1. What goals or learning outcomes/objectives were assessed in AY 2009-10?

The Department of Sociology assessed three learning outcomes: two for the undergraduate program and one for the graduate program.

A. Two learning objectives for the undergraduate program

A1: Objective 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:

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

A2: Objective 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:

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

**B. One learning outcome for the graduate program**

All the graduate students in the Department of Sociology are required to write a thesis or project to receive their master degree, and faculty members and graduate students in our program have been struggling with student thesis writing for a long time, despite the fact that written communication skills are one of the learning outcomes for all the undergraduate programs at SSIS, one of the university’s baccalaureate learning goals for the 21st century (See Appendix II), and one of the most popular essential learning outcomes for university students in the United States (See Appendix III).

Like undergraduate students in the College of Social Science and Interdisciplinary Studies (SSIS), graduate students in Sociology department should be able to communicate effectively in writing about social phenomena. To this end, we expect students to demonstrate:

1. An awareness of the purpose of their writing and use the purpose to develop the composition  
2. An ability to organize materials and arguments to explain or persuade effectively   
3. An ability to engage the audience  
4. Technical proficiency in writing (grammar, spelling, etc.)  
5. A fluent and clear writing style  
6. An ability to effectively present material graphically, when appropriate  
7. An ability to integrate research findings into the work, including proper citation and formatting,

**2. How did you assess these two undergraduate learning objectives and what are the results?**

Three methods were used to assess the two learning objectives (Objective 3 and Objective 4): 1. Exit survey by graduating seniors (indirect assessment); 2. Exit exam by the graduating seniors; and 3. Interpretative qualitative analysis.

At the end of each semester, letters were sent to graduating seniors to ask them to take the online exist survey and exit exam.

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1 We have adopted this idea from the undergraduate written communication skills for SSIS.
Interpretative qualitative analysis was provided by faculty members who have been teaching Soc. 102a and Soc. 102b (Research Methods and the Lab). Five faculty members taught 12 sections of research methods classes (Soc. 102a and Soc. 102b) in academic year 2009-2010. One of them, Dr. Jennifer Murphy, was asked by the department assessment coordinator, Dr. Todd Migliaccio, to provide her assessment of students’ abilities related to Objective 3 and Objective 4 in her classes.

**A1: Objective 3**

1. **Indirect assessment: Exit survey**

   For the past two years, all of our surveyed students (N=100) have consistently felt they have somewhat or significantly attained the skills that allow them to be able to understand and analyze research methods in sociology while in our program. Furthermore, an average of 64 percent of them in recent semesters has felt they significantly attained the skills, which is higher than any previous semesters.

2. **Direct assessment: Exit exam**

   Based on the exit exams taken by graduating sociology seniors (N=50), our students displayed an 80 percent success rate when answering questions pertaining to methodology and statistics. We feel our students are very successful in their understanding of methods and statistics based on our programmatic organization.

3. **Interpretative analysis**

   Dr. Murphy assessed Objective 3 in her two-semester Research Methods sequence (102a and 102b) using various methods and commented on the student progress as well as the criteria used for the assessment. Her comments are quoted after each question below.

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2 Dr. Todd Migliaccio was on Sabbatical leave in spring 2010.
3 This section is written by Dr. Todd Migliaccio.
4 This section is written by Dr. Todd Migliaccio.
5 This whole interpretative section is written by Dr. Jennifer Murphy.
**Objective 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.

“I attempt to accomplish this overarching goal through many in-class activities and two major projects: a qualitative research report and a quantitative research paper. See below for more details with each specific objective.”

