

## Assessment Plan (AY17-18 through AY21-22) – SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT

In just the past 5 years since our previous Self Study Report, the make-up of our student body and faculty has changed a great deal. **In 2012-13, we had 545 majors, 15 full-time faculty and 10 lecturers. According to the Departmental Factbook, in 2016-17, we have 725 majors, 14 full-time faculty and 22 lecturers (61% of faculty).**

The work load on all faculty has increased and we are focused on developing feasible, sustainable approaches to department assessment.

The previous assessment (2011-12 to 2016) plan was very difficult to maintain as it proposed multiple assessments, and multiple sources of data. While it might be ideal to collect data from multiple sources (i.e. focus groups, exit surveys, entrance surveys, etc.), we hope to develop an assessment plan for the next 5 years that accomplishes two things that the previous plan did not:

- (1) Implement a data collection procedure that is *sustainable* in terms of amount of faculty and student time, and record keeping.
- (2) Successfully match student performance on select learning outcomes from the beginning of their time in the Sociology program to their final semester to allow us to infer, with greater confidence, that any evident changes are due to students' learning and experiences throughout the entirety of the program.
  - Once we have collected data with both pre- and post-tests for the first cohort of students, we will only analyze data for those students who complete both tests, and comparing within native freshmen and transfer students.

**Fall, 2016 and Spring, 2017** – For the AY 2016-17 Program Assessment, we piloted a “post-test” approach to assess the extent of student learning for relevant Program Learning Objectives (PLOs). The test was given at the end of SOC 102, with data from an existing assessment tool developed by faculty involved in a systematic quasi-experimental evaluation of the SOC 102 course, Research Design and Analysis.

The pilot test of this approach was not particularly successful. On the surface, the assessment matched the PLO it was intended to measure, but we felt that we needed to be able to give more specific directions in terms of the style and content of the students' answers, so to do this we developed a specific assessment tool with more specific directions for our purpose.

**2017-18:**

We piloted the assessment tool in Summer 2017 with students at the required Summer orientations (n=95).

Summer Orientations – Students completed the assessment “pre-test” during orientation. They provided their names and, the last 4 digits of their Sac State IDs (if they had them). These identifiers were intended to be used to match their pre- and post-tests.

Students were recorded as transfer students or incoming-Freshman.

By the end of Spring 2019, we intended to administer the same assessment to students in their 102 courses and then match the aggregate pre-test results to post-test, as well as look at the mean change in scores. After the initial administration of the pre-test however, we found that the instrument we developed would most likely not work for the purpose it was intended. The collection process and length of time it took to complete the assessment was simply longer than originally anticipated.

**2018-19: We are looking at two possible options for the upcoming year, and hope to find a sustainable option.**

1. As part of the program review we are developing a 2 unit capstone experience for students. This will be required during their final semester and will most likely need to be online to meet student scheduling needs. We can use e-Portfolios from this experience or direct or indirect surveys/tests to assess a variety of learning outcomes and have high response rates by making the assessment relevant to the course and required.

**Since it may take a while to develop the 2 unit course, we have a 2<sup>nd</sup> option in the interim:**

We find ourselves circling back around to where we have been in the past. Our most successful assessments in previous years have used final papers from Sociology 102 (Research Design and Analysis) and measured the students’ successful mastery of various PLOs. The department has recently implemented a Research Symposium each semester, where students display their research projects. While students from most (not all) sections of SOC 102 participate in this effort, this will potentially be a source of sustainable and measurable data relevant to several of our PLOs, including the following:

1. The sociology major at CSU Sacramento will be expected to think critically.
2. The sociology major at CSUS will be expected to have the writing skills necessary to communicate effectively with persons whom they encounter in their work, civil obligation and personal life.
3. Students will be able to:

- i. Design a research study to analyze a social experience or problem, using evidence and quantitative and qualitative research methods from sociology.
- ii. Apply sociological theory to a social experience.
- iii. Apply a sociological imagination to a social experience to understand and/or explain it.