

Sociology Major Assessment Report

Submitted to HSS LOAC on October 1, 2014

Approved

Learning Objectives Assessed:

This report covers the learning goals that were assessed in SOC 301: Socio-Cultural Theory. SOC 301 is a required course in the sociology major, which is usually taken in the sophomore or junior year. Students are expected to demonstrate an intermediate level of competency on three learning goals associated with this course:

Concepts and Paradigms: Students will be able to explain sociological understanding of culture, social structure, and social processes using the functionalist, conflict and interactionist perspectives in the context of the United States and other societies.

Application: Students will be able to connect sociology to their public and private lives-as members of families and organizations and as citizens of local, national, and global communities

Communication: Students will be able to demonstrate an ability to write and speak logically and cogently, to convey ideas and research findings to large audiences and small groups, to listen to others and respond constructively, and to demonstrate leadership skills and collaboration skills

Methods:

There were four sections of SOC 301 offered in AY 2013-14. For each section, the instructor was asked a priori to designate an assignment that would be used for assessment. The population of students submissions for these assignments were collected (48 total), and identifying information was removed (name, instructor name, semester, section, etc.) and each was assigned a random number. Two copies of each blinded paper were made and distributed evenly (and somewhat randomly) to all members of the department faculty, excluding the instructors for SOC 301 (six faculty members participated).

Assignment instructions were distributed to all participating faculty. Faculty then determined a rubric for classifying students on all three learning goals as either “Exceeding Expectations” (Coded 3), “Meeting Expectations” (Coded 2) or having only “Emergent Understanding” (Coded 1). For “Concepts and Paradigms”, students would need to identify a generalized principle that corresponds to one of the three principle paradigms in sociology. For “Application”, students would need to apply this to a real world context. For “Communication”, students would need to write a logical and cogent paper, that conveys both ideas and findings.

Each faculty member then scored each paper independently, so each student paper was read and coded on all three criteria by two faculty members. Intercooder reliability was high: in only 10 of 48 cases did one faculty member code a paper as “Emergent”, while the second faculty member coded the paper as meeting or exceeding expectations on at least one of the three objectives. In each of

Sociology Major Assessment Report

these cases, a discussion of coding was held. In the eight cases where the two initial coders could not resolve the differences, a third faculty member read and coded the paper, and a discussion of the coding took place. In each of these eight cases, the third reviewer's codes corresponded with at least one of the initial reviewers.

Findings

We found at least one faculty member had coded 7 of 48 (14.6%) submissions on "Concepts and Paradigms" as "Emergent"; 5 (10.4%) submissions on "Application"; and for only 3 (6.3%) submissions on "Communication". However, when multiple faculty members' coding were considered, only three submissions (6.3%) failed to at least meet expectations on any one of the three learning goals and none failed to meet expectations on all three.

Reflection

Given the range in student performance overall, we are confident that SOC 301 is meeting our learning objectives for this course. We affirm that SOC 301 does not need to have identical projects for assessment, but that faculty teaching this course should continue to designate one major assignment for assessment purposes.

Sociology Major Assessment Report

Appendix 1: Learning Objectives for the Sociology Major Approved by LOAC 12.03.12

Critical Thinking: Students will be able to abstract general propositions from textual, observational, and quantitative evidence; identify logical relations among general propositions, and test the applicability of these propositions against new evidence

Assessed in SOC 101, 302, 499

Concepts and Paradigms: Students will be able to explain sociological understanding of culture, social structure, and social processes using the functionalist, conflict and interactionist perspectives in the context of the United States and other societies.

Assessed in SOC 101, 301, 499

Application: Students will be able to connect sociology to their public and private lives-as members of families and organizations and as citizens of local, national, and global communities

Assessed in SOC 101, 301, 499

Social Research Methods: Students will be able to explain causality and to posit interesting and important sociological research questions, analyze quantitative and qualitative data, interpret their findings and effectively communicate their results to appropriate audiences

Assessed in SOC 101, 302, 499

Communication: Students will be able to demonstrate an ability to write and speak logically and cogently, to convey ideas and research findings to large audiences and small groups, to listen to others and respond constructively, and to demonstrate leadership skills and collaboration skills

Assessed in SOC 101, 301, 302, 499

Information Literacy: Students will be able to distinguish between scientifically-grounded observation, logical proposition, anecdote, and opinion.

