Sociology BA/BS

1. Achieve Sociological Competency: Entry Level

Goal Description:

Students who take introductory sociology classes will gain basic knowledge of social life, social change, and the causes and consequences of human behavior as they acquire the sociological perspective.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Demonstrate Sociological Competency: Entry Level
Learning Objective Description:

Students who take introductory sociology classes that are included in the SHSU Core Curriculum will be able to demonstrate their understanding of the basic core concepts of the discipline and the sociological perspective.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Comprehension Of Basic Core Concepts: Entry Level
Indicator Description:

A sample of students enrolled in all of the three introduction-level sociology courses in the SHSU Core Curriculum (SOCI2319 in Component Area IV: Humanities and Visual and Performing Arts; and, SOCI1301 and SOCI1306 in Component Area V: Social and Behavioral Sciences) is chosen in the Spring semester for evaluation. Employing an extra credit opportunity format, students responded to a five question evaluation instrument for the Component Area V courses (see Attachment #1) and a ten question evaluation for the Component Area IV course (see Attachment #2) to measure their understanding of basic core concepts in Sociology. The selection of these indicators conforms to disciplinary standards for sociological research. This assessment was developed by the Department Undergraduate Committee and approved by the entire faculty.

Criterion Description:

At least 85% of participating students should have at least 3 correct answers out of the 5 questions for Component Area V and 6 out of 10 questions for Component Area IV.

Attached Files
📄 Attach1BA.BS.Entry15.16
📄 Attach2BA.BS.Entry15.16

Findings Description:

Component Area IV: Of the 900 enrolled students in 25 sections, 607 students participated in the assessment (67.4% participation rate) and 580 students scored 3 or higher. Therefore, 95.5% of the participating students performed satisfactorily (see Attachment #3).

Component Area V: Of the 511 enrolled students in 10 sections, 397 students participated in the assessment (77.7% participation rate) and 357 students scored 3 or higher. Therefore, 89.9% of the participating students performed satisfactorily (see Attachment #4).

Attached Files
📄 Attach3.BABS.Entry15.18
📄 Attach4.BABS.Entry15.16

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Comprehend Basic Core Concepts: Entry Level
Action Description:

The data indicate the desired result is exceeded regarding both component areas. The department will continue to ensure that entry level students understand the basic core concepts of sociology.

2. Sociological Competency: Mid-level

Goal Description:

Students who complete the mid-level assessment course, SOCI2399: Writing in Sociology, will gain knowledge and skills in thinking and writing sociologically.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Demonstrate Sociological Competency: Mid-level

Learning Objective Description:

Sociology majors will be able to demonstrate the ability to think and write sociologically.

Sociological Mid-level Papers

Indicator Description:

The SOCI 2399: Writing in Sociology is required as a mid-level course to achieve the BA/BS in Sociology. A sociological essay is a requirement of the class. As a pilot study, a random sample of thirty percent of student essays (5 of 17) were selected from the SOCI2399: Writing in Sociology class in the Spring 2016 semester for assessment of their ability to think and write sociologically.

The Undergraduate Committee reviews the selected papers at the end of the Spring semester based on two main areas: sociological content and sociological writing in the discipline of Sociology. Sociological content includes three criteria: understanding social forces, applying a theoretical framework, and providing empirical evidence. Sociological writing includes three criteria: adopting American Sociological Association format, demonstrating a formal academic writing style, and minimizing grammatical errors. The selection of these criteria conforms to disciplinary standards for sociological thinking and writing. The evaluation rubric was developed and reviewed by the Undergraduate Committee (see Attachment #5).

Each paper was evaluated by five Undergraduate Committee members (four faculty members and the Director) using the evaluation rubric, where a score from 1 to 5 (1 is "no mastery" and 5 is "excellent mastery") is assigned in each of the six criteria in the two main areas. Note: The Undergraduate Committee is composed of four faculty members plus the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

Attached Files

📄 Attach5BA.BS.Mid15.16

Criterion Description:

At least 75% of papers should be rated 3 or better on average for each of the two main areas: Content and Writing Style.

