed. Due to retirement and resignation, there are some gaps in “key areas.” The Self-study makes no reference to the extent to which current FTE generates sufficient income to cover faculty costs; however, it is presumed that with the high FTE generated by the Department this is not a problem.

2. Program Staff. Deemed adequate.

3. Is the total operating expense budget adequate? The report suggests that the operating budget is adequate. There is no indication that the Department views the budget as inadequate. Verbal testimony indicates the Department has a good working relationship with the college and this includes budgetary issues. However, it is fair to say that the Department could benefit were additional resources made available.

Part VII. Recommendation to the Dean of SSIS and to the Faculty Senate

Recommendations to the Dean of the College of SSIS

1. Recommendation: The Review Team concurs with the Department that more “smart classrooms” be made available to the Department.

2. Recommendation: The Review Team concurs with the Department and the external consultant that the graduate program in Sociology receive greater consideration in terms of priority and resources.

3. Recommendation: This is a global issue that extends beyond the Department of Sociology, but one that requires reiteration. It is a challenge for the faculty to balance the demands of teaching, scholarship, and service. The Review Team encourages the College to vigorously pursue campus resources, and allocate such resources to the Department as necessary in order to achieve reasonable workloads, and to provide resources for the faculty to successfully achieve their teaching, scholarship, and service goals.

4. Recommendation: The Review Team encourages the dean to vigorously advocate for parity in salaries for junior faculty.

5. Recommendation: The Review Team concurs with the Department that inasmuch as course scheduling is driven, in part, by FTE concerns, and given that GE courses typically require prime time scheduling in order to attract students, it follows that if major courses are scheduled during those times currently reserved for GE, then overall enrollment will decrease and FTE will suffer. This problem, therefore, relates directly to resource allocations at the College/University level. Accordingly, the Review Team recommends that the College and Department engage in a dialogue for the purpose of assuring the Department that any FTE losses subsequent to such scheduling modifications be protected from any penalty such as a reduction in allocation of resources (# of sections supported/ cancellation of sections due to low enrollment etc).

Recommendations to the Provost

1. Recommendation: The Review Team concurs with the Department that there is value in having the Office of Instructional Resources develop data that relates directly and specifically to self-study criteria.

2. Recommendation: The “retention of transfer-students-issue” certainly merits consideration on the departmental level, but the Review Team views this as an issue that extends beyond the Department and is best handled by the resources available to the office of Institutional Research, or other appropriate University division. It is recommended that the University should undertake the documentation of this phenomenon on a campus-wide basis, and also inquire into its causes. Presumably the results of such survey analyses would have a campus-wide benefit.

Recommendations to the Faculty Senate:

On the basis of this Program Review and the Department of Sociology’s Self-study, and the findings of the outside consultant, the Program Review Team recommends the following:

1. The Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology be approved for six years or until the next Program Review.

2. The Master of Arts Degree in Sociology be approved for six years or until the next Program Review.