

Institutional Effectiveness Report for the Department of Sociology

Name of Program/Department:	Sociology
Year:	2021-2022
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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 2020-2021 to AY 2021-2022 graduates in three SLOs measured in the indirect assessment based on the senior exit survey (SLO 2, SLO 5b and SLO 5c), with SLO 2 and SLO 5b exceeding their respective benchmarks and three-year target scores for the second and fourth consecutive year, respectively. Based on the direct assessment data from the exit exam scores of graduating majors, the department saw improvement in SLO 1, SLO 2, SLO 5b, and SLO 5c. Additionally, student scores on SLO 5c exceeded the benchmark for the second consecutive year. There was also improvement in SLO 5a and SLO 5c according to the second direct assessment (faculty ratings rubric), with SLO 5c exceeding its benchmark and three-year target score for the fourth consecutive year. Three-year averages of benchmarks and target scores will be calculated for all SLOs that have been achieved and exceeded by students in consecutive years to determine appropriate benchmarks and target scores for these SLOs.

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' written communication scores (SLO 6) based on the faculty ratings direct assessment. Students in AY 2021-2022 fell short of the benchmark and baseline from AY 2020-2021. This decline in performance may partially be explained by the addition of an item measuring overall written communication to the faculty ratings rubric used to score student papers. In prior years, overall scores on these papers were used as a proxy of written communication skills. Recognizing this was not the most accurate measure, the department added a specific item to the

rubric asking professors to rate the student's written communication skills on a scale of 1 (poor) to 6 (excellent). The scores for written communication from the senior exit survey indirect assessment also show a decline. It is also important to note that students in AY 2021-2022 fell below the baseline and the benchmark in the senior exit survey indirect assessment, rating their written communication skills lower than their peers did in AY 2020-2021. To address the weaknesses found in SLO 6, the department will ensure students have adequate opportunities to practice their written communication skills using written assignments and student papers to improve students' ability and confidence in their written communication skills. A similar trend was found in SLO 4 (understanding and applying theories). Students in AY 2021-2022 fell below the baseline and the benchmark for both the senior exit survey indirect assessment and the faculty ratings direct assessment. The department will focus on improving students' theoretical knowledge by providing relevant examples and application of theory in upper-division courses. Research proposals, assignments, and papers that require students to explain and apply a theory or theoretical perspective to their studies will remain a requirement in the research-based courses^a.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

1. Students will be able to identify and apply the sociological imagination. (PLO #1)
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 = N/A). The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.10. 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 = 71.43%). 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 = 5.22). The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.15. A benchmark of 75% is established for the direct assessment of graduating sociology majors who will be able to identify and apply core concepts on the exit exam (baseline = 70.24%). 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 = 5.22). The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.15. A benchmark of 70% is established for the direct assessment of graduating sociology majors who will be able to identify issues facing different social groups on the exit exam (baseline = N/A). The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is 75%.
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 5.1 (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 = 5.44). The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.15. A benchmark of 82% is established for the direct assessment of graduating sociology majors who

^a Courses that require a research project or paper as part of the course assignments

will be able to identify and apply theoretical perspectives on the exit exam (baseline = 86.90%). 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 = 5.11). 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 = 78.57%). The benchmark for 5b is 70% (baseline = 65.48%). The benchmark for 5c is 70% (baseline = 71.43%). The benchmark for 5d is 90% (baseline = 87.50%). The target scores the department would like to achieve in three years for 5a, 5b, 5c are 72%. The target score the department would like to achieve in three years for 5d is 92%.

In the second direct assessment, where professors evaluate student 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 4.67. The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.25. For 5b, the benchmark is 5.25 and the baseline is 5.70. The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.30. For 5c, the benchmark is 5.25 and the baseline is 5.43. The three-year target score for this item is a mean of 5.30.

The indirect assessment benchmark for 5a 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. The baseline for 5a is 5.33. The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.25. For 5b, the benchmark is 5.2 and the baseline is 5.44. 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 4.89. The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.25. For 5d, the benchmark is 5.0 (baseline = N/A). The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.10.

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 = 5.11). The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.25. The benchmark for the direct assessment (faculty ratings) is 5.1 (on a scale of 1 to 6, where a score of 6 means exemplary work) on the research project (baseline = 5.18). The target score the department would like to achieve in three years is a mean of 5.25.

