

Indiana University Kokomo  
School of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Program Review:  
Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science in Sociology

Process

Schedule of Program Reviews:

All academic programs will be reviewed every five years beginning in Fall 2008. Reviews will usually be based on five years of data and never less than three years for newer programs or programs that have undergone substantial change. Each program administrator and faculty member will participate in preparing a program self-study in the spring prior to the program review. For programs that participate in external accreditation, the information gathered and the findings of the external consultant evaluator will be used and reframed to fit the program review format and criteria. If additional data are needed beyond that provided by the accreditation process and findings, the program will provide these data. All other programs will employ external evaluators who will both review programs' self-studies and do an on-site visit prior to preparing their report and findings.

## SELF-STUDY

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**School, Division, Department:** Department of Sociology; School of Humanities and Social Sciences; Indiana University Kokomo

### I. REVIEW PROCESS

A. **Program under Review:** Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science in Sociology

B. **Review Period:** Fall 2012 through Spring 2017

C. **Steps in the Review Process:**

#### 1. Data Obtained:

Data for the review were obtained from departmental and program records, the Office of Student Affairs, official institutional documents, individual faculty records, Faculty Annual Reports (FARs), and from the Indiana University Kokomo website.

#### 2. Self-Study Process:

This report was compiled by the current Department Coordinator, Dr. Niki Weller, with support from resident faculty members, Dr. Stephanie Medley-Rath and Professor Jamie Oslawski-Lopez. Additional data was collected from courses taught by adjunct faculty members. Program faculty collaborated in identifying a suitable external reviewer to bring to campus in spring 2018.

#### 3. External Reviewer:

Yvonne Kissing, Ph.D., Professor of Sociology in the Department of Healthcare Studies and Sociology at Salem State College. Dr. Kissing is a member of the American Sociological Association - Department Resource Group (DRG) which is comprised of faculty from many different institutional affiliations and substantive areas that all share a common concern for the advancement of the discipline of Sociology.

## II. REVIEW CRITERIA

### A. Program Role and Mission and Consistency with University Mission

#### 1. Describe the ways in which the program advances the campus's mission, vision, values, and strategic goals.

The mission statements of the Department of Sociology, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Indiana University Kokomo are provided below.

#### DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY - MISSION STATEMENT

##### **Mission Statement:**

The mission of the Department of Sociology is to create a learning environment that promotes a scientific understanding of social life. Through teaching, scholarship, and service, the Department of Sociology provides educational experiences that encourage students to think sociologically about the significance of social structures and processes, multicultural perspectives, and emerging interdependencies among members of the global community.

Through a variety of major concentration options for the undergraduate student, both on campus and online, we provide our students with academic programs and varied practical experiences that enhance their understanding and application of sociology and the sociological imagination. The B.A. and B.S. in Sociology serves as a strong foundation for graduate work in Sociology as well as in other professional fields such as social services, health services, community work, law and government, business, teaching, and college services.

As part of a liberal arts education, the Department of Sociology reflects IU Kokomo's broader mission by encouraging the development of critical thinking, effective communication, responsibilities of community membership, and other transferable skills as part of career preparation. By modeling intellectual curiosity and critical thinking, the resulting acquisition of knowledge helps students to become informed and contributing members of society, committed to creating, maintaining and enhancing healthy, just, and sustainable social structures from micro to macro levels.

#### SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES - MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

##### **Mission Statement:**

The mission of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences is to improve well-being through our teaching, research, and service. Through our innovative educational programs, we help people to become enlightened, successful citizens prepared for meaningful lives, community engagement, and fulfilling careers in the 21st century. Through teaching, research, and service we increase our understanding of the world and improve the lives of those within it.

##### **Vision Statement:**

The Indiana University Kokomo School of Humanities and Social Sciences strives to offer degree programs recognized for their outstanding quality, unique opportunities, and personal relationships among faculty and students. We prepare students to be versatile, lifelong learners able to make positive changes in their lives and within their communities.

## **INDIANA UNIVERSITY KOKOMO - MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT**

The Indiana University Kokomo campus mission and vision statements are available at <http://www.iuk.edu/academic-affairs/resources/mission.php>

### **Mission Statement:**

The mission of Indiana University Kokomo, a regional campus of Indiana University, is to enhance the educational and professional attainment of the residents of north central Indiana by providing a wide range of bachelor's degrees, and a limited number of master's and associate degrees. Indiana University Kokomo is further dedicated to enhancing research, creative work, and other scholarly activity, promoting diversity, and strengthening the economic and cultural vitality of the region and the state through a variety of partnerships and programs. In addition to the official mission statement, IU Kokomo also uses an accompanying vision statement and statement of commitments to guide campus planning efforts. These statements read as follows:

### **Vision Statement:**

Indiana University Kokomo will be an educational institution of first choice. Students will have a transformative experience resulting in broad and deep knowledge, an ability to integrate professionalism and ethics, and exceptional skills in analytical and critical reasoning, innovative problem solving and effective communication. We will educate future leaders with a focus on inclusiveness, diversity, culture, civic engagement and globalization. Together with students, our faculty and staff will serve the world through scholarship, creative work and community engagement. (Approved by the Indiana University Kokomo Strategic Planning Committee, August, 2015).

## **INDIANA UNIVERSITY KOKOMO STATEMENT OF COMMITMENTS:**

Indiana University Kokomo contributes to its students and to the region through the affirmation of the following values in all of its endeavors:

- *Commitment to Student Learning:*  
The campus community provides a learner-centered environment grounded in the liberal arts and sciences and linked to the professional schools. We are committed to open and free inquiry, high quality instruction and academic support services, experiences that foster students' development, opportunities for experiential learning, and the enhancement of skills in the areas of civic engagement, diversity, and global awareness and involvement.
- *Commitment to Regional Engagement:*  
The campus community works with regional partners, including other educational institutions, to enhance the vitality of the region by promoting community engagement opportunities as a key campus strategy and by valuing shared governance and open, civil discourse.
- *Commitment to Diversity:*  
The campus community demonstrates its commitment to diversity by providing a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment that promotes integrity and respect among all

members of best practices in teaching and learning, student development, institutional stewardship, and scholarly activity.

- *Commitment to Innovation:*  
As a community of learners, the campus embraces innovation and creativity in its pursuit of best practices in teaching and learning, student development, institutional stewardship, and scholarly activity.
- *Commitment to Assessment:*  
The campus community embraces a culture of assessment, actively seeking evidence for improving current practices while providing an atmosphere in which new initiatives can develop as the campus strives for excellence in all of its work.

## **DISCUSSION OF THE MISSION**

The IU Kokomo campus is one of the smallest in the IU system. Total enrollment was 3719 in Fall 2012; that number rose to 4106 in Fall 2016. The Department of Sociology contributes to the General Education curriculum and to a small number of majors and minors. Currently, two faculty members are Assistant Professors, one is an Acting-Assistant Professor, and, at the time of this report, we are searching for a fourth, tenure-track Assistant Professor. Four faculty members are Emeritus faculty and were full Professors at the time of their retirement. Promotion and tenure criteria are located here: <http://www.iuk.edu/academic-affairs/resources/promotion-tenure-criteria.php>

The Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees in Sociology align closely with the missions of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and IU Kokomo. Our program supports the School of Humanities and Social Sciences' mission and vision statements by seeking to innovate in our degrees and our courses, and to enlighten and engage our students, preparing them to be versatile, lifelong learners who are capable of making positive change within their communities. The Sociology program complements the IU Kokomo mission statement by enabling students to achieve the competencies needed to strengthen the economic and cultural vitality of the region and state, conducting scholarly research, and promoting diversity.

The Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees in Sociology offer students an opportunity to pursue a Traditional degree track or one that emphasizes an Applied Sociology focus. By providing two track options for students, this degree program pursues its mission: *"The mission of the Department of Sociology is to create a learning environment that promotes a scientific understanding of social life. Through teaching, scholarship, and service, the Department of Sociology provides educational experiences that encourage students to think sociologically about the significance of social structures and processes, multicultural perspectives, and emerging interdependencies among members of the global community."* For instance, students in most upper level courses write multiple academic research papers and give presentations of various types within the classroom, at various student-based university symposiums, and at regional conferences.

Students pursuing the BA degree must complete 42 credits within the major. Students pursuing the BS degree must complete 30 credits within the major. Students who elect to pursue a BA or BS in the Traditional track must complete an internship in Sociology (SOC-S 494 Field Experience in Sociology) and their senior capstone in Sociology (SOC-S470 Senior Seminar in Sociology). Students who elect to pursue a BA or BS in the Applied Sociology track must complete an internship in Human or Social Services (SOC-S497 Field Experience in Human or Social Services)

and their senior capstone in Applied Sociology or Human Services (SOC-S471 Senior Seminar in Applied Sociology or Human Services). All students pursuing their BA or BS in the Traditional or Applied Sociology track have the option to complete a series of courses that meet one of three, optional program concentrations in Medical Sociology, Family and Children, and/or Crime and Deviance. To complete one of these concentrations, students must complete at least four upper-level electives that have the program faculty have identified as meeting the curriculum expectations of these concentrations. A number of courses offered within the department can be used towards two concentrations, which creates more opportunities for students to successfully complete one of the optional concentrations.

We seek to make educational opportunities available to a diverse student population by offering content-rich and pedagogically solid courses. The department is also dedicated to offering out-of-classroom learning opportunities by encouraging participation in discipline-specific clubs, interdisciplinary programs, meetings of professional organizations, field trips, seminars and conferences / workshops. We promote academic excellence by encouraging qualified students to take advantage of opportunities afforded by the IU Kokomo Honors program and by offering opportunities to engage in independent study and research projects. All students must complete an internship as part of their Field Experience. The department helps students to prepare for careers and post-graduate education. We encourage students to build on classroom experiences and to engage in learning outside the classroom. The unit's curriculum emphasizes diverse experience across temporal, regional, cultural, race/ethnicity, gender, and religious boundaries (among others). The Senior Seminar course emphasizes research and allows students to apply the skills obtained over the course of their academic careers and present their research at regional conferences under the supervision and guidance of faculty within the program.

The Sociology program sustains the larger School of Humanities and Social Sciences Mission Statement, in which *"we help people to become enlightened, successful citizens prepared for meaningful lives, community engagement, and fulfilling careers in the 21st century. Through teaching, research, and service we increase our understanding of the world and improve the lives of those within it."* Our courses are vital to the campus general education requirements and other major fields as well. Within the campus-wide general education requirements our department offers classes that satisfy parts of the Social and Behavioral Sciences outcomes, Critical Thinking outcomes, Cultural Diversity outcomes and Quantitative Literacy outcomes (<http://iuk.edu/academic-affairs/resources/general-education.php>). Other majors require their students to take Sociology courses as well. These include Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Criminal Justice, Public Affairs, and Psychology. The program also offers a minor in Sociology and provides classes important to the General Studies program. Several Sociology courses are the foundation of new interdisciplinary minors on campus including a minor in Social Justice and Community Engagement, a minor in Sustainability, and a forthcoming minor in Gender Studies. Thus, in a variety of ways, the program in Sociology contributes to the department, school, and campus mission and vision statements. The role that the Department of Sociology plays in general education and serving other majors and minors on the IU Kokomo campus is significant and should not be overlooked. It also takes a substantial portion of the Department's resources to offer this high level of service to other departments.

