

Sociology Graduate Learning Goals/Objectives and Program Learning Outcomes 2015-2016 (5/24/16)

Prepared by the Graduate Program Assessment Committee of Sociology

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Graduate Learning Goals/Objectives Policy

The Graduate Program of Sociology submits the following report as requested by the Office of Graduate Studies and University Policy: I. Graduate Program Objectives and Outcomes report along with a II. Curriculum Map, III. Assessment Map, and IV. Action Plan.

The Faculty Senate recommends that departments/interdisciplinary groups with graduate programs in their purview be required to establish Graduate Goals/Objectives, Program Learning Outcomes with an associated curriculum map, and an assessment plan with an associated action plan, to be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies within one full academic year of approval of this policy (Approved in May 2015). Items in *italics* are additional elements being requested to assist with institutional level data collection.

I. Graduate Learning Goals/Objectives and Program Learning Outcomes

The Faculty Senate further recommends that in developing graduate learning goals/objectives, faculty consult resources such as the information submitted in the Instructional Program Priorities (IPP) process, the Graduate Learning Goals recommended by the Graduate Studies Policies Committee, and/or the Lumina Foundation Degree Qualifications Profile in framing their learning goals/objectives and assessment components.

Graduate programs shall develop Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) that represent their unique perspectives. Each graduate program shall define its own set of learning outcomes, specific to the level of study and to the discipline, which are clearly more advanced in content than those defined for related undergraduate work. For some programs, these might already be defined, at least in part, by external accrediting agencies. Such defined outcomes shall also form the basis for assessment plans within graduate programs and offer foci for future academic program review terms.

Program Learning Outcomes are designed with the goal of placing graduated master's or doctoral students into post-degree positions in secondary education, non-profits, business and consulting, government and private agencies, and other fields that draw on the knowledge and skills of graduates in the focused areas of their degree preparation.

Graduate Learning Goals/Objectives and Program Learning Outcomes

Graduate Learning Objectives	Program Learning Outcomes ¹
Competency in the discipline	1. Advanced sociological knowledge
Communication Skills	2. Sociological contributions and applications
Critical Thinking	3. Challenges in sociology
Intercultural Knowledge and Competency	4. Written communication
Inquiry and Analysis	5. Oral communication
	6. Critical thinking
	7. Intercultural knowledge and competency
	8. Inquiry and analysis (integrated learning)

I. Curriculum Map

Each program shall create a curriculum map:

1. List all courses, both required and elective, as well as other required graduate education activities.
2. Indicate where in the curriculum each PLO is addressed through development of a curriculum map. The curriculum map may be presented in many formats, including tabular form as the template below. Another format may be substituted
3. *Please indicate if the course is a core (C), an elective (E), or culminating experience (Thesis, Project, or Comprehensive Examination) course.*

¹ See Appendix I for specification on these Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and Appendix II for rubrics guiding standard measurement.

Curriculum Map

Course Work	PLO 1 Advanced Sociological Knowledge	PLO 2 Sociological contributions and applications	PLO 3 Challenges in sociology	PLO 4 Oral communication	PLO 5 Written communication	PLO 6 Critical Thinking	PLO 7 Intercultural knowledge and competence	PLO 8 Integration: Inquiry and Analysis
CORE								
SOC 200A (C)	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
SOC 200B (C)	D, M	D, M	D, M	D, M	D, M	D, M	D, M	D, M
SOC 214 (C)	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D
SOC 215 (C)	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D
SOC 235 (C)	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D
SOC 240 (C)	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D
SOC 500 (Thesis)	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
ELECTIVES								
SOC 210 (E)	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D
SOC 220 (E)	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D
SOC 225 (E)	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D
SOC 226 (E)	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D
SOC 230 (E)	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D
SOC 238 (E)	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D
SOC 255 (E)	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D
SOC 260 (E)	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D
SOC 265 (E)	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D
SOC 266 (E)	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D
SOC 296 (E)	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D
SOC 299 (E)	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D	I, D

‘I’ represents introduced; ‘D’, developed; and ‘M’, mastered.

III. Assessment Plan

Each graduate program shall develop a plan for assessing student achievement of its Program Learning Outcomes:

1. *Indicate the date assessment of the PLO started and identify each PLO separately in the Assessment Plan.*
2. Identify graduate program-specific direct and indirect lines of evidence for each of the PLOs. (See the policy for summaries of the kinds of direct and indirect evaluative data programs might draw on to assess progress towards and achievement of PLOs).
3. *Please indicate the lead personnel associated with evaluating each PLO.*
4. *Articulate evaluation parameters for measuring introductory and advanced levels of graduate student development for each PLO and the timeline for measurement, e.g., at time of admission or prior to culminating experience coursework.*
5. Evaluate each of the PLOs based on direct lines of evidence, collectively supporting the evaluation of introductory and advanced levels of development over the course of each student's program trajectory. Emphasis should be placed on early assessment of indicators that predict success in the graduate experience.

