Academic Program Assessment Report

Assessment is a term commonly used to encompass the process of gathering and using evidence to guide improvements.

SACSCOC requires that an institution "underlineidentifies expected outcomes, <u>assesses</u> the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and <u>provides evidence of seeking improvement</u> based on analysis of the results".

Be sure to SAVE your progress as you work!

Academic Program
Sociology, B.S.

Submission Due Date
2023-2024

Assessment Coordinator Name
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Program Goal

Goal

Goal 1

Program Goals are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Program Goal
Demonstrate disciplinary knowledge in the field of sociology.

Pillar of Success Supported
High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

Outcomes

Outcome 1

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?
Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Percentage of graduating students demonstrating an ability to describe and use key sociological concepts by scoring at least 70% on Sociology Disciplinary Knowledge Assessment.

Timeframe for this Outcome
Academic Year 2022-2023

Performance Target for "Met"
Over 75% of students score at least 70% on Sociology Disciplinary Knowledge Assessment.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"
Between 50 and 74% score at least 70% on Sociology Disciplinary Knowledge Assessment.

Performance Target for "Not Met"
Less than 50% score at least 70% on Sociology Disciplinary Knowledge Assessment.

Assessment Measure Used	**Frequency of Assessment**
Sociology Disciplinary Knowledge Assessment	Yearly (spring), at the beginning of Sociology 499 capstone (or in the Crim 499 Capstone if they graduate in December)

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**
33%	1

Comments/Narrative
Three graduating seniors took the in-house Sociological Knowledge Disciplinary Assessment at the beginning of Spring 2023. The average score was a 59%. 33% of students scored at least 70% or higher. This percentage is roughly the same as last year 2021-2022, when the average score was a 60%, and 25% of students scored a 70% or better. These results are a bit disappointing, particularly since we are using a new in-house assessment instrument. However, the low sample size means that the results may not be reliable, and one significantly lower score (39%) brought down the average considerably.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Outcome 2

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome
Percentage of students demonstrating disciplinary knowledge by scoring at or above the national average (40-57 is the range for 50th percentile) on the Core portion of ETS Sociology Field Test.

Timeframe for this Outcome
Academic Year 2022-2023

Performance Target for "Met"
Over 75% score at or above average national score on core portion of Sociology Field Test.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"
Between 50 and 74% score at or above average national score on core portion of Sociology Field Test.

Performance Target for "Not Met"
Less than 50% score at or above average national score on core portion of Sociology Field Test.

Assessment Measure Used	**Frequency of Assessment**
ETS Sociology Field Test	Annually, in Soc 499 Sociology Capstone Experience (or in the Crim 499 Capstone if students are graduating in the fall).

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**
66%	2

Comments/Narrative
In the 2022-2023 AY, three graduating seniors took the Sociology Field Test (ETS). The average score on the "core" portion of the test for our students was a 38 (on a scale of 20-100) with a range from 26 to 45. The national average score on the assessment is between 40 and 57 (50th percentile). We are happy to report that our average student score was almost at the national average. This score is higher than 2021-22 when 58% of our students scoring at or better than the national average and also higher than 2020-2021 where 38% of our students scored above the national average. Yet the sample size is very low, so the results may not be reliable. Two of the students scored quite well (45 and 43), while the third student scored much lower (26), bringing down the average.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments
Overall, we have mixed results when it comes to data measuring the goal of students demonstrating disciplinary knowledge in sociology. Part of the problem is our small sample size. Another problem is that many of our content heavy classes occur early in the program, knowledge of which is often forgotten by the time students are seniors. Many students also take these classes at other schools from other professors and we have no idea of the quality of their previous instruction. A final contributing factor might me the timing of the assessment itself, which is given on the first day of classes after winter break, and students may not yet be readjusted to the rhythms of the semester.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal
This was the first year we implemented the new in-house instrument relating to the demonstration of disciplinary knowledge in sociology. The sociology faculty will be review this instrument prior to each term to make sure that the concepts measured are being adequately taught in the core sociology courses. In Soc 101, 202, 398, and 399 the instructors are now providing all students with copies of power point slides (not just those with disabilities), which we hope will lead to improvements comprehension and understanding. We have also added two classes to the General Education World Cultures category which hopefully will lead to more majors, and which will then lead (in time) to a larger sample of graduating seniors.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files

Goal 2

Program Goals are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Program Goal
Demonstrate the ability to think analytically.