Findings Description:

60.0% of the students' essays meet the minimum requirement of sociological content and sociological writing, respectively. Attachment #6 includes each of the individual committee members' ratings for each of the five papers, and a summary in the results table.

Attached Files

📄 Attach6.BABS.Mid15.16

Demonstrate Sociology Writing : Mid-Level

Action Description:

The data from this pilot study indicate that the desired result was not achieved for either of the two main areas. The Departmental Undergraduate Studies Committee and the Assessment Coordinator will meet with the instructors for the SOCI2399: Writing in Sociology class to improve the students learning outcomes. Additionally, we will get faculty approval for a finalized rubric and implement assessment for both Fall and Spring semester SOCI2399.

3. Sociological Competency: Exit Level

Goal Description:

Students who complete the Sociology Program will have an advanced understanding of the core concepts of the discipline and the sociological perspective.

Demonstrate Sociological Competency: Exit Level

Learning Objective Description:

Sociology majors will be able to demonstrate and apply advanced sociological knowledge and scientific skills to critically analyze social phenomenon through a capstone research paper.

Sociological Papers: Exit Level

Indicator Description:

The SOCI4399: Senior Seminar class is a required capstone course to achieve the BA/BS in Sociology. A sociological research paper is a requirement of the class. A random sample of thirty-two percent of student research papers (12 out of 38) was selected from the SOCI4399: Senior Seminar classes in the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 semesters for assessment of their advanced sociological knowledge and scientific skills to critically analyze social phenomenon.

The Undergraduate Committee reviews the selected papers at the end of the Spring semester based on three core criteria in the discipline of Sociology: sociological theory; sociological methods; and sociological perspective. The selection of these criteria conforms to disciplinary standards for sociological research. The evaluation rubric was developed by the Undergraduate Committee and approved by the entire

faculty (see Attachment #7).

Each paper is evaluated by three undergraduate committee members (two faculty members and the Director) using the evaluation rubric, where a score from 1 to 5 (1 is "no mastery" and 5 is "excellent mastery") is assigned in each of the three core areas. Note: The Undergraduate Committee is composed of four faculty members plus the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

To identify specific strengths and weaknesses in meeting the core learning objectives in the undergraduate BA and BS programs, for the 2015-2016 cycle we conducted item by item analysis in the three core areas: sociological theory; sociological methods; and sociological perspective.

Attached Files
 Attach7BA.BSExit15.16

Criterion Description:

Overall, at least 75% of papers should be rated 3 or better on average for the three core areas.

For item by item analysis, at least 75% of papers should be rated 3 or better on average for each of the three core areas.

Findings Description:

Overall, 10 of the 12 students' papers (83.3%) meet the minimum requirement. Regarding the item by item of the three core areas, 11 out of 12 (91.7%) for theory, 8 out of 12 (66.7%) for methods, and 12 out of 12 (100%) for sociological perspective, meet the minimum requirement. Attachment #8 includes each of the individual committee members' ratings for each of the twelve papers, summary tables of overall results and item by item analysis.

Attached Files
 Attach8.BABS.Exit15.16

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Apply Sociological Perspective, Theory, And Methods : Exit Level

Action Description:

Overall, the data indicate that the desired result is exceeded. However, the result of the item by item analysis reveals that one-third of students did not meet the minimum requirement regarding the research methods criteria. Those students who did not perform satisfactorily did not meet the minimum evaluative criteria regarding understanding of sociological theory and the application of appropriate sociological methods. The department will continue to make efforts in curricula and teaching to reduce the percentage of students who do not meet the minimum criteria overall, and in particular the area of research methods.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Regarding the entry-level assessment, the Undergraduate Committee will work with SHSU Online to standardize the delivery system in each class for the assessment of the learning comprehension for basic core concepts in Sociology. This will allow the Department to identify strengths and weaknesses item by item, as well as differentiate potential differences in online and in-person delivery systems related to core concept comprehension. The Department will maintain the existing criterion (85%) for the percentage of students meeting the minimum requirement for the desired learning outcome for the 2015-2016 assessment period.

