

General Education Report from the Department of Sociology 2018-2019

Competency	Courses	Assessment *See attached assessment instrument	Evidence	
			AY 2017-18	AY 2018-19
7-e: Recognize how other influences affect individual behavior.	SOCI 201	Assessment items #1 & #3	81.81%	64.58%
7-f: Recognize how other influences affect collective behavior.	SOCI 201	Assessment items #2 & #5	79.18%	75.78%
9-b: Ability to think critically	SOCI 201	Assessment items #2 & #4	75.14%	67.49%

General Education Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

SLO 7-e: Recognize how other influences affect individual behavior. SLO 7-e was assessed using two items from a direct measure of student knowledge in seven Sociology 201 courses (see appendix for the assessment). Scores for these two items were combined to create an average score. The baseline is 81.81%. The benchmark is 85%. The average score of students for SLO 7-e is 64.58%. The benchmark for AY 2018-2019 was not met. The target average score the department would like to achieve is 90% in five years.

SLO 7-f: Recognize how other influences affect collective behavior. SLO 7-f was assessed using two items from a direct measure of student knowledge in seven Sociology 201 courses (see appendix for the assessment). Scores for these two items were combined to create an average score. The baseline is 79.18%. The benchmark is 80%. The average score of students for SLO 7-f is 75.78%. The benchmark for AY 2018-2019 was not met. The target average score the department would like to achieve is 85% in five years.

SLO 9-b: Ability to think critically. SLO 9-b was assessed using two items from a direct measure of student knowledge in seven Sociology 201 courses (see appendix for the assessment). Scores for these two items were combined to create an average score. The baseline is 75.14%. The benchmark is 80%. The average score of students for SLO 9-b is 67.49%. The benchmark for AY 2018-2019 was not met. The target average score the department would like to achieve is 85% in five years.

Action Items

1. The benchmark was not met for any of the general education SLO's measured using a direct assessment of students who completed Sociology 201. Moreover, there is a decline in the average scores from the previous academic year (see table above). The data may be biased this AY because two 201 classes were not evaluated. However, the department proposes several

means in order to increase future scores. Sociology 201 is taught primarily as a traditional course; however, the department did offer a few hybrid sections during the 2018-2019 AY. A separate analysis revealed that overall scores are slightly higher for the traditional courses compared to the hybrid courses. Therefore, the department will focus on improving scores for all SLO's in the hybrid courses by incorporating more written assignments that highlight the application of the sociological imagination (**how other influences affect individual behavior, SLO 7-e**) to real world events. These types of assignments will bolster the students' understanding of the social influences and individual behaviors and increase critical thinking skills (SLO 9-b). In addition, the use of discussion boards as a vehicle for students to discuss key concepts and apply them can only serve to enhance and improve their knowledge and scores.

2. SLO 7-e: Recognize how other influences affect individual behavior. The department plans to increase student scores by incorporating written assignments that highlight application and critical thinking in all Sociology 201 formats (see description in action item 1). Students can also benefit from more class discussions on social factors and individual outcomes. Instructional films on certain topics, such as poverty, health care, immigration can help initiate important class discussion that can help improve student scores in this area. This is an area that sociology faculty plans to improve in the next academic year. Finally, the use of in class assignments that focuses on social factors and individual outcomes is an important tool to increase students' understanding of these concepts and relationships by encouraging participation and engage students' active learning.

3. SLO 7-f: Recognize how other influences affect collective behavior. The department plans to increase student scores by emphasizing how trends and patterns impact social groups and how such groups respond to social influences. This will be achieved in the upcoming academic year by focusing more on collective behavior through lectures and assignments. Research on group behavior is currently discussed during lecture in most Sociology 201 courses, but a more specific focus on collective behaviors that include an extensive discussion of norms, conformity, and social movements will be implemented during lectures in the 2019-2020 academic year. In addition to more focused lectures, assignments and discussions will be used to further enhance student learning in this area.

4. SLO 9-b: Ability to think critically. The department plans to increase student scores by incorporating writing assignments emphasizing critical thinking skills, specifically applying sociological concepts to real world events. Faculty currently utilize assignments that require students to critically apply concepts; however, more specifically focused assignments that also include class discussion to further illustrate how sociological concepts are applicable to the social world will be implemented in the upcoming academic year. These types of assignments will help students increase their ability to think critically.

Appendix

SOCI 201 General Education Assessment Questions

1. Why would sociologists who study academic performance be interested in the lives of college freshmen before they enter college?
 - a. Sociologists are particularly well equipped to study individuals' intelligence quotients and the impact of intelligence on academic performance.
 - b. Sociologists are particularly well equipped to study the influences of students' backgrounds—such as family influences—on academic performance.
 - c. Sociologists who took sociology courses in high school are particularly well equipped to study the academic performance of students entering college for the first time.
 - d. Students who excel academically are likely to attend schools closer to home.

2. If you possess a sociological imagination and someone asks you to study unemployment rates in a city of 50 million people where 15 million are unemployed, what would you conclude?
 - a. We should consider the economic and political structures of the society.
 - b. We should consider the work ethic of the average citizen.
 - c. We should worry about the intelligence level of the workers who have lost their jobs.
 - d. We should teach people how to take better advantage of their opportunities.

3. Which of the following statements is **TRUE** in society?
 - a. Peoples' lives are influenced primarily by the decisions they make.
 - b. Everyone who works hard will become successful.
 - c. People will most likely remain in the class they are born into.
 - d. Institutions cannot discriminate.

4. A _____ would view crime as serving a purpose for society, while a _____ would view crime as a result of lacking resources (e.g., unavailability of jobs).
 - a. Functionalist; Conflict Theorist
 - b. Conflict Theorist; Functionalist
 - c. Symbolic Interactionist; Social Constructionist
 - d. Social Constructionist; Symbolic Interactionist

5. Which of the following is **NOT** an example of how norms influence collective behavior?
 - a. People clap at the end of a speech.
 - b. People look both ways before crossing a street.
 - c. People flee from bear attacks.
 - d. People face the doors of an elevator.