

E. Student Outcomes Learning Assessment.

1. USP Assessment Plan

1.a – Learning Goals for the Undergraduate Sociology Program

Sociology undergraduate students should learn, critically assess, and be able to communicate about:

1. The discipline of sociology and how it contributes to our understanding of social reality, such that students will be able to:
 - a) explain how sociology both differs from and shares aspects with allied disciplines; and
 - b) apply the sociological imagination and sociological principles and concepts to his/her own life and the understanding of specific human societies and of human society in general.
2. The role of theory in sociology, such that students will be able to:
 - a) define theory and explain its role in the development of sociological knowledge;
 - b) compare and contrast major theoretical orientations;
 - c) show how theories reflect the historical and cultural contexts in which they emerged;
 - d) apply basic theoretical orientations to understanding human society.
3. The use of qualitative and quantitative methods in sociology, such that students will be able to:
 - a) identify basic methodological approaches and explain the role of methodology in building sociological knowledge;
 - b) compare and contrast basic methodological approaches for gathering data;
 - c) gather, analyze and interpret data;
 - d) critically assess research reports.
4. Basic concepts in sociology, such that students will be able to define and explain the importance of: culture, social change, socialization, social interaction, social stratification, social structure, economic and political structure, social institutions, and differentiation by “race”/ethnicity, sex, gender, age, class, and status.
5. How culture and social structure operate in the united States and in global context, so that students will be able to:
 - a) show how institutions affect each other and individuals;
 - b) demonstrate how social change affects social structure and individuals;
 - c) demonstrate how culture and social structure vary across time and place, and how such variations affect social life; and
 - d) show how individual behaviors impact others and the factors noted in a ,b, and c above.
6. The process of professional socialization, such that students will be able to:
 - a) Identify, analyze, and apply the ethics of the discipline (including the ASA Code of Ethics);
 - b) practice various modes of social discourse;
 - c) explore the uses of undergraduate and graduate degrees in sociology; and
 - d) explore the world of work and the various tools (resume/curriculum vitae writing, networking, on-line sources, etc.) important in gaining employment.

For each item, please indicate your current skill level.	Not at all skilled	Somewhat skilled	Very skilled	I am unsure of my skill level
<p>1. The discipline of sociology and its role in contributing to our understanding of social reality</p> <p><i>Rate your ability to:</i></p> <p>a) describe how sociology differs from and is similar to other disciplines.</p> <p>b) apply the sociological imagination, and sociological principles and concepts, to your own life.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>1</p>	<p>2</p> <p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>3</p>	<p>4</p> <p>4</p>
<p>2. The role of theory in sociology</p> <p><i>Rate your ability to:</i></p> <p>a) define theory and describe its role in building sociological knowledge.</p> <p>b) compare and contrast basic theoretical orientations.</p> <p>c) show how theories reflect the historical and cultural contexts in which they were developed.</p> <p>d) describe and apply some basic theories or theoretical orientations to social life.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p>	<p>2</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>3</p> <p>3</p> <p>3</p>	<p>4</p> <p>4</p> <p>4</p> <p>4</p>
<p>3. The use of qualitative and quantitative methods in sociology</p>				

<p>Rate your ability to:</p> <p>a) identify basic methodological approaches.</p> <p>b) compare and contrast basic methodological approaches for gathering data.</p> <p>c) design a sociological research study.</p> <p>d) gather, analyze, and interpret data.</p> <p>e) critically assess a research report.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p>	<p>2</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>3</p> <p>3</p> <p>3</p> <p>3</p>	<p>4</p> <p>4</p> <p>4</p> <p>4</p> <p>4</p>
<p>4. How culture and social structure operate in the United States and global contexts</p> <p>Rate your ability to:</p> <p>a) show how institutions affect each other and individuals.</p> <p>b) demonstrate how social change affects social structures and individuals.</p> <p>c) demonstrate how culture and social structure vary across time and place, and how such variations affect social life.</p> <p>d) identify the interrelationship between social policy</p>	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p>	<p>2</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>3</p> <p>3</p>	<p>4</p> <p>4</p> <p>4</p>

and social structure.	1	2	3	4
5. Reciprocal relationships between individuals and society <i>Rate your ability to:</i> a) explain how societal and structural factors influence individual behavior and the development of the self. b) demonstrate how social interaction and the self influence society and social structure.	1	2	3	4
6. The macro/micro continuum <i>Rate your ability to:</i> a) compare and contrast theories and research at various points along the macro/micro continuum. b) identify research questions and analytical issues relevant to each location along this continuum.	1	2	3	4
7. The process of professional socialization <i>Rate your ability to:</i> a) identify, analyze, and apply the ethics of the	1	2	3	4

discipline (including the ASA Code of Ethics).				
b) practice various modes of sociological discourse.	1	2	3	4
c) explore the uses of undergraduate and graduate degrees in sociology.	1	2	3	4
d) analyze the labor market, world of work, and methods (resume/curriculum vitae writing, networking, etc.) for obtaining employment.	1	2	3	4

1.b – Assessment Plan and Relation to Learning Goals

The assessment strategy for the undergraduate program in sociology comprises three methods: an entrance and exit questionnaire, embedded assessment in the undergraduate core curriculum, and detailed assessment of each student’s senior experience project.

