

Skyline College

Sociology Program

Program Review

Executive Summary



Short Summary of Findings

Department faculty strive to bring to the classroom the most relevant materials and innovative teaching methods to motivate students and enhance learning.

Students who take sociology courses are as diverse as the community that Skyline College serves. For example, 29 percent are Filipino, 24.5 percent are Asian, 22 percent are Hispanic, 21.7 percent are white, and 2.3 percent are African American. Also reflecting and exceeding college-wide trends, 62 percent of the students taking sociology courses are female.

While the weekly student contact hours (WSCH) declined somewhat between 2002 and 2003, this decline is largely the result of the retirement of one full-time faculty. The Sociology program is currently maintained by a .60 faculty appointment.

The Sociology program's faculty LOAD increased steady from 2001 to 2003 (388, 492, and 602, respectively). For 2003, the Sociology program's WSCH/FTE (602) is above the College's average (528) and the Social Science Division's average (509).

The Sociology program's current (2003) Retention and Success rates (83 percent and 63 percent, respectively) are somewhat below College-wide rates. However, the program's retention and success rate is comparable to the Anthropology program and the History program.

Because of limited department size (.60 appointment), faculty is not able to offer varied courses that parallel the first two years at a four-year college.

Three Strengths of the Program

- The Sociology program provides direct services to students for transfer and vocational areas. The program is supportive of and emphasizes basic skill (e.g., critical thinking and writing) areas.
- The Sociology program's curriculum focuses on an understanding and appreciation of the society and the world in which we live. A well-qualified instructor who is active and up-to-date in his field staffs the program.
- The Sociology program's faculty LOAD increased over the last three years. That is, although the program offered fewer classes, it enrolled more students per class.

Three Suggestions for Improvement

- For the Sociology program to serve its students and the college as a whole, it is imperative to hire a full-time sociologist.
- It is very important to expand sociology course offerings and services.
- It would be very helpful to have electronically equipped classrooms and expand the video and DVD files.

**SKYLINE COLLEGE
SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT
PROGRAM REVIEW SELF STUDY**

PART A: Overview of Program

1. State the goals/ focus of this program and how the program contributes to the mission and priorities of the College and District.

The goal of the Sociology program is to offer courses, which provide students with the opportunity to meet social science requirements for their AA degrees as well as to transfer to baccalaureate institutions. The Sociology program encourages students to explore their curiosity about the social world and to introduce them to sociological perspectives and analyses. While at the present time there is no sociology major, the program prepares students to become sociology majors at four-year colleges and universities. Moreover, the program provides lower-division classes, which prepare students for continued education at four-year colleges and universities.

2. Discuss how this program coordinates, impacts, and/or interacts with other programs in the College.

The Sociology program coordinates with several programs on campus. The program cross-lists classes with the Psychology program (Soci/Psyc 110: Courtship, Marriage and the Family) and the Administration of Justice program (Soci 108: Community Relations). The Sociology program participated this last spring in a special multi-disciplinary course (Sosc 680: Brown v. Board of Education), celebrating and analyzing the history, impact and future of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to desegregate schools.

The Sociology program also promotes and utilizes several Student Services programs, including the Learning Resource Center, the Writing Center, Extended Opportunity Program and Services (EOPS), and tutorial services. Textbooks and Study Guides for all sociology courses are on reserve in the Library, and students are encouraged to avail themselves of this and other Library services.

3. If the program utilizes advisory boards and/or professional organizations, describe their roles.

Not applicable.

4. Explain how this program meets the needs of our diverse community.

In addition to offering a course in race and ethnic relations, the Sociology program has assessed the racial and ethnic composition of the students who take sociology courses. For example, considering the data that are available for the 2001, 2002, and 2003 Fall semesters, of the 423 students who took sociology classes 29 percent were Filipino, 24.5 percent were Asian, 22 percent were Hispanic, 21.7 percent were white, and 2.3 percent were African American. To serve this population and to reflect the trends of racial and ethnic diversity, faculty selected

textbooks in Introduction to Sociology, Race and Ethnic Relations, and Courtship, Marriage and the Family which considered and analyzed cross-cultural perspectives and global issues.

As mentioned previously, Sociology faculty participated in the multi-disciplinary course on Brown v. Board of Education during the Spring Semester, 2004.