Moreover, as a part of our program goals, we are recognized as a valued resource for both our students as well as the agencies in the communities where our students are placed for internships and professional-level positions after graduation. As a part of our program goals we are committed to student success in both the design and pedagogy of our curriculum. Students from the Bachelor of General studies students, with an emphasis in social and behavioral sciences, provide a large student constituency in many of our sociology classes. We endeavor to

provide these continuing education students with the same level of academic rigor as our Sociology majors while at the same time offering hybrid courses, evening courses, and other accommodations to meet their needs. As such, we reach beyond our sociology majors and contribute to a larger public of continuing education students.

### **THE SOCIOLOGY PROGRAM - CHANGES SINCE 2009**

This academic unit last went through a program review in 2009. At the time of this report, none of the current faculty were employed with IU Kokomo for the 2009 review (current faculty were hired in 2012, 2014, and 2017). The 2009 program review suggested a number of changes that would help sustain and expand our efforts. Among the top priorities was planning for the future with specific mention to consider a concentration/track in applied sociology, involve students in campus and community programs, and improve department communication among faculty. Since the 2009 review, the Department of Sociology has implemented the Applied Sociology track eligible for all students pursuing either a BA or BS degree in Sociology. The implementation of this track has widely contributed to the academic and professional needs of our students and the community. Students have an option to complete their internship and senior seminar specific to the applied sociology track and we have added an Applied Sociology (SOC-S475) course as part of our curriculum map.

Additionally, we have implemented experiential learning opportunities in the majority of our courses that have integrated students into the community as well as participating in the campus initiative The Kokomo Experience and You (KEY). Faculty have developed community partnerships by inviting guest speakers to our classes and the campus, by facilitating site visits across the region, supervising students during their senior seminar independent research projects, and growing our list of internship-sites.

The program review addressed departmental issues concerning communication and collaboration across faculty. We have since implemented regular meetings, where faculty work collectively to develop, review, and assess curriculum demands, to map annual and 5-year course offerings, to develop strategic and assessment plans, to discuss student and program needs, and to provide support for faculty working towards their professional teaching and research goals.

One of the recommendations aligned with the above observations was the hiring of a fourth faculty member to replace Dr. Earl Wysong upon his retirement in 2012 and to support the Medical Sociology concentration. In 2012 Dr. Niki Weller was hired to fill the vacant retirement line and to be the lead faculty member supporting the Medical Sociology concentration. In 2014 Dr. Rick Aniskiewicz had a planned retirement and the department hired Dr. Stephanie Medley-Rath to be the lead faculty member supporting the Crime and Society concentration. Unplanned retirements occurred in 2016 with the departure of Dr. Nancy Greenwood and in 2017 with the departure of Dr. Ligaya McGovern. The department replaced the line vacated by Dr. Greenwood with the hire of Jamie Oslawski-Lopez (ABD, 2018) who became the lead faculty to support the Children and Families concentration and, at the time of this report, we are conducting a national search to replace the line vacated by Dr. McGovern.

A second priority outlined in the 2009 review was to enhance the existing concentrations and add an additional concentration in Medical Sociology. Since the review, we have added the Medical Sociology concentration and we have refined the Children and Families concentration, and the Crime and Society concentration. For example, faculty worked collaboratively to develop curriculum and to map courses that would count towards each concentration ensuring high-

quality instruction and frequent course offerings so students could complete a concentration in any of these areas. In 2017 we revised our course map for the BA and BS degree and worked with the academic advisors to ensure the course mapping was readily available and user-friendly for students and the advisors. In doing this, we have successfully increased the number of students working towards a concentration and in 2018 we will have a student graduate with a double concentration. Related to recommendations listed above regarding improved communication, we work collaboratively to ensure the concentrations continue to meet student needs, and we are currently considering a fourth concentration in Environmental Sociology that would be supported by the faculty member hired in 2018.

In addition to the recommended changes outlined in the 2009 review, the Department of Sociology has been actively committed to evolving our program to meet the needs of our students, the university, and the community. For example, one significant development was the active response of our faculty to the ongoing system-wide encouragement to provide online courses. Related to this, the department has engaged in discussions about the creation of an entirely online Sociology BS degree. Both of these initiatives reflect the realistic impression that Sociology instruction will no longer be situated exclusively in the classroom. These changes have raised new concerns as well. First, we are concerned about sustaining the quality of online instruction. All Sociology faculty who teach online have taken courses offered by the campus Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (CTLA), or have brought to campus extensive experience with online instruction. At the time of this report, two faculty have taught online courses and one faculty member is completing the online developer's certificate.

As noted, the emphasis on quality may also hamper our efforts, as large campuses have the ability to hire graduate students as graders. This small campus has no relevant graduate programs. This may limit our overall contribution to the credits and revenue garnered through online course offerings, but we hope to sustain quality instruction. Related to the expansion of online courses, Dr. Medley-Rath has participated actively in discussions with other system campuses about creating an online Sociology BS degree. Three regional campuses (Kokomo, East, and Northwest) and IUPUI are engaged in those conversations. We are working to create a uniform curriculum, and to ensure that there is no feast or famine (in terms of enrollments or financial rewards) for any participating campus. As of February 2018, the second memorandum of understanding has been approved.

In addition to online course offerings, all of our resident faculty have participated in a number of academic initiatives. These include the Re-Imagining the First Year. This effort, led and organized by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, works to improve first-year experiences, increase student success and retention, and ameliorate obstacles that first-year students encounter. Dovetailing with that program, all Sociology faculty have been active instructing courses linked to the First-Year Learning Communities. Research supports that our participation and mentorship in first-year experiences exposes and attracts students to the sociology major.

In the last two years, another program has begun, called the KEY (Kokomo Experience and You). This program supports the creation of high-impact programs and activities for all students and majors and involves a variety of creative approaches, from first-year experiences to internships, mentored research, and other efforts to stimulate student learning and retention. KEY proposals must be submitted to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, and his office approves funding for those experiences. In the sophomore year, KEY initiatives take students to a location in which they can learn more about the ways in which their major may relate to their overall plans after graduation. The activities are also intended to forge close interaction with faculty members. The

Sociology “Sophomore Sojourn” took students to local universities to participate in Graduate School recruitment fairs and meet with faculty and students from graduate programs. We work closely with students to mentor them regarding graduate school application and admission; place students in internships; engage in international travel; and participate in cross-curricular enterprises.

These kinds of faculty responsiveness to external academic shifts have had positive results, seen chiefly in the solid record of attracting majors to our disciplines. We pursued some of the recommendations in the 2009 review, and the changes in the department’s faculty and curriculum have attracted majors to this field. For example, we have seen enrollments and retention rates increase between spring 2016 (48 majors) and spring 2017 (61 majors) and graduation and completion rates increase from 8 in 2016 to 12 in 2017.

### **THE SOCIOLOGY PROGRAM – CHALLENGES**

**Service:** As noted, faculty members contribute heavily to the service opportunities on campus. At times service obligations strain our limited resources. For example, coupling the course release customary for the Coordinator with the limits on course caps first-year courses such as Introduction to Sociology (SOC-S100) and Social Problems and Policies (SOC-S101) or online courses has in the long run limited our face-to-face contact with some prospective majors, and diminishes our overall credits generated. The Sociology unit is so small that any course release by one class per semester reduces the availability of courses in that specialty. Adjunct instructors support our curriculum, but we believe that we attract majors when we have more contact with our students. It is clear we believe in contributing actively to the needs of our campus (including its academic and service efforts), but it is likely that we will need to assess these obligations continually against overall program performance to determine what constitutes a realistic load.

**General Education:** The General Education requirements at IU Kokomo are advertised as ranging from 42-44 credits total, the highest of any IU campus (<http://iuk.edu/academic-affairs/resources/general-education.php>). Thus far, IU Kokomo has not been able to redesign the General Education curriculum in a way that will make it more similar to the 30-hour limit that exists on most IU campuses. This affects our campus especially in the case of transfer students who are dismayed that a General Education core accepted at another campus now requires more coursework at IU Kokomo. We hope in the future to pursue an arrangement that brings IU Kokomo closer to its peer institutions in the General Education requirements. Please note that in 2018 a task force comprising faculty from across campus was established to completely overhaul the current general education requirements. This revision will undoubtedly impact courses offered by Sociology. Dr. Weller is serving as a representative from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences on this task force.

**Sustaining Growth:** The Department of Sociology has four, resident professors. We regularly contract three adjunct professors to teach for the department. Although we have been able to increase the number of majors in Sociology, we are aware that our small size (just four resident faculty members) means that our specialties and curriculum represent only a small portion of the available topics, methodologies, and expertise that might be represented by larger faculty units. Academically, the argument favoring better disciplinary coverage (a “more complete major”) is obvious, but that is constrained by obvious fiscal concerns—particularly in a period of system-wide slowing enrollments. Faculty in Sociology are anxious to contribute to campus programs and initiatives, but we often feel a sense of strain as a result.

**Website:** A campus-wide assessment of school and department websites indicated that changes in the campus and department websites were urgently needed. Several changes have been

made—faculty photos and contact information; information about the majors, minors, and other programs were made updated and made available in August 2017. We routinely request publicity for public speakers and events. In spite of significant progress in improving the website, further progress is needed to clean up dead links, to provide information about the Sociology student club, events, faculty research accomplishments, undergraduate research opportunities, and so on. We recognize the power that a website can have in attracting future majors and we are committed to maintaining up-to-date information on our current site.

**Faculty Retirements/Hires:** The 2009 program review identified that the department needed to plan for the future with regards to upcoming (planned and unplanned) faculty retirements and replacement hires. Since 2012, three resident faculty, all full professors, have retired; in 2014, 2016, and 2017. The two retirements in 2016 and 2017 occurred mid-year and without advance notice. The department conducted (and is currently conducting) national searches to replace these positions, but the absence of any tenured faculty and the time and effort that is required to replace these positions has placed unexpected service burdens on current faculty and has impacted the courses we have been able to offer our students. We look forward to having a department with four resident faculty, which can serve the needs of the students and the university.

#### **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT:**

Beginning in 2015, the Department of Sociology participated in a major restructuring of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. The primary reason for the realignments was to apportion administrative responsibilities more evenly among Chairs. In this process, Sociology is no longer united in a department with History and Political Science (formally the Department of Sociology, History/Political Science). The resulting, stand-alone Department of Sociology was approved by the Trustees in Fall 2016. We anticipate that this change will improve our efforts in recruiting majors to our discipline, the promotion of our three concentrations, and possible creation of a graduate program in Sociology. These changes will respond to well-established academic trends in the discipline, and more importantly will facilitate IU Kokomo's participation in the online BS in Sociology.

We need to achieve a reasonable balance between contributing productively to the many campus and system initiatives, and focusing on the needs of our students in general and our majors in particular. One issue discussed among Re-Imagining the First Year participants, for example, has been how to assure “buy-in” across the campus. Thus far, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences seems heavily invested in those efforts, and the result is HSS faculty generally feels the pressure of service and of careful academic collaboration. In the future, expanding the participation in these programs may help to manage service loads and to assure that we can sustain enrollment growth.

