

## Institutional Effectiveness Report for the Department of Sociology

<b>Name of Program/Department:</b>	<b>Sociology</b>
<b>Year:</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>
<b>Name of Preparer:</b>	<b>Jessica Doucet</b>

### **Program Mission Statement**

The Department of Sociology offers a major, minor, and collateral in sociology. The program operates in accord with the general purpose of Francis Marion University by providing an educational program within the liberal arts tradition by presenting a balance of theoretical views and varied analytical orientations. The bachelor's degree in sociology provides students with an understanding of sociology as the scientific study of human social life. The degree focuses on applying objective and systematic methods of investigation to identify patterns of social life and to understand the processes by which these patterns are established and changed. The program prepares students to learn to think critically, to communicate effectively, to appreciate individual and cultural diversity, and to develop their skills in computer applications. The program also provides student with opportunities for internships in applied settings. A major in sociology provides students with skills that will prepare them for graduate school or careers that require investigative methods, critical observation, and attention to diversity.

### **Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)**

1. Students will develop a critical understanding of the social world around them.
2. Students will develop a critical understanding of sociological theory.
3. Students will be able to apply sociological knowledge.
4. Students will be able to communicate this knowledge to others.

### **Executive Summary**

The department saw improvement from AY 2019-2020 to AY 2020-2021 graduates in nearly every SLO measured in the indirect assessment based on the senior exit survey (SLOs 2-4 as well as SLO 5a and 5b). Based on the direct assessment data from the exit exam scores of graduating majors, the department saw improvement in SLO 1, SLO 4, SLO 5a, SLO 5c, and SLO 5d. There was also improvement in SLO 4, SLO 5b, and SLO 6 according to the second direct assessment (faculty rubric scores). The largest improvement occurred in SLO 5a in the first direct assessment (the exit exam). Graduating seniors in AY 2020-2021 scored substantially better than those in AY 2019-2020 in their understanding of literature reviews and hypotheses. Scores increased approximately 57% from the baseline of 50% to an achieved score of 78.57%. Though the three-year target score was achieved and exceeded this academic year, student scores will be monitored to ensure consistency before adjusting the target score. The department saw a decline in a few SLOs based on data from the indirect assessment and both direct assessments. The most notable decline is in students' knowledge of how to collect and analyze data based on the exit exam direct assessment. Students in AY 2020-2021 fell short of the benchmark and baseline from AY 2019-2020. Students seem to perform well on this item in the faculty rubric direct assessment. This performance may be explained by the availability of sample papers and

help from instructors when writing this portion of their paper. The direct assessments appear to show that students struggle with recalling/applying this information in a test situation. The department will continue to focus on data collection methods and analysis techniques in research-based courses<sup>a</sup> to improve student scores on this measure.

The department will focus on how to conduct sociological research (SLO 5). When comparing the direct assessments, there appears to be a disconnect between students' knowledge of the research process and translating that knowledge into writing a research paper, particularly for parts a and b. Students have sufficient knowledge of literature reviews and hypotheses (SLO 5a) as demonstrated in the exit exam, but they performed below the benchmark based on the faculty rubric. Conversely, students fell below the benchmark on their knowledge of how to collect and analyze data (SLO 5b) according to the exit exam, but exceeded the benchmark based on the faculty rubric. The department will re-evaluate the faculty rubric to ensure consistency in our assessment of these items. To address the weaknesses found in SLO 5, the department will emphasize how to write literature reviews, develop hypotheses, and collect and analyze data. Research proposals, assignments, and research papers that require students to construct their own literature reviews and hypotheses will remain a requirement in the research-based courses<sup>b</sup>.

### **Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**

1. Students will be able to identify and apply the sociological imagination. (PLO #1)  
A benchmark of 80% is established for the direct assessment of graduating sociology majors who will be able to identify and apply the sociological imagination (baseline = 62.50%). The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is 87%.
2. Students will be able to identify and apply the core concepts of sociology. (PLO #1)  
The indirect assessment benchmark is a mean of 5.1 (on a scale of 1 to 6, where a score of 6 means "extremely well prepared") on the senior exit survey of graduating sociology majors (baseline = 5.0). The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.10. A benchmark of 75% is established for the direct assessment of graduating sociology majors who will be able to identify and apply core concepts (baseline = 72.90%). The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is 80%.
3. Students will be able to identify issues facing different social groups. (PLO #1)  
The indirect assessment benchmark is a mean of 5.1 (on a scale of 1 to 6, where a score of 6 means "extremely well prepared") on the senior exit survey of graduating sociology majors (baseline = 5.08). The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.10.
4. Students will be able to identify and apply different theoretical perspectives to societal issues. (PLO #2)  
The indirect assessment benchmark is a mean of 5.0 (on a scale of 1 to 6, where a score of 6 means "extremely well prepared") on the senior exit survey of graduating sociology majors (baseline = 4.69). The target score the department would like to achieve in three