Sociology faculty have developed and are pre-testing a "Classroom Socioemotional Environment Checklist" (See appendix), which seeks to assess the emotional and social climate of classrooms by asking students about their teachers and other student's verbal and nonverbal behaviors. This instrument was pre-tested in the Race and Ethnic Relations class during the Fall semester, 2003, but lack of resources prevented full analysis of the instrument's ability to assess the impact of classroom behaviors.

5. If the program has completed a previous self-study, evaluate the progress made toward previous goals.

This is the first program review for the Sociology program.

PART B: Curriculum

1. Describe how the courses offered in the program meet the needs of the discipline(s) and the students. (This may be answered through descriptive narrative evaluation or quantitative research).

The goals of the Sociology program are to provide basic courses in sociology, to encourage student interest in the sociological perspective and to prepare students for transfer to a four-year institution. Courses in the Sociology program help students satisfy the General Education Requirements for transfer to the CSU system (Area D3: Social, Political and Economic Institutions) and the Insegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (Area 4: Social and Behavioral Sciences).

While the Sociology program's current (2003) Retention and Success rates are somewhat below College-wide rates (Sociology: 83 percent retention, 63 percent success versus College-wide: 83 percent retention, 69 percent success), the Sociology program's retention and success rate is comparable to the Anthropology program (84 percent retention, 71 percent success) and the History program (81 percent retention, 58 percent success). Since the Sociology program is currently staffed by a .60 (part-time) adjunct instructor, we anticipate that the program's retention and success rate will increase with a full-time appointment. A full-time Sociologist can better serve the College's diverse student population by providing more office hours (currently, three hours per week), more classes, more time on campus, and more opportunity to interact with students.

2. State how the program has remained current in the discipline(s).

In addition to reading current professional journals in the field, the Sociology faculty review the most current textbooks for the most up-to-date sociological findings and analyses. Faculty also teach upper division and graduate classes at San José State University. This contact encourages

scholarly interaction and faculty undergo required yearly critical review of teaching methods by colleagues in the larger (25 members) Sociology Department. Whenever possible, faculty incorporate computer assisted learning (CD-ROM) and other innovations to teach and assess student learning. This includes incorporating power point when the technology is available do so in the classrooms.

3. If the student population has changed, state how the program is addressing these changes.

As mentioned previously (Part A, 4), the racial and ethnic composition of students who take sociology courses is diverse. Furthermore, the gender of students who take sociology courses are predominately female. While the college-wide student enrollment of females is 58 percent, the enrollment of females in sociology courses has increased over the last three fall semesters. For example, for the fall semesters of 1998, 1999 and 2000 the female enrollment in sociology courses was 60 percent. Comparatively, the female enrollment increased four percent to 64 percent over the last three fall semesters (2001, 2002 and 2003) for which data are available.

Overall, female retention and success is somewhat higher than their male counterparts. For the last seven years female retention and success is 76 percent and 67 percent, respectively, while male retention and success over the same time period is 74 percent and 57 percent, respectively.

While the retention rates for both genders are similar in sociology courses, the success rate is not. These differing success rates, however, are not unique to the sociology program. Rather, this disparity occurs college-wide and even nation-wide. At this point, it is not clear why this disparity exists. Sociology faculty would like to join with other campus programs to research and analyze how all college programs can increase male student retention and success rates.

Sociology faculty use class discussion, journal writing and in-class writing assignments to assess and monitor general student interest areas as well as specific occupational interest areas. While many students take sociology courses as electives, other students are taking these classes to meet requirements in other disciplines, especially those who are interested in or majoring in Health Sciences, Social Work and Administration of Justice. For example, several students (mostly females, but not exclusively so) taking sociology course have mentioned that they are concurrently enrolled at University of Norte Dame De Namur or San Francisco State Nursing programs. The Sociology program would like to serve this population better, by offering course(s) in medical sociology and community service.

4. All courses in this program should be reviewed and, if appropriate, modified every six years. If this has not occurred, please list the courses and explain.

During the spring semester 2004, the Sociology program modified the prerequisite English eligibility recommendations for Sociology 100, Introduction to Sociology. The program recommend that instead of student eligibility to take ENGL 836 that students should be eligible to take ENGL 100. Other sociology courses will be reviewed and modified as faculty resources permit.

