

## A. Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (Revised July 2016)

The Master's Degree in Sociology program has five primary goals for the students in its program:

- To acquire increased breadth and depth of substantive and theoretical sociological knowledge;
- To acquire quantitative and qualitative research skills, including research design, data collection, analysis and interpretation, and application, and be able to demonstrate skills in at least one of these methodological approaches in a public presentation;
- To demonstrate the ability to utilize the sociological perspective, including the reciprocal relationship between context (cultural, structural, historical) and human agency;
- To demonstrate the ability to conduct sociological research, culminating in the successful completion of a master's thesis under the mentorship of program faculty;
- To acquire an awareness of career and educational opportunities available with a master's degree in sociology.

The methods of assessment that are currently utilized have been revised to include the following: (1) student survey giving to master's students in their first and last year; (2) assessments by graduate faculty members of students' research proposals in SOC 471 and SOC 472 and students' management of large data sets in SOC 440; (3) embedded assessments by faculty members of research papers in elective graduate seminars; (4) analysis of the program review alumni survey data; and (5) the thesis document itself as a holistic assessment of a student's ability to sufficiently and appropriately utilize theory, methods, and analysis to a sociological phenomenon.

Assessment Instrument for the Sociology Master's Degree Program: July 2016

Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel I have a significant level of substantive sociological knowledge.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel I have a significant level of theoretical sociological knowledge.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel I have adequate quantitative research skills (research design, data collection, analysis, interpretation) for my future needs.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel I have adequate qualitative research skills (research design, data collection, analysis, interpretation) for my future needs.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel I have an adequate understanding of the concept and application of the sociological perspective.	1	2	3	4	5

I feel I am strongly prepared to conduct sociological research that will result in the successful completion of a master's thesis.	1	2	3	4	5

These questions will be asked to all incoming Graduate Students during their Fall semester Professional Seminar which is required of all students.

These same questions will be asked of all finishing Graduate Students following their Thesis or Capstone presentation at the completion of their program.

Further, in response to the initial assessment work, the Sociology Graduate Program Committee worked with the Graduate School to develop and distribute an email survey to the 57 most recent alumni of the program in early 2014. The survey included eighteen closed-ended questions and three open-ended questions. A total of 14 responded, for a response rate of 25%. However, some of the 57 email addresses came back as undeliverable but we are unable to determine that number, so the actual response rate is likely higher than the reported 25%.

Among the most relevant findings are the following:

- 100% of respondents stated that they were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the overall quality of the sociology graduate program.
- For the quality of their graduate instruction, 85.72% of the alumni reported that they were “very satisfied” (42.86%) or “satisfied” (42.86%).
- 100% of respondents were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the development of their substantive sociological knowledge in their coursework.
- With regard to their thesis experience, 92.85% of respondents stated that they were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied.”
- For the effectiveness of graduate advisement, 92.86% of respondents reported that they were “very satisfied” or “satisfied.”

#### The collection and use of assessment data

Each summer the graduate 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 graduate curriculum committee who will make suggestions to the chair.