

ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR

Bachelor of Arts with a major in Sociology (BA)
Instructional Degree Program

Spring 2004
Assessment Period Covered

June 28, 2004
Date Submitted

Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose Linkage:

Institutional Mission Reference:

Texas A&M International University, a Member of The Texas A&M University System, is committed to the preparation of students for leadership roles in their chosen profession and in an increasingly complex, culturally diverse state, national, and global society ... Through instruction, faculty and student research, and public service, Texas A&M International University is a strategic point of delivery for well-defined programs and services that improve the quality of life for citizens of the border region, the State of Texas, and national and international communities.

College/University Goal(s) Supported:

To increase "(1) students' ability to communicate through the use of the written and spoken word; (2) their knowledge and appreciation of culture, fine arts, social integration; and (3) self realization. The College [COAS] also prepares students for a variety of professions and roles by providing a broad-based liberal arts education."

Intended Educational (Student) Outcomes:

- 1.** Students completing the program will demonstrate their knowledge of the core ideas of the field of sociology.
- 2.** Students completing the program will be able to secure employment.
- 3.** Students will be satisfied with the curriculum and instruction of the sociology program.

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Students completing the program will demonstrate their knowledge of the core ideas of the field of sociology.

First Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

a. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success:

Students will take an exit objective and essay exam to document knowledge of key concepts of the core of ideas in the field of sociology—8 core areas--as determined by the faculty. We expect an average passing rate of 75% and no less than a 70% passing for any subpart of the exam in 8 sub-content areas. The essay portion of the exam, to measure critical thinking and application, will be graded by all faculty using a rubric of competency. The rubric was adapted from Cappell & Kamens (2002, *Teaching Sociology* (30), pp. 467-494)) and addresses the following areas: usage of sociological concepts and theories; accuracy of specific knowledge of social conditions; sociologically based reasoning skills; application of sociological knowledge to the evaluation of social policies or practical social service situations; ability to express ideas clearly in written English.

a. Summary of Assessment Data Collected:

Data collected was for one Spring 2004 graduating senior (the other 5 graduates were assessed in the Fall of 2003). The result was compared with 41 freshmen students. The student achieved an overall passing score of 78% (75% is average minimum), but fell below the expected minimum of 70% in three of eight areas--introduction to sociology, marriage and family and research methods. The graduates' results are compared to the freshmen results based on percent correct. This assessment is taken at the end of the term for all. We now have comparative data and can compare Spring 2004 with Fall and Spring 2003, both for graduates of the program and freshmen.

**Objective Assessment Results Comparative Analysis: Percent Correct
(N=number of graduates, n=number who took the assessment)**

Area	Min Exp Score	Grads Spring 2004 N=3 n=1*	Fresh Spring 2004 Compari son N=41	Grads Fall 2003 N=3 n=7**	Fresh Fall 2003 Comparis on. N=57	Grads Spring 2003 N=8 n=8
Introductory Qs	70%	60%	46.2%	57.0%	44%	57.0%
Sociological Theory	70%	80%	58.8%	80%	52%	54.8%
Research Methods	70%	40%	52.6%	77 %	32%	72.2%
Social Problems	70%	80%	80%	77.0%	16%	84.8%
Urban Sociology	70%	100%	74.7%	89%	80%	62.3%
Marriage & Family	70%	66%	48.6%	81.0%	40%	79.0%
Race	70%	100%	73.7%	100%	48%	92.6%
Social Inequality	70%	100%	80.5%	90%	73%	96.3%
Overall Average		78.25%	64.38%	79%	57.5%	73%

*students took the assessment the previous Fall 2003 when they were taking the Pro-Seminar class.

**includes students who will graduate Spring 2004

Essay: The one student's score is incomplete. We had changed the structure of the essay portion of the exam to be more explicit by providing data to be analyzed because past performance on essay was poor. The student, however, overlooked, or did not address the last part of the essay. What was completed, however, we considered adequate.

____a. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program:

We have increased the credit hours for the professional seminar from 1 to 3 (to be implemented Fall 2004). We believe this review and enhancement-based course will provide the needed synthesis of sociological concepts and skills and that this will be reflected in the next assessment, Fall 2004. We have examined our writing requirements in all of our courses and determined that 100% of our courses require writing; the writing expectation varies from 25-100%. This indicates writing is not at issue, but expectations for application to social policy is.

We are emphasizing social policy issues in all our courses. We have little control over our research methods as this course is cross-listed with political science and criminal justice. When we teach it, it is applied and students complete a research project. According to our Quality Enhancement Plan assessment (2/02/04) all of our courses have a minimum of 25% written work.

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Second Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

_____b. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success:

Every Fall students will be contacted (for three years after graduation) to determine if they have secured employment. A survey/structured interview is used to document employment.

_____b. Summary of Assessment Data Collected:

None. This is conducted in the Fall only and will be conducted Fall 2004.

_____b. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program:

While we did not conduct this survey, the faculty have identified the names of community individuals to be included on a sociology steering board to help us determine vocational skills. The College of Arts and Sciences asked us to wait on this endeavor, temporarily, while they develop their board.

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Third Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

_____c. Students will complete a 4 page survey assessing: (I) Their background; (II) Post-Graduate Work and Expectations; (III) Intellectual Development (41 questions), and (IV) Overall Satisfaction with Curriculum.

_____c. Summary of Assessment Data Collected:

Three graduating seniors took the exit survey. All were satisfied or very satisfied with the program except for the following areas, where 1 out of 3 indicated they were somewhat satisfied (note: it was the same respondent for all). These are: Ability to do computer searches, ability to use research skills for evaluation and gathering evidence; understanding sociological theory; how to use concepts of sociology; critique sociological findings; understand ethics. Personal experience comments indicated that two of the three thought that theory was most memorable. One indicated the study of social inequality has driven her/him to work for social change.

_____c. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program:

The exit survey indicates students have a higher assessment of their research skills compared to the assessment of knowledge indicates. We would like to see "very satisfied" with computer competence rather than "satisfied" and therefore, will require more use of technology in our courses. In that area, one faculty is introducing Census Data analysis with thematic mapping (GIS—Geographic Information Systems) into a number of courses (Introduction to Sociology, Sociology of Education, and Research Methods). This should increase both research methods skills and computer competence.

SUPPORT DOCUMENTATION

SOURCE	LOCATION/Special Instructions
Assessment of Knowledge-Sociology	
Assessment of Knowledge-Data	
Employment Survey-Sociology	
Exit Survey Perception-	
Exit Survey Perception-Data	
Rubric for Grading Written Work	
Quality Enhancement Plan Assessment (2/02/04)	