Assessment Plan

Lines of Evidence for Assessing Graduate Program Learning Outcomes						
Academic Year of Assessment	PLO	Direct Lines of Evidence ² (Example: Assignments in core courses; early writing assessment)	Indirect Lines of Evidence (Mid-course assessments; Alumni Survey)	Lead/Resources (Example: Faculty Advisors; Course Instructor; Department Chair)	Evaluation Parameters & Timeline: Examples of timeline: Admission (A); Exit (E); On-going (O); Follow up with Alumni (F); Qualification for Culminating Experience (Q)	Evaluation of each PLO based on direct lines of evidence
	1. Advanced sociological knowledge	1. Reading and writing assignments in core and elective classes 2. Research papers 3. Bibliographies	1. End of year survey ³ 2. GPA 3. Advancement to candidacy	1. Course Instructor 2. Faculty adviser 3. Graduate Coordinator 4. Chair 5. Professional Sociological Associations (ASA, PSA, CSA)	1. Diagnostic (pre-test) of program learning objective(s) (A) and later, post-test (O). 2. Advancement to candidacy (Q) 3. Prospectus Hearing (Q) 4. Thesis completion (Q)	1. On-going process 2. Diagnostic (pre-test) of program learning objective(s) and later, post-test. 3. Class papers/ presentations 4. Prospectus Hearing 5. Thesis completion

² Core and elective course syllabi are available upon request, which outline specific program/university learning objectives and measures (assignments) of outcomes.

³ See end-of-year survey questions in appendix III (first administered for AYs 14-15 and 15-16).

	2. Sociological contributions and applications	1. Reading and writing assignments in core and elective classes 2. Writing and oral assignments	1. Academic Conference presentations 2. Public reports 3. Internships 4. End of the year survey (F)	1. Course Instructor 2. Faculty adviser 3. Graduate Coordinator 4. Chair	1. Course assignments (O) 2. Advancement to candidacy (O) 3. Prospectus hearing (Q) 4. Thesis completion (Q)	1. On-going process 2. Diagnostic (pre-test) of program learning objective(s) and later, post-test. 3. Class papers/ presentations 4. Prospectus Hearing 5. Thesis completion
AY 16-17	3. Challenges in sociology	1. Course papers 2. Prospectus Hearing 3. Thesis	1. Academic conference activity 2. Public reports 3. Publications 4. Internships 5. End of the year survey (F)	1. Course Instructor 2. Faculty adviser 3. Graduate Coordinator	1. Course assignments (O) 2. Advancement to candidacy (O) 3. Prospectus hearing (Q) 4. Thesis completion (Q) 5.	1. On-going process 2. Diagnostic (pre-test) of program learning objective(s) and later, post-test. 3. Class papers/ presentations 4. Prospectus Hearing 5. Thesis completion
AY 12-13	4. Written communication	1. Course papers 2. Prospectus hearing 3. Thesis	1. Academic conference presentations 2. Public reports	1. Course Instructor 2. Faculty advisers 3. Graduate Coordinator 4. Writing Center	1. Course assignments (O) 2. Prospectus hearing (Q) 3. Thesis completion (Q)	1. On-going process 2. Diagnostic (pre-test) of program learning objective(s) and later, post-test. 3. Class papers/ presentations 4. Prospectus Hearing 5. Thesis completion
	5. Oral communication	1. Class presentations 2. Prospectus hearing	1. Academic conference presentations 2. Public reports	1. Course Instructor 2. Faculty Advisers 3. Graduate Coordinator	1. Course presentations (O) 2. Prospectus hearing (Q)	1. On-going process 2. Class presentations 3. Prospectus Hearing
AY13-14	6. Critical thinking	1. Reading and writing assignments in core and elective classes 2. Research papers	1. Academic conference presentations 2. Public reports 3. Publications	1. Course Instructor 2. Faculty adviser 3. Graduate Coordinator	1. Course assignments (O) 2. Advancement to candidacy (O) 3. Prospectus hearing (Q)	1. On-going process 2. Diagnostic (pre-test) of program learning

		integrating comprehensive literature reviews, methodologies, analyses, and recommendations	4. Research internships (constructing valid measures, interpreting data, providing assessments/recommendations).		4. Thesis completion (Q)	objective(s) and later, post-test. 3. Class papers/presentations 4. Prospectus Hearing 5. Thesis completion
AY 17-18	7. Intercultural knowledge and competency	1. Reading and writing assignments in core and elective classes 2. Standpoint methodologies (reflexive, contextual, interactive scholarship) 3. Research papers integrating comprehensive literature reviews reflecting global/diverse knowledge, methodologies, analyses, and recommendations	1. Activity in ethnic and race relations/diversity focused conferences 2. Public reports 3. Publications 4. Research internships (constructing bilingual measures and considering content and construct validity across cultures)	1. Course Instructor 2. Faculty adviser 3. Graduate Coordinator 4. Multicultural Center 5. Study Abroad Program (or comparable programs)	1. Course assignments (O) 2. Advancement to candidacy (O) 3. Prospectus hearing (Q) 4. Thesis completion (Q)	1. On-going process 2. Diagnostic (pre-test) of program learning objective(s) and later, post-test. 3. Class papers/presentations 4. Prospectus Hearing 5. Thesis completion
AY14-15 AY15-16	8. Inquiry and analysis	1. Critical reading and writing assignments in core and elective classes 2. Standpoint methodologies (reflexive, contextual, interactive scholarship) 3. Research papers Integrating/synthesizing comprehensive literature reviews, methodologies, analyses, and recommendations	1. Conference presentations 2. Public reports 3. Publications 4. Research internships/work (constructing valid measures, interpreting data, providing assessments/recommendations). 5. End of the year survey (F)	1. Course Instructor 2. Faculty adviser 3. Graduate Coordinator	1. Course assignments (O) 2. Advancement to candidacy (O) 3. Prospectus hearing (Q) 4. Thesis completion (Q)	1. On-going process 2. Diagnostic (pre-test) of program learning objective(s) and later, post-test. 3. Class papers/presentations 4. Prospectus Hearing 5. Thesis completion

Assessing the Program Learning Objective (AY 2014/2015 and 2015/16): Inquiry and Analysis (PLO #8)

For the Academic Years 2014/2015 and 2015/2016, the Graduate Program Committee of Sociology assessed the Program Learning Objective of Inquiry and Analysis (PLO #8). For both years, a graduate student cohort was selected: once while enrolled in SOC 214 and later while enrolled in SOC 215. Each class enrolls 15-18 students, and five student papers were randomly selected to assess the PLO #8. Students from SOC214 wrote (the pre-test) a research design proposal for a given topic; and later in SOC215, repeated the same assignment (the post-test).

