***STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM***

***SUMMARY FORM AY 2017-2018***

Please complete a separate worksheet for each academic program (major, minor) at each level (undergraduate, graduate) in your department. Worksheets are due to CASA this year by **June 15, 2018**. Worksheets should be sent electronically to [kjsanders@eiu.edu](mailto:kjsanders@eiu.edu) and should also be submitted to your college dean. For information about assessment or help with your assessment plans, visit the Assessment webpage at <http://www.eiu.edu/~assess/> or contact Karla Sanders in CASA at 581-6056.

BA in Sociology

**Degree and**

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**Please use size 10 font or larger.**

**PART ONE**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| What are the learning objectives? | How, where, and when are they assessed? | What are the expectations? | What are the results? | Committee/ person responsible? How are results shared? |
| 1.demonstate an understanding of key concepts and definitions | Students are assessed in SOC 2000 and SOC 4900 | 70% or better score | SOC 2000 (56%)  SOC 4900 (67%) | Administered by all instructors of SOC 2000 and SOC 4900 |
| 2.demonstate an understanding of theoretical concepts and perspectives | *same as above* | *same as above* | SOC 2000 (54%)  SOC 4900 (76%) | *same as above* |
| 3.demonstrate an understanding of methods of social inquiry | *same as above* | *same as above* | SOC 2000 (61%)  SOC 4900 (64%) | *same as above* |
| 4. demonstrate an understanding of statistical methods and analysis | *same as above* | *same as above* | SOC 2000 (44%)  SOC 4900 (52%) | *same as above* |
| 5. demonstrate an understanding of what is meant by the “sociological imagination” | *same as above* | *same as above* | SOC 2000 (65%)  SOC 4900 (64%) | *same as above* |
| 6. demonstrate an understanding of social and cultural diversity | *same as above* | *same as above* | SOC 2000 (54%)  SOC 4900 (75%) | *same as above* |

**PART TWO**

Describe your program’s assessment accomplishments since your last report was submitted. Discuss ways in which you have responded to the CASA Director’s comments on last year’s report or simply describe what assessment work was initiated, continued, or completed.

After much discussion, we decided to administer the assessment survey instrument, developed in 2015, for the third time. We thought that it was important to get one more year of comparative data to assess the quality of specific questions before making major changes to the questionnaire. The unchanged questionnaire, administered through Qualtrics, consists of 45 questions, 37 of which are designed to broadly assess students’ knowledge in sociology and anthropology (see appendix). The remaining seven questions focus on identifying information, such as GPA, gender, race/ethnicity, class standing, and transfer status. The assessment questions fall into six main categories: 1) basic definitions 2) theory 3) inquiry (methods) 4) statistics 5) the sociological imagination and 6) diversity. The number of questions in each category varies, from as few as six (in theory, methods, and imagination) to as many as fifteen in “basic definitions.” The questions that make up the survey were solicited from the faculty and then carefully selected by the assessment committee to create an instrument that would best measure our efforts at meeting department learning objectives.

The assessment survey was administered to students in SOC 2000, *Sociology Professional Seminar*, and in SOC 4900, *Current Issues in Sociology* at the end of both the Fall 2017 and Spring 2018 semesters. We chose these two classes because SOC 2000 is a majors-only course designed for students to take early in their academic career and SOC 4900, the major capstone course, consists of students who have completed all other core requirements for the major. Students taking these courses were provided an electronic link to the survey and were asked to complete it outside of class. Of the 41 students enrolled in two sections of SOC 2000, 24 completed the survey (58.5%). In SOC 4900, 8 of the 45 students enrolled in the two sections of the course completed the survey (17.7%). An additional 12 students accessed the survey, but did not respond to the assessment questions.

**PART THREE**

Summarize changes and improvements in **curriculum, instruction, and learning** that have resulted from the implementation of your assessment program. How have you used the data? What have you learned? In light of what you have learned through your assessment efforts this year and in past years, what are your plans for the future?

We devoted a significant block of time to discussing assessment at our annual all-day department retreat at the start of the 2017 academic year and at multiple department meetings thereafter. Our initial thought was to review the questions on which students scored poorly, and revise those questions. However, after extensive discussion, the faculty decided that it would be premature to make significant revisions with only two years of data. We decided to administer the survey for one more year and then revisit what changes should be made based on student performance over the three-year period.