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<sup>a</sup> Courses that require a research project or paper as part of the course assignments

<sup>b</sup> Courses that require a research project or paper as part of the course assignments

years is a mean of 5.10. A benchmark of 81% is established for the direct assessment of graduating sociology majors who will be able to identify and apply theoretical perspectives (baseline = 81.25%). The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is 85%. The second direct assessment (faculty ratings) benchmark is a mean of 5.0 (on a scale of 1 to 6, where a score of 6 means exemplary work) on the theory portion of the research project (baseline = 5.06). The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.25.

5. Students will be able to conduct research using the scientific method to address research questions. (PLO #3)
  - 5.a. create a literature review and develop hypotheses
  - 5.b. collect and analyze data utilizing the appropriate techniques
  - 5.c. interpret statistical results correctly
  - 5.d. use technology in the research process

In the direct assessment of graduating sociology majors who can correctly answer questions regarding the scientific method, the benchmark for 5a is 70% (baseline = 50.00%). The benchmark for 5b is 70% (baseline = 73.969%). The benchmark for 5c is 70% (baseline = 60.94%). The benchmark for 5d is 90% (baseline = 82.81%). The target scores the department would like to achieve in three years for 5a, 5b, and 5c are 70%. The target score the department would like to achieve in three years for 5d is 92%.

In the second direct assessment, where professors evaluate students' papers based on a standard rubric (on a scale of 1 to 6, where a score of 6 means exemplary work) for the components listed above, the benchmark for 5a is 5.1 and the baseline is 5.25. The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.25. For 5b, the benchmark is 5.1 and the baseline is 5.37. The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.25. For 5c, the benchmark is 5.1 and the baseline is 5.61. The three-year target score for this item is a mean of 5.25.

The indirect assessment benchmark for 5a is a mean of 5.0 (on a scale of 1 to 6, where a score of 6 means "extremely well prepared") on the senior exit survey of graduating sociology majors. The baseline for 5a is 4.92. The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.25. For 5b, the benchmark is 5.1 and the baseline is 5.23. The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.25. For 5c, the benchmark is 5.1 and the baseline is 5.15. The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.25.

6. Students will be able to effectively write a research paper. (PLO #4)

The indirect assessment benchmark is a mean of 5.1 (on a scale of 1 to 6, where a score of 6 means "extremely well prepared") on the senior exit survey of graduating sociology majors (baseline = 5.38). The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.25. The direct assessment to evaluate SLO #6 is the faculty rubric used to score student research papers. The benchmark is 5.1 (on a scale of 1 to 6, where a score of 6 means exemplary work) on the research project (baseline = 5.16). The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.25.

## Assessment Methods

### Direct and Indirect Methods

<b>Sociology Learning Objective</b>	<b>Courses that cover learning outcome</b>	<b>How Assessed<sup>a</sup></b>
Apply Sociological Imagination (SLO #1 under PLO #1)	201 and other sociology courses	Direct assessment from exit exam of majors. The exit exam appears on p. 13-18 in the Appendix.
Apply Core Concepts (SLO #2 under PLO #1)	201 and other sociology courses	Direct assessment from exit exam of majors and indirect assessment from senior exit survey (on p. 19-25 in the Appendix)
Identify Issues Facing Social Groups (SLO #3 under PLO #1)	310, 315, 306, 331, 343, 344, 348, 349, 351, 374, 382, 388, 407, and 419	Indirect assessment from item on senior exit survey
Apply Theoretical Perspectives (SLO #4 under PLO #2)	310, 315, 331, 339, 341, 343, 344, 348, 361, 374, 382, 388, 407, and 419	Direct assessment by faculty using a faculty developed, standard rubric (on p. 26 in the appendix) to assess student performance on literature review part of research projects from a random sample of graduating seniors and exit exam of majors, and an indirect assessment from senior exit survey
Conduct Research Using Scientific Method (SLO #5 under PLO #3)	302, 303, 331, 361, 381, 374, 388, 403, 407, and 419	Direct assessment by faculty using a faculty developed, standard rubric to assess student performance on data analysis and results interpretation part of research projects from a random sample of graduating seniors and exit exam of majors, an indirect assessment from senior exit survey
Write Coherent, Organized Research Reports (SLO #6 under PLO #4)	302, 303, 306, 310, 315, 331, 342, 343, 344, 346, 347, 348, 349, 351, 361, 374, 381, 382, 388, 403, 407, and 419	Direct assessment by faculty using a faculty developed, standard rubric to assess student performance on written papers from a random sample of graduating seniors; an indirect assessment from senior exit survey

<sup>a</sup>All students complete the Exit Exam direct assessment as a requirement for our capstone course (SOC1 496). For the faculty rubric direct assessment, a random sample of papers completed by graduating seniors in their senior year are analyzed. All students are invited to complete the Exit Survey indirect assessment. Response rates vary from semester to semester.

