



Program Name	Date Completed
Sociology	5/12/26
Report Completed By	Report Contributors
Chris Messer	
Brief Statement of Program Mission and Goals	
<p>Sociology examines human society with an emphasis on social structure, social interaction, and social change. One of the sociology program’s special emphasis areas is understanding social inequalities and their implication for social justice. Comparative, cross-national, and cross-cultural perspectives are also offered in many courses. The analytic frameworks sociologists employ encourage students to think about complex situations by showing how the social environment influences people’s life options, advantages, and disadvantages. Sociologists are interested not only in understanding social issues and social organization, but also in resolving social problems and improving social conditions for human populations. The insights gained from a sociological perspective include the ability to perceive the structures and patterns upon which everyday life rests, to understand the interaction between individual agency and social forces, to interpret events from diverse perspectives, and to examine existing social arrangements critically. The major is organized to provide a firm foundation in theory and research methods while allowing students to tailor their major to their specific subject interests.</p>	

Table I Closing the Loop

Report on at least one data-informed change to your curriculum during AY 2025-2026 that was implemented to improve student learning, in response to prior assessment cycles or other data.

A. Describe issues or SLOs addressed in the AY 2025-2026 cycle. Paste SLOs verbatim below.
SLO 4 – Demonstrate critical thinking by evaluating arguments and evidence related to social issues and by connecting sociological insights to current events and personal experiences of the social world.
B. In which prior academic year and semester was this SLO last assessed to generate data that informed the change(s) this year?



Spring 2025

C. What were the recommendations for change in the previous cycle?

1. Reviewer A had no recommendations and noted that our assessment fulfilled all areas required with clarity.
2. Reviewer B asked for more clarity on the assignment guidelines, the number of papers assessed, and plans for teaching and learning based on the process.

D. How were the recommendations for change acted upon?

1. We used a different course, SOC 310 Social & Cultural Theory, to assess critical thinking. The assignment used for assessment required students to select a sociological topic, explore previous theoretical approaches to the topic, and to propose a novel approach to studying the topic from a different sociological theory. The assignment was used to evaluate a student's ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information to form an overall perspective.
2. We describe below more details about the nature of the work assessed.
3. We further explain what meets the benchmark, something we aimed to achieve in this year's assessment
4. We will require a senior seminar (capstone) course in 2027. This class will be used, in part, to conduct a consistent assessment approach, which will also make it easier to incorporate prior assessment feedback and "close the loop."

E. How did the change(s) implemented impact student learning? If the change was not effective, what are the next steps or new recommendations?

The change was viewed as an effective strategy to ascertain student ability to engage in critical thinking as the assignments were tailored to draw out one's ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information to form an overall perspective.

Enter Comments on Table I Closing the Loop Below



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Sociology	May 12, 2026
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Table II Annual assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in AY 2025-26

1. Include information to share assessment processes, results, and recommendations for improved student learning. Copy this table for each assessed outcome.

A. Program SLO(s) assessed in this cycle. Copy the SLOs verbatim from the assessment plan.
SLO 4 – Demonstrate critical thinking by evaluating arguments and evidence related to social issues and by connecting sociological insights to current events and personal experiences of the social world.
B. Semester and year this SLO was previously reported on before this cycle.
Spring 2025
C. Describe the assessment method for this SLO(s).
An in-class assignment for SOC 310 Social & Cultural Theory. The class was held in Fall 2025. 2 reviewers (Susan Calhoun Stuber and Yunhan Zhao) conducted independent assessments. In cases where the reviewers arrived at different scores for a particular area, the average score was used. For example, if Susan gave a score of “1” regarding the rubric’s requirement of “clearly and comprehensively states the issue to be considered” and Yunhan gave the same paper a score of 2, then an overall score of 1.5 was provided.
D. Described student group(s) assessed. Provide the number of students or number of artifacts assessed.
5 senior Sociology majors, or 5 final papers.
E. Explain the expected proficiency level and proportion of students who should reach this level.
80% of students will demonstrate proficiency earning a minimum score of 2 on all five scored elements and an average score of 3 or higher (rubric below)
F. Provide Assessment results and number of students who met defined proficiency level.



5 papers were assessed using the attached rubric. All five students (100%) scored at least a 2 (“developing”) on every element. The average score on all 5 elements was 2.78, or closest to “proficient.”

G. Describe what the results or trends indicate about student performance.

The results revealed that most students either met the benchmark or exceeded the benchmark, meaning that they explained the issue, used information to investigate a point of view, addressed context and assumptions, carved out their own position, and developed a conclusion and identified implications. Still, we would like to see some improvement overall, ideally to the point where every student is at least “proficient.”

H. Describe program level changes/improvements planned for next AY (2026-2027?) which are informed by this assessment.

Assessment will be regularly conducted in a forthcoming required senior seminar course. This will allow us to routinely incorporate prior feedback and to more regularly measure additional SLOs simultaneously.

Enter Comments on Table II AY 2026 Assessment Below

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ATTACHMENT A

Sociology Assessment, Critical Thinking Rubric*

Student Learning Outcome #4: Critical Thinking	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Acceptable	Not Present (0)
	Exemplary (4)	Proficient (3)	Developing (2)	Emerging (1)	
<i>Explanation of issues</i>	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for full understanding.	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated, described, and clarified so that understanding is not seriously impeded by omissions.	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated but description leaves some terms undefined, ambiguities unexplored, boundaries undetermined, and/or backgrounds unknown.	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated without clarification or description.	Issue/problem to be considered is not stated.
<i>Evidence: Selecting and using information to investigate a point of view or conclusion</i>	Information taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are questioned thoroughly.	Information taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are subject to questioning.	Information taken from source(s) with some interpretation/evaluation, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are taken as mostly fact, with little questioning.	Information taken from source(s) without any interpretation/evaluation. Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact without question.	No evidence or mention of external sources presented.
<i>Influence of context and assumptions</i>	Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyzes own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position.	Identifies own and others' assumptions and several relevant contexts when presenting a position.	Questions some assumptions. Identifies several relevant concepts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions than one's own (or vice versa).	Shows an emerging awareness of present assumptions (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions). Begins to identify some contexts when presenting a position.	No awareness of context and assumptions when presenting a position.
<i>Student's position (perspective, thesis, hypothesis)</i>	Specific position (perspective, etc.) is imaginative, taking into account the complexities of an issue. Limits of position (perspective, etc.) are acknowledged. Others' points of view are synthesized within position/perspective/thesis, etc.	Specific position (perspective, etc.) takes into account the complexities of an issue. Others' points of view are synthesized within position/perspective/thesis, etc.	Specific position (perspective, etc.) acknowledges different sides of an issue.	Specific position (perspective, etc.) is stated, but is simplistic and obvious.	Specific position, perspective, thesis, hypothesis is not stated.
<i>Conclusion and related outcomes (consequences & implications)</i>	Conclusions and related outcomes (consequences & implications) are logical and reflect student's informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order.	Conclusion is logically tied to a range of information, including opposing viewpoints; related outcomes (consequences & implications) are identified clearly.	Conclusion is logically tied to information (because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion); some related outcomes (consequences & implications) are identified clearly.	Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences & implications) are oversimplified.	No conclusion presented or conclusion has little relation to information discussed.

*Adapted from American Association of Colleges and Universities – AACU