If enrollments and majors continue to grow, we anticipate addressing the curricular gaps in our program by requesting new faculty lines. This may include expanding on the breadth of the Applied Sociology focus and hiring faculty that can take the lead on this track, or bring in faculty that can support our existing programs.

We have come to recognize the need to create a Bridge course as part of the core curriculum that would prepare students for the more intense work taught in Research Methods, Social Theory, Social Statistics, and Senior Seminar. We hope to develop a course that will alleviate some of the review needed in these above mentioned core courses; however, this requires a reevaluation of our current degree maps and could reduce course offerings of existing resident

faculty. Faculty have considered the idea of offering a 1-credit hybrid course that would meet these needs.

In summary, our program shares the campus commitment to values that help both students and our wider community including all of the below:

#### *Commitment to student learning*

The Sociology faculty at Indiana University Kokomo focus on student learning both in and out of the classroom. As will be detailed below, all of the Sociology faculty have regularly conducted peer reviews in our classroom and either have or are currently participate in a variety of teaching-related enterprises to develop our teaching skills. These include pursuing SoTL research or grants; developmental activities; assessment; and peer reviews of courses. Recent assessment data is provided below.

#### *Commitment to regional engagement*

The Sociology program engages with our service region in many ways through both our students and faculty. Various students participate in internship programs that connect them to the larger region directly. Sociology faculty rotate supervising student internships and each faculty communicates with community supervisors from local social and human service agencies, criminal justice agencies, public health departments, and educational services to ensure successful student placement and performance. We encourage our students to present research at local and regional student conferences and some of our graduates have gone on to graduate programs in Sociology and Social Work at local universities, particularly IUPUI, IU Bloomington, Purdue, Ball State University, and Arizona State University. Faculty members also occasionally deliver public presentations about subjects of interest on campus.

#### *Commitment to diversity*

The Sociology program demonstrates its commitment to diversity in numerous ways. Issues of cultural difference, race, nationalism, religion, gender and sexual orientation, and class are intrinsic to our discipline and a part of every class we teach. These classes range from the Introduction to Sociology courses to upper-division courses that include but are not limited to Family Violence; Gender; Juvenile Delinquency; Race and Ethnic Relations; Drugs and Society; Mental Health; Criminology; Issues in Human and Social Services; and Health over the Lifecourse. Further, Sociology faculty promotes discussions and present work on local topics and social issues in and out of the classroom on campus.

#### *Commitment to innovation*

The Sociology program demonstrates its commitment to innovation by promoting professional engagement through research and professional associations as well as a willingness to learn and apply new pedagogical approach to enhance our program. Our three faculty members have all applied new technologies to the classroom including using clicker technologies and piloting Respondus Lockdown Browser, digital images (including digitized primary sources), and embedded music or videos to enhance lectures. To varying levels, we have also embraced numerous Canvas features including using assignment and grading tools in Canvas in addition to utilizing Canvas gradebook, announcements, and online discussion forums. Further, all faculty have integrated the use of headers and Tables of Contents in Microsoft word to ensure ADA compliance in documents provided to students. Dr. Medley-Rath and Prof. Oslawski-Lopez have

published innovative teaching practices and resources in TRAILS from the American Sociological Association TRAILS journal. We have supported educational innovations at the campus level including Freshman Learning Community, Honors Courses, and participating in discussions about retention and Re-Imagining the First Year. Finally, faculty members have supported the KEY initiative for Sociology.

#### *Commitment to assessment*

The Sociology program remains committed to the IU Kokomo assessment program. We assess student learning in both introductory and upper-level courses in accordance with each year's assessment plan designed in the fall and with data collected during the academic year. These findings are then used to improve our program and courses year-over-year in different areas and to provide a vehicle for faculty to discuss our strengths and weaknesses. As part of this, we include relevant general education learning outcomes in our syllabi and focus on specific outcomes each year such as thesis development in paper assignments and content knowledge.

Assessment has been a challenge, as learning outcomes being considered have changed over time. In 2009, faculty members were instructed to define the criteria that they were assessing and to determine whether the standard had been met or not. Later, faculty were urged to use a three-tier system of assessment (poor/failing, satisfactory, or met/surpassed expectations). More recently, a committee charged with unifying assessment strategies has compiled criteria for General Education outcomes and has collected outcomes from each academic unit. Currently, faculty are encouraged to use a five-tier evaluative rubric, with "1" indicating poor/failing command of the criterion and "5" indicating evidence of superior accomplishment of the outcome. The more centralized oversight in assessment, as well as our own determination to exercise a more consistent set of standards, will hopefully see the Sociology unit in a better position to evaluate the assessment data to determine its future course.

## **2. List key relationships between the program and the external constituencies, such as collaborations, partnerships with regional, community, state organizations, and/or businesses.**

Faculty from the Department of Sociology are active in the community and with external constituencies. Multiple courses are engaged with the local and regional communities in the following ways:

- Dr. Medley-Rath has taken students in SOC-S 375, 328, and 100 to the following community organizations for **site visits**:
  - Bona Vista
  - Kinsey Youth Center
  - McKinley Alternative High School
  - Howard County Domestic Violence Shelter
  - Coordinated Assistance Ministries Inc.
  - Howard County Juvenile Court
  - Kokomo Rescue Mission
  - Logansport Juvenile Correction Facility
- Professor Oslawski-Lopez has partnered with Kokomo's Very Early Center for Childhood Education for her SOC-S100 Introduction to Sociology course. In this partnership, Dr. Marilyn Skinner, the director of the center, will be attending each class to discuss sociological issues in early childhood education. Students will also visit the center and collect new and gently used books for children who use the center.

- Dr. Weller has taken students in SOC-S375, SOC-S360, and 100 to the following community organizations for **site visits**:
  - Bona Vista
  - Kinsey Youth Center
  - McKinley Alternative High School
  - Howard County Domestic Violence Shelter
  - Coordinated Assistance Ministries Inc.
  - Howard County Department of Health
  - Gilead House
  - The Hope Academy
  
- Dr. Medley-Rath has had **guest speakers** for SOC-S100, SOC-S360, and SOC-S 375, 328, 100, HON- 399 from the following community organizations:
  - Gilead House
  - Kinsey Youth Center
  - Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
  - Indiana Department of Child Services – Howard County
  - Howard County Public Health
  - Guardian Angel
  - Samaritan Caregivers
  - Four County Counseling Center
  - Howard County Juvenile Court
  - Jackson Street commons
  
- Dr. Weller has had **guest speakers** for SOC-S 375, 328, 100, HON- 399 from the following community organizations:
  - Gilead House
  - Logansport Correctional facility
  - Howard County Department of Public Health
  - Overdoes Lifeline, Inc.
  - Planned Parenthood
  - Prevail, Inc.
  - Indiana Youth Group: LGTB Youth Group Organization
  - Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
  
- Faculty from Sociology have successful places students in the following **internship sites** as part of their Field Experience:
  - Kokomo YMCA
  - United Way of Howard County
  - Sycamore Golden Living
  - Kid’s Hope USA
  - New Leaf Mentoring
  - The Villages
  - 365 Balance
  - S House
  - IU Kokomo Office of Sustainability
  - The Crossing

- Faculty from Sociology have been invited as **guest speakers** to the following:
  - The sociology class at Kokomo High School
  - Prevail, Inc.
  - The Hope Academy
  - Indiana University’s Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) Conference

### III. EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL DEMAND

1. **Describe the external demand for graduates of the program. Refer to employment projections based on federal and state information and other resources.**

**State Projections:** The following information is from the Indiana Department of Workforce Development. These numbers represent projections from 2014 to 2024 and provide data for categories of employment in Indiana relevant to Sociology majors:

**Table 1: Projections (2014-2024)**

Occupational Titles	Base Year	2024	% Change
Community and Social Service Specialists	1,246	1,420	14%
Substance Abuse and Behavioral Disorder Counselors	1,171	1,454	24.2%
Child, Family, and School Social Workers	5,362	5,876	9%
Social and Human Services Assistants	5,039	5,952	18.1%
Community Health Workers	1,212	1,466	21%
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	2,109	2,643	25.3%
Sociology Teachers, Postsecondary	339	394	16.2%
Statisticians	573	799	39.4%
Social Scientists and Related Workers	3,386	4,045	19.5%

These data provide useful information for several very specific careers related to the Sociology major. However, like many liberal arts degrees, the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science in Sociology are quite flexible, making it difficult to judge demand in such a limited fashion.

**Some Typical Jobs for Sociology Majors:** This collection notes only some of the categories in the report that apply. Students with a Sociology degree enter such a wide variety of fields. Other possibilities include: management, librarians, clerical support, sales/marketing, government work, and various forms of data analysis.

2. **What steps has the program implemented to attract enrollment from high school students and transfer students?**

The Sociology program participates with the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and the campus as a whole in recruiting activities that bring high school students and their parents to our campus for tours and information sessions. This involves all faculty participating in “VIP” (visit-in-person) campus visit days in which we discuss degree options with all students, and respond to questions about the major for students and their parents. Further, when our professional advisors meet with high school students to discuss Sociology as a potential major and our faculty are always available to meet with prospective students.

### 3. Describe internal demand for courses in the major using institutional data (see tables):

Table 2 shows the number of Sociology majors. The number of Sociology majors for this review period started with steady growth for the first few years of the reporting period, and eventually stabilized with an average of over 50 majors in the last three years of the reporting period. In addition, Fall 2017 saw our major numbers rise to 63 students, a striking 30% increase.

The following tables show our number of majors, number of graduates, and course enrollments.

**Table 2: Sociology Majors (2012-2017)**

		Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Fall 2013	Spring 2014	Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Fall 2015	Spring 2016	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Fall 2017	Spring 2018
Sociology BA	General Track	18	19	12	11	10	12	14	8	4	2	1	
	Human Services			1	2	3	2	1	1	2	4	4	3
	<b>Total</b>	18	19	13	13	13	14	15	9	6	6	5	3
Sociology BS	General Track	36	41	40	33	36	27	27	28	16	13	20	11
	Applied Sociology/Human Svcs				11	15	17	11	10	25	30	32	33
	Children and Families							3	2	1	3	5	6
	Crime and Society										1	1	1
	Human Services			10									
<b>Total</b>	36	41	50	44	51	44	41	40	42	47	58	51	
<b>Grand Total</b>	54	60	63	57	64	58	56	49	48	53	63	54	

Complete course enrollment figures can be found in Appendix A: Course Enrollments from 2007 to 2018.

### 4. How has the program addressed increased demand?

The Sociology program has hired adjunct faculty as needed to address demand in 100-level courses, and upper level electives when resident faculty have been released from a course or have other extenuating circumstances that have resulted in vacancies in a course. To date, we regularly contract adjunct faculty who have a PhD in Sociology – and whose professional experience, combined with graduate training, has prepared them to teach upper level electives when needed. Our adjuncts work in fields similar to the careers our students go into and provide invaluable support for our Applied Sociology track.