Assessment Methods

Direct and Indirect Methods

Sociology Learning Objective	Courses that cover learning outcome	How Assessed^a
Apply Sociological Imagination (SLO #1 under PLO #1)	201 and other sociology courses	Direct assessment from exit exam of majors (on p. 13-18 in the Appendix) and indirect assessment from senior exit survey (on p. 19-25 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
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	Direct assessment from exit exam of majors and indirect assessment from 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 from exit exam of majors and 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 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 from exit exam of majors and 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 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, and an indirect assessment from senior exit survey

^aAll students complete the Exit Exam direct assessment as a requirement for our capstone course (SOCI 496). For the faculty ratings 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	5.0	--	5.10	80.0	71.43	87.0	--	--	--
2. Core Concepts	5.1	5.22	5.15	75.0	70.24	80.0	--	--	--
3. Diverse Social Groups	5.1	5.22	5.15	70.0	--	75.0	--	--	--
4. Understand/Apply Theories	5.1	5.44	5.15	82.0	86.90	85.0	5.0	5.11	5.25
5. Research Process									
a. Literature Review & Hypotheses	5.1	5.33	5.25	70.0	78.57	72.0	5.1	4.67	5.25
b. Collect and analyze data	5.2	5.44	5.25	70.0	65.48	72.0	5.25	5.70	5.30
c. Interpret statistical results	5.1	4.89	5.25	70.0	71.43	72.0	5.25	5.43	5.30
d. Use technology	5.0	--	5.10	90.0	87.50	92.0	--	--	--
6. Written Communication	5.1	5.11	5.25	--	--	--	5.1	5.18	5.25

Assessment Results

Learning Outcome Results (Indirect Assessment)

Sociology Learning Objective	Senior Exit Survey Items Used	Average Student Ratings (AY 2020-2021)	Average Student Ratings (AY 2021-2022)
1. Sociological Imagination	1.1	a	5.06
2. Core Concepts	1.2	5.22	5.39
3. Diverse Social Groups	1.9	5.22	5.22
4. Understand/Apply Theories	1.3	5.44	4.94
5. Research Process			
a. Literature review and hypotheses	1.5	5.33	5.28
b. Collect and analyze data	1.8	5.44	5.50
c. Interpret statistical results	1.7	4.89	4.94
d. Use technology	1.10	a	5.22
6. Communication			
Written	1.6	5.11	4.89
N		9 ^{b,c}	18 ^{b,c}

^a Not assessed in the Senior Exit Survey 2020-2021

^b Not all graduates completed the Senior Exit Survey

^c As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, surveys for the AY 2020-2021 and AY 2021-2022 were completed online. We hope to return to paper surveys to encourage a better response rate.

Learning Outcome Results (Direct Assessment)

Sociology Learning Objective	Exit Exam Scores (AY 2020-2021)	Exit Exam Scores (AY 2021-2022)
1. Sociological Imagination	71.43	73.68
2. Core Concepts	70.24	73.68
3. Diverse Social Groups	a	71.05
4. Understand/Apply Theories	86.90	84.21
5. Research Process		
a. Literature review and hypotheses	78.57	71.93
b. Collect and analyze data	65.48	67.54
c. Interpret statistical results	71.43	72.37
d. Use technology	87.50	81.58
6. Communication Written	b	b
N	14	19

^a Not assessed in exit exam for AY 2020-2021

^b Not assessed in exit exam

Sociology Learning Objective	Faculty Ratings of Student Performance on research projects (AY 2020-2021)	Faculty Ratings of Student Performance on research projects (AY 2021-2022)
4. Understand/Apply Theories	5.11	4.78
5. Research Process		
a. Literature review and hypotheses	4.67	5.14
b. Collect and analyze data	5.70	5.63
c. Interpret statistical results	5.43	5.46
d. Use technology	a	a
6. Communication Written	5.18	4.42
N	6 (out of 14 graduating seniors)	6 (out of 19 graduating seniors)

^a Not directly assessed in the new faculty ratings 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)
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 = N/A). For AY 2021-2022, students had an average rating of 5.06 on this measure. Since our goal was a 5.0, the benchmark was achieved.

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 71.43%. For AY 2021-2022, students performed on average at the 73.68% 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 = 5.22). For AY 2021-2022, students had an average rating of 5.39 on this measure. Since our goal was a 5.1, the benchmark was achieved, as was our three-year target score of 5.15.

A benchmark of 75% was established for the direct assessment of graduating sociology majors (baseline = 70.24%) who would be able to identify and apply core concepts. Students performed on average at the 73.68% 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 = 5.22). For AY 2021-2022, students had an average rating of 5.22 on this assessment. Our benchmark of 5.1 and our three-year target score of 5.15 were achieved.

