

ACADEMIC PROGRAM ASSESSMENT PLAN (2012-2013)

Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Science

Program: Social Science BA/BS

College: Humanities and Social Science

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DEPARTMENT MISSION: The Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Science is firmly committed to the principles of a liberal education. Our central objective is to teach the sociological and anthropological ways of viewing the world. The programs in sociology, sociology/criminology, anthropology, and social science are intended to increase the student's knowledge of social organization and social relationships and to assist students in developing skills in the processing, integration and utilization of knowledge, rather than its simple transfer. Our curriculum reflects the long-standing interest of our disciplines in examining the human condition and understanding stability and change in social life. The department prepares students to work in a wide variety of occupations or to pursue professional or graduate studies. The department's mission is to produce graduates who are motivated and equipped to make meaningful contributions to the enhancement of the human condition.

The department's mission relates to the mission of Colorado State University at Pueblo in the following ways: (a) the Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Science Department offers programs of study designed to complement and strengthen a broad liberal arts education; (b) the Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Science Department provides programs with emphasis on preparing students for career success or further professional development through graduate education; and (c) the programs in the department wed theory to practice across the curriculum, stressing the application of knowledge in a variety of contexts.

The department's mission relates to the mission of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences in the following ways: (a) the Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Science Department programs provide classroom and distance learning environments that stimulate critical thinking, and assist students to further develop critical thinking skills; (b) social action and responsibility, personal morality and accountability, and professional ethics are focused on throughout the curriculum in classes that examine the interplay between individual agency and social influence; (c) the broad disciplines within the department stress the importance of an awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity; (d) the department is committed to producing motivated and socially aware graduates equipped to make meaningful contributions within a diverse community and increasingly interdependent world.

PROGRAM MISSION: A major in social science provides the framework for supporting an innovative, multidisciplinary study of people and social institutions, from both historical and contemporary perspectives, focusing on the relationships and impacts they have with and on each other.

The program's core curriculum embodies the multidisciplinary nature of a social science degree. The Social Science Program is designed around the idea that the boundaries between disciplines form ground for creative and innovative research and knowledge. The program's structure allows self-directed students to design an individualized program of study that rests on a core foundation and complements their academic, professional and personal goals. Students are challenged to engage in intellectual exploration and responsible educational innovation. The curriculum draws on established bodies of thought in the social sciences to address questions and issues relevant in a rapidly changing environment. The multidisciplinary core of the social science program provides the conceptual framework within which students gain an appreciation of multiple perspectives while developing skills in the processing, integration, and utilization of knowledge.

The social science program prepares its students to function as knowledgeable, responsible and engaged citizens with a comprehensive understanding of modern social, political, and economic institutions. Through the study of social science, students learn about human adaptation, institutional

conflict, and social change, preparing them for careers in a rapidly changing, global economy. The social science programs' curricula are designed to provide students with a fundamental understanding of the major disciplinary approaches to the study of social life, including anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology. Students are expected to be able to demonstrate the ability to recognize the interconnections between the different disciplines within the major as well as develop an understanding of the unique perspective each offers.

These skills enhance the student's ability to assess new and unfamiliar situations, to select and apply qualitative or quantitative techniques in solving practical problems in creative ways, and to communicate effectively. The program promotes critical inquiry, cultural and self-awareness, and the examination of ethical issues in order to prepare students to be productive professionals. The multidisciplinary curriculum engages students with an educational framework that enriches their personal lives and provides a foundation for socially responsible citizenship.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals of the social science program are:

To prepare graduates with a major in the discipline to be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to recognize the interconnection between the different disciplines within the major.
- Demonstrate the ability to integrate and apply the theoretical perspectives and research methods from cultural anthropology, history, political science, economics, geography and sociology.
- Demonstrate the ability to continue to develop an understanding of cultural diversity and self-awareness.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of the social science degree students are able to:

Outcome 1

- Think critically, such that the student will be able to:
 - Define theory and describe its role in building social science knowledge
 - Compare and contrast foundational theories and essential perspectives and their underlying assumptions in the core social science disciplines
 - Explain how theories and perspectives reflect the historical context of times and cultures in which they were developed
 - Select one or more basic theoretical orientations or perspectives and apply them to a current or historical event or series of events
 - Differentiate key cultural, economic, political, and social phenomena that influence individuals and social structures and illustrate their impacts, both historically and currently

Relation to program mission: Developing critical thinking skills demonstrates students have an understanding of theoretical perspectives through analyzing, applying, integrating, and utilizing concepts from all social science disciplines.

