

# Assessment of Student Learning Plan (ASLP): Sociology Program

2015-16 Academic Year

## A. College, Department, Date

*College* CAHS  
*Department* Criminology, Economics, and Sociology  
*Date* June 1, 2016

## B. Contact Person for the Assessment Plan

*Name and title* Cheryl Laz, Chair

## C. Degree Program

*Name of Degree Program* Sociology

## D. Assessment of Student Learning: Program Assessment

### Step 1: Identify the Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's)

- a. *Do you have your student learning outcomes published on your department's website?* Yes (though simplified and written in less-specialized language)

Sociology is a liberal arts major with particular emphasis on developing students' abilities to think critically about complex issues, to analyze social issues and organizations, to design and carry out research, and to write with clarity and economy.

- i. *If yes, please indicate the url:*

<https://usm.maine.edu/sociology/overview>

- ii. *If no, please list 3-5 of the most important student learning outcomes for your program. **What will students know by the end of your program?***

Several years ago, Sociology faculty developed a list of learning outcomes. We need to revisit it and streamline it.

- b. *Please identify **which of your student learning outcome(s) were assessed this past academic year.***

Several learning outcomes, as listed in Sociology's Policies and Procedures, should have been assessed in 2015/16:

1. Communicate ideas clearly and effectively in writing
2. Analyze a social problem, process, or organization from a sociological perspective
3. Effectively collaborate in the production and evaluation of knowledge
4. Critically assess and apply theory.

However, a perfect storm of retirements, resignations, and other uncertainties and developments meant that faculty collaboration around program assessment did not happen.

c. *Do you have a **matrix or curriculum map** showing when your student learning outcomes are assessed and in which courses? Yes*

i. *If yes, do you have this map published on your website? Please indicate url or attach a copy of the curriculum map.*

Not on website; copy is attached. [Note: Significant changes in staffing (retirements and resignations) and organization (combining with Economics and Criminology) necessitate revisiting both the outcomes and matrix. This is a task for 2016/17.]

## **Step 2: Assessment Methods Selected and Implemented**

a. *Identify which direct measures (other than course grades), that are used to determine whether students achieved the stated learning outcomes for the degree.*

Direct measures in the form of a scoring rubric could be used in SOC 300: Sociological Theory to assess the 4 outcomes specified above, though this was not done this year.

b. *Briefly describe when you implemented the assessment activity, and if a scoring rubric was used to evaluate the expected level of student achievement. (This information may be shown on your curriculum map).*

Not done this year, but would ordinarily be done in spring semester.

### **Step 3: Using the Assessment results to Improve Student Learning**

- a. *Briefly describe your unit's process of reviewing the program assessment results (i.e. annual process by faculty committee, etc).*

No unit-level assessment or review this year.

- b. *What changes have been or will be made to improve student learning, as a result of using the program assessment results?*

In the absence of unit-level assessment and review, efforts to improve student learning have been the responsibility of the individual faculty member teaching the course.

- c. *Date of most recent program review/self-study?*

2015

**E..Course Assessment Activities:** *Is your program able to report any assessment-related activities at the Course-Level... (i.e. created grading rubrics to use in required courses, examined student progress in entry-level courses, developed a new course, etc)? Please briefly explain any assessment projects.*

All Sociology faculty use rubrics for assessing and evaluating student work (i.e. for both formative and summative assessment). It would be useful for faculty to compare rubrics; doing so could be the basis for some systematic program assessment.

We are preparing a Capstone course for CAHS curriculum review. In its design and implementation, this course will provide opportunities for program assessment of student learning outcomes.

**F. Community Engagement Activities in your departmental curriculum:**

*a. Does your department have a student learning outcome that is related to any community engagement activities? If so, please state the outcome.*

No, but we should. We have a list of learning outcomes that is far too long (streamlining it is a task for next year) and that doesn't include community engagement despite our belief in its importance. There's some programmatic assessment for you!

*b. Please indicate what community engagement activities are included in your program's curriculum, and whether the activities are required or optional for students in your major.*

<u>Community Engagement Activity</u>	<u>Included</u>	<u>Required/Optional</u>	
Student Research (related to a community-based problem)	O	R	O
Student-Faculty Community Research Project	R	R	O
Internship, or a Field Experience	O	R	O
Independent Study (community-related project)	O	R	O
Capstone Course (community-related project)	O	R	O
Service-Learning (course-based)	___	R	O
Study Abroad, or an International Program	O	R	O
Interdisciplinary Collaborative Project (community related)	O	R	O
Student Leadership Activities (related to a team project)	___	R	O
Students/Faculty Community Leadership (advisory boards, committees, conference presentations)	___	R	O
Other Activities (not mentioned above):			

*c. Please list any courses (i.e. EDU 400) that have a community engagement activity in your program.*

At present, community engagement is only required in SOC 301 and SOC 307, our Research Methods courses. CE will be required in Capstone course (upper level). Community engagement at present occurs mostly at upper-level, in Independent Study, Internship, Honors thesis, and Study Abroad.

*Entry-level courses:*

*Mid-level courses:*

*Upper-level courses:*

## Map of Sociology Major Learning Outcomes across required courses

I = introduced, R=reinforced, M=mastered

Learning Outcome	SOC 100	SOC 210	SOC 300	SOC 301	SOC 307	Inequality	Other (Electives)
Read critically and think independently about social issues & policy	I	R	M	R	R	M	R/M
Write Effectively	I	R	R/M	R	R	R	R/M
Design & execute orig research		I		I/R/M	I/R/M		
Understand & eval research designs & samples	I	I/R		R/M	R/M		R/M
Understand & use basic statistics & statistical software		I		R	R/M		R/M
Appreciate ethical issues in research	I			R/M	R/M		
Produce a useful literature review		I		I/R	I/R		
Analyze a social problem, process or organization from a distinctly sociological perspective	I	I	R/M	R/M	R/M	R/M	R/M
Exercise the sociological imagination	I	R	R	R	R	R	R/M
Effectively collaborate		I	R	R	R	R	R
Appreciate the epistemological groundings of various theories			I/R	I	I		R/M
Critically assess and apply theory	I		I/R/M	I/R	I/R	I/R	I/R/M
Read and comprehend primary sociology texts inc journal articles	I	R	R/M	R/M	R/M	R/M	R/M
Think critically about social life and social issues;	I	I/R	R/M	R	R	R/M	R/M
Possess higher-level thinking skills		I	R	R	R	R	R
Understand basic concepts &	I	I	R	R	R	R	R/M

connections between concepts							
Understand & appreciate disciplinary diff & similarities	I	I	R	R	R	R	R/M
Understand the role of theory in sociology	I		R	R	R	R	R
Understand causes & consequences of inequalities and eval strategies to address them	I	I/R	R			R/M	R/M
Understand and appreciate cross cultural variations and global interdependencies	I		I			R	R
Understand how institutions and organizations work	I	I/R	R			R/M	R/M
Understand how indiv & collectv perceptions, attitudes, identities, & actions are shaped by culture, social structure, and interaction	I	I/R	R			R	R/M
Understand the causes & conseq of conformity & deviance	I		R			R	R
evaluate strengths and limits of different kinds of sociological knowledge;	I			R	R		
Understand the connections between micro- and macro	I	R	R/M			R/M	R/M
Understand & appreciate diversities of religion, ethnicity, race, sexuality, gender, & class	I	R	R			R/M	R/M
Understand issues related to global transformation	I	I	R			R/M	R/M