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 the Component Area IV course, respectively (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.

In this cycle, we included item-by-item analyses to assess students' understanding of the sub-concepts of basic core concepts of the discipline indicated by the SHSU Core Curriculum.

1. Two sub-concept areas corresponding to the Component Area IV: Humanities and Visual and Performing Arts: (a) Concept 1- To understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within an historical and social context (questions 1, 2, and 4); and (b) Concept 2 - to demonstrate knowledge of the influence of literature, philosophy, and/or the arts on intercultural experiences (questions 3 and 5).

2. Five sub-concept areas corresponding to the Component Area V: Social and Behavioral Sciences: (a) Concept 1- to employ the appropriate methods, technologies, and data that social and behavioral scientists use to investigate the human condition (Q2); (b) Concept 2 - to examine social institutions and processes across a range of historical periods, social structures, and cultures (Q4); (c) Concept 3 - to use and critique alternative explanatory systems or theories (Q1); (d) Concept 4 - to develop and communicate alternative explanations or solutions for contemporary social issues (Q3); and (e) Concept 5 - to identify and understand differences and commonalities within diverse cultures (Q5).

Criterion Description:

1. Overall, at least 85% of participating students should have at least 3 correct answers out of the 5 questions for Component Area V and Component Area IV, respectively.

2. For the Component Area IV: Humanities and Visual and Performing Arts, at least 85% of participating students should have at least 2 correct answers out of the 3 questions for the Concept 1, and at least 1 correct answer out of the 2 questions for the Concept 1.

3. For the Component Area V: Social and Behavioral Sciences, at least 85% of participating students should have correct answers for each concept.

Attached Files
　📄 Attach2BA.BSEntry16.17
　📄 Attach1BA.BSEntry16.17

Findings Description:

1. Overall, of the 1409 enrolled students in 37 sections (10 sessions of SOCI 1301, 4 sessions of SOCI1306, and 23 sessions of SOCI 2319), 975 students participated in the assessment (69.2% participation rate).

2. Overall, 94% and 92.1% of participating students had at least 3 correct answers out of the 5 questions for Component Area IV and Component Area V, respectively. Therefore, over 90% of the participating students performed satisfactorily (see Attachment 3:

Analysis of Findings).

3. For the Component Area IV: Humanities and Visual and Performing Arts, 91% of participating rating students had at least 2 correct answers out of the 3 questions for the Concept 1, and 97% of participating students had at least 1 correct answer out of the 2 questions for the Concept 2.

4. For the Component Area V: Social and Behavioral Sciences, 71.5%, 78%, 85.6%, 76.1%, and 83.9% of participating students had correct answers for each concept. Except for Concept 3, less than 85% of participating students had correct answers for each of the five concepts.

Attached Files

📄 Attach3BA.BSEntry16.17

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Comprehend Basic Core Concepts

Action Description:

The data indicate the desired overall result is exceeded regarding both component areas. The item-by-item analysis of the data also indicates that the desired result is exceeded regarding both concepts in Component Area IV: Humanities and Visual and Performing Arts. However, the item-by-item analysis of the data indicates that the desired result was not met for four of the five concepts for Component Area V: Social and Behavior Sciences. The department will continue to ensure that entry level students have an overall understand of the basic core concepts of sociology. Furthermore, the Undergraduate Committee will meet and discuss how to improve student performance on the four concepts of Component Area V that were not met the desired result.

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.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

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. A random sample of thirty-three percent of student essays (7 of 21) were selected from the SOCI2399: Writing in Sociology class in the Spring 2017 semester for assessment of their ability to think and write sociologically.

Members of 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 #1).

Each paper was 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 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

📄 Attach1BA.BSMidLevelRubric16.17

Criterion Description:

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

Findings Description:

Six of the seven (85.7%) students' essays meet the minimum requirements overall and for the Sociological Content and Sociological Writing areas, respectively. Attachment #2 includes each of the individual committee members' ratings for each of the seven papers, and a summary results table. Attachment #3 includes each of the individual committee members' ratings for each of the seven papers, and summary results for the Sociological Content and Sociological Writing areas. The results of the analysis in each area reveal that students performed slightly better on the Content area (3.87/5.0) than the Writing area (3.76/5.0).