*The student should be able to:*

1) **identify basic methodological approaches and describe the general role of methods in building sociological knowledge;**

“In order to accomplish this objective, I organize the first semester of Research Methods (Soc 102a) around the most common sociological methods. We start by discussing the broad paradigms of qualitative and quantitative research and how research contributes to sociological theory and knowledge. To explore this notion deeper, we also spend several weeks reading and critiquing published research articles. I give students 10 questions that they should apply to every research article in order to understand and evaluate such things as what the research question is, what theories are used, what methods are used, how concepts are operationalized, how the authors analyze the data, and how they draw conclusions from the data. Students then select a topic and research at least 7 peer-reviewed, published articles on that topic. Students use the questions for critique that we go through during class to apply to the research on their topic. They then summarize and critique those articles in a 4-6 page literature review. Students turn in a rough draft of the literature about mid-way through the semester. I grade it and give them feedback. They then revise the literature review and turn it back in at the end of the semester along with the other components of the research proposal (introduction and data/methods sections).

The first draft of the literature review is worth 10 points. In the fall 2009 semester, the mean student score on this was 5.2; the median was 6.4. The higher median reflects the sizeable number of students (4) who never turned in the first draft. These scores indicate that students have a lot of difficulty accomplishing all of the goals of the literature review.”
2). compare and contrast basic methodological approaches for gathering data;

“Students compare and contrast different methodological approaches when they write their literature review. One way to assess this criterion, then, is to evaluate the grades on the first draft of the literature review and the final quantitative research proposal (see above).

I think students have difficulty with this, but they do tend to improve significantly when revising the literature review into the final draft of the proposal. In fall 2009, the final proposal mean was about 84 percent; the median was 85 percent.

In addition, to assess students’ ability to compare and contrast various methodological approaches, I have a short essay question on the final exam that asks students to do this with specific methods we have covered in the weeks leading up to that exam. On the final exam in fall 2009, this question was worth 5 points (and about 17 percent of the total exam). The mean score on this question was 3.7 and the median was 4, showing that students overall are accomplishing this objective.”

3). design and complete a research study;

“Students complete a qualitative research report where they pick a qualitative method and complete a small study using that method. In fall 2009, the mean score on this project (out of 40 points) was 30.2 and the median was 32, indicating that students were quite successful at meeting this objective.

Students also complete a quantitative research proposal in 102a; the data are then analyzed and written up in Soc 102b. Students revise the proposal from 102a, complete the analysis, and write up a final paper with all appropriate tables, etc. In Spring 2010, students did very well on the final paper. The mean grade was 24.1 (out of 30 possible points) and the median grade was 24.5. Students likely do very well on the final project because they get a lot of feedback before they turn in the final draft. In addition to the drafts of the proposal completed in Soc 102a, they turn in a rough copy of the results section; I grade these very closely and give students specific directions on fixing the section for the final paper.”
4). critically assess a published research report.

“See above regarding literature review draft and final proposal.”

5). understand and apply basic statistical tests sociologists often use.

“Students are assessed on this objective in two ways. In Soc 102b, the midterm exam tests student knowledge of the quantitative data analysis covered throughout the semester. In spring 2010, the mean score on this exam was 81 percent and the median was 82 percent, indicating that students on average understand the quantitative data methods and how to apply them. The other assessment would be the final research paper (see above for breakdown of scores).”

A2: Objective 4

1. Indirect assessment: Exit survey

In the past two years, all of our students (N=100) have consistently felt they have somewhat or significantly attained the computer skills needed to learn and apply knowledge in the field of Sociology. This is in line with previous statements from our students.

2. Direct assessment: Exit online Interview

Based on the exit exams taken by graduating sociology seniors (N=50), our students displayed a 99 percent success rate when answering questions pertaining to computer skills in relation to understanding, analyzing and applying sociology. Our program is successful in educating our students on the use of computer when engaging sociology, and the world around them.

3. Interpretative analysis

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6 This section is written by Dr. Todd Migliaccio.
7 This section is written by Dr. Todd Migliaccio
8 This whole interpretative section is written by Dr. Jennifer Murphy.
Dr. Murphy assessed Objective 4 in her two-semester Research Methods sequence (102a and 102b) using various methods and commented on the student progress as well as the criteria used for the assessment. Her comments are quoted after each question below.

