

1.d Program Mission Statement

The mission of the undergraduate program in Sociology is to provide students with the skills necessary to understand and address social problems and inequalities in global, institutional, and interpersonal social relations. At its core, the curriculum in the major is rooted in social theory and the scientific method. Sociology majors are given opportunities to develop a broad understanding of core sociological theories and the methodological skills used to evaluate human behavior and social organizations. Sociology provides an intellectual background for students considering careers in business, social services, public policy, government service, international nongovernmental organizations, foundations, or academia.

1.e Undergraduate Program Learning Outcomes

Students will demonstrate an understanding of how to pose and investigate sociological questions.
Students will evaluate theory and critique research within the discipline.
Students will analyze a problem and draw correct inferences using qualitative and quantitative analysis.
Students will clearly and persuasively communicate ideas in an academic writing style.

1.f Assessment Design

Assessment Question	To what extent have our students achieved the learning outcomes of the major?"
Nature of Student Work or Performance	Students wrote rough drafts and then a final paper in the Sociology Writing in the Major courses SOC 200 and 202.
How Student Work will be Analyzed	Assessment of students' research and writing proficiency were evaluated based on in-class exercises, reading responses, rough drafts, and a final paper. Rough drafts and the final paper were scored based on rubrics given by the instructor (tailored to each assignment based on the instructions for that assignment) and the WASC rubric.

Other Notes on the Assessment Design	The rubrics and goals and assessment of papers and drafts in SOC 200 and SOC 202 varies somewhat, because SOC 200 is designed to be the end of a short research project, and SOC 202 is designed to be the beginning of an honors thesis. In the discussion that follows, we focus on the rubrics and assessments of SOC 202, because we had more students in SOC 202 in 2016-17.
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1.g Learning Outcomes Rubric				
	Unacceptable	Marginal	Proficient	Exemplary
<p>Learning Outcome #1</p> <p>Demonstrate an understanding of how to pose and investigate sociological questions.</p>	<p>Does not develop a sociological research question or offer hypotheses. Proposes a research plan with fewer than two distinct methods, or does not propose methods that provide leverage on the research question given the project's constraints.</p>	<p>Develops sociological research questions and offers hypotheses that are connected to the question but not plausible given relevant research or theory. Research plan provides limited leverage on the research questions and some key limitations are not addressed.</p>	<p>Develops sociological research questions and offers plausible hypotheses. Research plan provides leverage on the research question but leaves some elements unaddressed. The plan is feasible given the project's constraints, and limitations are acknowledged.</p>	<p>Develops sociological research questions and offers sophisticated hypotheses. Research plan is tailored to the research question and both methods are feasible given the project's constraints. Addresses whether and how limitations could affect the results.</p>
<p>Learning Outcome #2</p> <p>Evaluate theory and critique research within discipline.</p>	<p>Does not accurately summarize existing knowledge or use the literature to connect the research question to sociological theory. Does not define terms or concepts, lacks appropriate references, and does not identify the project's sociological contribution.</p>	<p>Does not provide appropriate context for question or relies on out-of-date or non-academic sources to connect the research question to theory. Key concepts lack clarity, key references are missing, and the sociological contribution is not clearly established.</p>	<p>Connects the research question to sociological theory using relevant literature, but some key perspectives are not addressed. Provides some appropriate references, and demonstrates the sociological contribution of the project, but some terms and concepts are not clearly defined.</p>	<p>Synthesizes relevant literature to present different perspectives and to connect the research question to sociological theory. Clearly defines key terms and concepts, provides references as appropriate, and identifies a gap in the literature that can be filled by the research.</p>