Attached Files

📄 Attach2.BABS.Mid16.17
📄 Attach3.BABS.Mid16.17

Demonstrating Sociology Writing

Action Description:

The data indicate the desired result is exceeded overall and for both of the component areas. The department will continue to ensure that mid-level sociology majors demonstrate the ability to think and write sociologically.

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.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS –

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-one percent of student research papers (12 out of 39) was selected from the SOCI4399: Senior Seminar classes in the Fall 2016 and Spring 2017 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 #1).

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 continue to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in meeting the core learning objectives in the undergraduate BA and BS programs, for the 2016-2017 cycle we conducted item-by-item analysis in the three core areas: sociological theory; sociological methods; and sociological perspective.

Attached Files

📄 Attach1BA.BSExitRubric.16.17

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 in all three core areas. Regarding the item-by-item analysis of the three core areas, 12 out of 12 (100.00%) for theory, 10 out of 12 (83.3%) for methods, and 12 out of 12 (100%) for sociological perspective, meet the minimum requirement. Attachment #2 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

📄 Attach2BABS.Exit16.17

Apply Sociological Perspective, Theory, and Methods

Action Description:

Overall, the data indicate that the desired result is exceeded for all three competency areas. The result of the item-by-item analysis reveals that while all students exceeded the minimum criteria for the theory (12 of 12) and sociological perspective (12 of 12) areas,

one-sixth (2 of 12) of students did not meet the minimum requirement regarding the research methods criteria. The department will continue to make efforts in curricula and teaching to maintain high performance in all three competency areas.

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 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 identify 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 analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the two main component 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.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

Regarding the entry-level assessment, the Department Assessment Coordinator worked closely with SHSU Online to overcome the technical difficulties regarding Blackboard's capacity to effectively retrieve and report the necessary data for item-by-item analysis. The effort was complicated but successful overall, except for two classes that were excluded from the analysis due to coding inconsistencies. The item-by-item analysis revealed that the entry-level students understand well the basic concepts related to Component Area IV, but do not understand well the basic concepts related to Component Area V. The Department was not successful at evaluating student comprehension between online and in-person delivery methods during this cycle.

Regarding the mid-level assessment, the Department Assessment Coordinator worked with the professors who teach this course to adjust the evaluation rubric to allow for enhanced analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the two main component areas, Content and Writing Style, with three criteria in each area. The effort was successful as all selected student papers exceeded the minimum requirement.

Regarding the exit-level assessment, the Department Assessment Coordinator worked with the professors to rectify the deficiency of student learning outcomes in the core area of research methods. The effort was successful as the students' performance exceeded the minimum requirement.

Plan for Continuous Improvement

Closing Summary:

Regarding the entry-level assessment, the Department Assessment Coordinator will continue to meet with SHSU Online and the instructors to ensure that all sections of the entry-level courses provide clean data for analysis. The Undergraduate Committee will meet with the instructors who teach these courses to improve the teaching and student comprehension regarding the four deficient conceptual areas in Component Area IV: Social and Behavior Sciences. The Department will maintain the existing criterion (85%) for the percentage of students meeting the minimum requirement for the desired learning outcome for the 2017-2018 assessment period.

Regarding the mid-level assessment, the Undergraduate Committee and Department Assessment Coordinator will continue to perform the analysis of the two main component areas (Content and Writing Style) to identify strengths and weaknesses. In addition, item-by-item analysis of the three criteria in each component area will be carried out to identify specific strengths and weaknesses with the main areas. The Department will maintain the existing criterion (75%) for students meeting the minimum requirement for the desired learning outcome overall, in each component area, and in the three items per component area in the 2017-2018 cycle.

Regarding the exit-level assessment, although student performance in all three student learning outcome areas is above the minimum requirement, the Undergraduate Committee and Department Assessment Coordinator will continue to work with the professors who teach this course to maintain the high levels of learning outcomes in theory and sociological thinking and improve the student learning outcomes in the core area of research methods. Based on improved exit-level performance, the Department will raise the existing criterion of 75% to 80% for students meeting the minimum requirement for the desired learning outcome overall and in each of the three core areas in the 2017-2018 cycle.