In the first year through the in-class writing assignment (pre-test), students explained how they would research the effectiveness of a new teaching method in a biology class and also whether the new method affected students' identity as scientists. In the second year, the writing prompt was changed to the following: "As a server at a local restaurant you observe that your coworkers are reluctant to wait on tables occupied by people from groups that the servers expect to be 'bad tippers'. You decide to design a study of the factors that affect tipping in restaurants, including any variations by customer groups and employee attitudes and behaviors. Explain the research process for doing this study. Feel free to be creative and be as specific as you can."

The rubric used to measure the standard of performance covered 8 central components of inquiry and analysis, including ability to do a scholarly literature review, clearly state a research question, relate theory to the research question and/or hypotheses, develop a research design that best addresses the research question, conceptualize/operationalize variables, and analyze findings in relation to the theoretical framework/existing research (see PLO #8 rubric tables below). Each PLO dimension was measured with a 1-4 scale with scores ranging from low performance (1) to high performance (4).

The reliability of measurement was sought by a panel of four faculty reviewers, who teach for the graduate program. They each scored the papers in the pre- and post-tests, and their scores were averaged for each category in the matrix of inquiry and analysis (see table below).

Standards and Expectations for Integrating Inquiry and Analysis

Inquiry and Analysis (PLO #8)	1 Below expectation	2 Approaches expectation	3 Meets expectation	4 Exceeds expectation
Reviews scholarly literature to specific research question	No citations of previous literature; writer's "opinion" dominates	Limited citations; writer mainly states "opinion" without support	Writer supports most statements appropriately with citations	Amount of support/citation is strong
Informs research question with theoretical framework	No theoretical framework mentioned	theory mentioned but not adequately explained or integrated with RQ	theory is both minimally explained and integrated	Theoretical framework is logically integrated and adequately explained
States clear hypothesis or research question	No formal hypothesis or RQ	Hypothesis(es) or RQ(s) do(es) not logically follow from previous literature or connect well to variables/method chosen	Hypothesis(es) or RQ(s) either follows logically from literature OR fits with variables/methods but not both	Hypothesis(es) or RQ(s) logically follows from literature and are appropriately tested by chosen method
Chooses appropriate methods and/or statistical techniques	Statistical technique chosen/sampling method etc. are not appropriate for proposed study	Statistical technique chosen/sampling method is not inaccurate, but is not a strong or conventional choice	Statistical technique chosen/sampling method are adequate for proposed study	Statistical technique chosen/sampling method is adequate and choice(s) are well supported
Describes Data Set/Source of Data	Data set or data source not described	Data set or data source described briefly and unclearly	Data set or data source described accurately but not completely	Data set or data source described accurately and thoroughly
Explains Variables	Variables are not explained	Variables are explained unclearly or inaccurately	Variables are explained accurately but not all conventions followed (e.g. using variable names (PRMSEX))	Variables are explained accurately with conventions of scholarly writing followed
Interprets results	Results of statistical tests/qualitative analysis are not interpreted	Results of statistical tests/qualitative analysis are interpreted inaccurately	Results of statistical tests/qualitative analysis are interpreted accurately	Results of statistical tests/qualitative analysis are interpreted accurately and thoroughly
Analytical Discussion	Discussion disconnected to findings and to past literature or theory	Discussion is relevant to findings but does not tie in past literature (or vice versa) or theory	Discussion is relevant to findings and ties in minimal past literature/theory	Discussion highlights key findings and ties in adequately to past literature and theory
References	Has no scholarly sources	Has a few scholarly sources	Has over 50% scholarly sources, but many are not sociological	Nearly all references are scholarly and at least 50% are from sociological journals/books

Measuring Inquiry and Analysis PLO #8 AY 2015-2016

Pretest Inquiry & Analysis Skills (PLO #8)	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5	Student 6	AVE Range 1-4
Reviews scholarly literature to research question	NA	NA	2	2.5	NA	NA	2.3
Informs research question with theoretical framework	3	2.5	2.5	3	2.5	1	2.41
States clear hypothesis or research question	3	2.5	3	3	2.5	1	2.5
Chooses appropriate methods and/or statistical techniques	3	3.5	3	3	3	1	2.75
Describes Data Set/Source of Data	3	3	3	3	3	1	2.66
Explains Variables	3	2.5	2	3	2	1	2.25
Interprets results	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
Analyzes in Discussion	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
Average per PLO #8 item	3	2.8	2.6	2.9	2.6	1	2.48
Individual Student's total score							
Faculty reviewer #1	15	14	15.5	17.5	13	5	13.5
Faculty reviewer #2	16.5	12	12.5	14.5	13.5	12	13.5
Individual Average	15.75	13	14	16	13.25	8.5	13.5
Post-test Inquiry and Analysis Skills (PLO #8)	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5	Student 6	AVE Range 1-4
Reviews scholarly literature to research question	NA	3	NA	NA	3	NA	3
Informs research question with theoretical framework	2.5	3	3	3	3	1.5	2.66
States clear hypothesis or research question	3	3	3	3	3	1.5	2.75
Chooses appropriate	3	3.5	3	3	3.5	1.5	2.91

methods and/or statistical techniques							
Describes Data Set/Source of Data	3	3	3	3	3.5	2	2.91
Explains Variables	2.5	3	3	3	3	1.5	2.66
Interprets results	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Analyzes in Discussion	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Average per PLO #8 item	2.8	3.1	3	3	3.2	1.3	2.81
Individual student's total score							
Faculty reviewer #1	14	18.5	15	15	19	8	14.9
Faculty reviewer #2	14	14.5	15	15.5	18	11	14.7
Individual	14	16.5	15	15.25	18.5	9.5	14.8