A benchmark of 70% was established for the direct assessment of graduating sociology majors (baseline = N/A) who would be able to identify issues facing different social groups. Students performed on average at the 71.05% level on a 100-point scale on this measure. Since our goal was 70%, the benchmark was 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 5.1 (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 = 5.44). For AY 2021-2022, students had an average rating of 4.94. Our benchmark of 5.1 was not achieved.

A benchmark of 82% was established for the direct assessment of graduating sociology majors (baseline = 86.90%) who would be able to identify and apply theoretical perspectives. For AY 2021-2022, students performed on average at the 84.21% level on a 100-point scale on the direct assessment. Since our goal was 82%, the benchmark was achieved.

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 = 5.11). For AY

2021-2022, students had an average rating of 4.78. Since our goal was 5.0 for the second direct assessment, the benchmark was not 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 5.1 (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 and the baseline was 5.33. For the AY 2021-2022, students had an average rating of 5.28. Our benchmark of 5.1 as well as our three-year target of 5.25 were achieved. The indirect assessment benchmark for 5b was a mean of 5.2 and the baseline was 5.44. For the AY 2020-2021, students had an average rating of 5.50. Our benchmark goal of 5.2 and three-year target score of 5.25 for this assessment item were both achieved. For 5c, the benchmark was 5.1 and the baseline was 4.89. For the AY 2021-2022, students had an average rating of 4.94. Our benchmark of 5.1 was not achieved. For 5d, the benchmark was 5.0 (baseline = N/A). For the AY 2021-2022, students had an average rating of 5.22. Our benchmark of 5.0 was achieved, as was our three-year target score of 5.1 (though this was the first year measuring use of technology using the indirect assessment).

The benchmarks for the direct assessment of graduating sociology majors who would be able to correctly answer questions on the exit exam regarding the scientific method were 70% (5a), 70% (5b), 70% (5c) and 90% (5d). The baselines for these items were 78.57%, 65.48%, 71.43%, and 87.5%, respectively. For AY 2021-2022, students performed on average at 71.93%, 67.54%, 72.37%, and 81.58% levels on 100-point scales, respectively. The benchmark of 70% was achieved for 5a (71.93%) and 5c (72.37%). Additionally, our three-year target of 72% for 5c was achieved. The benchmark was not achieved for 5b (67.54%) since our goal was 70%. The benchmark of 90% for 5d (81.58%) 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 4.67. For the AY 2021-2022, students had an average rating of 5.14. The benchmark of 5.1 was achieved. For 5b, the benchmark is 5.25 and the baseline was 5.70. For the AY 2021-2022, students had an average rating of 5.63. Our benchmark of 5.25 and our three-year target score of 5.3 were achieved. For 5c, the benchmark was 5.25 and the baseline was 5.43. For the AY 2021-2022, students had an average rating of 5.46. Both our benchmark goal of 5.25 and our three-year target of 5.3 were achieved and exceeded. The faculty ratings 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 = 5.11). For the AY 2020-2021, students had an average rating of 4.89. Since our goal was 5.1, the benchmark was not achieved.

The direct assessment to evaluate SLO #6 is the faculty ratings 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 = 5.18). For the AY 2021-2022, students had an average rating of 4.42. Our benchmark of 5.1, therefore, was not achieved.

