2017-2018 Assessment Cycle COLA_Sociology BA

Mission (due 12/4/17)

University Mission

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette offers an exceptional education informed by diverse worldviews grounded in tradition, heritage, and culture. We develop leaders and innovators who advance knowledge, cultivate aesthetic sensibility, and improve the human condition.

University Values

We strive to create a community of leaders and innovators in an environment that fosters a desire to advance and disseminate knowledge. We support the mission of the university by actualizing our core values of equity, integrity, intellectual curiosity, creativity, tradition, transparency, respect, collaboration, pluralism, and sustainability.

University Vision

We strive to be included in the top 25% of our peer institutions by 2020, improving our national and international status and recognition.

College / VP and Program / Department Mission

Mission of College or VP-area
Provide the mission for the College or VP-area in the space provided. If none is available, write "None Available in 2017-2018."
The College of Liberal Arts is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The College teaches students to think critically, applying scientific principles and intellectual schema to understand human behavior and society in a diverse world, to express ideas and ideals in a variety of forms, and to understand themselves and others as members of regional and global communities. The intellectual and creative foundations of this enterprise are written and oral communication, analytical and reasoning skills, and the ability to solve problems creatively. Each departmental curriculum presents perspectives from the past, provides an understanding of the present and directs attention to the challenges of the future. As active researchers, faculty in the College work to advance the frontiers of knowledge and our understanding of humanity and the world we live in, and to use that knowledge and understanding to improve the human condition.

Mission of Program / Department
Provide the program / department mission in the space provided. The mission statement should concisely define the purpose, functions, and key constituents. If none is available, write "None Available in 2017-2018."
Sociology focuses on human behavior in the context of culture and society. Its task is to understand human beings – what they do and why they do it. Sociologists try to bring into focus the familiar and the mysterious behavior of people and make the behavior understandable. Though no one has yet arrived at a total understanding of human behavior, sociology offers the adventure of acquiring understanding beyond the point we reach in our usual day to day existence. Students learn about people as social beings and gain an understanding of the relationship between society and the individual. Given that such an understanding is essential to successful social interactions, whether in business, leisure, or personal relations, sociology is an important facet of a college education. The curriculum is designed to provide students with an integrated body of knowledge leading to careers in, for example, community service, social work, counseling, marketing research, criminal justice and personnel management. The curriculum offers a strong background for persons who wish to enter such professional schools as law, social work, theology and business, as well as graduate training in sociology and other closely related fields.

Attachment (optional)
Upload any documents which support the program / department assessment process.

Assessment Plan (due 12/4/17)

Assessment Plan (Goals / Objectives, Assessment Measures and Criteria for Success)

Assessment List

Goal/Objective	Sociology majors will demonstrate an ability to find, synthesize, summarize and critique, a sociological literature, and use it to support an argument.(Imported)
Legends	SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);
Standards/Outcomes	
Assessment Measures	

Assessment Measure	Criterion	Attachments
Direct - Capstone Assignment	Final Synthesis projects will be evaluated by a program assessment committee, composed of sociology faculty. Success will be measured as 70% of students achieving acceptable, good, or excellent performance ratings on a five point scale.	

Goal/Objective	Student satisfaction with the sociology program(Imported)
Legends	PO - Program Objective (academic units);
Standards/Outcomes	
Assessment Measures	

Assessment Measure	Criterion	Attachments
Indirect - Exit Interviews	Student comments during exit interviews will be evaluated by a program assessment committee, composed of sociology Faculty. Success will be measured by 70% of graduating students reporting satisfaction with the sociology program on four assessment items: 1) overall satisfaction 2) required coursework satisfaction 3) pedagogical satisfaction 3) advising satisfaction. Satisfaction will be measured as a yes/no, with comments for additional explanation.	

Goal/Objective	Promote academic excellence and career readiness in sociology majors(Imported)

Legends	PO - Program Objective (academic units);	
Standards/Outcomes		
Assessment Measures		

Assessment Measure	Criterion	Attachments
Indirect - Exit Interviews	Student comments during exit interviews will be evaluated by a program assessment committee, composed of sociology faculty. Success will be measured by 70% of graduating students reporting acceptance into graduate schools and/or job acquisition due to completion of the sociology program.	