Pillar of Success Supported
High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

Outcomes

Outcome 1

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?
Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome
Percentage of students demonstrating analytical knowledge by scoring at or above the national average on the Critical Thinking portion of the ETS Sociology Field Test.

Timeframe for this Outcome
Academic Year 2022-2023

Performance Target for "Met"
Over 75% score at or above average national score on assessment.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 50 and 74% score above or at average national score on assessment.

Performance Target for "Not Met"
Below 50% score above average national score on assessment.

Assessment Measure Used	**Frequency of Assessment**
Sociological Field Test (Critical Thinking)	Each time Soc 499 Sociology Capstone Experience is offered (or in the Crim 499 Capstone class if they are graduating in the fall term).

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**
66%	2

Comments/Narrative
Three sociology graduates took the Critical Thinking portion of the ETS Field Test during the 2022-2023 AY. 66% of our students scored at or above the national average (39-56) on critical thinking skills. Our students' average score was a 36, with a high score of a 46 and a low score of a 20. This is a highest percentage in three years (it was 50% in AY 2021-22; 56% in 2020-2021 and 44% in AY 2019-2020. While we are happy to see this progress, the small sample size could mean that the results may not be completely reliable. However, the assessment does provide some evidence that continue to demonstrate the ability to think critically and analytically.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Outcome 2

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?
Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome
Percentage of students demonstrating analytic knowledge by scoring grade of 70 % or higher on analytical essay question.

Timeframe for this Outcome
Academic Year 2022-2023

Performance Target for "Met"

Over 75% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"
Between 50 and 74% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Performance Target for "Not Met"
Below 50% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Assessment Measure Used
Students are given a Final Examination essay question which asks them to pick a theorist, discuss their life and work, a concept associated with their work, what the concept means and apply the concept to a social institution in society. The essay is graded on a 50 point scale, with 10 pts. for each part of the question. Scores are then converted to percentages.

Frequency of Assessment
Each time Soc 499 Sociology Capstone Experience is offered (or in the Crim 499 Capstone class if they are graduating in the fall term).

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)
66%

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)
2

Comments/Narrative
Three students completed the assessment in the spring 2023 term. The average score was a 37. With a high score of 47 and a low score of 18. 66% percent of students scored at least a 70%, which indicates that our goal was partially met. This score is slightly lower than last year when 75% scored a 70% or better, and also AY 2020-2021 when 70% of students earned a 70% or higher. Again, we have a low sample size and one very low score which skewing the results and thus makes it had to make general comments. This issue speaks to the bifurcated nature of students in the sociology program – some are very good, high achieving, honors level students; other students really struggle with executing basic tasks.   Keeping the high achieving students engaged and interested while not leaving the others behind remains a concern with which faculty continue to grapple.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Outcome 3

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome
Percentage of Students Satisfactorily completing an assignment that demonstrates the ability to read and comprehend a peer reviewed journal article.

Timeframe for this Outcome
Academic Year 2022-2023

Performance Target for "Met"
Over 75% of students score at least 70% or better on assignment

Performance Target for "Partially Met"
Between 50 and 74% students score at least 70% on assessment.

Performance Target for "Not Met"
Below 50% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Assessment Measure Used
Students were given a peer-reviewed article from a sociology journal and tasked with summarizing several dimensions of it: what is already known about the topic, what gap in knowledge the author(s) are attempting to fill, what type of method was used, and what the results were. Students were also asked to reflect on how they would change parameters if they were to repeat the study in order to generate new knowledge.

Frequency of Assessment
Every semester.

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)
80% (average over both semesters).

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)
3

Comments/Narrative
Sixteen students took the assessment in the fall term and averaged a 73%. Sixteen students took the assessment in the spring and averaged an 89%%. This shows that we are meeting our goal of teaching students to think critically (as demonstrated by their ability to analyze a peer-reviewed scholarly publication).

These scores have declined from last year, returning to what they were in AY 2020-2021. Last year we speculated that there was an exceptional group creating outlier data, and that seems to be the case from the present. We will continue using this metric for the time being. One item we are aware of that may affect our use of it is that apparently LINK courses have recently developed a similar assignment for how to read a journal article. We view this as an essential skill and worth having a similar assignment in this upper level class, up to the point that either a much higher number of students pass the assessment or students begin reporting that it feels redundant.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments
Two of the outcomes in the goal are muddied by an unusually low enrollment year in our senior capstone class (only 3 students). In past years, students in this course have performed at or above the national average for sociology students taking the same instrument from ETS (outcome 1) and have score much higher averages on their analytical essay (outcome 2). We need a greater timeline and more data points to understand whether this lower level of achievement is an aberration of the low enrollment this year or indicative of a larger trend.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal
We will continue to monitor the journal article assignment's outcome to see if student performance stabilizes or continues to vary to such a great extent. If it does continue to vary like that, we will have to consider a different assignment.