Action Items

Issues Identified	Actions to Be Taken
1. Sociological imagination	Though improvement was seen on this SLO for the exit exam direct assessment compared to the AY 2020-2021, the benchmark was not achieved. However, the benchmark for the new indirect assessment item on the senior exit survey was 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. Students indicate that they know the term, but this is not translating to correct answers on the exit exam. While the sociological imagination is used in all courses, faculty may not always explain that students are using their “sociological imagination” when connecting sociology to the social world. Emphasis on the use of appropriate terminology in upper-level classes will reinforce students’ knowledge of and connection to the sociological imagination. Students will demonstrate this knowledge on exams and in course assignments.
2. Core concepts	Benchmark and target were achieved on the indirect assessment. Though scores improved from the AY 2020-2021, neither the benchmark nor the target score were achieved on the direct assessment (exit exam). Department faculty reviewed exit exam questions in Fall 2021 to ensure the core concepts were covered in several upper-level courses. This revision may have contributed to an increase in scores. Course assignments that require students to discuss and apply core concepts to current social events will be incorporated into courses to continue to improve student scores. Students will demonstrate this knowledge on exams as well as through application in course assignments. Three-year averages on the senior exit survey will be examined to determine if increasing the benchmark and/or target score is appropriate for this item.
3. Issues facing diverse social groups	Benchmark and target were achieved on the indirect assessment. Benchmark was achieved on the exit exam direct assessment. Courses will continue to emphasize issues relating to culture and different social groups. Three-year averages on the senior exit survey will be examined to determine if increasing the benchmark and/or target score is appropriate for this item. Because this is the first year assessing this SLO on the exit exam, scores will be monitored to ensure year-to-year consistency before increasing the benchmark for this item.
4. Apply theories	Benchmark and target were not achieved in the indirect assessment or the faculty ratings direct assessment. The benchmark was achieved in the exit exam direct assessment, though scores were lower than those from AY 2020-2021. Students’ confidence in their knowledge of sociological theories as assessed in the senior exit survey decreased as did their performance based on the faculty ratings. The decline in faculty ratings may be partially due to new instructions given with the rubric. Prior to scoring course papers, faculty were informed of what students were expected to do (based on instructions given to

	<p>students) for their paper. This was done to ensure interrater reliability and allowed faculty to more accurately rate students' ability to understand and apply theory. Student comments on the senior exit survey suggest that the time between completing the theory course and their research capstone course may have played a role in their performance. Faculty will continue to have students apply theories in assignments and projects in relevant courses. Additionally, faculty will advise students to take their sociological theory course in the semester before enrolling in their research capstone course to reduce the time gap between these courses. Three-year averages for the exit exam will be examined to determine if increasing the benchmark for this item is appropriate.</p>
<p>5a. Student's ability to create a literature review and develop hypotheses.</p>	<p>Benchmark was achieved for all three assessment items (senior exit survey, exit exam, and faculty ratings). The three-year target score was achieved for the indirect assessment item (senior exit survey) but was not achieved for either direct assessment (exit exam and faculty ratings). While scores showed an improvement in the faculty ratings direct assessment, student performance on the indirect assessment item and the exit exam direct assessment decreased from AY 2020-2021. The increase in faculty ratings may be partially due to new instructions given with the rubric. Prior to scoring course papers, faculty were informed of what students were expected to do (based on instructions given to students) for their paper. This was done to ensure interrater reliability and allowed faculty to more accurately rate students' ability to write a literature review and research hypotheses. Faculty will continue to emphasize 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. Because of the decline experienced this AY, scores on the senior exit survey and exit exam will be monitored to ensure year-to-year consistency before adjusting the benchmarks and/or three-year target scores for these items.</p>
<p>5b. Collect and analyze data</p>	<p>Benchmark and three-year target scores were achieved in the indirect assessment (senior exit survey) and the faculty ratings direct assessment. However, though there was improvement from AY 2020-2021, neither the benchmark nor the three-year target score was achieved according to the exit exam direct assessment. This AY was the first year following the new prerequisites for SOCI 496, the course in which this exam is taken. These prerequisites ensure that students have completed or are concurrently enrolled in SOCI 403 as this course is vital in teaching/refreshing student knowledge of collecting and analyzing data. 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 data. The requirement of a research paper analyzing secondary data in SOCI 303 and a research paper analyzing primary data in SOCI 403 will remain for students. The inclusion of a research proposal in SOCI 302 will be discussed by the department. Based on multiyear data from the faculty ratings rubric, target scores were increased from 5.25 in AY 2020-2021 to 5.30 in AY 2021-2022. The new increased target score was achieved this AY. Scores will be reassessed to determine if the three-year target score should be set higher for AY 2022-2023. Scores on the senior exit survey for the past three years will be</p>