1.g Learning Outcomes Rubric				
	Unacceptable	Marginal	Proficient	Exemplary
<p>Learning Outcome #3</p> <p>Analyze a problem and draw correct inferences using qualitative and/or quantitative analysis.</p>	<p>Correct analytic tools are not used or are incorrectly applied. Conclusions drawn are based on little to no evidence. Does not discuss descriptive statistics or clearly demonstrate relationships between key variables. Lacks interpretation of qualitative data.</p>	<p>Correct analytic tools are used but the link between data presented and broader questions is unclear or otherwise lacking. Provides descriptive statistics that demonstrate a relationship between the DV and at least one IV. Provides excerpts from qualitative data but some interpretations or appropriate context may be lacking.</p>	<p>Correct analytic tools are used and findings are correctly stated. Some minor mistakes of logic may be made in analysis or interpretation. Provides relevant descriptive statistics and/or qualitative data excerpts and identifies relationships between key variables but does not offer complex or thorough discussion.</p>	<p>Uses correct analytic tools, and analyzes data in light of research question. Provides and discusses relevant descriptive statistics and/or qualitative data excerpts. Presents evidence that supports conclusions but also weighs plausible alternative explanations.</p>
<p>Learning Outcome #4</p> <p>Clearly and persuasively communicate ideas in an academic writing style.</p>	<p>Communication of ideas is muddled, lacking an identifiable argument. Final paper is not organized as an academic article, citation style is inconsistent, typographical and grammatical errors are found throughout.</p>	<p>Offers an identifiable argument but it is not logically or persuasively presented. Writing and verbal communication is awkward or sloppy at times. Final paper is organized in the style of an academic article but citation style is inconsistent.</p>	<p>Communicates ideas competently, offers a clear argument that may contain minor logical gaps, but is generally persuasive. Paper is organized in the style of an academic article, consistently uses a single citation style, and contains only a few minor copyediting errors.</p>	<p>Communicates ideas clearly both verbally and in writing, develops persuasive and logical arguments. Final paper is organized in the style of an academic article, consistently uses correct ASA citation style and was obviously proofread.</p>

2. Collect and Assess Student Work

2.a Timeline of Assessment Activities		
Academic Year	Planned Activities (Fill in all rows of this column at the time the Assessment Plan is created, saying what you plan to do each year.)	Actual Assessment Activities Completed (Fill in one row of this column at the conclusion of each academic year, saying what activities were in fact completed.)
2016-17	Complete assessment plan and collect and score student work	Completed assessment of 5 students from SOC 202, scored student research proposals, and put the numbers into the learning outcomes data table.
2017-18	Complete assessment plan and collect and score student work	
2018-19	Complete assessment plan and collect and score student work	

3. Results and Assessment Report

3.a Learning Outcomes Data Table					
	Unacceptable	Marginal	Proficient	Exemplary	Total Number of Students Assessed on Each Dimension
Learning Outcome #1	0(0%)	0(0%)	4 (80%)	1(20%)	5
Learning Outcome #2	0(0%)	0(0%)	1(20%)	4(80%)	5
Learning Outcome #3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Learning Outcome #4	0(0%)	0(0%)	1(20%)	4(80%)	5

Notes: “Count” is the raw number and “%” the percentage of students evaluated who fall into each category (e.g. the number scored exemplary on learning outcome #1 divided by the total number of students assessed on learning outcome #1). **Please enter “0” when no students fall in a category; please do NOT leave any cells blank. Please check that percentages across each row sum to 100%, or note rounding error.** The table can be adapted to display trends over time or compare subgroups. Please contact ----- for assistance.

3.b Assessment Report

Written Summary of Assessment Results

From final paper scores based on the WASC rubric:

1) Demonstrate an understanding of how to pose and investigate sociological questions:

All students were at least proficient in developing a research question by narrowing down a topic based on interest and feasibility, and asking the question in a way that addresses a broader conceptual question relevant to the discipline. Students were also able to identify possible answers (or hypotheses) to their research questions, and to acknowledge limitations of the methods they selected.