**Objective 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

1). use computerized and on-line data bases to find published research;

“Students prove to be very adept at this task, although there is usually some difficulty at first depending on the topic. Students can effectively use the on-line databases through the CSUS library website. Almost all students successfully find at least 7 peer-reviewed articles related to their topic.”

2). use the internet to communicate to others and to find information; and 3). to use standard software packages, such as SPSS, to analyze data.

“Students end up very proficient in using SPSS by the end of Soc 102b. I cannot name one student this past year who could not run basic statistical analysis in SPSS by the end of the course.”

**B1. Direct assessment of written communication skills for graduate students in Sociology and the findings**

  **a. Results and findings**

Sociology Graduate Assessment Committee was established in spring 2010 to directly assess graduate student written communication skills. Three faculty members answered the Graduate Committee’s call to participate in this assessment effort: Professor Jennifer Murphy, Professor Cid Martinez, and Professor Amy Liu (Interim Sociology Assessment Coordinator). Dr. Amy Liu served as the committee chair.
A college written communication rubric has been developed by the college faculty assessment coordinator, Professor Amy Liu, based on the integration of the written communication rubrics from all the undergraduate programs in SSIS, Sacramento State University’s writing rubric, the CLA (Collegiate Learning Assessment) written communication rubric, the AAC&U’s (Association of American Colleges and Universities) written communication VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) rubric, and several other written communication rubrics. Then the draft rubric was refined based on critical reviews by Dr. Charles W. Gossett (Dean of SSIS), Professor Terry Underwood (University Assessment Coordinator), Professor Dan Meltzer (University Reading and Writing Coordinator), Dr. Edward Lascher (Associate Dean of SSIS), and the department chairs and program directors at SSIS. Please see Appendix IV for more details.

The Department Graduate Assessment Committee critically reviewed the rubric through emails and a face-to-face meeting. The committee met and decided to adopt the SISS written communication rubric to evaluate our graduate student writing this time. This is also an experiment to see if we need to develop a different written communication rubric for graduate students or we can simply use the same rubric SSIS (the college) has developed for undergraduate students to evaluate the writing of the graduate students as well.

We also decided to look the thesis proposals from Soc. 200b, a required class for all the graduate students in the department. Students in Soc. 200B are expected to integrate sociological perspectives to develop a draft proposal for an original research (thesis prospectus/project proposal). Thesis prospectus is the first three chapters of a thesis that includes Introduction (Statement of Problems and Significance of the Study), Literature Review (the Development of Research Questions and/or Hypotheses), and Research Methodology (Data Collection and Analysis). Graduate students will formulate research questions that are feasible, socially important, and scientifically relevant (Chapter 1). They are to complete a thorough review of relevant literature and the problems to demonstrate why their study is important (Chapter 1) and to develop the research questions and/or hypotheses (Chapter 2). Moreover, they need to choose an existing dataset with specific variables and/or concepts and/or plan to collect their own data (qualitative and/or quantitative) for the study. They will also critically assess advantages and disadvantages of the dataset and the variables and/or concepts in the study (Chapter 3).

Writing each draft of the three chapters of the thesis prospectus or research proposal is a critical part of the learning process to become a professional sociologist. At the beginning, students “write to understand.” (Machi and McEvoy 2009:129). With each additional draft, students become more and more clear about what their research question is, why the research is important, how the research question and/or hypothesis is developed, and the kinds of data needed to answer the research question and/or to test the hypothesis. Thus, it is very typical for students to have written numerous drafts before getting a clear idea of their research. Students in Soc. 200b are expected to write at least three drafts for each chapter.
There were 10 students finished Soc. 102b and data was collected by directly examining all the 10 thesis/project proposals using the score sheet in Appendix V. Most of the proposals are the second draft.

Each member in the Graduate Assessment Committee was asked to read three of the 10 proposals to use the rubric and the data collection sheet to record the scores. The group members were told to bring any questions and concerns they had about the rubric, the score sheet, the student proposals, or any other concerns they had about assessment in general and this task in particular to the first group meeting.