IV Findings and Action Plans:

Significant improvement was documented within a cohort of graduate students in developing their inquiry and analytical skills (PLO #8) in AY 2015-2016. Although the improvement from 2.48 to 2.81 mean score is modest, the standard of performance across time is significantly improving, which is a very positive sign of change within a year. There was also improvement from the previous year's average score per PLO item, from 2.7 to 2.8. The program, however, seeks a more substantial improvement in performance among graduate students, and will continue to work to align graduate courses with explicit, concrete interventions (assignments) in developing inquiry and analytical skills—particularly those categories with low scores.

Because the research design paper was an in-class assignment, students did not cover all of the seven categories that measure inquiry and analysis (i.e., literature review, citations, interpretation of data). These were marked as not applicable (NA). Nonetheless, in the PLO's items examined, significant improvement was observed in the overall performance of the students from SOC214 (pretest) to SOC215 (posttest): the overall mean score improved from 2.48 to 2.81. Furthermore, every category saw an improvement: stating clear hypothesis went from 2.5 to 2.75, choosing appropriate method from 2.75 to 2.91, describing data from 2.6 to 2.91, and explaining variables from 2.25 to 2.66. In AY 2015-2016 we also documented individual improvement for student participants in the pre- and post-tests, and we also found general improvement in their individual total scores with two-thirds improving significantly (see table above for individual student's total score), and the other third staying at about the same range.

In short, there is improvement in student performance in the area of inquiry and analysis. The overall findings recommend that course work continue to emphasize the needed research skills (e.g., writing literature review, integrating relevant scholarship, and analyzing findings). The Graduate program has emphasized research methods skills, because there is evidence that these skills are among the

most marketable for graduate students, helping them get into Ph.D. programs or professional employment. Student success in acquiring these skills also correlates significantly with success in employment and job satisfaction (Vooren, Nicole Van, and Spalter-Roth, Roberta. 2011. Sociology Master's Graduates Join the Workforce. Research Brief for American Sociological Association, Department of Research Development, July).

Action Plan

Based on the assessment data collected, each graduate program shall provide detailed information about action steps to be taken to maintain program quality and/or address identified deficiencies.

1. Assessment Data Summary
2. Evaluation
3. Actions for Program Improvements and/or Continuation

PLO	Assessment Data Summary	Evaluation	Actions for Program Improvement and/or Continuation
1. Advanced sociological knowledge			
2. Sociological contributions and applications			
3. Challenges in sociology			
4. Written communication	AY 2012-213 report available upon request	“”	“”
5. Oral communication			
6. Critical thinking	AY 2013-214 report available upon request	“”	“”
7. Intercultural knowledge and competency			
8. Inquiry and analysis	See finding and recommendations above (AYs 2014-2015, 2015-2016) .	Modest improvement in Standards of performance for Inquiry and Analysis.	The recommended actions include coordination and consistent emphasis on all the PLOs in course work, particularly core classes, SOC 200B (Thesis Preparation), SOC 214 (Research Methods), and SOC 215 (Statistical Analysis). All electives courses will also emphasize critical thinking, inquiry and analysis, and communication.

Assessment Time-line for 2012–2019⁴

PLOS AY (Time Frame)	PLO 1 Advanced Sociological Knowledge	PLO 2 Sociological contributions and applications	PLO 3 Challenges in sociology	PLO 4 Oral communication	PLO 5 Written communication	PLO 6 Critical Thinking	PLO 7 Intercultural knowledge and competence	PLO 8 Integration: Inquiry and Analysis
2012-2013					X			
2013-2014						X		
2014-2015								X
2015-2016								X
2016-2017			X					
2017-2018							X	
Self-Study								

⁴ This timeline has been adjusted from the earlier proposed program review plan of 2012-2013, so as to reflect emergent concerns and needs of the graduate program. Most of our students struggle to complete master thesis; therefore, the graduate program will focus in the research methods course(s) and aligning electives to assist students advance in their cumulating project, i.e., master thesis. Moreover, there is evidence that these skills are among the most marketable for graduate students, helping them get into Ph.D. programs or professional employment. Student success in acquiring these skills correlates significantly with success in employment and job satisfaction.

Appendix I: Program Learning Outcomes for Sociology Graduate Program

Appendix I: Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for the Sociology Graduate Program

Here is the list of the detailed program learning outcomes (PLOs) for the sociology graduate program:

1. Sociology graduate students are expected to demonstrate advanced sociological knowledge including theories, methods, perspectives and other content: they will (**PLO 1: Advanced sociological knowledge** adopted from the *Degree Qualification Profile*).

- 1.1: Elucidate major research methods, sociological theories and approaches to inquiry and/or school of practices;
- 1.2: Articulate their sources; and
- 1.3: Illustrate both their applications and their relationship to allied fields.