1. The Entrance and Exit Survey. The survey will be administered in an introductory sociology and course and in Senior Experience.
2. The Core and Embedded Assessment. Each core course is specifically designed to present our students with the information and skills that are reflected in the program goals and to provide the student with an assessment of their mastery of the informational, methodological, theoretical and applied aspects of doing sociology. These assessments are provided via the assignments for each class.
 - a) Introduction to Sociology (Sociology 106) introduces students to the discipline of sociology and what characterizes it as an approach to understanding the workings of society. Included are presentations of the basic concepts of culture, social stratification, inequality, socialization, socialization, and social institutions. This course provides basic mastery of goals 1, 4, and 5
 - b) Sociological Inquiry (Sociology 206). This course is only open to students making a C or better in 106. It immerses the student in the way sociologists approach the discipline, utilize the sociological imagination, and communicate about the discipline. This course provides basic mastery of goals 1-b, 2-a, 2-c, 2-d, and additional mastery of aspects of goals 4 and 5.
 - c) History of Sociological Thought (Sociology 270). This course requires a C or better in both 106 and 206. It discusses the basic theoretical framework that underlies sociological knowledge and how these frameworks have changed from the mid-9th century to today. As the primary theory course in the core, it specifically promotes mastery of goal 2.

- d) Introduction to Sociological Research (Sociology 271). Also requiring a C in both 106 and 206, this course provides the student with an introduction to conducting research using a variety of methods and analytical techniques. As such it provides skills basic to the mastery of goal 3.
- e) Social Statistics (Sociology 275). Like 270 and 271, a C is required in both 106 and 206 to take this class. Mastery of basic statistics applies primarily to goals 3-c, 3-d, and 3-e.
- f) Careers for Sociology Majors. (Sociology 292). This course examines applications for a sociology major and stresses the skills important in seeking opportunities past the undergraduate degree. The course addresses goal 6.
- g) Senior Experience (Sociology 300). As the program's capstone course, Sociology 300 requires a C or better in all of the previous core courses. Senior experience specifically enhances mastery of goals 1-b, 3-b through 3-e, and 6-a. As a capstone course it will also enhance other goals, particularly aspects of goals 1-a, 2, 5, and 6 depending on the topic the student researches.
- h) In all classes, but particularly in Sociology 206, 270, 271, and 300, writing is emphasized such that students develop their critical thinking ability with regard to researching and presenting their ideas, and enhance their writing skills. Sociology 300 also generally involves oral presentation as well.
- i) Competency at each stage in the core is reflected in the fact that a C is required in 106 for any other core; a C in 206 is required for the remaining core; and a C in all core classes is required for entry into Sociology 300. Thus a student cannot progress in the core without attaining a fundamental competency at each stage.

Embedded assessment of Learning Goals 1b, 4a, 4b, 5a in Sociology 206 (Sociological Inquiry).

This assessment focuses on students' mastery of several key skills within the larger set of Learning Goals for the sociology undergraduate program:

- We will assess one aspect of Goal 1 (understanding of the discipline of sociology and its role in contributing to our understanding of social reality) by assessing students' mastery of **Goal 1b: ability to apply the sociological imagination, and sociological principles and concepts, to their own lives.**
- We will assess two aspects of Goal 4: (understanding how culture and social structure operate in the United States and global contexts) by assessing students' mastery **Goal 4a: ability to show how institutions affect each other and individuals, and Goal 4b: ability to demonstrate how social change affects social structures and individuals.**
- We will assess one aspect of Goal 5 (understanding the reciprocal relationships between individuals and society) by assessing students' mastery of one of the features of **Goal 5a: ability to demonstrate how societal and structural factors influence individual behavior.**

This embedded assessment is comprised of a pre-test and a post-test in Sociology 206 (Sociological Inquiry), the first core course for sociology majors.

Pre-test: On the first day of Sociology 206, students will be given an in-class written assignment. They will be asked to answer the following questions:

What is the sociological imagination? Define it in your own words. Then give an example of how you could apply the Sociological Imagination to your own life, i.e., use it to interpret an aspect of your own behavior.