In 2012 and 2014, the campus hired two tenure-track faculty members to replace faculty who left the program. Thus, we have maintained our four tenure-track faculty who regularly teach courses in the program. At the time of this report, the Department of Sociology was conducting a national search to replace a resident faculty who retired in 2017. With the successful hire, the department will have four full time resident faculty. Admittedly, while the department has had four resident faculty, the last two years have actually represented a department of only three resident faculty – a reflection of unanticipated retirements and a Fulbright scholarship.

### 5. What problems have been encountered in meeting demand?

Although we have had some turnover, our number of faculty has remained constant at four. Given our heavy service commitments (faculty senate, Applied and Community Research Center,

department and school committees.), we have had problems staffing our courses from time to time. Several of these positions include course release time, which equates to fewer classes we are able to offer, and therefore less flexibility in scheduling. Another result is that our faculty have not participated in Freshman Learning Communities, the Honors program, and other initiatives as much as we would like to.

The Sociology program has added courses in response to faculty and student demand, always keeping in mind the needs and objectives of the major and our concentrations. We have revised these objectives for clarity and to align with the growing interdisciplinary needs of the twenty-first century world. These can be found in our IU Kokomo Sociology program Mission Statement. In recent years, the program has added courses in the Crime and Society, Medical Sociology, and Children and Families concentrations – a direct result of the hiring of three new full time faculty since 2012. Likewise, we have added online, upper level electives that are offered during the summer to help students stay on their path towards graduation.

We have previously requested a lecturer position (we currently use adjuncts) but we would like to have a fifth line that could contribute to the service demands of the department and to contribute to our existing Applied Sociology track and three concentrations.

#### IV. PRODUCTIVITY

Describe the resources generated and used by the program and key results of the uses of these resources in the areas of student retention, graduation rates, numbers of degrees awarded, and services provided to non-majors and to campus-wide learning goals.

##### 1. List grants and contracts received by the program in the last three years and indicate how these resources have affected program productivity and efficiency.

Fiscal Year	Type of Resource	Approximate Dollar Amount
2015	FACET/Mack Center Travel Grant	\$750
2015	Applied Learning Grant	\$1000
2015	Grant-In-Aid	\$3100
2015	Summer Faculty Fellowship	\$6,000
2016	Course Development for the RFY	\$500
2016	Applied and Community Research Center	<i>Course release</i>
2017	Applied Learning Grant	\$1,626
2017	Summer Faculty Fellowship	\$6,000
2017	FACET/Mack Center Travel Grant	\$500
2017	Grant-in-Aid	\$3,250
2017	Women of the Wellhouse Grant	\$2000

The 2017 Summer Faculty Fellowship allowed Dr. Medley-Rath to collect qualitative data from 27 participants. She gave one presentation in 2017 supported by the fellowship and submitted four abstracts/papers for presentations in 2018 (3/3 accepted).

The 2017 Grant-in-Aid enabled Dr. Medley-Rath to purchase a tablet computer to better support her summer research of conducting online focus groups and has purchased several books in support of this line of research.

The 2015 and 2017 FACET/Mack Center SoTL travel grants have helped Dr. Medley-Rath attend two American Sociological Association conferences to present research on SoTL, her other line of research.

The Applied Learning Grants listed for 2015, 2016, and 2017 have provide immeasurable opportunities to support student travel on site visits, conference trips, to attend guest speaker events, and to invite guest speakers to campus.

The 2015 Grant-in-Aid and the 2015 Summer Faculty Fellowship supported Dr. Weller's travel to a restricted data site for the National Survey of Family Growth in Atlanta, Georgia, to pay for fees associated with collecting data, and for additional analytical programs.

The 2016 course release supported by the Applied and Community Research Center provided Dr. Weller time to collaborate with the Gilead House, Inc. of Kokomo to review and develop enhanced tracking systems for their clients, their services, and their outcomes.

The 2017 Women of the Well House Grant provided support to an interdisciplinary research project Dr. Weller is working on with colleagues from IU Bloomington. Funds for this project support a student worker and programmatic needs including transportation to/from Logansport Correctional Facility.

2. **List other financial resources generated by the program, such as donations, externally funded programs, and conference earnings. Indicate how these resources have enhanced productivity and efficiency.**

The Sociology program has not generated any such financial resources during this period.

3. **Describe the resource requirements of accreditation other than annual fees and site visits:**  
This is not applicable to Sociology.
4. **List in the tables below the last three years' data on the program's fall to fall retention rate, graduation rate, the number of degrees awarded, and classes cancelled due to low enrollment and/or with an enrollment below ten.**

**TABLE 3: FALL TO FALL RETENTION**

	<b>Number Retained</b>	<b>Fall-to-Fall Retention Rate</b>	<b>Low Enrolled Classes (&lt;11)</b>	<b># Classes Cancelled: Low Enrollment</b>	<b>Number of Graduates</b>
2012-2013	12	60%	1	1	5
2013-2014	13	68.4%	0	0	8
2014-2015	6	54.5%	2	0	7
2015-2016	3	30.0%	2	0	8
2016-2017	4	66.7%	2	0	12

Table 3 addresses Fall-to-Fall Retention over the past five years. In the previous report cycle, courses had an average 64.1% retention rate. In this reporting cycle, our retention rates achieved an average of 55.92%. There are concerns accompanying these results, for example, because our offerings are more limited than other campuses, we occasionally lose students who transfer to other institutions. Unfortunately, with just four faculty in Sociology, there is currently no way to increase our offerings without assuming substantial overload credit loads, or diminishing our commitment to the General Education curriculum. Similarly, faculty have been awarded course releases or have taught for the Honors Program which has impacted our course offering.

Starting in 2015, the campus, as a whole, saw low enrollments which are reflected in our record low program enrollments in 2016. Likewise, there has been consistent course releases among faculty that have impacted our ability to offer courses, subsequently impacting enrollments. We have made a concerted effort to have full-time faculty teach the 100 level courses as research supports these first-contacts with full-time faculty impact retention and enrollments in the 300 and 400 level courses. However, this has been difficult to maintain given our demand to offer the needed core courses and upper level electives.

**TABLE 4: CREDIT HOUR PRODUCTIVITY**

	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Fall 2013	Spring 2014	Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Fall 2015	Spring 2016	Fall 2016	Spring 2017
Non- Sociology Credit Hours	1,212	1,221	1,335	1,068	1,134	942	1,113	954	972	1,041
100-200 Credit Hours	33	39	81	33	102	69	93	75	93	45
300-400 Credit Hours	87	135	165	102	225	198	222	162	171	219
Total Credit Hours	120	174	246	135	327	267	315	237	264	264

Table 4 depicts the total number of credit hours taken by students taking Sociology courses; it distinguishes between those who are Sociology majors and by those who are not. The credit hour productivity has been consistent, with a few important qualifications. In 2015 the School of Business removed the requirement that all Business majors take SOC-S100 Introduction to Sociology. This resulted in a decrease in non-majors taking our 100 level courses. The Department of Sociology only offers one 200 level course, (SOC-S252 Methods of Sociological Research) which is required for all majors and rarely enrolled by non-majors.

These figures demonstrate a few different forms of recovery within the Sociology unit. For example, one sudden increase in credit hour production resulted from Dr. Medley-Rath joining the faculty in Fall 2014.

Our commitment to the campus' general education requirements is just as important to us as our mission of supporting the Sociology curriculum. In these ways, the Sociology unit contributes actively to a number of different academic areas, not solely to the major.

Other factors have negatively affected credit hour productivity, though. For example, a major construction project began on the campus' largest academic building in spring 2015. This closed a number of classrooms during 2016, limiting both the usable space on campus and course caps in some cases. While we accommodated those changes, this corresponded in part with the enrollment declines. Finally, as always, administrative releases (one per semester for Chair) have reduced the course offerings for resident faculty.

5. **Provide information relating to other areas in which the major has contributed to campus-wide initiatives in the areas of learning, engagement, diversity, and others not already reported in a previous section of this report. These might include but are not limited to involvement in freshman learning communities, campus-community partnerships and collaborations, and campus diversity initiatives. Please provide specifics regarding the number of individuals involved in each initiative, the duration of the involvement, as well as the impact of the initiative on the campus.**

**Faculty Service on Committees supporting Campus-Wide Initiatives.**

Our campus service again includes only our four resident faculty members. However, during the program years under review, two faculty had only been here since 2012 and 2014 and were still untenured. As well, the campus practice is that untenured faculty members should receive lower service loads; as two faculty are untenured (and at the time of this report we had a new faculty member who started in 2017) this has impacted our distribution of service across the campus, university, and profession. Nonetheless, our campus service has been exemplary and has clearly grown in the last three years. Among the more significant service contributions, Sociology faculty have coordinated or led the academic unit; have participated on an extensive array of campus committees and searches.

The following list provides examples of how Sociology faculty have contributed to campus-wide initiatives:

- **Re-Imagining the First Year (RFY)**. The RFY initiative, organized and led by AASCU, brought together many IU campuses in discussions about the first-year experience. Faced with concerns about students' sense of belonging and retention, the RFY initiative focuses on a variety of different means by which campuses may improve conditions that are likely to contribute to improved retention and student success.
- **Kokomo Experience and You (KEY)**. Funded by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the KEY encourages creation of high-impact practices. Some of these involve established practices like internships, presentation of student research, First-Year experiences, and so on. Most recently, the KEY has provided funding for "sophomore sojourns," day trips intended to show students the ways in which their major may prepare them for careers after graduation and to foster a sense of community.
- **Honors Program/Undergraduate Research**. Our faculty have consistently worked with the campus Honors Program and Undergraduate research over the past several years. Students who enroll in an Honors course agree to take on additional reading and coursework, typically completing the course with an independent research project. Dr. Medley-Rath was invited to teach a course for the Honors Program. Finally, our students present their work at the annual Indiana University Kokomo

Student Symposium and other regional Sociological conferences under the guidance and supervision of faculty.

- **Faculty Senate.** The Faculty Senate at IU Kokomo is NOT a representative Senate; we agree that our contributions are imperative to the ongoing campus affairs. All Sociology faculty participate on a variety of Senate committees, including those that address educational policies and curriculum, budgetary affairs, faculty affairs, and many others.
- **General Education:** We participate heavily in campus general education by offering four courses that meet the outcomes in Critical Thinking, Cultural Diversity, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Quantitative Reasoning.
- **Diversity:** Our program is committed to diversity. Given the nature of the disciplines, the majority of our courses include diversity components. All resident faculty are involved in efforts to promote diversity within our courses, and through engaging student experiences. For example, faculty attend regular events on campus that address diversity and often incorporate these events into our courses.
- **Online Courses:** We have also participated extensively in the campus's online course offering initiatives. We have offered the following courses in the fully online format:

**Table 5 – Course Enrollments for Online Courses**

<b>Course</b>	<b>Academic Term &amp; Enrollment</b>
<b>SOC-S100 Introduction to Sociology</b>	Spring 2014 – 20 students
	Spring 2015 – 27 students
	Spring 2016 – 18 students
	Summer 2016 - 34 students
	Fall 2016 – 25 students
<b>SOC-S328 Juvenile Delinquency</b>	Fall 2013 – 31 students
<b>SOC-S360 Special Topics in Social Policy</b>	Summer 2014 – 22 students
	Summer 2016 – 36 students
	Summer 2017 – 19 students
<b>SOC-S363 Sociology of Development</b>	Fall 2013 – 19 students
	Fall 2015 – 15 students
<b>SOC-S420 Advanced Topics in Deviance</b>	Summer 2017 – 12 students

## V. PROGRAM QUALITY

Describe activities of the program that lead to high program quality and provide documentation of how that quality is measured.