Goal/Objective	The sociology major should be able to: a. define theory and describe its role in building sociological knowledge b. compare and contrast the mainstream paradigms of sociological theory c. demonstrate the historical/cultural context in which sociological theories were developed(Imported)
Legends	SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);
Standards/Outcomes	
Assessment Measures	

Assessment Measure	Criterion	Attachments
Indirect - Exit Interviews	Student comments during exit interviews will be evaluated by a program assessment committee, composed of sociology faculty. Success will be measured by 70% of graduating students achieving acceptable, good, or excellent performance ratings on a five point scale when answering a randomly selected question on theoretical paradigms. Students will not be alerted ahead of time that they will be assessed on theoretical knowledge, which effectively makes the assessment a "pop quiz" of the ability to demonstrate mastery of sociological knowledge.	
Direct - Capstone Assignment	Combined final synthesis and method projects (a two-semester capstone project) will be evaluated by a program assessment committee, composed of sociology faculty. Success will be measured by 70% of students achieving acceptable, good, or excellent performance ratings on a five point scale	

Goal/Objective	Sociology majors should be able to: a. identify basic methodological approaches and describe the general role of methods in building sociological knowledge b. formulate empirical research questions and identify materials, research and data relevant to a research question c. perform rudimentary analyses of qualitative and/or quantitative data d. demonstrate an understanding of the role of evidence in qualitative and/or quantitative methods(Imported)
Legends	SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);
Standards/Outcomes	
Assessment Measures	

Assessment Measure	Criterion	Attachments
Direct - Capstone Assignment	Final research methods projects will be evaluated by a program assessment committee, composed of sociology faculty. Success will be measured as 70% of students achieving acceptable, good, or excellent performance ratings on a five point scale.	

Program / Department Assessment Narrative

The primary purpose of assessment is to use data to inform decisions and improve programs (student learning) and departments (operations); this is an on-going process of defining goals and expectations, collecting results, analyzing data, comparing current and past results and initiatives, and making decisions based on these reflections. In the space below, describe the program's or department's overall plan for improving student learning and/or operations (the "assessment plan"). Consider the following:
1) What strategies exist to assess the outcomes?
2) What does the program/department expect to achieve with the goals and objectives identified above?
3) How might prior or current initiatives (improvements) influence the anticipated outcomes this year?
4) What is the plan for using data to improve student learning and/or operations?
5) How will data be shared within the Program/Department (and, where appropriate, the College/VP-area)?

Assessment Process

Results & Improvements (due 9/15/18)

Results and Improvement Narratives

Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Sociology majors will demonstrate an ability to find, synthesize, summarize and critique, a sociological literature, and use it to support an argument.(Imported)

Goal/Objective	Sociology majors will demonstrate an ability to find, synthesize, summarize and critique, a sociological literature, and use it to support an argument.(Imported)

Legends	SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);
Standards/Outcomes	
Assessment Measures	

Assessment Measure	Criterion
Direct - Capstone Assignment	Final Synthesis projects will be evaluated by a program assessment committee, composed of sociology faculty. Success will be measured as 70% of students achieving acceptable, good, or excellent performance ratings on a five point scale.

Assessment Findings

Assessment Measure	Criterion	Summary	Attachments of the Assessments	Improvement Narratives
Direct - Capstone Assignment	Has the criterion Final Synthesis projects will be evaluated by a program assessment committee, composed of sociology faculty. Success will be measured as 70% of students achieving acceptable, good, or excellent performance ratings on a five point scale. been met yet? Met	The Sociology Program Committee evaluated Final Synthesis Projects in Fall 2017. The committee found that 84% of students achieved acceptable, good, or excellent performance ratings and therefore exceeded our standards for success. Success is measured at 70%.	Assessment_SOCI301_Fall_2017.docx	- Pedagogical Change : Explore new technological opportunities such as peer/cloud collaboration in composition. - Pedagogical Change : Explore assigning teaching rotations to include the same instructor across SOCI 301 and the subsequent research methods course (306/07 or 308/09) to improve instructional continuity for

					students.

Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Student satisfaction with the sociology program(Imported)

Goal/Objective	Student satisfaction with the sociology program(Imported)
Legends	PO - Program Objective (academic units);
Standards/Outcomes	
Assessment Measures	
Assessment Findings	

Under Assessment Measures:

Assessment Measure	Criterion
Indirect - Exit Interviews	Student comments during exit interviews will be evaluated by a program assessment committee, composed of sociology Faculty. Success will be measured by 70% of graduating students reporting satisfaction with the sociology program on four assessment items: 1) overall satisfaction 2) required coursework satisfaction 3) pedagogical satisfaction 3) advising satisfaction. Satisfaction will be measured as a yes/no, with comments for additional explanation.

Under Assessment Findings:

Assessment Measure	Criterion	Summary	Attachments of the Assessments	Improvement Narratives
Indirect - Exit Interviews	Has the criterion Student comments during exit interviews will be evaluated by a program assessment committee, composed of sociology Faculty. Success will be measured by 70% of graduating students reporting satisfaction with the sociology program on four assessment	The sociology program committee evaluated exit interview data collected by the Department head in Fall 2017. Students were asked four questions about their satisfaction with the sociology program. 1) is the student satisfied with the overall program? Explain. The committee found that 80% of graduating students reported overall satisfaction		- Assessment Process: Continuous monitoring: Explore increasing program requirements in terms of research and grant writing and emphasis on publication. - Curricular Change : Explore adding an applied track by reinstating the social work course and requiring it plus the death and dying and internship courses. - Pedagogical

		items: 1) overall satisfaction 2) required coursework satisfaction 3) pedagogical satisfaction 3) advising satisfaction. Satisfaction will be measured as a yes/no, with comments for additional explanation. been met yet? Met	with the sociology program. 2) could program requirements be harder? Explain. The committee found that 40% of graduating students reported that program requirements could be harder. 3) Could pedagogy be improved? Explain. The committee found that 100% of graduating students reported that pedagogy could be improved. 4) Could advising be improved? Explain. The committee found that 30% of graduating students reported that advising could be improved. Overall, the committee found that the objective was met (item 1), but that improvements could be made in terms of requirements, pedagogy and advising.		Change : Explore limiting and deepening theoretical coverage to prepare for graduate work. - Pedagogical Change : Explore reassignment of workload for instructors unwilling to make pedagogical changes. Explore assigning new instructors to a two-semester sequence of synthesis and methods courses who have participated in professional development and training for these critical courses and who participate in the ongoing planning and refinement of course requirements and assignments as members of a team.

Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Promote academic excellence and career readiness in sociology majors(Imported)

Goal/Objective	Promote academic excellence and career readiness in sociology majors(Imported)
Legends	PO - Program Objective (academic units);
Standards/Outcomes	
Assessment Measures	

Assessment Measure	Criterion
Indirect - Exit Interviews	Student comments during exit interviews will be evaluated by a program assessment committee, composed of sociology faculty. Success will be measured by 70% of graduating students reporting acceptance into graduate schools and/or job acquisition due to completion of the sociology program.

Assessment Findings					

Assessment Measure	Criterion	Summary	Attachments of the Assessments	Improvement Narratives
Indirect - Exit Interviews	Has the criterion Student comments during exit interviews will be evaluated by a program assessment committee, composed of sociology faculty. Success will be measured by 70% of graduating students reporting acceptance into graduate schools and/or job acquisition due to completion of the sociology program. been met yet? Met	The sociology program committee evaluated exit interview data collected by the Department Head in Fall 2017. Students were asked about their plans for graduate school and/or employment in their field of study after graduation. The committee found that 60% of graduating students had been accepted into graduate programs, 30% had been offered employment in their field of study, and the remaining 10% had not yet made final plans for after graduation. Of the students going on to graduate school,70% were planning to pursue a masters degree in social work, and 30% indicated that they would be pursuing a doctorate in sociology. Of the		- Assessment Process: Results Discussed / Shared: Explore sharing the 90% success rate with the full program faculty.

		students who found employment in their field of study,70% of these students reported that completing the 6 credit internship in the sociology program led directly to their job offer. Overall, the committee found that the objective was met with 90% of students reporting acceptance into graduate schools and/or job acquisition due to completion of the sociology program.		

Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for The sociology major should be able to: a. define theory and describe its role in building sociological knowledge b. compare and contrast the mainstream paradigms of sociological theory c. demonstrate the historical/cultural context in which sociological theories were developed(Imported)

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Legends	SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);
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Assessment Measures	

Assessment Measure	Criterion
Indirect - Exit Interviews	Student comments during exit interviews will be evaluated by a program assessment committee, composed of sociology faculty. Success will be measured by 70% of graduating students achieving acceptable, good, or excellent performance ratings on a five point scale when answering a randomly selected question on theoretical paradigms. Students will not be alerted ahead of time that they will be assessed on theoretical knowledge, which effectively makes the assessment a "pop quiz" of the ability to demonstrate mastery of sociological knowledge.
Direct - Capstone Assignment	Combined final synthesis and method projects (a two-semester capstone project) will be evaluated by a program assessment committee, composed of sociology faculty. Success will be measured by 70% of students achieving acceptable, good, or excellent performance ratings on a five point scale

Assessment Findings					
	Assessment Measure	**Criterion**	**Summary**	**Attachments of the Assessments**	**Improvement Narratives**
	Indirect - Exit Interviews	Has the criterion Student comments during exit interviews will be evaluated by a program assessment committee, composed of sociology faculty. Success will be measured by 70% of graduating students achieving acceptable, good, or excellent performance ratings on a five point scale when answering a randomly selected question on theoretical paradigms. Students will not be alerted ahead of time that	The sociology program committee evaluated exit interview data collected by the Department Head in Fall 2017. Students were asked to randomly select two open ended questions on theoretical paradigms. The committee found that 70% of graduating students achieved acceptable, good or excellent performance ratings in their ability to demonstrate mastery of sociological knowledge. The standard for		- Assessment Process: Measures changed: Explore assigning the same three questions to graduating seniors during their exit interview to better avoid artificial inflation or deflation of assessment of student mastery. Previous cycles have used one or two randomly selected questions; as such, it is possible that student outcomes were influenced by luck of the draw. - Assessment Process: Measures changed: Explore using final capstone project as an indirect measure of mastery of sociological knowledge/theory.

		they will be assessed on theoretical knowledge, which effectively makes the assessment a "pop quiz" of the ability to demonstrate mastery of sociological knowledge. been met yet? Met	success was 70%.		
	Direct - Capstone Assignment	Has the criterion Combined final synthesis and method projects (a two-semester capstone project) will be evaluated by a program assessment committee, composed of sociology faculty. Success will be measured by 70% of students achieving acceptable, good, or	The sociology program committee evaluated combined final synthesis and method projects (two-semester capstone projects from FA17 and SP18). The committee found that 80% of students achieved acceptable, good, or excellent performance ratings and therefore exceeded	Assessment_SOCI308_309_Spring_2018.docx	- Pedagogical Change : This is the first assessment cycle with sufficient data to evaluate this measure for this objective. Sufficient data from across a two-semester process of building the capstone project were necessary before the assessment could be completed. A second instructor has been trained for a two-semester rotation to provide continuity of instruction for students. One instructor will teach

					quantitative methods (306/07) and the second will teach qualitative methods (308/09). Both will teach synthesis (301).
	excellent performance ratings on a five point scale been met yet? Met	our standard for success. Success is measured at 70%.			

Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Sociology majors should be able to: a. identify basic methodological approaches and describe the general role of methods in building sociological knowledge b. formulate empirical research questions and identify materials, research and data relevant to a research question c. perform rudimentary analyses of qualitative and/or quantitative data d. demonstrate an understanding of the role of evidence in qualitative and/or quantitative methods(Imported)

Goal/Objective	Sociology majors should be able to: a. identify basic methodological approaches and describe the general role of methods in building sociological knowledge b. formulate empirical research questions and identify materials, research and data relevant to a research question c. perform rudimentary analyses of qualitative and/or quantitative data d. demonstrate an understanding of the role of evidence in qualitative and/or quantitative methods(Imported)
Legends	SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);
Standards/Outcomes	
Assessment Measures	

Assessment Measure	Criterion
Direct - Capstone Assignment	Final research methods projects will be evaluated by a program assessment committee, composed of sociology faculty. Success will be measured as 70% of students achieving acceptable, good, or excellent performance ratings on a five point scale.

Assessment Findings	

Assessment Measure	Criterion	Summary	Attachments of the Assessments	Improvement Narratives
Direct - Capstone Assignment	Has the criterion Final research methods	The sociology program committee evaluated	Assessment_SOCI308_309_Spring_2018.docx	- Student/Faculty Support (for Educational

			projects will be evaluated by a program assessment committee, composed of sociology faculty. Success will be measured as 70% of students achieving acceptable, good, or excellent performance ratings on a five point scale. been met yet? Met	final research methods projects in Spring 2018. The committee found that 85% of students successfully identified basic methodological approaches (A1) and 80% of students successfully described how their methodological approach and the results of using that approach contributed to sociological theory, method or public policy (A2). The committee further found that 80% of students formulated one or more empirical research questions in their capstone project (B1) and 90% of students identified, accessed, critically evaluated, and		Programs): Explore acquiring qualitative data analysis software for the sociology research lab. Our STEP grant from last year was not funded and we were therefore unable to implement this improvement in this assessment cycle. As a result, students continue to be trained using methods from the 1980s to learn qualitative data analysis because of the lack of appropriate software in the lab. - Resources / Resource Allocation (for Educational Programs: Explore acquiring or accessing quantitative data analysis software for the sociology

				summarized materials relevant to their identified research question (B2). Additionally, the committee found that 80% of students identified and collected data relevant to the research question (B3). Further, the committee found that 80% of students performed rudimentary analyses of qualitative data (observational and interview data)(C1 & C2). Finally, the committee found that 70% of students demonstrated an understanding of the role of evidence and qualitative methods by connecting the findings of their research to prior		research lab. Currently 7 of 8 computers in the research lab have SPSS, but with the required Windows 10 update that will be implemented this AY, the licenses for SPSS will require updating as well and the university may not have sufficient licenses. Adding 11 additional computer workstations with appropriate research software to the lab would allow the class to meet as a unit and capitalize on the available time for instructors whose skills are in high demand. Without these changes, students continue to be trained using methods from the 1980s to learn data analysis

			research findings (D1). All parts of the goal/objective were met by students and therefore exceeded our standards for success. Success is measured at 70%.		because of the lack of appropriate software in the lab.

Reflection (Due 9/15/18)

Reflection

The primary purpose of assessment is to use data to inform decisions and improve programs and operations; this is an on-going process of defining goals and expectations, collecting results, analyzing data, comparing current and past results and initiatives, and making decisions based on these reflections. Recalling this purpose, respond to the questions below.

1) How were assessment results shared in the program / department?
Please select all that apply. If "other", please use the text box to elaborate.
Distributed via email (selected)
Presented formally at staff / department / committee meetings
Discussed informally (selected)
Other (explain in text box below)

2) How frequently were assessment results shared?

Frequently (>4 times per cycle)
Periodically (2-4 times per cycle) (selected)
Once per cycle
Results were not shared this cycle

3) With whom were assessment results shared?
Please select all that apply.
Department Head (selected)
Dean / Asst. or Assoc. Dean (selected)

Departmental assessment committee (selected)
Other faculty / staff (selected)

4) Consider the impact of prior applied changes. Specifically, compare current results to previous results to evaluate the impact of a previously reported change. Demonstrate how the use of results improved student learning and/or operations.