Indirect and Direct Assessments – Benchmark, Baseline, and Three-Year Target Scores

Student Learning Outcome (SLO)	Indirect Assessment			Direct Assessments					
	<i>Senior Exit Survey</i>			<i>Exit Exam</i>			<i>Faculty Ratings</i>		
	Benchmark	Baseline	Target	Benchmark	Baseline	Target	Benchmark	Baseline	Target
1. Sociological Imagination	--	--	--	80.0	62.50	87.0	--	--	--
2. Core Concepts	5.1	5.00	5.1	75.0	72.90	80.0	--	--	--
3. Diverse Social Groups	5.1	5.08	5.1	--	--	--	--	--	--
4. Understand/Apply Theories	5.0	4.69	5.1	81.0	81.25	85.0	5.0	5.06	5.25
5. Research Process									
a. Literature Review & Hypotheses	5.0	4.92	5.25	70.0	50.00	70.0	5.1	5.25	5.25
b. Collect and analyze data	5.1	5.23	5.25	70.0	73.96	70.0	5.1	5.37	5.25
c. Interpret statistical results	5.1	5.15	5.25	70.0	60.94	70.0	5.1	5.61	5.25
d. Use technology	--	--	--	90.0	82.81	92.0	--	--	--
6. Written Communication	5.1	5.38	5.25	--	--	--	5.1	5.16	5.25

## Assessment Results

### Learning Outcome Results (Indirect Assessment)

<b>Sociology Learning Objective</b>	<b>Senior Exit Survey Items Used</b>	<b>Average Student Ratings (AY 2019-2020)</b>	<b>Average Student Ratings (AY 2020-2021)</b>
1. Sociological Imagination	a	a	a
2. Core Concepts	1.1	5.00	5.22
3. Diverse Social Groups	1.8	5.08	5.22
4. Understand/Apply Theories	1.2	4.69	5.44
5. Research Process			
a. Literature review and hypotheses	1.4	4.92	5.33
b. Collect and analyze data	1.7	5.23	5.44
c. Interpret statistical results	1.6	5.15	4.89
d. Use technology	a	a	a
6. Communication			
Written	1.5	5.38	5.11
<b>N</b>		<b>13<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>9<sup>b,c</sup></b>

<sup>a</sup> Not assessed in the Senior Exit Survey

<sup>b</sup> Not all graduates completed the Senior Exit Survey

<sup>c</sup> As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, surveys for the AY 2020-2021 were completed online for the first time. We hope to return to paper surveys to encourage a better response rate.

Learning Outcome Results (Direct Assessment)

<b>Sociology Learning Objective</b>	<b>Exit Exam Scores (AY 2019-2020)</b>	<b>Exit Exam Scores (AY 2020-2021)</b>
1. Sociological Imagination	62.50	71.43
2. Core Concepts	72.90	70.24
3. Diverse Social Groups	a	a
4. Understand/Apply Theories	81.25	86.90
5. Research Process		
a. Literature review and hypotheses	50.00	78.57
b. Collect and analyze data	73.96	65.48
c. Interpret statistical results	60.94	71.43
d. Use technology	82.81	87.50
6. Communication Written	a	a
N	16	14

<sup>a</sup> Not assessed in exit exam

<b>Sociology Learning Objective</b>	<b>Faculty Ratings of Student Performance on research projects (AY 2019-2020)</b>	<b>Faculty Ratings of Student Performance on research projects (AY 2020-2021)</b>
4. Understand/Apply Theories	5.06	5.11
5. Research Process		
a. Literature review and hypotheses	5.25	4.67
b. Collect and analyze data	5.37	5.70
c. Interpret statistical results	5.61	5.43
d. Use technology	a	a
6. Communication Written	5.16	5.18
N	6 (out of 16 graduating seniors)	6 (out of 14 graduating seniors)

<sup>a</sup> Not directly assessed in the new faculty rubric used beginning AY 2016-17 given all research projects require the use of technology (SPSS).

## Assessment Results and Benchmarks

1. Students will be able to identify and apply the sociological imagination. (SLO#1 of PLO #1)

A benchmark of 80% was established for the direct assessment of graduating sociology majors who would be able to identify and apply the sociological imagination. The baseline is 62.50%. For AY 2020-2021, students performed on average at the 71.43% level on a 100-point scale. Since our goal was 80%, the benchmark was not achieved.