At the first meeting, Professor Amy Liu shared with the group why and how to use WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) standards and student assignments to carry out high quality assessment, which is critical to the success of any good assessment efforts. See Appendix VI for more details.

This meeting also addressed questions and concerns faculty members had for the assessment effort in the department and the college. All the group members became much clearer about the rubric, the purpose of the papers and this assessment effort, the learning outcome assessed, the thesis/project proposal, and the importance of reliability and validity for any good assessment efforts.

The results of the direct assessment of the student writing are shown in Table I below.
Table I: Results of the Direct Assessment of Written Communication for Sociology Graduate Students

Written Communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing. Sociology graduate students should be able to communicate effectively in writing about social phenomena from a sociological perspective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Meet or Exceed Expectation (2.7 to 4)</th>
<th>Below or Approach Expectation (1 to &lt;2.3)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Purpose and Development</td>
<td>30% (3)</td>
<td>10% (1)</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Overall Organization</td>
<td>40% (4)</td>
<td>20% (2)</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Audience Engagement</td>
<td>20% (2)</td>
<td>30% (3)</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Control of Syntax and Mechanics</td>
<td>10% (1)</td>
<td>50% (5)</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Summary: Clarity and Revision</td>
<td>10% (1)</td>
<td>20% (2)</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Citation of Sources (if applicable)</td>
<td>60% (6)</td>
<td>20% (2)</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Graphic Presentation</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. Areas in which students are doing well

Of the six areas, the students scored the best in the area “citation of sources.” Sixty percent of the students consistently cited all or the majority of their sources. Forty percent of the students had clear direction or identifiable internal structures for their writing. Thirty percent of the students also met or exceeded the expectation for the purpose and development; they studied increasingly complex ideas, demonstrated an adequate understanding of the subject, and had a clear purpose to guide the development of the composition.
c. **Areas in which improvements are needed**

Of the six areas, what the students needed to improve the most was clarity and revision. For 70 percent of the papers, some parts are clear, but others are hard to follow. These papers need a fair amount of revision.

In half of the papers, students show a reasonable control over limited range of standard writing conventions. Conventions are sometimes handled well; at other times, errors distract readability. Moreover, in 30 percent of the papers students held the attention of the audience, but do not sustain it throughout the whole paper.

As of the second draft, twenty percent of students sometimes or often had no clear direction or identifiable internal structures for their writing, which makes it hard for readers to get a grip on the theme or the main idea of the writing. Thirty percent of the students can not cite the references consistently.

**B1. Graduate student self assessment of their written communication skills through their reflection papers**

Students were required to write three drafts in Soc. 200b in fall 2009 and received detailed feedback and suggestions for each draft from the instructor, the students in the class, and the thesis chair. At the end of Soc. 200B, students were also required to reflect on what they have learned through this writing process in Soc. 200b. Written communication is one of the learning outcomes for the class and for our graduate program. Based on their reflections and the final drafts, graduate students have improved their writing skills a great deal with these feedbacks and support from fellow students, the instructor, and their thesis chairs. Students have told us:

Starting to write a thesis seems like a daunting task; so many students who have started the process share their experiences and frankly scare those of us who are just getting started. The class helped calm those fears and start the process step by step, breaking the process into steps helps to clarify the development process and combat the fear. The rubrics you have created for the thesis also help to break down the process step by step. The rubrics created a nice checklist to use in writing our own papers and while reading others.

As graduate students we are capable of writing thesis quality work but we are still in need of many helping hands. Having fellow students read, offer advice, and ask questions helps us to see the flaws in our own writing and thought process. Reading other students drafts also helps us to recognize their strengths which in turn helps us to bring that out of our own writing. The class discussions were great, although brief, a lot of information was exchanged at each
meeting. As you lead the discussions and helped each writer clarify their topic and questions, the flaws in everyone’s process became apparent. As you pointed out what needed to be done in order to simplify each study, we were all able to use the advice in order to make our own writing more straightforward and set up specific questions and ways to answer them.