Assessed in SOC 101, 499

Annual Assessment Plans:

Year	Course Focus	Learning Goals Assessed
2013-14	SOC 301	Intermediate Levels: Concepts and Paradigms Application Written Communication
2014-15	SOC 302	Intermediate Levels: Critical Thinking Social Research Methods Written Communication
2015-16	SOC 499	Advanced Level: All
2016-17	SOC 101	Introductory Level: All
2017-18	SOC 101 SOC 301 SOC 302 SOC 499	All Levels: Oral Communication

Sociology Major Assessment Report

Appendix 2: Sociology Major Assessment Plan Matrix

Learning Objectives	Assessed in	Assessment Strategy	Cycle
<u>Critical Thinking</u> : Students will be able to abstract general propositions from textual, observational, and quantitative evidence; identify logical relations among general propositions, and test the applicability of these propositions against new evidence.	101 (Introductory level) 302 (Intermediate level) 499 (Advanced level)	Portfolio analysis of research papers in 302, & 499; syllabus review in 101 Ongoing discussion with regard to rubric development and revision for each level during planned year of assessment.	SOC 101: AY 2016-17 SOC 302: AY 2014-15 SOC 499: AY 2015-16
<u>Concepts and Paradigms</u> : Students will be able to explain sociological understanding of culture, social structure, and social processes using the functionalist, conflict and interactionist perspectives in the context of the United States and other societies.	101 (Introductory level) 301 (Intermediate level) 499 (Advanced level)	Portfolio analysis of conceptual assignments in SOC 101, 301, & 499; Ongoing discussion with regard to rubric development and revision for each level during planned year of assessment.	SOC 101: AY 2016-17 SOC 301: AY 2013-14 SOC 499: AY 2015-16
<u>Application</u> : Students will be able to connect sociology to their public and private lives-as members of families and organizations and as citizens of local, national, and global communities.	101 (Introductory level) 301 (Intermediate level) 499 (Advanced level)	Portfolio analysis of application assignments in SOC 101, 301, & 499; Ongoing discussion with regard to rubric development and revision; Ongoing discussion with regard to rubric development and revision for each level during planned year of assessment.	SOC 101: AY 2016-17 SOC 301: AY 2013-14 SOC 499: AY 2015-16
<u>Social Research Methods</u> : Students will be able to explain causality and to posit interesting and important sociological research questions, analyze quantitative and qualitative data, interpret their findings and effectively communicate their results to appropriate audiences	101 (Introductory level) 302 (Intermediate level) 499 (Advanced level)	Portfolio analysis of research papers in 302 & 499; syllabus review in 101 Ongoing discussion with regard to rubric development and revision for each level during planned year of assessment.	SOC 101: AY 2016-17 SOC 302: AY 2014-15 SOC 499: AY 2015-16
<u>Communication</u> : Students will be able to demonstrate an ability to write and speak logically and cogently, to convey ideas and research findings to large audiences and small groups, to listen to others and respond constructively, and to demonstrate leadership skills and collaboration skills.	101 (Introductory level) 301/2 (Intermediate level) 499 (Advanced level)	Oral communication skill will be assessed by (1) collecting baseline data in SOC 101; (2) observation of SOC 302 research presentations; and (3) observation of student presentations in SOC 499 capstone. Writing skill will be assessed by (1) collecting baseline data by analyzing written assignment from a random sample of SOC 101 students; (2) analysis of the papers in SOC 301 & 302; (3) analysis of final paper in SOC 499 Ongoing discussion with regard to rubric development and revision for each level during planned year of assessment.	Written Communication SOC 101: AY 2016-17 SOC 301: AY 2013-14 SOC 302: AY 2014-15 SOC 499: AY 2015-16 Oral Communication assessment will be developed and implemented in AY 2017-18
<u>Information Literacy</u> : Students will be able to distinguish between scientifically-grounded observation, logical proposition, anecdote, and opinion.	101 (Introductory level) 499 (Advanced level)	Common assignment to be developed across SOC 101, portfolio analysis in 499 Ongoing discussion with regard to rubric development and revision for each level during planned year of assessment.	SOC 101: AY 2016-17 SOC 499: AY 2015-16