2. Students will be able to identify and apply the core concepts of sociology. (SLO #2 of PLO #1)

The indirect assessment benchmark was a mean of 5.1 (on a scale of 1 to 6, where a score of 6 means “extremely well prepared”) on the senior exit survey of graduating sociology majors (baseline = 5.00). For AY 2020-2021, students had an average rating of 5.22 on this measure. Since our goal was a 5.1, the benchmark was achieved, as was our three-year target score of 5.1.

A benchmark of 75% was established for the direct assessment of graduating sociology majors (baseline = 72.90%) who would be able to identify and apply core concepts. Students performed on average at the 70.24% level on a 100-point scale on this measure. Since our goal was 75%, the benchmark was not achieved.

3. Students will be able to identify issues facing different social groups. (SLO #3 of PLO #1)

The indirect assessment benchmark was a mean of 5.1 (on a scale of 1 to 6, where a score of 6 means “extremely well prepared”) on the senior exit survey of graduating sociology majors (baseline = 5.08). For AY 2020-2021, students had an average rating of 5.22 on this assessment. Our benchmark of 5.1 and our three-year target score of 5.1 were achieved.

4. Students will be able to identify and apply different theoretical perspectives to societal issues. (SLO #4 of PLO #2).

The indirect assessment benchmark was a mean of 5.0 (on a scale of 1 to 6, where a score of 6 means “extremely well prepared”) on the senior exit survey of graduating sociology majors (baseline = 4.69). For AY 2020-2021, students had an average rating of 5.44. Our benchmark of 5.0 and our three-year target of 5.1 were achieved.

A benchmark of 81% was established for the direct assessment of graduating sociology majors (baseline = 81.25%) who would be able to identify and apply theoretical perspectives. For AY 2020-2021, students performed on average at the 86.90% level on a 100-point scale on the direct assessment. Since our goal was 81%, the benchmark was achieved. Our three-year target of 85.0 was achieved as well.

The second direct assessment (faculty ratings) benchmark was a mean of 5.0 (on a scale of 1 to 6, where a score of 6 means exemplary work) on the research project (baseline = 5.06). For AY 2020-2021, students had an average rating of 5.11. Since our goal was 5.0 for the second direct assessment, the benchmark was achieved.



5. Students will be able to conduct research using the scientific method to address research questions. (PLO #2)
  - 5.a. create a literature review and develop hypotheses
  - 5.b. collect and analyze data utilizing the appropriate techniques
  - 5.c. interpret statistical results correctly
  - 5.d. use technology in the research process

The indirect assessment benchmark for 5a was a mean of 5.0 (on a scale of 1 to 6, where a score of 6 means “extremely well prepared”) on the senior exit survey of graduating sociology majors and the baseline was 4.92. For the AY 2020-2021, students had an average rating of 5.33. Our benchmark of 5.0 as well as our three-year target of 5.25 were achieved. The indirect assessment benchmark for 5b was a mean of 5.1 and the baseline was 5.23. For the AY 2020-2021, students had an average rating of 5.44. Since our goal was 5.1, the benchmark was achieved. Our three-year target of 5.25 for this assessment was achieved as well. For 5c, the benchmark was 5.1 and the baseline was 5.15. For the AY 2020-2021, students had an average rating of 4.89. Our benchmark of 5.1 was not achieved.

The benchmarks for the direct assessment of graduating sociology majors who would be able to answer questions regarding the scientific method were 70% (5a), 70% (5b), 70% (5c) and 90% (5d). The baselines for these items were 50.00%, 73.96%, 60.94%, and 82.81%, respectively. For AY 2020-2021, students performed on average at 78.57%, 65.48%, 71.43%, and 87.5% levels on 100-point scales, respectively. The benchmark of 70% was achieved for 5a (78.57%) and 5c (71.43%). Additionally, our three-year target of 70% for 5a and 5c were achieved. The benchmark was not achieved for 5b (65.48%) since our goal was 70%. The benchmark of 90% for 5d (87.5%) was also not achieved.

In the second direct assessment, where professors evaluate student research projects (on a scale of 1 to 6, where a score of 6 means exemplary work) for the components listed above, the benchmark for 5a was 5.1 and the baseline was 5.25. For the AY 2020-2021, students had an average rating of 4.67. Neither the benchmark of 5.1 nor our three-year target of 5.25 were achieved. For 5b, the benchmark is 5.1 and the baseline was 5.37. For the AY 2020-2021, students had an average rating of 5.70. Our benchmark of 5.1 and our three-year target score of 5.25 were achieved. For 5c, the benchmark was 5.1 and the baseline was 5.61. For the AY 2020-2021, students had an average rating of 5.43. Though the rating score decreased slightly, both our benchmark goal of 5.1 and our three-year target of 5.25 were achieved and exceeded. The faculty rubric to assess student research projects does not directly measure use of technology (5d) given all students had to use SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software for their projects.