I greatly enjoyed and appreciated having Soc 200B as a part of the curriculum of the MA in Sociology at Sacramento State. While I have been working closely with my thesis chair to develop my overall research question and research methodology, it was extremely helpful to have my peers and another faculty member read and reread my ever-changing drafts of my thesis prospectus. My peers offered emotional support as well since we had all gone through, or were currently going through, similar experiences and difficulties in the writing process (even if we were at different points in our overall progress). Amy Liu devoted much time carefully reading through my drafts and offering detailed feedback on the structure, clarity, and focus of my prospectus which always helped me to create a better draft.

Overall, I think the most important thing I learned in this class was gained by being able to read other’s works in progress. It helped me be much more comfortable with sharing my own work before it is “perfect”. It really helped to be able to meet with my cohort in a non-competitive setting. Such an experience has never been part of my education, and at a commuter school like Sac State, it doesn’t happen after classes. The high percentage of students who have to work contributes to a lack of opportunity to sit and share ideas. This class helped ease that loss, by putting us at ease and giving us a structure to talk about our work.

I would say that I preferred submitting my drafts via e-mail, and having all my classmates and you give their suggestions during class, opposed to being put us into groups of 2. When in groups of two I only received one opinion. During this time I found myself e-mailing one of my other classmates for suggestions. Not that they did not offer great suggestions, but during group I was able to see what others thought, and what did or did not make sense. Hearing what others thought of not only my paper but of my classmate’s papers, was good at making me realize how to look the big picture as well as the small details. I just really thought it was a good way for us to see the different interpretations that 10 minds could get out of one paper, and how those interpretations differentiated to what the author was actually trying to portray. I thought this exercise was able to make me realize that I needed to work more on my critical thinking skills, and paying attention to the small details. I also liked this exercise because I always felt shy about criticizing others works, since I felt I was not an expert, but this class made me realize that it was not about criticizing the persons topic or the facts they presented, but the actual presentation. Do I understand it is what they were trying to say, and was
it in accordance to the guideline. I still believe I need more work in that area, but with this class I felt grew even if it was just a little.

There are numerous lessons of importance that I have taken away from this course, and it is difficult to put my finger on what exactly is the most important lesson. Written communication skills are definitely at the top of the list as I feel we all continually worked to better our writing by struggling towards greater clarity and better organization. Each time we met, I believe that Amy’s words, “Make it clear” sunk in a little bit further, and after struggling to understand each other’s papers we understood the importance of clear writing.

All in all, the experience was very positive. I was pushed to revise drafts against every bone in my body. It's hard to say how much work I would have done if I wasn't being pushed by the deadlines in class. Hopefully I've gotten enough momentum to start working more independently.

Professor Liu, ‘You’re right, writing a thesis is “hard work and a long process’. Sociology 200B was a very important step to kick off the writing process. From choosing a topic to actually writing the class was very helpful….I would like you to know how much this class has helped me and by the progress of my classmates the class was a great success.

3. As a result of faculty reflection on these results, are there any program changes anticipated?

Many changes have already taken place in the thesis writing in the sociology graduate program so we will discuss them in more details below.

This is the first time Sociology graduate program has assessed its student writing and the thesis writing process. Although the majority of the student benefited a great deal from the support and feedback from the class, a few changes may make this class significantly improve student success in the graduate program.

First, we have revised the syllabus and the rubrics for Soc. 200B, including the written communication skill rubric, for fall 2010. We will also require students to present their proposal at the end of the semester. We will share the syllabus and the rubrics for each chapter and for the written communication in July with students who have registered to take this class for the fall, so students can
make the decision whether they are ready to take this class to start the thesis writing process or it is better for them to wait to take this class in fall 2011.