This question assesses students' ability to define the sociological imagination and apply it to their own lives. In the words of sociologist C. Wright Mills, it assesses whether they can analyze the relationship between "history" and "biography," the impact of micro- and macro-level social factors (e.g., culture, socialization, socioeconomic status, social norms, socioeconomic status, social policies, historical time period, etc.) on an aspect of their own behavior.

Post-test: At the end of the first unit of the course (Week 5), students will write the Sociological Imagination Paper. For this paper, students must define the sociological imagination and then choose one aspect of their own "biography" and analyze how it was influenced by several aspects of "history." Again, this means recognizing and describing the impact of micro- and macro-level social factors (e.g., culture, socialization, social norms, socioeconomic status, social policies, historical time period, etc.) on an aspect of their own behavior.

An instructor will grade both assignments, using the rubric below. By comparing students' pre- and post-tests, we will be able to determine whether students have mastered some key Learning Goals for the sociology undergraduate program.

LEARNING GOAL	NO MASTERY 0	SOME MASTERY 2	FULL MASTERY 4
Goal 1b: Ability to apply the sociological imagination, and sociological principles and concepts, to his/her own life	Does not demonstrate an understanding of the sociological imagination or how to apply it	Demonstrates limited understanding of the sociological imagination and/or how to apply it	Can define the sociological imagination and can apply it

Goal 4a: Ability to show how institutions affect each other and individuals	Does not address the impact of institutions on individual behavior	Mentions or alludes to institutions but does not address their impact on individual behavior	Shows how institutions impact individual behavior
Goal 4b: Ability to demonstrate how social change affects social structures and individuals	Does not address the impact of social change on social structure and individual behavior	Mentions or alludes to social change and social structure, but does not address their impact on individual behavior	Shows how social change affects social structure and, in turn, individual behavior
Goal 5a: Ability to explain how societal and structural factors influence individual behavior	Does not explain how societal and structural factors influence individual behavior	Mentions or alludes to societal and structural factors, but does not address their impact on individual behavior	Shows how societal and structural factors influence individual behavior

3. Senior Experience. The Senior Experience (SE) course (Sociology 300) is a true capstone experience for seniors. Under the guidance of a sociology faculty member, each student develops a research project, designs the implementation of the project, gathers data, analyzes and interprets the data collected, and presents the findings in written and (usually) oral forms. In so doing, students employ the sociological imagination, theory, specific methodological and analytical approaches. Each student is evaluated by faculty according to a set of rubrics intended to reflect level of mastery of several specific learning goals articulated above.

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Exceeds Expectations</u>	<u>Meets Expectations</u>	<u>Below Expectations</u>
Research Question/ Topic	Question is challenging, well thought out; demonstrates thorough understanding of topic area and research needs.	Question is clearly stated and thought out; demonstrates acceptable understanding of topic area and research needs.	Question lacks clarity and focus; lack of understanding of topic area and research needs.
Literature	In-depth, thorough review of pertinent literature; solid synthesis of literature cited;	Adequate review of pertinent literature; good synthesis of	Inadequate literature review; little or no synthesis of literature;

Theory	ties literature to their study very well. Excellent demonstration of theoretical knowledge; Ties in theory to study very well.	literature; ties literature to their study well. Good demonstration of theoretical knowledge; Ties in theory to study well.	does not tie literature to their study well. Inadequate demonstration of theoretical knowledge. Does not tie theory in well.
Methodology	Excellent understanding and appropriate use of methodology; in depth understanding of limitations of methods.	Adequate understanding and appropriate use of methodology; clearly understands limitations of methods.	Methodology inadequate, incomplete or inappropriate; lack of understanding of limitations of methods
Analysis	Excellent analysis of information (data).	Adequate analysis of information (data).	Poor analysis of information (data).
Reporting and Discussion of Results	Strong connection between background information and results. Excellent interpretation and discussion of results.	Adequate connection between background information and results. Adequate interpretation and discussion of results.	Weak connection between background information & results. Weak interpretation and discussion of results.
Quality of Writing	Excellent writing skills and error free.	Adequate writing skills with limited errors.	Writing skills lacking and errors common.
Quality of Presentation	Excellent presentation with well-done visual aids, articulate speech, strong organization, effective handling of questions.	Good presentation with solid visual aids, clear speech, good organization good handling of questions.	Weak presentation with inadequate visual aids, unclear speaking poor organization, inadequate handling of questions

The collection and use of assessment data

Survey data will be collected each fall in SOC106 and in the Spring in Senior Experience. The SOC 206 level assignment rubric will be completed by the 206 faculty and the Senior Experience rubric will be completed by faculty during the public presentations. Each summer the undergraduate coordinator will analyze these data and prepare a one-page report that will be provided to the chair by the start of the Fall semester. The chair will then share these data with the undergraduate curriculum committee who will make suggestions to the chair.