6. Students will be able to effectively write a research paper. (PLO #3)

The indirect assessment benchmark is a mean of 5.1 (on a scale of 1 to 6, where a score of 6 means “extremely well prepared”) (baseline = 5.38). For the AY 2020-2021, students had an average rating of 5.11. Since our goal was 5.1, the benchmark was achieved.

The direct assessment to evaluate SLO #6 is the faculty rubric used to score student research papers. The benchmark is 5.1 (on a scale of 1 to 6, where a score of 6 means exemplary work) on the research project (baseline = 5.16). For the AY 2020-2021, students had an average rating of 5.18. Our benchmark of 5.1, therefore, was achieved. However, our three-year target score of 5.25 was not achieved.

### Action Items

<b>Issues Identified</b>	<b>Actions to Be Taken</b>
1. Sociological imagination	Though improvement was seen on this SLO compared to the AY 2019-2020, the benchmark was not achieved. The department will emphasize the sociological imagination in our courses through the use of course assignments that require students to apply the sociological imagination to current events to improve student performance on this SLO. While an important concept that students likely demonstrate in their understanding of society, the term is not always directly used. This may prevent students from recognizing when they are using their sociological imagination. Emphasis will be placed on utilizing this terminology when connecting sociology to the social world, especially within upper-level courses. Students will demonstrate this knowledge on exams and in course assignments. An indirect assessment item will be added to the Senior Exit Survey to ascertain students' perceptions of their preparedness on this SLO upon graduation.
2. Core concepts	Benchmark and target were achieved on the indirect assessment, but neither were achieved on the direct assessment (exit exam). Course assignments that require students to discuss and apply core concepts to current social events will be incorporated into courses to improve student scores. Students will demonstrate this knowledge on exams. The Exit Survey item that addresses this SLO will be adjusted to directly reflect the item being assessed. Department faculty will review exit exam items to ensure students are tested on a variety core concepts that are covered in several upper-level courses, regardless of their track within the program. Scores on the indirect assessment will be monitored for year-to-year consistency before increasing the target score.
3. Issues facing diverse social groups	Benchmark and target were achieved. Courses will continue to emphasize issues relating to culture and different social groups. Adjusting the Senior Exit Survey in Fall 2019 to more directly reflect the wording of this SLO may explain the continued increase in performance of students on the indirect assessment. Since the three-year target was achieved, this item will be monitored to ensure consistency year-to-year. Direct assessment items will be included on the exit exam given to graduating sociology majors to directly test their knowledge of differences between social groups.
4. Apply theories	Benchmark and target were achieved in the indirect assessment and the senior exit exam direct assessment. The benchmark was achieved in the faculty rating direct assessment, with a slight improvement from AY 2019-2020. Students' confidence in their knowledge of sociological theories as assessed in the exit survey increased nearly 16% from AY 2019-2020. Their scores on the exit

	<p>exam direct assessment are also approximately 7% higher. Faculty will continue to have students apply theories in assignments and projects in relevant courses. The departmental hire of a faculty member well versed in and passionate about sociological theory is thought to contribute to the marked improvement. Scores on the exit survey and exit exam will be monitored to ensure year-to-year consistency before adjusting three-year target scores.</p>
<p>5a. Student's ability to create a literature review and develop hypotheses.</p>	<p>Benchmark and three-year target were achieved for both the indirect assessment item (senior exit survey) and the exit exam direct assessment. However, the benchmark and three-year target were not achieved for the second direct assessment data (faculty rubric). Student scores fell dramatically on this component for AY 2020-2021. Though students feel as though faculty are preparing them to complete this task, their execution of writing an adequate literature review was lacking this year. Faculty will continue to place an emphasis on summarizing existing literature in relevant classes. Incorporating assignments that require students to read and critically analyze existing literature will assist them with understanding how to construct a literature review for their own papers. Scores on the senior exit survey and exit exam will be monitored to ensure year-to-year consistency before adjusting three-year target scores.</p>
<p>5b. Collect and analyze data</p>	<p>Benchmark and three-year target were achieved in the indirect assessment (senior exit survey) and the faculty rubric direct assessment. However, neither were achieved according to the exit exam direct assessment. The exit exam is taken as a final exam in SOCI 496. At the time of taking this exam, students should have completed all other required coursework. However, some students have enrolled in SOCI 496 prior to the completion of SOCI 403, a key course in teaching/refreshing student knowledge of collecting and analyzing data. The prerequisites for SOCI 496 were updated for the AY 2021-2022 Catalog to ensure students have had or are concurrently enrolled in SOCI 403. Additionally, faculty will continue to emphasize data collection methods in course lectures and assignments in the methods and research-based courses to assist students with knowing how to choose appropriate research methods, as well as how to collect and analyze primary and secondary data to ensure students fully grasp these components of the research process. This will continue to be achieved by the requirement of a research paper analyzing secondary data in SOCI 303 and a research paper analyzing primary data in SOCI 403. Scores on the senior exit survey and faculty rubric will be monitored to ensure year-to-year consistency before adjusting three-year target scores.</p>
<p>5c. Student's ability to interpret statistical results</p>	<p>Benchmark and three-year target were achieved according to both direct assessments (exit exam and faculty rubric), though scores on the faculty rubric direct assessment fell slightly from AY 2019-2020. Benchmark was not achieved based on the indirect assessment (senior exit survey). Students performed better in a test of their statistical knowledge than they recognize. This could be due to trepidation students feel toward statistical analyses and their lack of confidence in their abilities. Research-based courses (particularly SOCI 303 and 403) will continue to emphasize how to interpret statistical</p>