1. **Provide evidence of the students' successful achievement of the program's learning outcomes.**

**Assessment** - As noted, assessment of Sociology courses has been challenging in the last five years, with some significant changes in outcomes listed. Collection of data has been consistent, but earlier efforts may not reflect the rigor or methodology that is currently in use. Assessment has recently adopted a more centralized approach. A single administrator at the university level is responsible for encouraging proper techniques and in collecting evidence of ongoing assessment.

The program creates a strategic plan each year where faculty collaborate to develop yearly goals and outcomes for the program. Reports are generated and passed on to the chair, dean, and VCAA. All resident faculty participate in assessment.

Our annual assessment activities indicate that we have reached the benchmark standard or higher that we set before data collection began. Assessment data suggest that our Sociology program is meeting or exceeding the standards set by the American Sociological Association for undergraduate sociology programs (See Appendix D: Assessment Cycle 2016-2017).

**2. Provide outcome information on graduates as available, in particular, employment and enrollment in graduate programs. Information on exit exams, licensure, and other tests and exams should also be provided, especially when comparative results are available.**

At this time, the Sociology program does not have a systematic way of tracking the employment of graduates from the program. We do maintain contact with some of our students after they graduate via email, Facebook, and other social media.

Most of the Sociology majors seek entry-level positions in human/social service agencies. The Sociology program has an outstanding track record with regard to the number of students who have found employment consistent with their major in Sociology. While we have not been able to track every graduate, we have an excellent track record with regard to the number of students who apply and are successful in being accepted into post-baccalaureate programs.

The following list contains a sample of job titles of former graduates of our program:

- Caseworker - County Welfare Departments
- Child Protective Services
- Prenatal Case Worker
- Youth Manager/Counselor
- Insurance Claims
- Social Services Director
- Family Assessment Worker
- Youth Specialist
- Parent-Child Interaction Specialist
- Retail Manager
- Life-Skills Instructor
- Administrative Assistant
- Legal Support
- Corrections Counselor

**3. Discuss the benefits, impact, and importance of accreditation where appropriate.**

Not applicable.

**4. What steps has the program taken to develop pedagogical innovation and forward-looking curricula?**

The Sociology faculty use innovative pedagogical and forward-looking curricula and techniques in all our classes. Several examples include:

- Experiential projects such as working with community groups, collecting and analyzing data for student-led research projects, and presenting research at conferences
- Focusing on learner-centered design by allowing students to choose from multiple assignment options.
- Developed online and other innovative delivery formats.
- Worked with the Honors Program to include classes for Honors credit.
- Used a variety of pedagogical techniques in our classes including lecture, small and large group discussions, movies, presentations, and debates.
- Engaged in numerous presentations in a casual format to engage the campus and community with our disciplines.
- Implemented Medical Sociology concentration
- Implemented Applied Sociology track
- Increased dramatically the number and variety of internships.

We also innovate by constantly revising and updating courses. We exchange ideas with one another and integrate ideas from other sources. Faculty stay current with reading in the field (particularly the scholarship of teaching and learning) and regularly attend conferences and workshops.

**5. Provide evidence of advising effectiveness.**

Our campus uses a professional advising system. Students now have more opportunities to meet with advisors and the monitoring of student progress has become more regular. Faculty retain the role of mentoring students informally, and often meet with students to review graduation plans, course selection, career options, and so on.

The advisors have their own regular assessment plans, and use several features such as electronic degree maps and academic planners. However, these tools are relatively new and we do not yet have data on their impact upon Sociology students.

**6. Describe specific efforts aimed at student success and retention.**

The Sociology faculty constantly strive to improve student success. We participate in campus-wide efforts, including VIP Day. There are as many as six VIP days in an academic year, and we always have at least one faculty member at the event to recruit. We explain our major and its requirements to prospective students at these events. We also routinely interact with students at the New Student Convocation during “meet the faculty” sessions.

The Sociology faculty all participate in the campus's FLAGS early warning system. This system helps identify at-risk students so advisors can intervene. Faculty submit reports at one, five, and ten weeks in the semester.

Over the last five year, Sociology has hosted a number of lectures and open forums on current regional issues to encourage our students to engage with such activities directly. These forums involve campus and community members at times. For example, we have invited guest speakers from local public health departments to speak to our students, and across campus, on the current opioid epidemic in Indiana. Similarly, we invite guest speakers to our classes to highlight what students can do with their sociology degrees.

If students are going to succeed at IU Kokomo in general and in Sociology in particular, they need to do well in SOC-S100 Introduction to Sociology. Moreover, on the basis of their experiences in this introductory course, students may decide to declare a major in Sociology. All of the Sociology faculty use special techniques to enhance student success and retention in their introductory courses.

For example, Dr. Weller uses experiential learning activities in her courses where students work together in groups to explore, through hands-on learning, the concepts presented in class. Students conduct small surveys with other students, explore sociological concepts in advertisements, and explore how race/ethnicity and gender are stereotyped in social media. Students collaborate on a written assessment and class presentation from these assignments.

Dr. Medley-Rath engaged students in a semester-long visual sociology assignment. Students take photos and create captions for several course concepts in a group project, Seeing Sociology. At the end of the semester, all photos/captions are compiled into one slide show that we view together as a class. In addition, Dr. Medley-Rath added an ethnography, Evicted, last fall. Along with the book, she added a site visit (Kokomo Rescue Mission) and a guest speaker from Jackson Street Commons (serving housing insecure veterans). The class traveled to hear the author, Matthew Desmond, speak in Indianapolis. Dr. Medley-Rath plans to continue using the site visit and guest speaker in future semesters. This experience gives introductory students a taste for our upper level elective courses.

In Prof. Oslawski-Lopez's Introduction to Sociology courses, students read an article about the My Lai massacre, watch a documentary, and then discuss its sociological significance in class. They try their hand at research by completing a short ethnographic study of campus, they learn about impression management and formation through a "speed get-to-know-you" exercise, they learn about traditional gender roles by completing the BEM scale and discussing their favorite toys growing up. Students also read a memoir and "bring text to life" by connecting the text to a class discussion and community needs / events.

**7. Provide evidence of faculty engagement in scholarship and service in the table below.**

**TABLE 6 – FACULTY SCHOLARLY PUBLICATIONS**

Year	Books	Chapters	Refereed Journal Articles	Refereed, Invited Publications	Conference Presentations
2012					1
2013					2
2014				8	2
2015			1	12	7
2016		1	3	11	9
2017		2	2	4	11

Please note that Table 6 represents faculty scholarship achieved by the current resident faculty participating in this current review. This includes Dr. Weller, Dr. Medley-Rath, and Professor Oslawski-Lopez. It does not include scholarship accomplishments from the retired, emeritus faculty.

**Table 7 Faculty Service and Engagement**

Type of Service	Total
Department Activities	33
Department Coordinator	1
Campus Service	60
Review (book, article, publisher)	20
Editorship/editorial staff/review board	2
Search chair/committee member	7
Service to the community	9
Community/consulting	1
<b>Sum Total</b>	<b>133</b>

## 8. SUMMARIZE SPECIAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Campus Faculty Awards:
  - Trustees Teaching Awards (1)
- University Faculty Awards
  - FACET nomination (1)
- Professional recognition outside the University
  - Nomination for the John F Schnabel Distinguished Contributions to Teaching Award from the North Central Sociological Association (1)
  - Elected officer for an American Sociological Association section (1)
- Awards and special recognition of students
  - 2017. Nicole Brown. "Corporal Punishment Research Proposal." North Central Sociological Association Undergraduate Student Paper Competition. 3rd Place. (supervised Stephanie Medley-Rath)
  - Each year we recognize one student (typically a senior) with an Outstanding Sociology Student award.
  - Numerous students accepted to graduate school
  - Numerous students graduating with honors

## VI. POTENTIAL

**Describe the relationship between current resources and program capacity. Support your responses with substantive explanations and forecasts based on measurable trends and other data.**

- 1. What is the program's maximum capacity for majors and minors with current resources? What is the maximum for service courses? In the last five years, what steps have been taken to strengthen the program and increase enrollment, and eliminate underused capacity?**

The program has consistently maintained an average of 54 majors. When considering our maximum capacity for majors and minors, our service loads need to be considered. With course release time as described above, as well as the corresponding course commitments we have little room for variance. As an estimate, if we added about 20 more majors, we would have to withdraw from campus wide initiatives, such as Freshman Learning Communities or the Honors Program, in order to offer courses within the major more frequently.

A good example is SOC-S252 Methods in Sociological Research, which is offered every Fall semester. We have set the cap for enrollment around 20 students for this class given the tremendous amount of research and grading that is required. However, each semester we are asked to increase the cap to allow additional students. This is not an issue of non-Sociology students taking the course, as the majority are Sociology students, but rather accommodating transfer students and students who declare Sociology as a major after their freshmen year. To offer the course every semester would result in faculty not being able to teach an upper level elective, which would have a negative impact on the availability of course options for students perusing a concentration. SOC-S355 Statistics for Social and Health Professionals, which is offered every spring semester, is facing a similar situation, in which the cap is regularly raised in order to admit additional students.

- 2. Has the program implemented any measures to increase efficiency in the last five years? Describe any reallocations of greater efficiency within the program or department. How might the program improve productivity through consolidation or through internal/external partnerships?**

The faculty have taken steps to regularize course offerings in order to improve students' ability to move more efficiently toward graduation. We have increased the frequency of certain courses, such as SOC-S252 Methods of Sociological Research and SOC-S355 Statistics for Social and Health Professionals to be offered every Fall and Spring semester respectively. We have created five-year course maps, which we share with the academic advisors, so students are aware of future offerings of upper level electives. We revise the course bulletin every spring to reflect our current and future course offerings. We have adjusted course caps when necessary and have made occasional course substitutions so students can graduate in a timely fashion. Finally, we offer courses on days and times that are most convenient for our students, allowing for family and work-life demands.

The Sociology program created degree maps for the three concentrations (Crime and Society; Medical Sociology; and Children and Families), which also aid in timely graduation. Students and academic advisors can easily identify the courses that contribute to each concentration and when the course will be offered.

We recently consolidated the internships (SOC-S494 Field Experience in Sociology and SOC-S497 Field Experience in Human and Social Services) so that one faculty member oversees all interns. This has led to more efficient advising of interns and has facilitated the interaction of interns with each other.

