Assessment Plan

B.A. in SOCIOLOGY and ANTHROPOLOGY
School of Social Science
College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Kean University

Mission:
The Sociology Program at Kean University has several related goals that are aligned with the University Mission. As a major program within a highly diverse university, the Sociology faculty is devoted to instilling in its students the sociological imagination as a way of understanding the relationship between their personal lives and the history of their world. As such, we are devoted to academic rigor, critical thought, teaching excellence and ethical scholarship.

As a department, we seek to inspire in our students a commitment to democracy and firm principles of egalitarianism that will prepare them for graduate work and positions in research, teaching, public service, business, and anywhere else where they may serve as agents of social change. We aim to develop in our students an awareness of the effects of social structures and social forces on human lives, organizations and groups. We further emphasize the importance of respecting diversity and promoting social justice in a pluralistic society. In summary, we are committed to helping our students become critically active and informed members of their communities, their societies and their world.

Assessment Process:
The Sociology major must complete five core courses, five major electives, and two social science electives, in order to complete the requirements for graduation. While the core courses provide a solid foundation in the theoretical and methodological aspects of Sociology, the electives enable students to apply the sociological perspective to many inter-related subfields. Therefore, the faculty has agreed to center our assessment on the courses that involve the core knowledge of Sociology at Kean University.

Each core course has assessment tools such as exams, research exercises, reflective writing assignments, and group projects, etc., as part of the evaluation process. The Sociology Program has used results of assessment for making improvements to program practices aimed at increasing student learning. Beginning in the Fall of 2011, the culminating assignment in the Capstone Course has been identified as a direct measure for assessing attainment of our program’s Student Learning Outcomes. In this course, assessment data collected in assignments, required students to provide evidence of meeting our program goals. Each semester, composite data from scored student assignments are collected and analyzed to address areas of program strengths and weaknesses and to inform our decisions, ultimately resulting in program improvements. In addition, the Graduating Student Survey will be implemented as a systematic process for gathering data utilizing an indirect measure. Data from the student survey will also help inform our decisions regarding program improvement to increase student learning and to address possible academic program re-orientation.
Complementary to the effort to enhance the development of research skills in our students, guided tours to the library are coordinated with library staff to introduce students to the wide array of services, databases and resources that are offered. This is a useful technique to not only address immediate content but also to engage students in the use of the library itself as an important source of knowledge. Through these efforts, we seek to enable students to understand the process of developing annotated bibliographies, retrieving peer review journal articles, and targeted searches for books to best maximize searches in the Kean Library System. Likewise, the capstone course students received guided tours of the library to evaluate Kean University Library space, services and website. These efforts show how university-wide services are incorporated into courses content and in the development of students’ academic skills.

The emphasis of the core courses on social research has led to the development of research proposals, research analyses, and writing emphasis assignments and exercises which require students to summarize readings, prepare citation formats for references, develop outlines for presentations and written assignments, and to make oral presentations. The implementation of oral presentations have also led to the development of outline assignments that are consistent with the General Education

Criteria for Oral Rubrics.
In addition, the General Education Writing Rubric has been used as an example to develop a rubric for the capstone course in Sociology. Specifically for the capstone course, the student learning objectives of the Sociology Program assess creativity, ability and strong grasp in understanding: 1) sociological concepts by utilizing specific concepts from sociological theory to analyze everyday life practices and social structures, 2) the application of the sociological perspective of diversity based on the intersectionality of class, gender, ethnicity and/or other social indicators in the analysis of social processes broadly defined, and 3) updates to the latest sociological analysis in tune with contemporary social transformations such as recent social movements, technological impacts in society, and different levels of economic reorganization at the local, national and global levels.

The assessment process has also helped to fine tune existing courses to comply with programmatic needs. The assessment process provided the opportunity to evaluate the program and produced more specific changes to match in a more complementary manner professors strengths, courses content, and student expectations. As a result, the faculty has made the decision to emphasize an academic orientation that identifies globalization, technology, and sustainability as guiding conceptual interests for the faculty, the program, and courses content.