2. They will demonstrate a deep understanding of sociological contributions: they will (**PLO 2: Sociological contributions and applications** adopted from the *Degree Qualification Profile*):

- 2.1: Assess the contribution of major sociologists;
- 2.2: Describe major methodologies and/or practices in sociology; and
- 2.3: Implement at least two of them through projects, papers or performances

3. Our graduate students are able to demonstrate a deep understanding of challenges in sociology: they will (**PLO 3: Challenges in sociology** adopted from the *Degree Qualification Profile*):

- 3.1: Articulate a full range of challenges involved in practicing sociology;
- 3.2: Elucidate the learning edges of the field; and
- 3.3: Delineate the current limits of sociological theory, knowledge and/or practice by independently initiating, assembling, arranging and reformulating ideas, concepts, design and/or techniques in carrying out a project directed at a sociological challenge which lies outside conventional boundaries.

4. Our graduate students are able to communicate effectively in writing about any topics from a sociological perspective; they will (**PLO 4: Written communication** adopted from the VALUE):

- 4.1: Identify the purpose of their writing and use the purpose to develop a composition.
- 4.2: Organize materials and arguments to explain or persuade effectively.
- 4.3: Use credible, relevant and updated evidence and sources
- 4.4: Integrate research findings into their work, including proper citation and formatting.
- 4.5: Display technical proficiency in writing (grammar, spelling, etc.).
- 4.6: Write clearly and revise when needed

5. Sociology graduate students are able to demonstrate effective oral communication skills: they will (**PLO 5: Oral communication** adopted from the VALUE rubric):

- 5.1: Use a clear and consistent organizational pattern to present content cohesively (**Organization**);
- 5.2: Choose memorable and appropriate language to enhance the effectiveness of the presentation (**Language**);
- 5.3: Select different types of delivery techniques to make the presentation compelling and the speaker appear polished and confident (**Delivery**);
- 5.4: Use different types of materials to significantly support the presentation and establish the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic (**Supporting materials**);
- 5.5: Deliver a compelling central message (**Central message**);

6. Sociology graduate students will demonstrate a habit of systematically exploring issues, ideas, artifacts and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion: they will (**PLO 6: Critical thinking** adopted from the VALUE rubric):

- 6.1: Clearly state the issue/problem which needs to be considered critically, comprehensively describe the issue/problem, and deliver all relevant information so it is necessary for a full understanding of the issue/problem (**Explanation of issues**).
- 6.2: Thoroughly interpret and evaluate the information taken from source(s) to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis (**Evidence**)
- 6.3: Thoroughly analyze their own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluate the relevance of contexts when presenting a position (**Influence of context and assumptions**).
- 6.4: Students' specific position (perspective, thesis, or hypothesis) takes into account the complexities (all sides) of an issue. Limits of position and others' points of view are acknowledged and synthesized within position (**Student's position**);
- 6.5: Conclusions, consequences and implications are logical and reflect student's informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order (**Conclusions and related outcomes**).

7. Sociology graduate students will demonstrate "a set of cognitive, affective and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts": they will (**PLO 7: Intercultural Knowledge and Competency** from the VALUE rubric):

- 7.1: Articulate insights into their own cultural rules and biases; demonstrate awareness how their experiences have shaped these rules and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in a shift in self- description.
- 7.2: Demonstrate sophisticated understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, beliefs or practices.
- 7.3: Interpret intercultural experience from their own perspectives and more than one worldview while demonstrating an ability to act in a supportive manner which recognizes the feelings of another cultural group.
- 7.4: Articulate a complex understanding of cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication and be able to skillfully negotiate a shared understanding based on those differences.
- 7.5: Ask complex questions about other cultures; seek out and articulate answers to these questions which reflect multiple cultural perspectives.
- 7.6: Initiate and develop interactions with different cultures and suspends judgment in valuing her/his interactions with culturally different others.

8. Sociology graduate students are expected to apply sociological knowledge and skills to systematically explore issues or works in many fields through the collection and analysis of evidence which results in informed conclusions, judgments, or recommendations: they will (**PLO 8: Inquiry and analysis** from the VALUE rubric):

- 8.1: Identify a creative, focused, and manageable topic which addresses potentially significant yet previously less-explored aspects of an issue.
- 8.2: Synthesize in-depth information from relevant sources representing various points of view/approaches.
- 8.3: Skillfully develop all elements of a methodology or theoretical framework and synthesize appropriate methodology or theoretical frameworks from across disciplines or from relevant sub-disciplines.
- 8.4: Organize and synthesize evidence to reveal insightful patterns, differences or similarities.
- 8.5: State a conclusion that is a logical extrapolation from the inquiry findings.
- 8.6: Insightfully discuss limitations and implications of the study.

Appendix II: Rubrics Guiding Standard Measurement AY2015-16

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION RUBRIC FOR GRADUATE PROGRAM IN SOCIOLOGY

(Borrowed from the College of Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies and Modified from Written Communication VALUE Rubric)