In sum, the Sociology degree program serves the IU Kokomo campus and its students in significant ways. The vast majority of Sociology majors are seeking entry level positions in the human and social services. The program has an excellent track record in terms of the jobs that Sociology majors get after graduation. The program also has an excellent record of students who successfully seek admission to Masters in Sociology and Masters in Social Work programs. The Sociology program offers a content rich curriculum that serves its majors very well. The program serves a number of “quasi-majors” who chose the General Studies degree as an alternative to Sociology in response to different requirements. The program needs to offer a large number of SOC-S100 Introduction to Sociology sections (a definite source of significant credit hour revenue for this campus) while also needing to offer a wide range of upper levels to serve its majors, minors, and non-majors (i.e. criminal justice and psychology) who need sociology courses to satisfy a wide variety of programmatic requirements. The sociology faculty must be maintained at its current level in order to ensure that the program can continue to address student needs in a variety of contexts and in order to be prepared for opportunities dealing with future growth.

## **VII. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Please provide information below about any special considerations that contribute to the program’s importance to the campus or that affect the program that has not been covered above.

The following additional items are attachments to this report:

- Appendix A: Course Enrollments from 2007-2018
- Appendix B: Curricula vita for resident Sociology faculty
- Appendix C: Degree mapping for the Traditional BA and BS Degrees
- Appendix D: Degree mapping for the Applied Sociology BA and BS Degrees
- Appendix E: Recent General Education Assessment Results from 2016-2017

## **VIII. EXTERNAL REVIEWER’S COMMENTS/CONCERNS ON EACH OF THE REVIEW CRITERIA**

- Program role and mission and consistency with University mission
- External and internal demand
- Program quality
- Productivity, costs, efficiency
- Potential
- Additional information

In addition to commenting on each criterion, external reviewers are asked to fill in the grid below, providing a summative judgment on the overall success of the program on each criterion.

**TABLE 8: EXTERNAL REVIEWER FEEDBACK**

CRITERION	YES/NO
Does the program demonstrate significant alignment with campus Mission, Values, and Strategic Plans?	
Does the program demonstrate substantial internal demand?	
Does the program demonstrate substantial external demand?	
Compared to other similar programs at similar institutions, is it of high quality?	
Does the program demonstrate significant overall productivity?	
Do program trends suggest potential for future program growth?	
Did the additional information provided suggest that the program demonstrates significant contributions to the campus, region?	

**IX. Deans' Recommendations Regarding the Future Status of the Program:**

- 1. Programs that are recommended for revision, merging, or other action** will be charged to present specific plans for revision, etc. by December 1 following the recommendation of the deans. These plans must provide measureable objectives and a year-by-year plan for the delivery of these objectives. Failure to meet objectives may result in a decision to eliminate the program.
- 2. Programs that are recommended for additional investment** will be charged to present specific plans for revision, expansion, etc. by December 1 following the recommendation of the deans. These plans must show how additional investment will positively affect the program in the categories of productivity and quality and indicate how these enhancements will be measured over time, both quantitatively and qualitatively.
- 3. Programs that are recommended for elimination** will be charged to present specific plans for phasing out the program, accommodating the graduation of current students in the program.
- 4. Programs that are recommended for no change in status** will not be required to make adjustments to their operations, nor will they be identified for the infusion of new resources.

Program recommended for revision \_\_\_\_\_

Program recommended for additional investment \_\_\_\_\_

Program recommended for elimination \_\_\_\_\_

Program recommended for no change in status \_\_\_\_\_

**Indiana University Kokomo  
Sociology Department Review**

Conducted by Yvonne Vissing, PhD

American Sociological Association Department Resources Group

March 13, 2018



**INDIANA UNIVERSITY**  
KOKOMO



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This March 2018 review of the Sociology Department of Indiana University Kokomo observes a department in transition. There have been many retirements in recent years, resulting in the hiring of exclusively newly minted PhDs, hence the department now consists of junior level faculty. They inherited curriculum, courses, culture and a program that were designed for other faculty, other students, other needs, at another point in time. The new faculty wants to address the needs and interests of current-day students. They have been struggling with how to integrate the old standard to meet contemporary demands. This has not been easy. The new faculty is confronted with additional demands that weren't a part of the old model, such as vibrant service-learning and community engagement activities, online education, technological innovations and pedagogical changes. As new professors, they are trying to build their careers, create good courses, work with students, conduct research, publish, make professional presentations and try to build their families and sane lifestyles. The three full-time Sociology professors dedicated, innovative, and enthusiastic. They are also stressed because of this multiplicity of competing demands. This report suggests some ways to reduce the pressures they face.

The details contained in this report highlight the strengths and challenges facing the Sociology Department. The challenges are largely structural in nature, hence recommendations focus primarily on organizational change. These changes could benefit not just the Sociology Department but other departments within the university as well.

The Sociology Department is confronted with a natural transformation that occurs when leadership and student demands change. This review compliments the full time and adjunct faculty within the Department of Sociology. It is this reviewer's opinion that given the circumstances, they are doing an admirable job. It is also this reviewer's opinion that all of them, full time and adjuncts alike, have much to offer the students and university and would benefit from more institutional support. It is important that all of them feel like valued members of the campus community and have opportunities to provide their insights, gifts, and talents to the discipline, and institution, that they all appear to genuinely love.

There are a variety of ways that the transformation of the department could realistically unfold. As junior faculty, and adjuncts who have limited power, all of them could benefit from organizational support and strategic planning that allows for a variety of options to be created and then assessed to determine the best course of action for the department's future. This may not be easy. It cannot occur overnight. Greater senior-level professional

mentorship, use of external experts or consultants, and university support (emotional, programmatic, staff and financial) would facilitate their ability to accomplish this worthy and important task.

## OVERVIEW

Indiana University Kokomo determined that beginning in Fall 2008 all academic programs must be reviewed every five years. This report is designed to fulfill this requirement. It covers the time period from Fall 2012 to current day (Spring 2018). The reviewer is a member of the American Sociological Association's consultant corps, the Department Resources Group (DRG), which are highly trained experts in reviewing, assessing and assisting sociology departments around the nation.

The Sociology Department of IU Kokomo has historically been comprised of four full time faculty members and a few adjunct professors. This continues to be the case. However, the composition of the faculty has changed from one of senior to junior level professors, due to several recent retirements. The number of student majors had declined due to changes in course requirements by some departments (example – Business) but the number of majors has now increased to 64. Upon revision of the Sociology program, there is the opportunity to increase number of majors. Additionally, the Sociology Department's course offerings provide both general education and service courses to the larger university. Sociology is regarded as the Queen of the Social Sciences and is a foundation of liberal arts education. The IU Kokomo faculty seeks to strength its program to provide meaningful education to students, and in the process could attract more majors. This reviewer is in full support of this growth.

The department was housed in a multidisciplinary program for many years and only recently (2015 -2017) has become a stand-alone department. This transformation is naturally accompanied by growing pains and a struggle with an identity crisis. While the past program met needs of the faculty, students and university at the time, times are different and the program needs to be different as a result. The current faculty are trying to figure out who this department should become. They are innovative and creative but need to have more internal clarification of who they wish to become, and greater support from administration on how to get there.

Given the large number of courses on the books (many that are not regularly taught), need to develop new courses that are relevant to the changing times, and building a stronger civic-engagement/service learning component to the department, the faculty feel a heavy work-burden and would like to have at least one new full-time faculty line. This would increase full-time faculty members to five in the short-run and perhaps six in

the years ahead. They also see the need to add additional adjunct faculty members to teach existing and new courses, but they struggle with finding additional qualified adjunct faculty to add to who they have now. The faculty would like to grow the department and it is this reviewer's opinion that they could do so. They have interesting and innovative ideas in mind to do so. However, they cannot continue to fulfill the range of professional obligations they currently have and add more things – there is a limit to what even the most dedicated faculty can do, from a human time and health perspective.

This review will employ a SWOT model assessing the department's strengths, obstacles, weaknesses, and threats. Recommendations are made throughout the report as suggestions for future departmental and university conversations occur on how to grow the Sociology Department.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The following methodology was employed to conduct this review:

Review of IU Kokomo website, with particular attention to the Sociology Department

A review of the most recent IU Kokomo Sociology Department's Self-Study report

IU Kokomo Visit

This included individual and group interviews with Full Time Faculty – Niki Weller, Stephanie Medley-Rath & Jamie Oslawski- Lopez and Adjunct Faculty - Ken Gardner and Karen Altergott-Roberts

Student Interviews

Interview with Sarah Heath, Chair Department of History, Political Science, and Philosophy; former Chair of the Department of Sociology, History, and Political Science

Interview with Mark Canada, Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs

Interview with Eric Bain-Selbo, Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences

# Findings

Key findings of this review are organized by thematic subheads below.

## **Mission**

The mission statement of the Department of Sociology reflects the larger IU Kokomo School of Humanities and Social Sciences mission and vision statement. It also is in sync with the overall mission of the American Sociological Association. Key areas include an emphasis on quality teaching of the sociological foundations that are essential to a liberal arts education, the pursuit of scholarship especially in the forms of research, publications and presentations, and service to the university, local community, and the discipline.

## **Curriculum Review**

### Student Decision-Making.

The reviewer critiqued the IU Bulletin at how courses are described, since this information was not available on the department's website.

<http://bulletins.iu.edu/iuk/2017-2018/iuk-pdf.pdf> . This goes from page 78-85. It is this reviewer's observation that the amount of material on this site for the department is overwhelming and perhaps over-kill. There is much duplication and this lends towards confusion. Streamlining what is offered is highly recommended.

Students are instructed to choose either a traditional track or an applied track of study. This reviewer finds this to be unusual. Having students decide between pursuing a traditional or applied track is a somewhat unique programmatic decision for sociology departments. Both have value and students should be wisely exposed to both. Both are important and both are typically provided in departments of sociology across the country. Sometimes students may specialize in applied or public sociology, but this is usually viewed as an option. This reviewer recommends eliminating this bifurcation and allowing students to have a program with a more integrated focus.

Students are instructed to choose being either in a BA or BS program. The reviewer understands that having two degree programs was created so that students could double-major. In reviewing the BA and BS program requirements, the BA requires 42 credits with the BS requires 30. This is a significant difference. Reviewing how many students go into each would be a worthwhile data exercise that could lead towards the selection of one or the other. It is the reviewer's recommendation that the value of having both programs be evaluated and potentially streamlined and better clarified for students to understand this decision making paradigm

### Core and Elective Courses.

The core courses for most sociology departments around the country include:

Introduction to Sociology

Theory

Research Methods

Statistics

A capstone course

As a core course IU Kokomo requires an internship. This type of course is variable within departments across the nation. Having every student do an internship makes sense in a social work program, but its need is less clear in a sociology department. The pressure for faculty to require internships for all students has increased the stress for faculty to find good placements, work with community partners, support students in them, and create opportunities for synthesis in and between students. Sent along with this report is a Chronicle of Higher Education article looking at pros and cons of internships. Discussing the role of an internship as a core or elective class is worthy of conversation among faculty and administration.

Typical additional courses offered in most sociology departments include courses on race, gender, stratification, social problems/deviant behavior, social-psychology, ageism (children or the elderly), institutions (family, education, government, economics, communication, sports, medicine, etc.). Sometimes courses are developed in accordance with professor interests, such as sociology of food, war and peace, religion, to name but a few.

Most departments provide majors with a flow sheet of what courses they should take. The ordering of when students take these courses can vary. Intro always comes first and the capstone should come last and be a culminating scholarly experience of one's academic growth. The ordering of when students take other core classes varies. Some departments have a required order of what course should be taken, while other departments have no specific required order.