The results of the 2017-2018 assessment survey reveal a similar pattern to those of the prior year assessment. Students in SOC 4900 scored at least 10 percentage points higher on basic definitions, sociological theory, and diversity-related topics. Students in SOC 4900 also scored higher on sociological inquiry and statistics, but by less than 10 percentage points. In one instance, integrating the sociological imagination, students in SOC 2000 scored 1 percentage point higher than students in SOC 4900. The higher scores from students in SOC 4900 are consistent with our expectations since these students have completed much of their sociology coursework (including core requirements) when compared to students in SOC 2000. Scores for the integrating the sociological imagination likely reflects recency, since the sociological imagination is covered extensively in both SOC 1838G – Introductory Sociology and SOC 2000 – Sociology Professional Seminar which are taken early in students’ academic careers. Given the centrality of the sociological imagination to the discipline discussions are underway to ensure the faculty are explicitly emphasizing this conceptual approach in their courses. However, students in sociology courses are consistently using their “sociological imaginations” whether they recognize it or not. It would appear to be an appropriate time to revisit the questions used to assess students’ ability to integrate the sociological imagination.

Students in SOC 4900 exceed the 70% benchmark in sociological theory and diversity, but fell short of the benchmark in other areas of assessment. While mean scores for 4 of the 6 areas fell short of expectations for students in SOC 4900, there is substantial variation in correct responses to specific items within categories. For example, in the “integrating the sociological imagination” category the percentage of correct responses to specific questions ranged from 33% to 83%. Similarly, in the “basic definitions” category the percentage of correct response to specific questions ranged from 25% to 100% for students in SOC 4900. Now having 3 years of comparative assessment data available to review the Assessment Committee is well-positioned to consider the validity of specific survey questions. As noted earlier, the questions used on the survey were submitted by faculty and reviewed by the Assessment Committee. With the relatively recent departure of several faculty members from the department and the subsequent reassignment of core courses to current faculty it may be that existing questions do not accurately reflect the core content and knowledge that we expect students to know and retain.

One significant curriculum changes has occurred as a result of our ongoing assessment efforts. Specifically, the department decided to remove SOC 2000 – Sociology Professional Seminary from the list of required courses for the B.A. in Sociology. Feedback from both faculty and students indicated that content presented in this course is often duplicative. Much of the material presented in SOC 2000 is available in other existing courses (e.g. SOC 1838G, SOC 3050), online through PAWS (e.g. degree audits), via academic advising sessions, and through a more robust University-wide promotion of campus services. Of course, the elimination of SOC 2000 will lead to a modification of how we administer the department assessment survey to sociology majors earlier in their academic careers’. The Assessment Committee is already working on alternatives and will likely administer the survey in SOC 2721 – Social Stratification, another core course for the sociology degree that students typically take in in their sophomore year.

We continue to struggle with the response rate to the assessment survey. While we have improved the response rate for students in SOC 2000 49% in AY 16-17 vs. 58.5% in AY 17-18), we have seen the opposite trend among students in SOC 4900. The department is continuing to explore and test various alternatives (e.g. including the assessment survey as a requirement on the course syllabus, using class time to allow students to complete the survey) to improve the response rate.

The Assessment Committee will share the results of the assessment survey, as well as feedback from the Center for Academic Support and Assessment, and work with faculty to formulate strategies for meeting learning objectives at our upcoming faculty retreat (August 2018). In fact, a review of our assessment efforts and strategies to use this information to improve student learning, instruction, and our curriculum is a regular agenda item at our annual faculty retreat each August.