Our previous assessment reported the decision to link the synthesis and methods courses and to require a capstone project that bridged across the two. In part, this worked well as demonstrated in the current 17/18 AY assessment specifically with FA17/SP 18 301/308/309 data. However, while in mid-cycle for this assessment, we came to realize that pedagogical differences between instructors created unexpected difficulties for students and for assessing outcomes. In particular, one instructor objected to definitions of plagiarism used by other program members and likewise objected to adopting a team plan for teaching critical courses. As a result, the current assessment is unable to evaluate both quantitative and qualitative research classes. We have adjusted teaching assignments to include a new team teacher for the 18/19 AY and also to assigning a two-semester sequence in the teaching load so that the same instructor teaches part 1 and part 2 of the capstone project. The next assessment cycle should allow for evaluation of 301 with both 306/07 and 308/09. Still, with the current assessment results, we were able to document improved student learning outcomes via the final combined qualitative capstone projects reported in this cycle.

Our previous assessment reported insufficient data on the training and implementation of faculty in the use of new classroom technologies. However, the current assessment cycle has sufficient data to report that 70% of sociology faculty have been fully trained in the use of new classroom technologies. The remaining 30% of faculty have not been trained, but 10% report a willingness to do so. The remaining 20% are resistant to change and we are exploring ways to motivate and encourage professional development in faculty that are demoralized and disengaged. We intend to continue to rely on the ongoing training provided by the Distance Learning program to maintain excellence in teaching. Likewise, we intend to continue the enthusiastic senior mentoring program for best practices in the classroom and research productivity. The team introduced a uniform plan for teaching the synthesis course (301) during the last assessment cycle with great success as reported in this cycle, and will undertake developing a uniform plan for teaching each of the two methods courses (306/7 and 308/9) for the next assessment cycle.

The unit continues to be short one full-time instructor. During the 17/18 AY, a senior faculty member (and Department Head) covered the extra workload in part to model best pedagogical practices to junior faculty and to prevent a shortage of seats in the introductory course offerings. Both were excellent short term solutions to the shortage of teaching faculty as well as modeling best practices for junior faculty and are supported by findings presented here and as part of the Sociology Gen Ed assessment submitted elsewhere. Unfortunately, this is not a viable long term solution and the team is struggling to cover those courses through overloads for all junior and some senior faculty. A new adjunct faculty member was also identified and is subsequently undergoing training in hopes to offset impending losses of faculty specialties in the upcoming assessment cycle. Discussions with administration have included requests for a new faculty line as well as permission to replace hires that have or will leave the program.

5) Over the past three assessment cycles, what has been the overall impact of "closing the loop"? Provide examples of improvements in student learning, program quality, or department operations that are directly linked to assessment data and follow-up analysis.

Over the past three assessment cycles, the overall impact of closing the loop has resulted in a) a refined understanding of what was needed for assessment, b)a refined understanding of what was needed for our relatively new synthesis course (301), c) a refined understanding of what was needed to create a capstone project that bridged a two semester process, d) a refined understanding of the need for faculty willing to work and teach as a team especially for critical courses and e)the value of teamwork in improving the learning outcomes of our students. One example of improvements in student learning is found in the report for 301 after we implemented a uniform plan of teaching the course that we developed as a team. This example is further illustrated in the current assessment that reports that students are better prepared for the next level of required methodological coursework (308/09 in this assessment). Students are also now exploring the potential to publish their newly completed capstone projects. Three years ago, capstone projects were not required; there was no uniform plan for teaching the synthesis or methods courses, and students often focused their attention on multiple partial research projects with little understanding of how the parts might piece together into a publishable whole. Students today are in much better control of their understanding of the connection between theory and research, of the different

methods of research, and on how the individual parts are synthesized into a publishable and informative product that may be used for important policy decisions in the public or private sector.

Attachments (optional)
Upload any documents which support the program / department assessment process.