The order of methods, statistics and theory varies considerably across departments. Conversations with IUK faculty are considering moving into a more rigid and defined ordering of what semester and year to take what courses. There are distinct pros and

cons to a highly structure or a flexible ordering of courses. The direction selected by IUK needs to be seriously considered.

The department is considering a more integrative strategy that builds upon a cohort student model where students would take core courses together and conduct a thematic research project that they would carry out throughout their program. Each cohort would use a different theme. Over the years this would build up an internal data base that they could use in other classes for students. This is a creative approach that has many positive possibilities. However, how students who could not take courses at the prescribed times with their cohort is a concern that would have to be worked out in order for this model to succeed. Running a pilot program to test this strategy could be a worthwhile opportunity for the department.

Faculty are considering the use of bridge classes to help prepare students for success in the major.

Nationally, there is great variability in what other courses are offered within sociology department. One trend is to offer only additional courses that fit within an umbrella of concentrated foci. Another trend is to have a limited number of concentration areas with a smorgasbord of other interesting courses that may whet student appetites to take more sociology courses. These electives could also be of use to other departments or embellish educational perspectives for students in general. A few departments opt not to have any focus area and provide the core and other non-related courses. It seems that the IU Kokomo sociology department fits into the middle-category described above.

### Concentrations.

There are three concentrations currently on the IUK Sociology department books. This reviewer believes that concentrations can be good marketing tools, good for obtaining grants, and helps a department to have a focus or “brand”.

This reviewer’s opinion is that the child and family concentration has strong student appeal, career potential, and grant-obtaining possibilities. So does the medical sociology concentration. There are faculty members who are wedded to these areas who could build them. This reviewer is recommending the elimination of the Crime and Society concentration; it appears to have been born out of a previous time and set of circumstances that are no longer. It is the least strong of the three. There is already a department of criminal justice at the university. The courses within the crime area can stay as electives, since they are interesting and of use to the criminal justice students. There is not sufficient faculty expertise in this area at this time to place scarce resources into this concentration. There is conversation about building other concentrations in the

future, but those can evolve into the future. At this point, having two and building them to be strong makes more sense.

As departments identify their personality or brand, courses develop in areas of specialty – more and focused courses within fewer specialties. IF IU Kokomo wants 2 concentrations, then review all the courses on the books to determine if they are relevant. Consider what else should go into those concentrations, and where new courses could have overlap appeal into other areas and disciplines.

There seem to be too many courses on the books for the number of faculty to realistically teach on a semi-regular basis. Some of them do not appear relevant to any of the concentrations. This is fine – courses don't have to fit in a concentration. In fact, there may be benefits to having courses that are interesting and good draws for students in general, or as support for other concentrations or majors. As an example, there is talk of a new social psychology course. That could fit into both the medical and child/family concentrations, or become a strong stand-alone class for students, especially in psychology or criminal justice. There are new courses (like environmental ones) that could be developed that would be interesting but that don't fall under concentrations. The department could review each of the courses on the books to see if they should be kept or revised and updated to be more relevant and interesting to students. Keeping older classes that are on the books just because the current faculty inherited them may not make good sense. Every faculty has specialty areas that they would like to develop. Keeping faculty engaged with their areas of research and sharing it with students can be a wise decision. Consider current needs and directions. This reviewer would be happy to talk about this in more detail upon request.

## SWOT Analysis

In order to conceptualize the dynamics within the Sociology Department and its placement within the larger IU Kokomo system, the author of this review has chosen to utilize a SWOT format:

### Strengths

1. **Faculty Dedication:** The current three faculty members are very dedicated to building a quality program for students and the university. Dedication of this magnitude is an important asset for the university. Dedication is observed with having four classes/three preparations per term, incorporating innovative and creative service learning and scholarly opportunities into their courses, spending much of their personal time for school-related activities. All of them

are junior level and have the challenge of teaching many classes, serving the university and community, and trying to build their scholarly portfolios and disciplinary presence. They are enthusiastic, innovative and hard-working. They have willingly shouldered doing more and more work for the students, department and university. This reviewer wants administration to be aware of their high level of dedication and encourages they not to be overburdened in the future for fear that they could either burn out or leave the institution.

2. **Service:** The faculty have embraced the university's mission to provide civic engagement and service learning opportunities for students. The vast amount of service they deliver exceeds the amount that most other universities provide, even those that are double or triple in size. The faculty are providing a tremendous amount of service to the university. This could be a big asset as the university applies for Carnegie credentials. As a reviewer observation, there needs to be a more efficient way of documenting the amount of service to the community, number of students served, the fiscal contributions both made and received, etc. This reviewer suspects that the lack of efficient documentation systems for community engagement and service learning could be better documented across camps in other departments as well.
3. **Curriculum:** For a small department there is a great effort to provide students with a core curriculum of courses that are essential to the field, as well as elective courses that will provide students with information about other important and interesting areas of study. The core includes an introduction to sociology course, research methods, theory, statistics, an internship and a senior seminar. The elective courses are many and variable. They have ideas about how to transform existing courses, as well as ideas about new courses that could make valuable contribution to the curriculum.

### **Weaknesses**

1. **Faculty:** The current faculty are junior, untenured, and as young faculty they have the burden of multi-tasking in a variety of new areas of professional development. There are no senior level faculty within the department for them to call upon for mentoring and wisdom. They are being asked to do thing outside of their areas of expertise and are doing the best they can to be successful, but could probably do so in a smoother manner if they had more expertise in these new demand areas.

2. **Curriculum:** The core courses in Sociology tend to be Introduction to Sociology, Theory, Research Methods, Statistics, and either a capstone or senior seminar course. The IU Kokomo core also includes an internship.

All faculty incorporate applied or service components into their classes. These type of civic engagement experiences are indeed worthy for students, but they are time-intensive for faculty, especially in small departments with heavy professional responsibilities. If the university is committed to their providing and integrating service components into their course offerings, the faculty need more support in terms of additional faculty lines and resources.

The number of courses on the books are extensive but aren't necessarily reflective of what needs to go into building strong foundations in the concentrations. This is true for each of the concentrations. It may be years between times a given elective course is offered. This makes it hard for a student to graduate on time with all the courses needed. This weakness could be addressed by the hiring of additional faculty to ensure that all courses are offered more regularly. It could also be addressed by streamlining course offerings. A problem with cutting courses is complicated by the need to add new ones that would be useful and interesting.

3. **Funding:** There is no line-item for service learning in the Sociology budget, yet the faculty are expected to provide it. Faculty may spend considerable amounts of time applying for competitive internal grants or funding, with no assurance that they will receive it. If the department knew it had a set amount of funding, the faculty could prioritize how the funds would be spent. Faculty could still apply for additional funding for programs that were special. This request seems totally logical and could free the faculty to decide how to integrate service learning into their program.
4. **Assessment:** It is reported that the university regularly changes its assessment criteria. This fluctuation makes it challenging for faculty to develop long-term assessment strategies.

The IU Kokomo Sociology Department does not seem to utilize the American Sociological Association (ASA) strategies for assessment. While this may not be of concern within the university, it is a concern for the field. The ASA provides a wide variety of assessment and planning materials that could be of value to the department, both for building programs and for assessing the impact of what they are providing to students. It is recommended that the

faculty be provided the support, resources and time to review and utilize ASA assistance.

5. **Online Education.** Online education is here to stay as a dominant education platform. This reviewer admits being surprised at how cumbersome online education is being handled at within the IU system. It appears that IU Kokomo has little authority to do much to change the protocol, but there seems to be better ways to handle it than currently in place. There seems to be some faculty resistance to an active online education program, especially for core or upper-level courses. This reviewer teaches core and upper level classes online regularly and students learn and appreciate them. The reviewer understands that in many ways the Sociology faculty's hands are tied around this issue, but encourages them, as well as the larger IU system, take a more open look to the benefits of online instruction.
6. **Use of Adjunct Faculty:** The reviewer met with two adjunct faculty members. They were both very qualified individuals with graduate degrees, extensive professional expertise, and in many ways had credentials that were superior to that of the junior full time faculty members. Yet, because of their adjunct status, they were not informed of key university events and their opinions were not always solicited. These individuals have been here much longer than the faculty. In some ways they could serve as senior-level mentors to the faculty. But because adjunct professors are historically lower on the professional stratification ladder, their potential contributions become limited. This reviewer knows many adjunct professors around the county and must compliment these particular individuals at IU Kokomo because their expertise and professional skills far exceed that which many departments have. One professor is content with her current assignments but the other longs for a full-time instructor appointment. The reviewer recommends that university administrators consider this. His appointment would provide additional support that the department needs, expertise in areas that the department could use, senior-scholar support in many ways at a price that is more than affordable to the university. This is not recommended to replace the need for additional full-time tenure track positions. It is suggested as an additional line of support. As the department transforms, it is generally recommended that universities transform the treatment of adjunct faculty as important scholars within all departments.
7. **Compensation:** The reviewer did not ask full time faculty what they earned, but there was concern that they were asked to do more and more without additional release time or financial compensation. Adjunct faculty who have

been appointed for many years feel that they should have increases in their rate, as this is standard within many universities. It is reported that the adjunct faculty rate varies from within the different IU campuses, with some earning double what is paid at IU Kokomo. Being transparent about pay rates and having the same rate of pay for all adjunct professors is recommended. Some universities are offering vacation time or other benefits for long term adjunct faculty. While full and adjunct faculty love teaching for IU Kokomo, there was universally expressed concerns about financial compensation for their good works.

8. **Web Page:** The Sociology Department web page isn't strong enough, in this reviewer's opinion. It does not have an overview of faculty or courses. The reviewer had to go into the link to the university bulletin to find what courses were offered and exactly what courses were required for the concentrations, tracks, etc. While concentrations are listed, they are not engaging. Perhaps this is a product of university design to limit what information can be put on a page. Irrespective, this reviewer doesn't think the web page is not going to attract students. While there is a link to the ASA links, from talking with students, it doesn't appear that they are aware of these resources. Faculty could do more to integrate students into the ASA and link them with that organization's helpful resources. There is also a link to the department's Facebook page, and it is actually pretty good. Someone (student in the Soc club or who?) is posting on it semi-regularly and posting interesting material. However, it too could be more engaging. It is reported that there is also a majors-only Facebook page that this reviewer did not see.

### Opportunities

1. **Faculty:** Because faculty are junior and the senior professors are gone, they have the opportunity to alter the existing program and transform it into new directions that may be more cutting-edge and meaningful for students. As is normal within departments, courses and trajectories that are implemented at one point in time may need to be changed to meet new demands and dynamics. While this transformation may be bumpy and require negotiation, getting rid of the old and bringing in the new has value – but needs to be wisely designed and implemented in order to be successful. This is true for course development as well as for faculty hires. Incorporating new full-time faculty lines could bring vigor and vitality to the Sociology Department; bringing in more new adjunct faculty with different skill-sets and professional networks could also help grow the department.

2. **Curriculum:** Please see discussion on curriculum earlier in this report for more detail. Summary:

The requirements for the major could be reviewed to determine greatest efficacy and efficiency.

The ordering and structure of classes for majors be evaluated.