	Exceed Expectation 4	Meet Expectation 3	Approach Expectation 2	Below Expectation 1
1. Purpose and Development	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.	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.	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.	The paper has no clear sense of purpose or central theme. The student has not yet decided the main idea of the paper or is still in search of a topic, thus demonstrated little understanding of the subject.
2. Overall Organization	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.	The organizational structures are strong enough to display a central theme and adequately move the reader through the text.	The organizational structures are not strong enough to display a central theme; therefore the reader is confused sometimes when reading through the text.	The composition lacks a clear sense of direction and identifiable internal structures, which makes it hard for the reader to get a grip on the theme or the main idea.
3. Audience Engagement	The student meets the needs and captivates the interest of the audience throughout the composition.	The student meets the needs and captivates the interest of the audience throughout most of the composition.	Sometimes, the student holds the attention of the audience, but does not sustain it throughout.	The student neither meets the needs nor captures the interest of the audience.
4. Control of Syntax and Mechanics	The student demonstrates mastery of standard writing conventions (e.g. spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, paragraphing) and uses these conventions to enhance readability.	The student demonstrates an adequate grasp of standard writing conventions (e.g. spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, paragraphing) despite a few errors.	The student shows a reasonable control over limited range of standard writing conventions. Conventions are sometimes handled well; at other times, errors distract readability.	The student demonstrates little control of grammar, syntax, and mechanics. The errors distract the reader and make the text hard to read.
5. Summary: Clarity and Revision	The whole paper is extremely clear and easy to understand. It needs little or no revision.	The paper is clear and easy to understand, but needs some revision.	Some parts of the paper are clear, but others are hard to follow. The paper needs a fair amount of revision.	The paper is not clear, therefore difficult to follow. The paper needs significant revision.
6. Citation of Sources (if applicable)	The student consistently cites all of the sources.	The student consistently cites the majority of the sources.	The student consistently cites some of the sources.	Errors occur everywhere when citing the sources.
7. Graphic Presentation (if applicable)	The student demonstrates an innovative use of graphic presentations to communicate a meaningful message.	The student demonstrates an appropriate use of graphic presentations to communicate a meaningful message.	The student used some graphic presentations to communicate a message.	The student does not use graphic presentations where necessary.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION RUBRIC FOR GRADUATE PROGRAM IN SOCIOLOGY

(Borrowed from the College of Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies and Modified from Written Communication VALUE Rubric)

Please select two (2) key assignments from your course and designate where you believe they fall on this rubric according to the corresponding definitions on the previous copy.

	Exceed Expectation 4	Meet Expectation 3	Approach Expectation 2	Below Expectation 1
1. Purpose and Development				
2. Overall Organization				
3. Audience Engagement				
4. Control of Syntax and Mechanics				
5. Summary: Clarity and Revision				
6. Citation of Sources (if applicable)				
7. Graphic Presentation (if applicable)				

ORAL COMMUNICATION VALUE RUBRIC
(for more information, please contact value@aacu.org)

	Capstone 4	Milestones 3	Milestones 2	Benchmark 1
Organization	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is clearly and consistently observable and is skillful and makes the content of the presentation cohesive.	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is clearly and consistently observable within the presentation.	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is intermittently observable within the presentation.	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is not observable within the presentation.
Language	Language choices are imaginative, memorable, and compelling, and enhance the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience.	Language choices are thoughtful and generally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience.	Language choices are mundane and commonplace and partially support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience.	Language choices are unclear and minimally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is not appropriate to audience.
Delivery	Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) make the presentation compelling, and speaker appears polished and confident.	Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) make the presentation interesting, and speaker appears comfortable.	Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) make the presentation understandable, and speaker appears tentative.	Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) detract from the understandability of the presentation, and speaker appears uncomfortable.
Supporting Material	A variety of types of supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that significantly supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic.	Supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that generally supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic.	Supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that partially supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic.	Insufficient supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make reference to information or analysis that minimally supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic.
Central Message	Central message is compelling (precisely stated, appropriately repeated, memorable, and strongly supported.)	Central message is clear and consistent with the supporting material.	Central message is basically understandable but is not often repeated and is not memorable.	Central message can be deduced, but is not explicitly stated in the presentation.

ORAL COMMUNICATION VALUE RUBRIC

Please select two (2) key assignments from your course and designate where you believe they fall on this rubric according to the corresponding definitions on the previous copy.

	Capstone 4	Milestones 3	Milestones 2	Benchmark 1
Organization				
Language				
Delivery				
Supporting Material				
Central Message				

CRITICAL THINKING VALUE RUBRIC

	Capstone 4	Milestone 3	Milestone 2	Benchmark 1
Explanation of issues	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for full understanding.	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated, described, and clarified so that understanding is not seriously impeded by omissions.	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated but description leaves some terms undefined, ambiguities unexplored, boundaries undetermined, and/or backgrounds unknown.	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated without clarification or description.
Evidence <i>Selecting and using information to investigate a point of view or conclusion</i>	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis.	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis.	Information is taken from source(s) with some interpretation/evaluation, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis.	Information is taken from source(s) without any interpretation/evaluation. Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question.
Influence of context and assumptions	Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyzes own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position.	Identifies own and others' assumptions and several relevant contexts when presenting a position.	Questions some assumptions. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions than one's own (or vice versa).	Shows an emerging awareness of present assumptions (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions).
Student's position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is imaginative, taking into account the complexities of an issue. Limits of position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) are acknowledged. Others' points of view are synthesized within position.	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) takes into account the complexities of an issue. Others' points of view are acknowledged within position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis).	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) acknowledges different sides of an issue.	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is stated, but is simplistic and obvious.
Conclusions and related outcomes (implications and consequences)	Conclusions and related outcomes (consequences and implications) are logical and reflect student's informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order.	Conclusion is logically tied to a range of information, including opposing viewpoints; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.	Conclusion is logically tied to information (because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion); some related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.	Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are oversimplified.

CRITICAL THINKING VALUE RUBRIC

Please select two (2) key assignments from your course and designate where you believe they fall on this rubric according to the corresponding definitions on the previous copy.