	<p>results for a variety of sociological topics through course lectures/assignments. If the three-year target score for the faculty ratings is maintained for AY 2021-2022 (the fourth consecutive year), the department will increase the target score to exceed consistent student achievements. Though this target score has been achieved for three consecutive years, student scores have been declining over that time (down from 5.71 in AY 2018-2019). If this trend continues, the target score may not be achieved in AY 2021-2022, which would indicate a need to keep the target score as is and work to increase student scores on this measure.</p>
5d. Technology use	<p>Though scores were improved over the AY 2019-2020 baseline, the benchmark was not achieved. Course lectures and assignments aimed at teaching students how to use statistical software (specifically, SPSS) will continue in research-based courses. The exit exam is taken as a final exam in SOCI 496. At the time of taking this exam, students should have completed all other required coursework. However, some students have enrolled in SOCI 496 prior to the completion of SOCI 403, a key course in teaching/refreshing student knowledge of SPSS. The prerequisites for SOCI 496 were updated for the AY 2021-2022 Catalog to ensure students have had or are concurrently enrolled in SOCI 403. An indirect assessment item will be included in the Senior Exit Survey to assess students' perceived level of preparedness on this SLO upon graduation.</p>
6. Written communication	<p>Benchmark was achieved according to the indirect assessment (senior exit survey) and the second direct assessment (faculty rubric). An emphasis on writing will remain a staple in all sociology courses, with a focus on writing research papers in research-based courses.</p>

**EXIT EXAM**  
**FOR SOCIOLOGY MAJORS**  
(Core courses only)

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY**  
**FRANCIS MARION UNIVERSITY**  
**2020-2021**

STUDENT ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**For each of the following items, select the best answer and fill in the appropriate letter by the item number on the scantron sheet provided. Please return both this questionnaire and the completed scantron sheet to the chair or a faculty member in the Sociology department.**

Part A. Knowledge Items

1. Which of the following sociological perspectives emphasizes the re-creation of society everyday through our interpersonal interactions?
  - a. Conflict
  - b. Functionalist
  - c. Postmodernism
  - d. Symbolic Interactionism
  
2. A system by which a society ranks categories of people in a hierarchy is called:
  - a. social mobility.
  - b. social stratification.
  - c. stereotyping.
  - d. social inequality.
  
3. To understand the connection of society with our everyday lives and experiences, one must develop a(n):
  - a. sociological imagination.
  - b. symbolic interactionist approach.
  - c. common sense approach.
  - d. introspection.
  
4. A(n) \_\_\_\_ analysis studies large scale social structures in order to determine how they affect the lives of groups and individuals.
  - a. macro-level
  - b. micro-level
  - c. meso-level
  - d. individual-level
  
5. Identify the independent variable from the following hypothesis: "Students who spend more hours studying have higher test scores."
  - a. Students
  - b. Test scores
  - c. Study hours
  - d. Higher
  
6. Which of the following data collection techniques involves using data already collected by the Census Bureau, FBI, or some other government agency?
  - a. Secondary data analysis
  - b. Survey research
  - c. Field research
  - d. Content analysis
  
7. A person's race is an example of a(n) \_\_\_\_ level variable.
  - a. nominal
  - b. ordinal
  - c. interval
  - d. ratio

8. Using a(n) \_\_\_\_ approach to research involves deriving hypotheses from a theory, then collecting data, and analyzing it.
  - a. deductive
  - b. inductive
  - c. conductive
  - d. reductive
  
9. A sociologist hypothesized that as income increases, crime decreases. This statement reflects a:
  - a. positive correlation.
  - b. negative correlation.
  - c. spurious correlation.
  - d. causal correlation.
  