**Second,** we will share the syllabus of Soc. 200b class and the rubrics for each of the three chapters, including the written communication skill rubric, when the new graduate students are taking the Orientation to Sociology Graduate Program (Soc. 200A) this fall (fall 2010) so they would have a much better understanding of the expectations of the thesis proposal class and the thesis writing process for the graduate program. We also plan to ask new students to look for a thesis chair the second semester if they plan to take Soc. 200B the third semester and begin to explore their thesis topic with their thesis chair as soon as possible, so they are ready to write when they come to Soc. 200B. Moreover, students benefit a great deal more from this class if they work closely with the thesis chair, the class instructor, and the students at the same time.

**Third,** changes have already been made in advising graduate students after some have taken this class. A few students who have taken this class last fall still need the help, the support, and the structure offered by this class to help them with their thesis writing, and we have invited them to come and join the class again this fall so they can be part of the action and benefit from this class again. Many of them are very grateful for this wonderful opportunity.

At this point, sociology department is not ready to make major program changes based on the data we have so far and before extensive discussion with its faculty in the summer 2010 and the fall 2010. However, in summer 2010 department retreat and fall department meetings we will discuss this assessment report and the meaning of the results from our different assessment methods. These discussions will allow faculty to learn from each other and from our students and come up with more or better ideas to improve student writings and research methods skills.

**4. Did your department engage in any other assessment activities such as the development of rubrics, course alignment?**

Yes. We have been assessing the undergraduate student writing for three years, plan to summarize the results, and discuss them with our faculty. Our regular assessment coordinator will write the report and share the results with our faculty to come up with good suggestions to improve this learning outcome.
5. What assessment activities are planned for the upcoming academic year?

Sociology graduate program plans to:
1. To have faculty meetings in the summer and fall to discuss the results and suggestions of our assessment and ask for feedback on how to improve the written communication of our graduate students.
2. To share the results of the assessment with the university writing coordinator to figure out ways to help faculty develop more effective strategies to improve thesis or other student writing or to work directly with students to improve their writing.
3. To continue assessing written communication with better designs and/or methodology that would link student survey, reflection paper, and the thesis proposal to offer better data to recommend changes in improving our teaching and student writing.
4. To develop an assessment plan and curriculum map for our graduate program based on the WASC standards.

Sociology undergraduate program plans to:
1. Complete the writing assessment, develop the writing rubric and implement the findings/solutions into our program.
2. Assess learning objectives 6 and 7 in the same format as all of the others:

**Objective 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.

**Objective 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.
Appendix I: Option 1: Narrative Submission for the Annual Assessment Report

Please address the following questions:

1. What goals or learning objectives/outcomes were assessed in the AY ending June 30 (e.g., 2006, 2007, 2008?)

2. How did you assess these learning outcomes?
   a. Describe the measures you used and the information gathered? (Description, date administered, results)
   b. As a result of these assessments what did you learn about the program’s success in helping its students achieve these learning outcomes?
   c. In what areas are students doing well and achieving expectations?
   d. What areas are seen as needing improvement within your program?

3. As a result of faculty reflection on these results, are there any program changes anticipated?
   a. If so, what are those changes?
       b. How will you know if these changes achieved the desired results?

4. Did your department engage in any other assessment activities such as the development of rubrics, course alignment?

5. What assessment activities are planned for the upcoming academic year?
Appendix II: Sacramento State Baccalaureate Learning Goals for the 21st Century

The Faculty Senate has adopted the following Baccalaureate Learning Goals for the 21st Century (FS 09-74/GE/GRPC/Ex.) in November 2009.

Competence in the Disciplines: The ability to demonstrate the competencies and values listed below in at least one major field of study and to demonstrate informed understandings of other fields, drawing on the knowledge and skills of disciplines outside the major.

Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts. Focused by engagement with big questions, contemporary and enduring.

Intellectual and Practical Skills, Including: inquiry and analysis, critical, philosophical and creative thinking, written and oral communication, quantitative literacy, information literacy, teamwork and problem solving, practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance.