Last year we noted that we were going to have conversations with the newly hired sociologist in the department about developing new measures for this goal to be deployed across at least one additional course. While we began that conversation, what it ultimately led to was a decision to create new courses (see below in Changes Made for Goal 3). Therefore, we will look next year at collecting a measure from one of those new courses. The conversation is ongoing - we meet as a discipline at least twice a year and at our August meeting we discussed new assessment measures for this goal.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files

Goal 3

Program Goals are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Program Goal
Demonstrate the ability to apply sociological theory.

Pillar of Success Supported
High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

Outcomes

Outcome 1

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?
Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Percentage of students demonstrating ability to apply of sociological theory by scoring at least 70% on Soc 202 final paper assignment.

Timeframe for this Outcome
Academic Year 2022-2023

Performance Target for "Met"
Over 75% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"
Between 50 and 75% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Performance Target for "Not Met"
Less than 50% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Assessment Measure Used
The Sociology 202 final paper allows students to pick a social problem and report its nature and potential solutions using sociological theories. Students are assigned to apply at least two of the four major theoretical paradigms of sociology presented in the class to their understand of the nature of the problem (E.g. conflict, functionalist, feminist, and symbolic interactionist theories).

Frequency of Assessment
Each semester in Soc 202 Social Problems.

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)
84% average across both terms.

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)
3

Comments/Narrative
In AY 2022-2023, 84% of students passed this assessment. In comparison, the previous AY 89% of students passed this assessment, and 88% the year before. This suggests a relative consistency to the measure, and even though there was a small decline it is within a margin of error for the sample size of 63 across 4 sections.

The enrollment was smaller than expected in the spring sections of 202, which affected that sample size. This was in part due to there being two face to face sections when traditionally we have offered one face to face and one online, so in the future we will continue to offer one of each. One trend worth keeping an eye on is that most of the students who failed to complete apply sociological theory satisfactorily came from the one online section this past year.

This is the third year using this metric, and the first in which we have examined the differences between face to face and online data for it. Ergo, those differences will be something to monitor in coming assessment cycles and may require the metric to be better adapted for measurement in both delivery modes. Or the online lessons may warrant changing to better prepare students for the assessment measure.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Outcome 2

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?
Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome
Percentage of students demonstrating ability to apply sociological theory by earning at least a 70% on the Sociological Imagination paper in Soc 399

Timeframe for this Outcome
Academic Year 2022-2023

Performance Target for "Met"
Over 75% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"
Between 50 and 74% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Performance Target for "Not Met"
Less than 50% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Assessment Measure Used	Frequency of Assessment
Sociological Imagination Research paper. Students research a pivotal event in their life and apply sociological theory to understand their experiences.	Every semester in Sociological Theory

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)
33%	1

Comments/Narrative
Eight students were given this assignment in spring 2023 in Soc 399. While average score on the assignment was an 76%, only 37.5% scored 75% or higher, which means that we did not meet our goal. These scores are lowest they have been in three years. It seems that students are leaving this project to the last minute, which makes it difficult and unreliable to use as an assessment measure. As such, we have decided to terminate the measure. This project was supposed to be a semester long research project, but the instructor found that too many students are not taking it seriously. Students end up making satisfactory scores on the assignment overall, yet many do not do well on the portion of the assignment that actually involves theoretical application. A new measure of ability to apply sociological theory was initiated in fall 2023.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments
While the assessment measure in Soci 202 has remained stable, the assessment measure for Soci 399 declined dramatically. This may be cause for concern, but warrants further observation via the new assessment we are planning to deploy this year to see if the class was an outlier or indicative of trends in student preparedness we will need to address in our courses. It is likely we are still seeing some ripple effect of COVID on the preparedness of students, though it could just as well have been a down year for this particular assessment.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal
As mentioned above, beginning in AY 2022-2023, a new measurement was used to assess the ability to apply sociological theory, which will replace the Sociological Imagination (SI) paper. The SI paper had been used for a number of years and it is time for a change. The assignment no longer seemed to work well for the students, who would often leave it to the last minute, not take it seriously, or who were unprepared for serious research. The new measure takes form of an application of Marx's theory of alienation to contemporary work experiences. Students will interview an individual with at least 10 years of work experience and ask them about experiences concerning the four types of worker alienation. Results will be typed up in a 3-5 paper and assessed appropriately. It is hoped that this shorter, more intensive assessment will provide a more useful and better measure of this goal.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files

Goal 4

Program Goals are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Program Goal
To comply with Program Productivity standards as defined by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education.