10. In hypothesis testing, when the null hypothesis is rejected, this indicates:
  - a. a statistically significant relationship.
  - b. a statistically insignificant relationship.
  - c. the alternative hypothesis is false.
  - d. more information is needed to answer this question.
  
11. If we say that on average, the poverty rate for states is 5.6 percent, then we are providing an interpretation of what statistic?
  - a. Mean
  - b. Standard deviation
  - c. Covariance
  - d. Regression
  
12. The degree to which the same questions will produce similar answers reflects whether the measurement is:
  - a. valid.
  - b. reliable.
  - c. reasonable.
  - d. important.
  
13. A \_\_\_\_ is an explanation for why and how something occurs.
  - a. survey
  - b. hypothesis
  - c. guess
  - d. theory
  
14. Which of the following theorists argues that society is comprised of two social classes, based upon who owns the means of production?
  - a. Weber
  - b. Marx
  - c. Durkheim
  - d. Parsons
  
15. According to \_\_\_\_, the social world is viewed like a play on a stage, where everyone plays a part.
  - a. Dramaturgy
  - b. Exchange theory
  - c. Control theory
  - d. Conflict theory

16. According to \_\_\_\_, an individual's self is largely social in that our self develops from our impressions of how others view us.
- the dramaturgical approach
  - impression management strategies
  - the conflict perspective
  - the looking glass self
17. When conducting research on social phenomena, it is important to remember that:
- experiments are the best research method.
  - causation is impossible to establish in the social sciences.
  - errors are commonly made in research.
  - correlation is impossible to establish in the social sciences.
18. A researcher is analyzing the influence of age on income. Within the survey, respondents 18 and over are asked to report their age using the following answer choices:
- (a) 18 to 20                      (b) 21 to 23                      (c) 24 to 27                      (d) 27 to 35
- The answer choices given above are considered to be:
- mutually exclusive only.
  - exhaustive only.
  - both mutually exclusive and exhaustive.
  - neither mutually exclusive nor exhaustive.
19. "Did you go to the store and take your sister with you?" This is an example of a double-barreled question.
- True
  - False
20. Which of the following criteria for establishing a causal relation between two variables implies that the relationship between the two variables is **not** caused by variation in a third variable?
- Time order
  - Association
  - Nonspuriousness
  - Mechanism
21. When a researcher takes steps to ensure that a respondent's identity cannot be matched to their responses by others, they are protecting the respondent's:
- face validity.
  - confidentiality.
  - anonymity.
  - informed consent.
22. If your p-value is .028, which level of significance would be reported?
- .10
  - .05
  - .01
  - This p-value is not significant.
23. This theory argues that both birth and death rates are high, then decline at different rates, and eventually level off at low rates.
- Demographic Transition
  - Malthusian
  - Push-Pull
  - IPAT



24. Since 1965, most of the immigrants that have come to the US are from which country?
- Australia
  - Canada
  - Mexico
  - Japan
25. \_\_\_\_ is the study of humans' relations with their environment.
- Human ecology
  - Constructionism
  - Learning theory
  - Exchange theory
26. Which state in the US has been experiencing population growth for decades?
- Wyoming
  - Ohio
  - Georgia
  - Michigan
27. Which of the following computer programs is used by sociologists to analyze data?
- Word
  - SPSS
  - Excel
  - Powerpoint
28. If you are entering data into SPSS, you must be looking at the \_\_\_\_ screen.
- variable view
  - data view
  - output view
  - analysis view
29. If you are entering the name of cities into SPSS, you should select which variable *type*?
- Numeric
  - Date
  - String
  - Percentage
30. If you plan to obtain statistics from SPSS, which item in the toolbar at the top of the screen will you click on?
- Compute
  - Edit
  - Tools
  - Analyze

Part B. Respondent Information Items

31. What is your race/ethnicity? If you choose not to answer, skip to Question #32.

- a. White
- b. African American
- c. Hispanic
- d. Asian
- e. Other

32. What is your gender?

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Other
- d. Refuse to answer

33. Why did you decide to major in sociology?

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34. What are your future career plans?

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35. At what non-FMU email address can we reach you?

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## Senior Exit Survey for Sociology Students

### Introduction

As part of our effort to assess the strengths and weaknesses of our program, we are conducting surveys with all of our graduating seniors to find out how they evaluate the quality of their educational experiences in the sociology program at Francis Marion University.