Personal and Social Responsibility, Including: civic knowledge and engagement—local and global, * intercultural knowledge and competence, ethical reasoning and action, foundations and skills for lifelong learning anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges.

**Integrative Learning, Including: synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies. All of the above are demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems.
Appendix III: Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) Essential Learning Outcomes


The LEAP campaign is organized around a robust set of "Essential Learning Outcomes" (pdf) -- all of which are best developed by a contemporary liberal education. Described in College Learning for the New Global Century (pdf), these essential learning outcomes and a set of "Principles of Excellence" (pdf) provide a new framework to guide students' cumulative progress through college. Beginning in school, and continuing at successively higher levels across their college studies, students should prepare for twenty-first-century challenges by gaining:

Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World

- Through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts

Focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring

Intellectual and Practical Skills, Including

- Inquiry and analysis
- Critical and creative thinking
- Written and oral communication
- Quantitative literacy
- Information literacy
- Teamwork and problem solving

Practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance

Personal and Social Responsibility, Including

- Civic knowledge and engagement—local and global
- Intercultural knowledge and competence
- Ethical reasoning and action
- Foundations and skills for lifelong learning

*Anchored* through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

**Integrative and Applied Learning, Including**

- Synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies

*Demonstrated* through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems
Appendix IV: Written Communication Rubric For Sociology Graduate Students

Written Communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing for a particular audience and purpose. Sociology graduate students should be able to communicate effectively in writing about social phenomena from a sociological perspective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 = Exceed Expectation</th>
<th>3 = Meet Expectation</th>
<th>2 = Approach Expectation</th>
<th>1 = Below Expectation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Purpose and Development</td>
<td>A strong sense of purpose controls the development of the composition. The paper is extremely focused even though it studies complex ideas. The student demonstrates mastery of the subject.</td>
<td>A clear purpose guides the development of the composition. The paper studies increasingly complex ideas and is adequately focused. Student demonstrates an adequate understanding of the subject.</td>
<td>The student generally stays on a fairly broad topic, but has not developed a clear theme. The writer demonstrates some understanding of the subject, but has not yet focused the topic pass the obvious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Overall Organization</td>
<td>The organization enhances and showcases the central theme. The order, structure or presentation of information is compelling and smoothly moves the reader through the text.</td>
<td>The organizational structures are strong enough to display a central theme and adequately move the reader through the text.</td>
<td>The organizational structures are not strong enough to display a central theme; therefore the reader is confused sometimes when reading through the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Audience Engagement</td>
<td>The student meets the needs and captivates the interest of the audience throughout the composition.</td>
<td>The student meets the needs and captivates the interest of the audience throughout most of the composition.</td>
<td>Sometimes, the student holds the attention of the audience, but does not sustain it throughout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Control of Syntax and Mechanics</td>
<td>The student demonstrates mastery of standard writing conventions (e.g. spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, paragraphing) and uses these conventions to enhance readability.</td>
<td>The student demonstrates an adequate grasp of standard writing conventions (e.g. spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, paragraphing) despite a few errors.</td>
<td>The student shows a reasonable control over limited range of standard writing conventions. Conventions are sometimes handled well; at other times, errors distract readability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Summary: Clarity and Revision</td>
<td>The whole paper is extremely clear and easy to understand. It needs little or no revision.</td>
<td>The paper is clear and easy to understand, but needs some revision.</td>
<td>Some parts of the paper are clear, but others are hard to follow. The paper needs a fair amount of revision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Citation of Sources (if applicable)</td>
<td>The student consistently cites all of the sources</td>
<td>The student consistently cites the majority of the sources</td>
<td>The student consistently cites some of the sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Graphic Presentation (if applicable)</td>
<td>The student demonstrates an innovative use of graphic presentations to communicate a meaningful message</td>
<td>The student demonstrates an appropriate use of graphic presentations to communicate a meaningful message</td>
<td>The student used some graphic presentations to communicate a message</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix V: Written Communication Data Collection Sheet

