

Unit Name: Sociology and Anthropology Assessment Summary Fall 2008-Spring 2009

What are the student learning outcomes in your unit?

Critical thinking skills

Ability to understand the difference between structural explanations versus individual explanations to explain social problems and social phenomenon. (to acquire the “sociological and anthropological imaginations)

To acquire an understanding of the “first wisdom of sociology” – things are not what they seem

Student writing skills

Student research skills

Which outcome did you assess this academic year?

All of the outcomes were assessed last year.

How did you assess their skills before, during and / or at the end of the semester / academic year?

Our assessments tools are primarily our capstone courses. In sociology we use S261 Research Methods, S262 Statistics, S254 Qualitative Field Research and S340 Sociological Theory. In anthropology we use A200 Ethnographic Methods and A360 Anthropological Thought. In both theory courses students are required to write term papers focusing on sociological and / or anthropological theory. All full-time faculty in the department are expected to read the papers and assess each students’ ability to explain the principal component of the major theoretical perspectives in their respective major. Anthropology majors are required to demonstrate their understanding of the holistic or four field approach in anthropology by enrolling in core courses in sociolinguistics, archaeology, physical anthropology, and cultural anthropology. Sociology majors are required to create a survey instrument in S261 and collect data and employ statistical analysis in S262 resulting in a paper modeled after published articles in the *American Sociological Review*. Once again, sociology faculty review each student’s final paper to assess their ability in conducting quantitative research. Students in S254 conduct participant observation research projects resulting in a final paper which is also assessed by full time sociology and anthropology faculty.

Another form of assessment we consistently use each year involves sponsoring student papers at the annual COAS Research Conference, the Midwest Student Sociology Conference, and the North Central Sociological Association Research Conference. 5 students participated in the conferences last year and two students co-authored published articles with a sociology faculty member last year as well.

Please summarize the data you have collected this semester / academic year.

We are in the process of collecting quantitative data on whether majors improve in overall skills when completing the capstone courses listed above. The Chair of the Department was on sabbatical in the spring semester 2009 and the Acting Chair was not able to complete the data collection process. However, qualitative data has been collected and we are in the process of analyzing this data during the fall 2009 semester.

Please describe any programmatic changes you have made or are planning to make based on the data you have collected.

During the Spring semester 2009 the Department's proposal for a joint major with IUSB in anthropology was approved. We have spent much of the Fall 2009 semester working on the anthropology curriculum and getting our new major in place. We already have 24 anthropology majors, are conducting a search for a new position in cultural anthropology, and are continuing to work on revising and modifying the anthropology curriculum. We are also in the process of developing a five year plan for revising and modifying, and strengthening the sociology curriculum.

****Note:** Please use this template to provide the responses to the prompts above.**