	analyzed to determine if consistency in scores warrants an increase in the benchmark and/or three-year target score for this SLO.
5c. Student's ability to interpret statistical results	Benchmark and three-year target were achieved according to both direct assessments (exit exam and faculty ratings rubric). 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 results for a variety of sociological topics through course lectures/assignments. Based on multiyear data from the faculty ratings rubric, target scores were increased from 5.25 in AY 2020-2021 to 5.30 in AY 2021-2022. The new increased target score was achieved this AY. Scores will be reassessed to determine if the three-year target score should be set higher for AY 2022-2023. Scores on the senior exit exam for the past three years will be analyzed to determine if consistency in scores warrants an increase in the benchmark and/or three-year target score for this SLO.
5d. Technology use	Benchmark and target scores were achieved according to the new indirect assessment item on the senior exit exam. However, neither the benchmark nor the target score was achieved according to the exit exam direct assessment. Additionally, scores on the exit exam direct assessment have declined nearly 7% from AY 2020-2021. This AY was the first year following the new prerequisites for SOCI 496, the course in which this exam is taken. These prerequisites ensure that students have completed or are concurrently enrolled in SOCI 403 as this course is vital in refreshing student knowledge of SPSS. Course lectures and assignments aimed at teaching students how to use statistical software (specifically, SPSS) will continue in research-based courses. More class time will be devoted to demonstrating the use of the software to students. Because this is the first year assessing this SLO on the senior exit survey, scores will be monitored to ensure year-to-year consistency before increasing the benchmark and/or target score for this item.
6. Written communication	Benchmark and target scores were not achieved according to either the indirect assessment (senior exit survey) or the second direct assessment (faculty ratings rubric). The decline in writing performance based on the faculty ratings direct assessment may partially be explained by the inclusion of a new rubric item that specifically assesses students' written communication skills. Prior to the update of the rubric, overall paper scores were used as a proxy for written communication. Directly asking faculty to rate students' written communication ability on a scale of 1 (poor) to 6 (excellent) has revealed the need to emphasize writing assignments in all upper-level classes. While paper requirements have remained in theory and research-based courses, professors have removed written assignments from several upper-level courses. The department will discuss the need to reinstate writing assignments and/or papers in these courses. Faculty will also encourage students to utilize campus resources (i.e., the Writing Center) when completing their writing assignments.

EXIT EXAM
FOR SOCIOLOGY MAJORS
(Core courses only)

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
FRANCIS MARION UNIVERSITY
2021-2022

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.
 - a. the dramaturgical approach
 - b. impression management strategies
 - c. the conflict perspective
 - d. 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. All of the following population groups are associated with higher rates of poverty in the U.S. except:
- young adults.
 - African Americans.
 - foreign-born residents.
 - women.
24. The criminal justice phenomenon of mass incarceration has disproportionately impacted which of the following groups?
- White and Hispanic women
 - Black and Asian men
 - Black and Hispanic men
 - Asian and Hispanic men

25. Arlie Hochschild's term _____ refers to the idea that women are much more likely than men to do the majority of the unpaid labor inside the home even after a full day's work outside the home.
- the second shift
 - women's work
 - the double standard
 - the female burden
26. Which of the following groups has the lowest life expectancy?
- African American females
 - White females
 - African American males
 - White males
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?

34. What are your future career plans?

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

SENIOR EXIT SURVEY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
FRANCIS MARION UNIVERSITY
2021-2022

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 imagination and its importance to understanding social issues?

1 2 3 4 5 6

Because? (please explain)

1.2 To understand core sociological concepts?

1 2 3 4 5 6

Because? (please explain)

1.3 To understand sociological theories?

1 2 3 4 5 6

Because? (please explain)

1.4 To read and understand research articles in sociology journals?

1 2 3 4 5 6

Because? (please explain)

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

1 2 3 4 5 6

Because? (please explain)

1.6 To communicate effectively, both written and orally?

1 2 3 4 5 6

Because? (please explain)

1.7 To analyze and interpret sociological data?

1 2 3 4 5 6

Because? (please explain)

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

1 2 3 4 5 6

Because? (please explain)

1.9 To understand differences within and across social groups?

1 2 3 4 5 6

Because? (please explain)

1.10 To use technology in the research process?

1 2 3 4 5 6

Because? (please explain)

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

1 2 3 4 5 6

Because? (please explain)

1.12 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 or your experiences in the sociology program?

Sociology Paper Rubric

Paper # _____

Criteria: Introduction & Literature Review			
The student...	Not at All	Partially	Completely
constructed at least 1 research question			
explained why the research is important			
reviewed previous research			
included a theoretical perspective to their research			
proposed hypotheses			
Criteria: Data & Methods			
The student...	Not at All	Partially	Completely
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			
Criteria: Results			
The student...	Not at All	Partially	Completely
created bivariate and/or multivariate tables			
conducted the appropriate analyses on the data to test the hypotheses			
interpreted results			
Criteria: Discussion & Conclusion			
The student...	Not at All	Partially	Completely
discussed limitations			
identified future research ideas			
provided appropriate citations and references			
Overall Quality of Writing			SCORE
On a scale of 1 (poor) to 6 (excellent), please rate the student's overall written communication skills.			