	Capstone 4	Milestone 3	Milestone 2	Benchmark 1
Explanation of issues				
Evidence <i>Selecting and using information to investigate a point of view or conclusion</i>				
Influence of context and assumptions				
Student's position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)				
Conclusions and related outcomes (implications and consequences)				

INTERCULTURAL KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCE

	Capstone 4	Milestones 3	Milestones 2	Benchmark 1
Knowledge <i>Cultural self-awareness</i>	Articulate insights into own cultural rules and biases (e.g. seeking complexity; aware of how her/his experience have shaped these rules, and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in a shift in self-description).	Recognizes new perspectives about own cultural rules and biases (e.g. not looking for sameness; comfortable with the complexities that new perspectives offer).	Identifies own cultural rules and biases (e.g. with a strong preference for those rules with own cultural group and seeks the same in others).	Shows minimal awareness of own cultural rules and biases (even those shared with own cultural group(s)) (e.g. uncomfortable with identifying possible cultural differences with others).
Knowledge <i>Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks</i>	Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs & practices.	Demonstrates adequate understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs & practices.	Demonstrates partial understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.	Demonstrates surface understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.
Skills <i>Empathy</i>	Interprets intercultural experience from the perspectives of own and more than one worldview and demonstrates ability to act in a supportive manner that recognizes the feelings of another cultural group.	Recognizes intellectual and emotional dimensions of more than one worldview and sometimes uses more than one worldview in interactions.	Identifies components of other cultural perspectives but responds in all situations with own worldview.	Views the experience of others but does so through own cultural worldview.
Skills <i>Verbal and nonverbal communication</i>	Articulates a complex understanding of cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication (e.g., demonstrates understanding of the degree to which people use physical contact while communicating in different cultures or use direct/indirect and explicit/implicit meanings) and is able to skillfully negotiate a shared understanding based on those differences.	Recognizes and participates in cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication and begins to negotiate a shared understanding based on those differences.	Identifies some cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication and is aware that misunderstandings can occur based on those differences but is still unable to negotiate a shared understanding.	Has a minimal level of understanding of cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication; is unable to negotiate a shared understanding.
Attitudes <i>Curiosity</i>	Asks complex questions about other cultures, seeks out and articulates answers to these questions that reflect multiple cultural perspectives.	Asks deeper questions about other cultures and seeks out answers to these questions.	Asks simple or surface questions about other cultures.	States minimal interest in learning more about other cultures.
Attitudes <i>Openness</i>	Initiates and develops interactions with culturally different others. Suspends judgment in valuing her/his interactions with culturally different others.	Begins to initiate and develop interactions with culturally different others. Begins to suspend judgment in valuing her/his interactions with culturally different others.	Expresses openness to most, if not all, interactions with culturally different others. Has difficulty suspending any judgment in her/his interactions with culturally different others, and is aware of own judgment and expresses a willingness to change.	Receptive to interacting with culturally different others. Has difficulty suspending any judgment in her/his interactions with culturally different others, but is unaware of own judgment.

INTERCULTURAL KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCE

Please select two (2) key assignments from your course and designate where you believe they fall on this rubric according to the corresponding definitions on the previous copy.

	Capstone 4	Milestones 3	Milestones 2	Benchmark 1
Knowledge <i>Cultural self-awareness</i>				
Knowledge <i>Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks</i>				
Skills <i>Empathy</i>				
Skills <i>Verbal and nonverbal communication</i>				
Attitudes <i>Curiosity</i>				
Attitudes <i>Openness</i>				

INQUIRY AND ANALYSIS VALUE RUBRIC

	Capstone 4	Milestone 3	Milestone 2	Benchmark 1
Topic selection	Identifies a creative, focused, and manageable topic that addresses potentially significant yet previously less-explored aspects of the topic.	Identifies a focused and manageable/doable topic that appropriately addresses relevant aspects of the topic.	Identifies a topic that while manageable/doable, is too narrowly focused and leaves out relevant aspects of the topic.	Identifies a topic that is far too general and wide-ranging as to be manageable and doable.
Existing Knowledge, Research, and/or Views	Synthesizes in-depth information from relevant sources representing various points of view/approaches.	Presents in-depth information from relevant sources representing various points of view/approaches.	Presents information from relevant sources representing limited points of view/approaches.	Presents information from irrelevant sources representing limited points of view/approaches.
Design Process	All elements of the methodology or theoretical framework are skillfully developed. Appropriate methodology or theoretical frameworks may be synthesized from across disciplines or from relevant sub-disciplines.	Critical elements of the methodology or theoretical framework are appropriately developed, however, more subtle elements are ignored or unaccounted for.	Critical elements of the methodology or theoretical framework are missing, incorrectly developed, or unfocused.	Inquiry design demonstrates a misunderstanding of the methodology or theoretical framework.
Analysis	Organizes and synthesizes evidence to reveal insightful patterns, differences, or similarities related to focus.	Organizes evidence to reveal important patterns, differences, or similarities related to focus.	Organizes evidence, but the organization is not effective in revealing important patterns, differences, or similarities.	Lists evidence, but it is not organized and/or is unrelated to focus.
Conclusions	States a conclusion that is a logical extrapolation from the inquiry findings.	States a conclusion focused solely on the inquiry findings. The conclusion arises specifically from and responds specifically to the inquiry findings.	States a general conclusion that, because it is so general, also applies beyond the scope of the inquiry findings.	States an ambiguous, illogical, or unsupportable conclusion from inquiry findings.
Limitations and Implications	Insightfully discusses in detail relevant and supported limitations and implications.	Discusses relevant and supported limitations and implications.	Presents relevant and supported limitations and implications.	Presents limitations and implications, but they are possibly irrelevant and unsupported.

INQUIRY AND ANALYSIS VALUE RUBRIC

Please select two (2) key assignments from your course and designate where you believe they fall on this rubric according to the corresponding definitions on the previous copy.