**APPENDIX**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 1: Percentage correct, Department of Sociology & Anthropology Assessment Survey, 2017-18 Academic Year** | | | | |
|  | **SOC 2000** | | **SOC 4900** | |
| **Questions** | **% Correct** | **Total** | **% Correct** | **Total** |
| **Basic definitions:** |  |  |  |  |
| The process by which people act and react in relation to others | 42 | 24 | 75 | 8 |
| A social position that a persons holds | 75 | 24 | 88 | 8 |
| The study of humankind | 75 | 24 | 63 | 8 |
| The broad focus on social structures that shape society as a whole | 50 | 24 | 75 | 8 |
| The recognized violation of social and cultural norms | 92 | 24 | 100 | 8 |
| Behavior expected of someone who holds a particular status | 71 | 24 | 63 | 8 |
| A close-up focus on social interaction in specific situations | 79 | 24 | 75 | 8 |
| Cultural patterns that set apart some segment of a society's population | 48 | 24 | 100 | 8 |
| The systematic study of human society | 79 | 24 | 75 | 8 |
| People who interact in a defined territory and shared culture | 42 | 24 | 75 | 8 |
| Any relatively stable pattern of social behavior | 26 | 23 | 50 | 8 |
| The lifelong social experience by which people develop their human potential and learn culture | 38 | 24 | 25 | 8 |
| The ways of thinking and acting, and the material objects that combine to form a people's way of | 42 | 24 | 50 | 8 |
| The process by which people creatively shape reality by interacting with others | 29 | 24 | 50 | 8 |
| Rules and expectations by which a society guides the behaviors of its members | 58 | 24 | 38 | 8 |
| *Mean percentage correct for the basic definitions section* | **56** |  | **67** |  |
| **Sociological Theory:** |  |  |  |  |
| Theories are critical for sociological theory because \_\_ | 82 | 22 | 83 | 6 |
| Underlying theme in the work of Emile Durkheim | 36 | 22 | 67 | 6 |
| Karl Marx argued that the point of studying society was \_\_ | 32 | 22 | 33 | 6 |
| Weber's concept of rationality \_\_ | 41 | 22 | 89 | 6 |
| Critical difference between functionalism and conflict theory | 59 | 22 | 83 | 6 |
| Claims that it is not so much what people do, but what meaning they attach to their behavior | 73 | 22 | 100 | 6 |
| *Mean percentage correct for the sociological theory section* | **54** |  | **76** |  |
| **Social Inquiry:** |  |  |  |  |
| What is the methodological approach used by Social-cultural anthropologists today? | 59 | 22 | 67 | 6 |
| Method used to study attitudes and values, among large numbers of people | 68 | 22 | 67 | 6 |
| Informed consent is absolutely essential in social research when | 55 | 22 | 67 | 6 |
| Upper, upper-middle, middle, working and lower levels of socioeconomic status | 32 | 22 | 50 | 6 |
| Methodology is defined as the science of | 73 | 22 | 50 | 6 |
| "Please describe how you feel about divorce in America." without a list of possible responses \_ | 77 | 22 | 83 | 6 |
| *Mean percentage correct for the social inquiry section* | **61** |  | **64** |  |
| **Statistical literacy** |  |  |  |  |
| The\_\_\_\_ influences observable changes in the \_\_\_\_. | 82 | 22 | 83 | 6 |
| Which is a characteristic of the interval-ratio level of measurement? | 46 | 22 | 83 | 6 |
| \_\_\_  statistics summarize a single variable and \_\_ statistics make generalizations to populations. | 23 | 22 | 0 | 6 |
| Statistically, the two things social scientists are interested in are: | 33 | 21 | 100 | 6 |
| The mode, median, and mean are three different statistics which tell us | 50 | 22 | 50 | 6 |
| Parameters are measurements from a \_\_, but statistics are measurements from a \_\_\_. | 36 | 22 | 33 | 6 |
| For a distribution which is highly skewed, which measure of central tendency is appropriate? | 32 | 22 | 17 | 6 |
| \_\_\_ tests compare means for two groups, \_\_\_ compares more than two groups. | 50 | 22 | 50 | 6 |
| *Mean percentage correct for statistical literacy* | **44** |  | **52** |  |
| **Integrating the sociological imagination** |  |  |  |  |
| The sociological imagination asks us to: | 67 | 21 | 83 | 6 |
| Making use of the sociological perspective encourages | 62 | 21 | 83 | 6 |
| Lisa attends a religious service with her friend John. She wonders if all religious services are … | 71 | 21 | 67 | 6 |
| What is the relationship between individuals and social forces? | 70 | 20 | 33 | 6 |
| Social class has two dimensions: | 43 | 21 | 33 | 6 |
| Sociologists use the term SES to indicate the social position of an individual in terms of: | 76 | 21 | 83 | 6 |
| *Mean percentage correct for the sociological imagination* | **65** |  | **64** |  |
| **Discussing diversity** |  |  |  |  |
| Anthropologists and sociologists adopt this perspective when trying to understand cultural differences: | 52 | 21 | 67 | 6 |
| The sociological definition of race is based on | 57 | 21 | 67 | 6 |
| Social stratification is a profoundly important subject in sociology because | 43 | 21 | 100 | 6 |
| If you wanted to understand your social class, you should consider which of the following factors? | 71 | 21 | 100 | 6 |
| Throughout the life course, gender shapes: | 76 | 21 | 100 | 6 |
| Which of the following is not a characteristic of culture? | 43 | 21 | 67 | 6 |
| Which of the following is a factor in determining a group's place in the ethnic hierarchy? | 14 | 21 | 0 | 6 |
| Wealth, power and prestige are elements of: | 71 | 21 | 100 | 6 |
| *Mean percentage correct for discussing diversity* | **54** |  | **75** |  |