2) Evaluate theory and critique research within discipline:

Four students wrote exemplary literature reviews (after revisions), and one wrote a proficient literature review. They all provided multiple appropriate references, clearly defined terms, and used relevant literature to connect their research question to existing sociological work. Four of the five students also synthesized the relevant literature appropriately, and identified gaps in the literature that would be filled by their research.

3) Analyze a problem and draw correct inferences using qualitative and quantitative analysis:

The objective of SOC 202 is to guide students in writing a research proposal, rather than a final research paper. As such, it is difficult to assess how well students are able to state their findings and analyze them.

4) Clearly and persuasively communicate ideas in an academic writing style:

All students were able to write coherent and clear research proposals, communicating ideas in persuasive academic style, and organizing them into appropriate sections. One final project contained a few minor copyediting errors, and did not incorporate suggestions for improvement as readily as the other four. All students adequately employed a consistent citation style throughout their papers. In addition, all students persuasively presented their work orally in a conference panel format, and were able to ask and answer peer reviewer questions, and incorporate feedback into the final proposals.

Paper mean score and final grade:

The mean final research proposal score was 91. This final assignment was cumulative, bringing together and improving on previous assignments that students received detailed feedback on. Four students received a grade of A, and one a grade of B+. All students wrote solid proposals, and showed considerable improvement in reaching learning goals throughout the quarter.

Limitations of the Assessment Results	One limitation of these results is the difficulty in assessing Learning goal #3, as students are expected to conduct the research detailed in their research proposals during the summer of their junior year (after the end of SOC 202), and analyze the results during the fall of their senior year. The small number of students assessed is another limitation. However, SOC 202 was cross-listed with Urban Studies 202, and the Sociology majors performed on par with Urban Studies majors.
What mechanisms will you use to share these results with program faculty?	We will discuss these issues in faculty meetings and in curriculum committee meetings.

<p>What changes in the program do these findings suggest?</p>	<p>Student results from SOC 202 (Junior Research Seminar) suggest that encouraging students to start thinking about doing independent research in their junior year can be a very beneficial step in increasing students' readiness for completing independent projects in their final year. We will continue to encourage majors to take SOC 202 in advance of their senior year in conjunction with the research methods course sequence.</p> <p>Some of the students who take SOC 202 in their junior years go on to write a senior honors thesis, but at least half of the students who take SOC 202 their junior years do not go on to complete a senior honors thesis. Informal evaluation of the quality of honors theses is part of our broader evaluation of student progress, of which this learning assessment evaluation of SOC 202 is only a part.</p> <p>The Sociology WIM courses (SOC 202, 200, and 204) are one leg of the research preparation we give to students, the other two legs being required courses SOC 180A (Foundations of Social Research) and SOC 180B (Introduction to Data Analysis). To the extent that students taking SOC 202 have already taken SOC 180A or SOC 180B, we want to see knowledge of research methods taught in SOC 180A and 180B reflected in the research designs students produce in SOC 202.</p> <p>In our last report, in 2014, we noted that student performance in the WIM class suggested that the students could have been better prepared, and that made the Sociology faculty put more effort into SOC 180A and 180B.</p> <p>We note an improvement in average learning outcome evaluation between this report and the 2013-14 Sociology learning assessment report, though the numbers are small. We are gratified to see some improvements in the evaluations of our students taking the WIM courses.</p> <p>One of the challenges Sociology faces, in terms of assessing the work of Sociology majors who complete honors theses, is that an increasing percentage of our majors' honors theses are performed in interest-specific IDPs or specialized honors programs, which have proliferated in recent years at Stanford. Sociology has a Spring quarter honors thesis colloquium, wherein all Sociology majors who did honors work present, but our faculty get less insight into how students are translating their class work into research when we only hear the colloquium presentation, rather than working with the student at every step along the way. Aside from convincing more Sociology majors to complete their honors theses within Sociology, there is not much we can do about the proliferation of honors programs at Stanford.</p>
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3.c Notes for the Next Assessment Cycle

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