Your responses will be used only for program improvement, and will in no way affect your academic record. The information you give will be recorded on this form, but your name will not be attached anywhere to the form, and your responses will be combined with the responses of the other seniors we are surveying to protect your anonymity. **Nowhere** will your name be attached to any comment you make. Your individual responses will remain confidential. We'd like you to give examples or other explanations to clarify your answers, so we really understand how you see the quality of your experiences here at FMU.

## Part I: Perceptions of Program Quality

The first areas we would like to discuss have to do with your educational experiences in specific areas of Sociology. For each of the following, please indicate how well prepared you feel now at the end of your college program.

Please consider **all** of the sociology courses you have taken, and tell us how well you have been prepared in the following areas. After rating each area, please explain your rating so we can understand what went well and what did not go so well. Remember, we are asking about broad areas, rather than specific courses.

**How well have you been prepared by all of your courses...**

### Response Set #1

6=Extremely Well Prepared	3=Somewhat Unprepared
5=Very Well Prepared	2=Very Unprepared
4=Somewhat Prepared	1=Extremely Unprepared

1.1 To understand the sociological perspective and its relevance to contemporary social issues?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please explain)

1.2 To understand sociological theories?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please explain)

1.3 To read and understand research articles in sociology journals?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please explain)

1.4 To write a summary of scholarly research studies and their findings?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please explain)

1.5 To communicate effectively, both written and orally?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please explain)

1.6 To analyze and interpret sociological data?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please explain)

1.7 To understand how sociologists collect information about the social world?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please explain)

1.8 To understand differences within and across social groups?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please explain)

1.9 To have a career in the work world after graduation?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please explain)

1.10 To enter a graduate program after graduation?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please explain)

## Part II: Course Quality & Offerings

Next are some questions about your experiences as a Sociology major.

Using **Response Set #2**, please rate each aspect of the sociology program and, if you'd like, give us a brief explanation of the primary reason for your rating.

### Response Set #2:

6=Excellent	3=Fair
5=Very Good	2=Poor
4=Good	1=Very Poor

2.1 The availability of course offerings in Sociology?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please elaborate)

2.2 The extent to which class objectives were specified and met in your Sociology classes?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please elaborate)

2.3 The overall quality of the instructional strategies used in and outside the classroom, including lectures, discussions, demonstrations, assignments, and exercises?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please elaborate)

2.4 The overall fairness of grading in your Sociology classes?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please elaborate)

2.5 The overall quality of the courses you took in Sociology at FMU?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please elaborate)

2.6 What have you heard other students say about our Sociology classes that you think we should know?

### **Part III: Faculty Performance**

Still using **Response Set #2** (1=Very Poor to 6=Excellent), please rate the sociology faculty's performance in a number of areas and, if you'd like, tell us the primary reason for each rating.

3.1 The faculty's overall knowledge of the subject matter?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please elaborate)

3.2 The faculty's overall course conduct, including preparation, clarity, providing a clear syllabus, using time well, etc.

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please elaborate)

3.3 The faculty's treatment of students in the classroom?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please elaborate)

3.4 The faculty's approachability and availability?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please elaborate)

3.5 Quality of academic advising from your Sociology professors?

1      2      3      4      5      6

Because? (please elaborate)

3.6 Do you have any suggestions for improving advising?



**Part IV: Program Strengths & Weaknesses**

4.1 What do you see as the primary strengths of the Sociology program? Why?

4.2 What do you see as the primary weaknesses of the Sociology program? Why?

4.3 What are some things that you think we might do to improve the Sociology program at FMU?

4.4 Is there anything else you'd like us to know about the Sociology program?

4.5 What else would you like for us to know about your experiences in the sociology program?

<b>Criteria: Introduction &amp; Literature Review</b>			
The student...	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Partially</b>	<b>Completely</b>
constructed at least 1 research question			
explained why the research is important			
reviewed previous research			
included a theoretical perspective to their research			
proposed hypotheses			
<b>Criteria: Data &amp; Methods</b>			
The student...	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Partially</b>	<b>Completely</b>
described how the data were collected/how the survey was administered			
operationally defined the variables (discuss measures)			
identified the type of analyses used			
provided descriptive statistics of the data/sample			
<b>Criteria: Results</b>			
The student...	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Partially</b>	<b>Completely</b>
created bivariate and/or multivariate tables			
conducted the appropriate analyses on the data to test the hypotheses			
interpreted results			
<b>Criteria: Discussion &amp; Conclusion</b>			
The student...	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Partially</b>	<b>Completely</b>
discussed limitations			
identified future research ideas			
provided appropriate citations and references			