These changes have been customized to develop stronger critical thinking skills and the ability to understand the social construction of reality, context, positionality, reflexivity, and multi-sided arguments about social issues in an ethical manner that considers the consequences of research, social justice, and issues of representation in our society. The role of the researcher as an agent for social change is examined to provide a standpoint from which informed policy can be analyzed and promoted. The assessment plan for the Sociology Program will continue to:
- integrate recommendations to the courses in a sophisticated, socially progressive, and effective manner,
- understand that assessment is an on-going process that needs to consider ethical and programmatic issues,
- integrate flexibility in matching professors areas of expertise,
- encourage professional development, and
- promote ways to grow as a program and in its collaborative efforts university-wide.

Program Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) – as aligned with KU SLOs derived from the Institutional Mission* and GE SLOs.** (Data from Direct and Indirect Measures collected each semester in the Capstone Course and other required courses.)

_students who graduate with a BA in Sociology and Anthropology should be able to:_

**SLO1:** Demonstrate an understanding of the core concepts and theories within the sociological perspective through a rigorous analysis of society and social behavior. (KU 1, 2, 3) (GE K1, K2, S1, S4, S5, V4, V5)

_Direct Measure#1_: SOC 4600: Research paper scored with rubric to demonstrate achievement of program goals.

_Direct Measure#2_: (Beginning Fall 2012) Soc 3050 Development of Sociological Theory: Written assignment to be scored with rubric measuring attainment of SLO

_Indirect Measure_: Graduating Student Survey

**SLO2:** Critically analyze the effects of social structures and social forces on human lives, organizations and groups. (KU 1, 4) (GE K2, S1, S3, S4,V4)

_Direct Measure#1_: SOC 4600: Research paper scored with rubric to demonstrate achievement of program goals.

_Direct Measure#2_: To be Piloted Fall, 2012 -- Soc. 1000 - Pre and Post Test

_Indirect Measure_: Graduating Student Survey

**SLO3:** Effectively comprehend and ethically use quantitative and qualitative methodologies to gain a better understanding of the social world. (KU 1, 2, 3) (GE K1, K2, S1, S3, S4, S5,V2)

_Direct Measure#1_: Soc 2052: Research proposal scored with rubric to indicate mastery of sociological methodology

_Direct Measure#2_: Soc 3052, Qualitative Methods, Written project connected to research proposal (Rubric developed by faculty)

_Indirect Measure_: Graduating Student Survey

**SLO4:** Identify the importance of diversity, democracy, egalitarianism and social justice in a pluralistic society and articulate the implications for social policy and action in efforts to bring about social change.
Direct Measure#1: SOC 4600: Research paper scored with rubric to demonstrate achievement of program goals.

Direct Measure#2: (beginning Fall 2012) Soc. 2000 Social Justice – Assignment of written paper to be scored with rubric assessing for SLO

Indirect Measure: Graduating Student Survey

SLO5: Articulate, analyze and describe the relationship between their personal lives, the history of their world, and contemporary social arrangements in local, national and global contexts. (KU 1, 4) (GE K3, S1, S2, S5, V1, V3)

Direct Measure#1: SOC 4600: Research paper scored with rubric to demonstrate achievement of program goals.

Direct Measure#2: To be Piloted Fall, 2012 -- Soc. 1000 - Pre and Post Test

Indirect Measure: Graduating Student Survey

* KU Student Outcomes: Kean University graduates should be able to:

1. Think critically, creatively and globally;
2. Adapt to changing social, economic, and technological environments;
3. Serve as active and contributing members of their communities; and
4. Advance their knowledge in the traditional disciplines (GE) and enhance their skills in professional areas (Prof. pgms)

**General Education Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes – Knowledge: Students will demonstrate proficiency in knowledge and content by:

(K1) applying the scientific method to understand natural concepts and processes;
(K2) evaluating major theories and concepts in social sciences;
(K3) relating historical references to literature; and
(K4) evaluating major theories and concepts in the fine arts.

Student Learning Outcomes – Skills: Students will demonstrate the skills necessary to:

(S1) write to communicate and clarify learning;
(S2) communicate effectively through speech;
(S3) solve problems using quantitative reasoning;
(S4) think critically about concepts in multiple disciplines; and
(S5) show information literacy.

Student Learning Outcomes; Values: Students will exhibit a set of values that demonstrates:

(GEV1) personal responsibility
(GEV2) critical and social responsibility
(GEV3) social and civic engagement
(GEV4) respect for diverse cultures and perspectives
(GEV5) life-long learning