Pillar of Success Supported
High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

Outcomes

Outcome 1

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

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Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?
Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome
Major Enrollment

Timeframe for this Outcome
Academic Year 2018-2023

Performance Target for "Met"
Using a five-year rolling average, the number of students enrolled in the major (a) for Baccalaureate programs is greater than or equal to 12.5, (b) for Master's/First Professional is greater than or equal to 6.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"
Not Applicable.

Performance Target for "Not Met"
Using a five-year rolling average, the number of students enrolled in the major (a) for Baccalaureate programs is less than 12.5 (b) for Master's/First Professional is less than 6.

Assessment Measure Used	**Frequency of Assessment**
Enrollment and Graduation data extracted from Banner.	Annually.

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**
46.0	3

Comments/Narrative
As we have noted for several years, we continue to compete with Criminology and Human Services (and other social sciences) for majors. Fortunately, what was a downward trend seems to have reversed and we are gaining slightly in the number of overall majors. In addition to making the Sociology program the best that it can be, we are also reaching out to students from other disciplines who might be double majoring in Sociology.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Outcome 2

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?
Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome
Completions (Degrees Awarded)

Timeframe for this Outcome
Academic Years 2018-2023

Performance Target for "Met"
Using a five-year rolling average, the number of degrees awarded (a) for Baccalaureate programs is greater than or equal to 8, (b) for Master's/First Professional is greater than or equal to 3.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"
Not applicable.

Performance Target for "Not Met"
Using a five-year rolling average, the number of degrees awarded (a) for Baccalaureate programs is less than 8 (b) for Master's/First Professional is less than 3.

Assessment Measure Used	**Frequency of Assessment**
Enrollment and Graduation data extracted from Banner.	Annually.

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**
15.2	3

Comments/Narrative
Last year we discussed Drs. Rubin and Harrison switching between teaching SOCI 202 and 101, but we have changed course with a few other ideas. First, Dr. Kerr is planning to offer a special medical-focused section of SOCI 101 for students entering medical professions. Second, Dr. Kerr is taking over SOCI 499 from Dr. Harrison to free him up to teach newly developed classes like SOCI 294 - Sociology of the South. Finally, as a department (Government, Criminology, and Sociology) we will be have a discussion this year about how to better accommodate double majors, which we hope will boost the number of majors for us as there are many students who take several Sociology courses but come up short of a major.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments
After decreasing for a few years, our number of majors has increased slightly. Additionally, our courses remain as popular as ever. Out of 388 available seats across 13 sections, 349 are filled this fall - 90% full. This suggests that people want to take sociology courses.

We continue to serve important roles across disciplines. SOCI 101, for example, is a required transcript

course for many students seeking higher degrees in medical professions such as MD and PT school. SOCI 202 is a requirement for the Human Services program, and SOCI 398 is a choice requirement for both that and the Criminology Program. Many of our other courses serve as choice or elective components for more than 10 majors across campus, which makes Sociology an essential part of the curriculum.

Last year we reported that Dr. Rubin was to take over responsibility for sociology internships from Prof. Carson and that we would begin reporting assessment data on that. However, there were only 5 sociology internships last year so we are opting to wait until there is a larger sample size to report on metrics from them. All 5 students passed their internships on a P/F scale.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal
Last year we proposed to alter, eliminate, and create several courses within our curriculum in order to stay a competitive major. Here are a list of changes made, which take affect AY 2023-2024:
1. Activated SOCI 229 - Drugs, Alcohol, and Society
2. Activated SOCI 294 - Sociology of the South (which will also support the new Southern Studies minor)
3. Changed the prerequisites for a number of courses to be SOCI 101 OR SOCI 202, instead of both: SOCI 301, 321, 322, 328, 331, 356, and 371.
4. Designated SOCI 389 - Cultures of Violence a World Cultures course.
5. Updated the minor to require one 200+ level elective instead of one 300+ level elective.

We are continuing to propose some other course modifications this year as well, including eliminating some of the less popular courses or ones we do not have the capacity to teach.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files

Dean's Email Address
smcmillan@lander.edu

Approved by Dean?

Signature of Dean

Comments from Dean's Review