	Capstone 4	Milestone 3	Milestone 2	Benchmark 1
Topic selection				
Existing Knowledge, Research, and/or Views				
Design Process				
Analysis				
Conclusions				
Limitations and Implications				

Appendix III: Sociology Graduate Student Reflection Survey AY2015-16

Due: May 20, 2016

Dear graduate students,

To help us advise you better and more efficiently, we ask you to reflect on the past academic year and complete the survey below no later than May 20, 2015.

The information you share will be used only for advising and program assessment by the faculty of sociology department at Sac State. Your success is very important to us, and with the information, we hope to provide more and better guidance to assist your successful completion of the graduate program. If you have any question about this survey, please contact the graduate program coordinator Dr. Manuel Barajas at 916-278-7576 or barajasm@csus.edu.

Thank you,
Graduate Program Committee
Department of Sociology

Sociology Graduate Student Reflection Survey AY2015-16

Your Basic Information

1. Full Name

2. Best email address to reach you

3. Is this email address different from what we have on file?

☐ Yes

☐ No

4. Best phone number to reach you

5. Is this phone number different from what we have on file?

☐ Yes

☐ No

6. Year and semester you started this MA program (e.g., fall 2013)

7. Current cumulative GPA

Your Course Work

8. Check all the required courses you have taken so far.

- ☐ SOC 200A Orientation to Graduate Studies in Sociology
- ☐ SOC 200B Thesis Prospectus/Project Preparation Seminar
- ☐ SOC 214 Research Methods
- ☐ SOC 215 Data Analysis
- ☐ SOC 235 Social Psychology
- ☐ SOC 240 Sociological Theory

9. Check all the elective courses you have taken so far

- ☐ SOC 210 Urban Sociology
- ☐ SOC 220 Social Change

- ☐ SOC 225 Social Stratification
- ☐ SOC 226 Sociology of Gender
- ☐ SOC 230 Social Organization
- ☐ SOC 238 Environmental Sociology
- ☐ SOC 255 Social Research in Crime and Deviance
- ☐ SOC 260 Contemporary Issues of the Middle East and North Africa
- ☐ SOC 265 Race and Ethnic Relations
- ☐ SOC 266 Sociology of the Family
- ☐ SOC 295 Internship and Fieldwork
- ☐ SOC 299 Special Problems
- ☐ SOC294 Special Topics

10. Are you done with the course work?

☒ Yes

☐ No

11. Have you advanced to candidacy?

☒ Yes

☐ No

12. If you have, please tell us in which semester you advanced to candidacy. (e.g., fall 2013)

Your Thesis

13. Have you selected your thesis advisor (i.e., thesis committee chair) AND confirmed with the faculty member that he/she will serve as your thesis chair?

☐ Yes

☐ No

14. If yes, who is your advisor?

15. Have you selected your second reader AND confirmed with the faculty member that he/she will serve as your second reader?

☐ Yes

☐ No

16. If yes, who is your second reader?

17. Do you have a thesis topic?

☐ Yes, I have a concrete research question

☐ Yes, I have a general idea of the research topic.

☐ No, I do not have an research topic yet.

18. If you have a thesis topic, describe your thesis topic or research question in one sentence (You can give us the title of your thesis if you have identified it).

19. Have you and your thesis advisor (chair) discussed the thesis topic?

☐ Yes

☐ No

20. Have you applied for Human Subject Committee approval for your thesis?

☐ Yes, I received an approval already.

☐ Yes, I applied and it is pending at the university-level Human Subject Committee.

☐ Yes, I applied and it is pending at the department-level Human Subject Committee.

☐ No, I haven't and will need to apply for it.

☐ No, I do not have a research topic yet.

☐ Not Applicable - My research does not require Human Subject Committee approval (e.g., content analysis, use of publicly available secondary data).

21. Have you had your prospectus hearing?

☐ No

☐ Yes (specify the semester and year when it took place)

22. If you haven't, in what semester do you plan to hold the prospectus hearing?

23. Are you or have you been enrolled in SOC500?

☐ Yes

☐ No

24. If you haven't, in what semester do you plan to enroll in SOC500?

25. Have you applied for graduation?

☐ Yes

☐ No

26. If you haven't, in what semester do you plan to apply for graduation?

If you do not understand the steps needed to complete the thesis and graduate, please read the *Graduate Student Handbook* available on the Sociology department website. You could also contact your thesis chair (if you have identified one already) or Dr. Manuel Barajas for any question and concern regarding the process.

Your Goals & Accomplishments

27. What is your career goal after graduation?

28. During the academic year of 2015-16, did you attend an academic conference?

☐ Yes

- ☐ No, I didn't, but have attended an academic conference(s) in the past.
- ☐ No, I have never attended an academic conference.

29. If yes, which conference did you attend? Please list.

30. During the academic year of 2015-2016, did you present a paper or project at any public research event (conference, student research symposium, etc)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No, I didn't, but have presented at such a public event in the past.
- ☐ No, I have never presented my research at a public event.

31. If you presented your research, at which conference/symposium/event? Please list.

32. Are there any other accomplishments you would like to share with us during the academic year of 2015-2016? (e.g., volunteering at a conference, internship, TA, RA, attended workshops, applying for and/or receiving scholarship/award/honor, publication...etc).

33. What is your goal for the next academic year?

34. Please list the title of the courses you wish to take in the future semesters.



Your General Reflection

35. How satisfied are you with the graduate program on a scale from 1 (low satisfaction) to 10 (high satisfaction)?

36. Is there anything else you would like the faculty to know?



37. Do you have any question or concern related to the graduate program?