5. If external accreditation or certification is required, please state the certifying agency and status of the program.

Not applicable

6. Discuss plans for future review and program modification.

The Sociology program would like to expand course offerings to more clearly reflect student interest and occupational desire. As mentioned previously, the program would like to offer classes in medical sociology. Additionally, we would like to explore internship/field immersion opportunities for students through offerings in community service learning, especially for students interested in Allied Health Fields and Administration of Justice. This would mean developing and working with outside community agencies to develop sites for student internships.

Since written communication is increasingly important in today's society, the Sociology program would also like to work more closely with the English program and the Writing Center to develop and expand student's ability to think and write critically.

PART C: Faculty and Staff

1. List major development activities completed by faculty and staff in this program in the last six years and state what development is needed or proposed by faculty in this program.

At the end of 2002, the Sociology program lost its full-time faculty member due to retirement. Since then, part-time faculty (.60 position) have continued to teach sociology courses and participate in Division and College-wide activities, such as holding office hours, attending Division meetings, advising students on other sociology programs, and writing course modifications and program reviews. Faculty attended a two day web-site development workshop last year at Canada College.

As a paid consultant in 2001, faculty conducted several focus groups of students enrolled in the Middle College program at the College of San Mateo. In a separate focus group research project at CSM, faculty assessed student opinions about ENGL 800 and READ 802. A third study, also conducted at CSM, analyzed the results of a statewide survey of pre-transfer level math coursework (Mathematics GateKeeper). Reports for each of these research projects were presented to CSM's Dean of Articulation and Research, Dr. John Sewart.

Faculty also wrote and published two articles in peer reviewed publications. While not directly applicable to teaching at community college, both articles focused on subject matter (cost analysis mental health programs and risk assessment of juvenile firesetters) which are used in lectures to illustrate points of sociological research and analysis.

The Sociology program needs a full-time sociologist and part-time adjunct faculty to serve the student population.

2. Describe the orientation process for new faculty and staff (include student workers such as tutors and aides).

Currently, the Sociology program is a single person (.60 position) which does not require an orientation process.

3. If recruitment of new and/or diverse faculty is needed, suggest recruitment techniques.

One full-time faculty position will be necessary immediately to allow for continued enrollment growth and to meet the demands of the community.

In addition to placing advertisements in the Chronicle of Higher Education, Pacific Sociologist, and the American Journal of Sociology, current faculty will also contact Sociology Departments at local universities (San José State and San Francisco State) to encourage and enlarge the diverse pool of potential applicants.

PART D: Facilities, Equipment, Materials and Maintenance

1. Discuss the effectiveness of the facilities, equipment, equipment maintenance, and materials for the program to meet its goals and focus. Include if they impact success and if they are accessible to all students.

Some of the classrooms in Building 1, especially room 1105, are difficult to teach in because of poor ventilation and noise from adjacent rooms and the outside parking lot. Moreover, room 1105 frequently needs lights replaced, and the electrical outlet near the lectern is broken and electrical wires are exposed. The overhead projectors need to be better maintained. In other classrooms, which are electronically equipped for example, 5132A, the projectors and so forth need to be better maintained.

2. List projected needs.

It would be very helpful if all classrooms were made computer-ready, including multi-media (DVD technology). Sound proofing and ventilating the rooms would make for a more compelling teaching and learning atmosphere.

3. Describe the use of technology in the program and discuss if technology is current and comparable to other college and business or industry.

Increasingly, educational materials require instructional technologies that employ computers, CD-ROM, DVD, and CD equipment and web-based course management materials. However, there are a limited number of "smart classrooms," which limits faculty use of these technologies in teaching and supporting the needs of students who enroll in sociology courses. Faculty would like to develop on-line courses and a department web site. Since computer-assisted presentations are becoming an industry and educational standard, faculty would like to do power point presentations in all classrooms.

4. If appropriate, describe the support the program receives from industry. If the support is not adequate, what is necessary to improve that support?

While the Sociology program is not an industry-based program, faculty would like to be able to develop an intern/immersion program which would acquaint students with the work world.

PART E: Budget Request

1. What resources (staff, facilities, equipment and/or supplies) will be needed in the next six years?

One full-time sociologist is necessary to maintain quality instruction and to provide a broader range of classes and further development of the program. Computer equipment, web-site development, expanded video and DVD library, and professional association memberships will be necessary to keep the Sociology program up-to-date.