Written Communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing for a particular audience and purpose. Sociology graduate students should be able to communicate effectively in writing about social phenomena from a sociological perspective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4 = Exceed Expectation</th>
<th>3 = Meet Expectation</th>
<th>2 = Approach Expectation</th>
<th>1 = Below Expectation</th>
<th>0 = Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Purpose and Development</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Overall Organization</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Audience Engagement</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Control of Syntax and Mechanics</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Summary: Clarity and Revision</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Citation of Sources (if applicable)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Graphic Presentation (if applicable)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other information about the paper:
6. No. of References__________
## Appendix VI: Rubric for Assessing the Use of Student Assignments for Assessing Program Learning Outcomes

(Modified based on WASC’s Capstone Rubric: F:/PUBLICATIONS/Resources/080430_Rubrics.doc)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Developed</th>
<th>Highly Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevant Outcomes And Lines of Evidence Identified</td>
<td>It is not clear which program outcomes will be assessed in the assignment.</td>
<td>The relevant outcomes are identified, e.g., ability to integrate knowledge to solve complex problems; however, concrete plans for collecting evidence for each outcome have not been developed.</td>
<td>Relevant outcomes are identified. Concrete plans for collecting evidence for each outcome are agreed upon and used routinely by faculty who give the assignments.</td>
<td>Relevant evidence is collected; faculty have agreed on explicit criteria statements, e.g., rubrics and have identified examples of student performance at varying levels of mastery for each relevant outcome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid Results</td>
<td>It is not clear that potentially valid evidence for each relevant outcome is collected and/or individual faculty use idiosyncratic criteria to assess student work or performances.</td>
<td>Faculty have reached general agreement on the types of evidence to be collected for each outcome; they have discussed relevant criteria for assess each outcome but these are not yet fully defined.</td>
<td>Faculty have agreed on concrete plans for collecting relevant evidence for each outcome. explicit criteria, e.g., rubrics. have been developed to assess the level of student attainment of each outcome.</td>
<td>Assessment criteria, such as rubrics, have been pilot-tested and refined over time; they usually are shared with students. Feedback from external reviewers has led to refinements in the assessment process, and the department uses external benchmarking data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliable Results</td>
<td>Those who review student work are not calibrated to apply assessment criteria in the same way; there are no checks for inter-rater reliability.</td>
<td>Reviewers are calibrated to apply assessment criteria in the same way or faculty routinely check for Inter-rater reliability.</td>
<td>Reviewers are calibrated to apply assessment criteria in the same way, and faculty routinely check for inter-rater reliability.</td>
<td>Reviewers are calibrated, and faculty routinely find assessment data have high inter-rater reliability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results are used</td>
<td>Results for each outcome may or may not be are collected. They are not discussed among faculty.</td>
<td>Results for each outcome are collected and may be discussed by the faculty, but results have not been used to improve program.</td>
<td>Results for each outcome are collected, discussed by faculty, analyzed, and used to improve the program.</td>
<td>Faculty routinely discuss results, plan, needed changes, secure necessary resources, and implement changes. They may collaborate with others, such as librarians or student affairs professionals, to improve results. Follow-up studies confirm that changes have improved learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Student Experience</td>
<td>Students know little or Nothing about the purpose of the assignment or outcomes to be assessed. It is just another assignment or requirement.</td>
<td>Students have some knowledge of the purpose and outcomes of the assignment. Communication is occasional, informal, left to Individual faculty or advisors.</td>
<td>Students have a good grasp of purpose and outcomes of the assignment and embrace it as a learning opportunity. Information is readily available in advising guides, etc.</td>
<td>Students are well-acquainted with purpose and outcomes of the assignment and embrace it. They may participate in refining the experience, outcomes, and rubrics. Information is readily available.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>