Regarding the mid-level assessment, the Undergraduate Committee and OATDB Coordinator will work with the two instructors for the SOCI2399: Writing in Sociology course to evaluate the challenges faced in 2014-2015 in developing an assessment protocol for that course. A new pilot evaluation protocol will be created and implement during the 2015-2016 assessment cycle. The Department will maintain the proposed criterion (75%) for students meeting the minimum requirement for the desired learning outcome in the 2015-2016 cycle.

Regarding the exit-level assessment, the Undergraduate Committee will work with the two professors who teach this course to adjust the evaluation rubric to allow for enhanced inter-item analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the three criteria: theory, methods, and sociological perspective. The Department will maintain the existing criterion (75%) for students meeting the minimum requirement for the desired learning outcome in the 2015-2016 cycle.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

Regarding the entry-level assessment, the Department maintained the existing criterion (85%) for the percentage of students meeting the minimum requirement for the desired learning outcome for the 2016-2017 assessment period. For item by item analysis, the Undergraduate Committee worked with SHSU Online to standardize the delivery system in each class for the assessment of the learning comprehension for basic core concepts in Sociology and identification of strengths and weaknesses in each core area. However, due to technical difficulties (i.e., the limited flexibility of the Blackboard system for effective data gathering and reporting for item by item analysis), we were unable to conduct item by item analysis. Regarding the assessment of potential differences in online and in-person delivery systems related to core concept comprehension, we were not able to implement the analysis due to the same technical difficulties.

Regarding the mid-level assessment, the Undergraduate Committee and Department Assessment Coordinator worked with the instructors for the SOCI2399: Writing in Sociology course to evaluate the challenges faced in 2015-2016 in developing an assessment protocol for that course. A new pilot evaluation protocol was created and implemented during the 2015-2016 assessment cycle. The Department maintained the proposed criterion (75%) for students meeting the minimum requirement for the desired learning outcome in the 2015-2016 cycle.

Regarding the exit-level assessment, the Undergraduate Committee worked with the professors who taught this course to adjust the evaluation rubric to allow for enhanced inter-item analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the three criteria: theory, methods, and sociological perspective. The Department maintained the existing criterion (75%) for students meeting the minimum requirement for the desired learning outcome in the 2015-2016 cycle. We conducted item by item analysis for the three core areas of sociological competence.

Analysis of the exit-level data revealed the deficiency in performance level was primarily in area of the research methods. The instructors for this course will be informed of this finding and adjust the pedagogy accordingly.

Plan for Continuous Improvement: Sociology BA/BS

Closing Summary:

Regarding the entry-level assessment, the Department Assessment Coordinator will meet with SHSU Online to try to overcome the technical difficulties regarding Blackboard's capacity to effectively retrieve and report the necessary data for item by item analysis This will allow the Department to identify strengths and weaknesses item by item, as well as differentiate potential differences in online and in-person delivery systems related to core concept comprehension. The Department will maintain the existing criterion (85%) for the percentage of students meeting the minimum requirement for the desired learning outcome for the 2016-2017 assessment period.

Regarding the mid-level assessment, the Undergraduate Committee and Department Assessment Coordinator will work with the professors who teach this course to adjust the evaluation rubric to allow for enhanced inter-item analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the two main areas, Content and Writing Style, with three criteria in each area. The Department will maintain the existing criterion (75%) for students meeting the minimum requirement for the desired learning outcome overall and in each main item criteria in the 2016-2017 cycle.

Regarding the exit-level assessment, based on the results reported in the item by item analysis, the department will work with the professors to rectify the deficiency of student learning outcomes in the core area of research methods. The Department will maintain the existing criterion (75%) for students meeting the minimum requirement for the desired learning outcome overall and in each of the three core areas in the 2016-2017 cycle.