The budget requests that the Sociology program makes for electronic classrooms and other equipment would be shared with other programs in the Division of Social Sciences and would be a benefit to us all.

2. If appropriate, discuss methods the program could share resources with other programs in the College and District.

Skyline College Program Review Worksheet for Enrollment, Performance and WSCH/FTE

Weekly Student Contact Hours – WSCH

Report the 3 previous **Fall** semesters with the most recent on the right.

Year	2001	2002	2003
WSCH	466	492	421

Please comment on program enrollment and expected trends.

The Weekly Student Contact Hours declined between 2002 and 2003 largely as a result of the retirement of one full-time faculty member who effectively retired at the end of 2002. Therefore, fewer classes were offered. A .60 faculty have maintained the Sociology program and it is clear that student interest and enrollments will increase. For example, the Sociology program carefully selects textbooks and classroom materials, which focus on and reflect cross-cultural perspectives and global issues as well as the diverse population of students taking sociology classes. Moreover, the program has shown a steady increase of female students over the last three years, largely the result of students majoring in the Nursing program at San Francisco State or Notre Dame D’Namur universities, which include sociology as an elective. Students have also commented that it is much less expensive to take lower division electives at Skyline College than at the four-year public or private universities.

FTE and WSCH/FTE (LOAD)

Report the previous 3 Fall semesters with the most recent on the right

	2001	2002	2003
FTE	1.20	1.00	.70
WSCH/FTE	388	492	602

Please comment on the comparison of this program to College trends.

The faculty load shows a steady increase from 2001 to 2003. The Sociology program’s WSCH/FTE (602) is above the College’s average (528) and the Social Science Division’s average (509). This can be explained by the fact that the Sociology program has offered fewer classes since 2002, but the program has more students per class. Moreover, this trend continues to the current semester. That is, although data are not available for the fall 2004 semester, student-census enrollment in each of the three sociology classes being taught this fall exceeds the enrollment from the fall 2003 semester.

Retention and Success

Report data on program retention and success rate with the most recent on the right.

	2001	2002	2003
Retention	82%	74%	83%
Success	67%	65%	63%

Please comment on the programs success and retention rate. Include factors that affect the rates and how college services are used to provide multiple avenues for student success.

While the Sociology program's current (2003) Retention and Success rates are somewhat below College-wide rates (Sociology: 83 percent retention, 63 percent success versus College-wide: 83 percent retention, 69 percent success), the Sociology program's retention and success rate is comparable to the Anthropology program (84 percent retention, 71 percent success) and the History program (81 percent retention, 58 percent success).

As mentioned previously (Part B, 3), the racial and ethnic composition as well as the gender composition of students taking sociology courses is diverse. It was noted that females have higher success and retention rates than do their male counterparts. The Sociology program is also monitoring recent changes in enrollment patterns in sociology courses and how this impacts success and retention. For example, in comparison to the last seven years (fall semester only, 1997 through 2003), to the most recent three years (fall semester only, 2001 through 2003), enrollments among the four largest racial and ethnic groups taking sociology courses have changed: Filipino enrollments increased, Asian enrollments remained relatively steady, Hispanic enrollments show some decline, and white enrollments show the greatest decline. Moreover, during this same comparative time frame (previous seven years to the most current three years), retention and success rates have also changed: Filipino retention and success rates increased, Asian retention and success rates increased, Hispanic retention rate increased, but success rate declined somewhat, and both white success and retention rates declined.

These changes bear watching. A partial explanation could include the fact that only data for fall semesters are included in analysis above. These data do not reflect either spring semesters or, especially, summer semester, when some local students who have been away from home at four-year colleges and universities enroll in sociology and other classes at Skyline College to meet elective requirements. It is also the case that the racial and ethnic demographics of the area are also changing.

To serve this diverse population, faculty select textbooks and course materials for all of the courses in the Sociology program that include, focus on and analyze cross-cultural perspectives and global issues.

Faculty encourage students to make use of the Writing Center, Library and the Learning Resource Center. From time to time, faculty require students to attend college programs/productions (guest speakers and special presentations) and write reports analyzing their sociological significance.