Both the program structure and course offerings developed in the past need to be reconsidered and updated to meet contemporary student and faculty interests.

Offering two concentrations and a variety of interesting other courses could be a useful way to update the department.

3. **Involvement of Adjunct Faculty:** The current adjunct faculty have excellent credentials, good experience, and high levels of commitment to the department. They could be a bridge of support for the junior faculty in many ways. The traditional stigma associated with being an adjunct professor is counter-productive. New adjunct professors could provide both relief and expertise to the full time faculty. Additionally, hiring adjunct faculty could improve the diversity of the department. Right now all faculty appear to be white, heterosexual females who are about the same age. The new candidates are white males of about the same age. The current adjuncts provide some diversity with respect to age, which is important and to be valued. Adjuncts who were from different racial, ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, nationality, etc. could provide students with positive exposure to professionals who were different from themselves.
4. **Relationships with other university units:** IU Kokomo is building interdisciplinary programs that hold potential for the Sociology Department to grow and inspire student learning. These include the Social Justice program, Sustainability minor, Community Engagement program, the ACRC, the KEY program, to name a few. How exactly these integrations and the forms that they may take can occur is a worthy consideration. There is a lot of potential to do creative programming around this area.
5. **Assessments.** The reviewer has encouraged the department to integrate assessment and support materials prepared by the American Sociological

Association. These materials are detailed and of high quality and could be of assistance to the department in a variety of ways.

The reviewer has encouraged the department to consider developing an online tool for student majors to know what they are going to have to do to fulfill the major. This guideline could help students to anticipate what to do when in order to graduate and successfully build their career.

The reviewer encouraged the department to consider implementing a pretest/posttest of knowledge in the field for students. Providing a survey instrument to students in Intro Soc and then again in the Senior Seminar could provide data to document what students have learned through the major.

The reviewer has encouraged the faculty to consider having students develop electronic portfolios. They could be given details on what should go into it over their studies. At the end of the program, it could be used as both an assessment tool for the department and a career-showcase document for students to have ready for graduate school admissions or employment support.

6. ***Communicating with Majors and the Undergraduate Sociology Club:***

Students report having a very positive relationship with the IUK Sociology Department faculty. They feel the faculty are good role models for the profession. They also believe that the faculty cares about them and are good mentors. This is a hidden benefit of having small faculty-student ratios, and reinforces faculty desire to add new faculty lines. Students reported finding more support from sociology faculty than in most other departments.

It is recommended that the department use their university website better to post more key documents and guidelines for students, and hold more workshops just for students – perhaps this would revitalize the Soc Club at the same time.

The club is not reported to attract many students or do many things. This is an under-developed potential asset. Students report that perhaps 3-5 students actually attend meetings. The role of president and vice-president are useful for students, good resume entries, and have appeared to help advance credentials and opportunities for students. The club membership and activity level is very sparse compared to other clubs on campus, according to student reports. The club could be revitalized to provide workshops for learning about how to perform in interviews, learning in brown-bag seminars about their (or faculty) research, to engage in socio-learning opportunities, like watching a

film and discussing it or going as a group to an area or and discussing it. As an example, students could go together for an organized visit to Lilly pharmaceuticals to learn more about big pharma and the role of the pharmaceutical industry. These kinds of events could perhaps be associated with a 1 credit or course opportunity. The bottom line is that the club is not very functional now but could be. Then again, this would require professor time to mentor the students in this endeavor, and professor time is already a big concern.

### **Threats**

1. **Faculty:** The number faculty is small compared to the amount of work that needs to be done. At this point their enthusiasm and dedication make them willing to self-sacrifice, but there is the potential of burning them out if Administration isn't careful about realistic performance expectations. They aren't just in the career-building phase, they are also in the family-building phase. Compensation is important when adding on more and more demands and responsibilities; one's time is a valuable commodity. There is concern by this reviewer that additional responsibilities and expectations have the potential of wearing-down these dedicated faculty members unless relief in forms of more faculty support, resources and compensations are provided.
2. **Service Role:** It is clear to this reviewer that Sociology faculty members are receiving mixed messages about the role of service. On one hand, they are told that they should do a minimum amount of service as they build their classes, program, and research. They believe they must have one good publication every three years; they are at the career-building point in their profession and understands that the university wants to support that. On the other hand, they hear that civic engagement and service learning is important, that Sociology students will benefit from being exposed to real-world opportunities, speakers, trips, etc. They have risen to this challenge and seem to have active service learning in virtually every class! This is unusual in most sociology departments and is a unique strength of the IU Kokomo department. But this contribution is coming at extensive cost to the young faculty's professional and personal lives. Another pressure for service they feel is that being on committees allows them to meet faculty from other departments; being involved in university activities allows them to meet administrators, students in other majors, and community representatives. They would benefit from a clear-cut determination by administration of exactly how much service learning they should do, and where it fits into their professional development scheme.

3. **Curriculum:** Is the curriculum that is currently in place a big draw to students? The number of students is up to 64 from 50 in previous years, showing that the department is doing something right to increase numbers. What other courses could the department be providing as courses to generate meaningful student interest? There is conversation about adding environmental sociology courses to the curriculum. These could be interesting and a draw for students. It's important to make sure courses are relevant and meaningful in order for sociology to thrive.

There is a concern over who is offering what courses – should more senior-level faculty be offering introductory classes as a means of recruitment into the major, or should they focus on teaching the more specialized upper-level courses? There is also concern over the variable class size – adjuncts often teach sections with higher number of students than more senior-level faculty. This is perplexing to this reviewer, who encourages more standardization of minimum and maximum student caps for classes.

### **Student Demand and Enrollment Trends**

It appears from a review of the data that enrollments have been holding steady and generally increasing. If this is the case during the time of department upheaval and transformation, it bodes well for an increase of students as the department better defines its identity. The fact that students report very positive interactions and support from Sociology professors could support a university-wide reputation of this department as being a good major. These factors support the reviewer's belief that investing in this department and faculty could be a worthwhile investment.

### **Service to the Profession**

The faculty of the Sociology Department are professionally active within the profession. As junior level faculty, they are regularly making professional presentations – and providing opportunities for students to do so! Many are publishing in peer reviewed journals or other types of publications. Given the fact that they are creating new course preparations, engaging with students, involving student learning, and being active within the university, it would appear that they are making realistic contributions to the profession, especially since IU Kokomo is not a R1 institution.

## **Additional Recommendations**

There have been many recommendations, suggestions and observations about this department contained in this report. Below are additional recommendations made by this reviewer for the benefit of the Sociology Department at Indiana University Kokomo.

### **Organizational Recommendations**

1. Review of assessment standards and learning objectives to be in line with those of the ASA. The ASA focuses not just on sociological learning but on liberal arts education in general. Reviewing their materials would be, at minimum, a useful academic exercise and may hold potential for positive assessment development.
2. Creation of an Internship-Community Partnership Coordinator. The Sociology Department faculty are spending an extraordinary amount of time integrating service learning and community partnership activities into their courses. This is a unique contribution that requires a significant amount of time. If there was a university-wide coordinator for internships, speakers and community partner development, this could free the faculty a great deal to focus more on instruction rather than logistic details.
3. Creation of an Institutional Research Coordinator. It appears to this reviewer that there is no one coordinating data on civic engagement, student activities, and data beyond enrollment. There must be someone internally doing institutional research to some degree. However, it appears that it would be useful to the university to have a strong sense of baseline data on a variety of indicators, and then collect data in an efficient and effective manner from this point on so that comparisons can be made to document success. It would also identify gaps and areas of potential need and growth.
4. Creation of a Grants Coordinator. It appears to this reviewer that the entire university would benefit from the creation of a grants coordinator. The Sociology Department has concentrations in areas that are ripe for grants securing. Issues of health, family, children and youth, crime, and potentially their new area of environment are important social issues for which there is grant money. Indianapolis is known for a variety of philanthropic supporters that could be interested in funding innovative new programs. Applying for a grant requires extensive expertise in order to be effective. This reviewer teaches grantwriting and has applied for and secured grants and knows that it is time intensive with no assurance of result. Having someone who could make faculty aware of potential funding opportunities, help them to put the grants package together, work up the budget, and submit it would be of big help to faculty across campus. IU

Bloomington has these resources – why can't they be shared with IU Kokomo and other campuses?

5. Create a university-wide mentoring program for new faculty. The Sociology Department is comprised exclusively of younger, junior level faculty. They need greater information and support from senior level faculty. This ranges from “how to do” certain things at the university, issues regarding tenure and promotion, balancing of teaching, research and service obligations, to “what to do when” certain things happen with colleagues or students. The mentors could potentially serve in ombudsmen roles if necessary. It is the opinion of this reviewer that while the Sociology faculty get along well together now and support one another, the potential for tension or conflict exists and could be prevented or managed through having mentors. Underlying currents of dis-ease are common in almost every department of every university; they are normative and should be expected. The potential sources of tension include all faculty being at similar stages in age, career status, demographic composition, and need to establish credentials. The Sociology Department has a history of power struggles and stratification differentials that are part of the institutional fabric; residues of this may be present in underlying ways. The faculty are encouraged in this report to shed past programmatic operations/courses as they consider how to build the program for the future. While they are unanimous in this goal, chances are normatively high for there to be disagreement and power struggles over which way to steer the departmental ship in the future. This may be further exacerbated by the addition of a new faculty member. Prevention is good medicine, and each faculty member having a senior level faculty advisor who is not related to the department may be of help. The American Sociological Association has a mentor program as well and can link junior faculty with senior faculty at other institutions that could be explored. This is an excellent faculty base to be nurtured and provided with opportunities for training, development, and collaboration.

### **Departmental Recommendations**

6. Better use of the American Sociological Association resources. The ASA has a variety of resources that could be of help to the university as a whole, such as its highly developed liberal arts learning objectives and assessment tools. The department could benefit from greater use of the student career center, distribution of undergraduate ASA handbooks (I will send some for their review), and supporting some student memberships into the organization, as well as student membership in some ASA sections relevant to the department, such as their Medical Sociology section or their Section on Children and Youth.

7. Creation of a Sociology Department strategic plan. The faculty have a lot to do – too much to do all at once. It is recommended that they have a work-retreat and come up with a 1, 3 and 5 year strategic plan so that they all (and administration) know who is going to accomplish what task when.
8. Additional faculty lines. In order for the faculty to grow, they need to have faculty lines. According to student feedback, one of the things they most appreciate about the department is the personal concern and mentorship they receive from faculty. They believe they are learning important scholarly information, but they also believe the faculty genuinely cares about them. In serving an institution of heavy first-generation college students, many who come from modest socio-economic backgrounds, this type of interpersonal care and concern really matters.

Adding a fifth full time faculty member is recommended as part of their 3 year plan. Since adding a full time instructor line now is unlikely, the Sociology Department has an adjunct who is eager to assume this role and has the potential to teach or develop courses that could fit their to-be-determined-refined set of course offerings. This could be explored. Hiring additional adjuncts as well could bring in fresh perspectives. Inclusion of diversity hires would be recommended. While the population of students is white, exposure to people of different racial, ethnic, religious, age, ability, and sexual orientations may widen their appreciation of all peoples.

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