Outcome 2

- Demonstrate an understanding of the role of evidence and qualitative and quantitative methods in the social sciences, such that the student will be able to:
 - Distinguish between qualitative and quantitative methods, critically assess research publications, and explain how studies can be modified or improved
 - Identify basic methodological approaches and describe the ways in which various methods contribute to cumulative social science knowledge
 - Compare the strengths and weaknesses of each discipline's methodology in analyzing cultural, economic, social, and political problems and developing solutions

Relation to program mission: Acquiring knowledge of social science research methods enables students to select and apply qualitative and quantitative techniques to solve practical problems and contribute to a deeper understanding of the interconnections between social science disciplines.

Outcome 3 –

- Communicate effectively, such that the student will be able to:
 - Express oneself in a clear and coherent manner in writing
 - Express oneself in a clear and coherent manner in oral presentation

Relation to program mission: Obtaining facility in oral and written modes of expression leads to effective communication about the study of people, cultures, and social institutions from both historical and contemporary perspectives.

Outcome 4

- Demonstrate self awareness, cultural competence and social action, as well as an appreciation of multiple perspectives, such that the student will be able to:
 - Show how patterns of thought and knowledge, including one's own, are directly influenced by culture, history, geography and economic, political and social structures
 - Compare and contrast micro and macro perspectives and illustrate how each explains the status and experiences, past and present, of minority or marginalized groups
 - Interpret how historical and social contexts create diverse groups and identities and shape the role of the individual within society and human relations across cultures

Relation to Program Mission: Promoting self awareness, cultural competence, and social action enriches students' personal lives and provides a foundation for socially responsible citizenship. Through the study of micro and macro perspectives students comprehend the significance and implications of socially situated identities and foster in others an appreciation of diverse human experiences.

Assessment Methods:

Outcome 1 – Think critically, such that the student will be able to:

Learning Objective	Assessment Mechanisms
Define theory and describe its role in building social science knowledge	<u>Direct measurements</u> Essay exams Research papers <u>Indirect measurements</u> Grades Student survey
Compare and contrast foundational theories and essential perspectives and their underlying assumptions in the core social science disciplines	<u>Direct measurements</u> Essay exams Research papers <u>Indirect measurements</u> Grades Student survey
Explain how theories and perspectives reflect the historical context of times and cultures in which they were developed	<u>Direct measurements</u> Essay exams Research papers <u>Indirect measurements</u> Grades Student survey
Select one or more basic theoretical orientations or perspectives and apply them to a current or historical event or series of events	<u>Direct measurements</u> Essay exams Research papers <u>Indirect measurements</u> Grades Student survey
Differentiate key cultural, economic, political, and social phenomena that influence individuals and social structures and illustrate their impacts, both historically and currently	<u>Direct measurements</u> Essay exams Research papers <u>Indirect measurements</u> Grades Student survey

Assessment Mechanisms – Definitions:

Essay exams and research papers – proctored essay exams and research papers completed as coursework in upper division social science electives

Grades – letter grades received on selected assignments in upper division social science electives

Student survey - a questionnaire given to graduating students to evaluate and assess their educational experience within the distance learning social science degree program. The student survey consists of both quantitative and qualitative measures, including questions specific to the program's student learning outcomes.

Outcome 2 – Demonstrate an understanding of the role of evidence and qualitative and quantitative methods in the social sciences, such that the student will be able to:

Learning Objective	Assessment Mechanisms
Distinguish between qualitative and quantitative methods, critically assess research publications, and explain how studies can be modified or improved	<u>Direct measurements</u> Essay exams Research papers <u>Indirect measurements</u> Grades Student survey
Identify basic methodological approaches and describe the ways in which various methods contribute to cumulative social science knowledge	<u>Direct measurements</u> Essay exams Research papers <u>Indirect measurements</u> Grades Student survey
Compare the strengths and weaknesses of each discipline's methodology in analyzing cultural, economic, social, and political problems and developing solutions	<u>Direct measurements</u> Essay exams Research papers <u>Indirect measurements</u> Grades Student survey

Outcome 3 – Communicate effectively such that the student will be able:

Learning Objective	Assessment Mechanisms
Express oneself in a clear and coherent manner in writing	<u>Direct measurements</u> Essay exams Research papers <u>Indirect measurements</u> Grades Student survey
Express oneself in a clear and coherent manner in oral presentation	<u>Direct measurements</u> Essay exams Research papers <u>Indirect measurements</u> Grades Student survey

Outcome 4 – Demonstrate self awareness, cultural competence and social action, as well as an appreciation of multiple perspectives, such that the student will be able to:

Learning Objective	Assessment Mechanisms
Show how patterns of thought and knowledge, including one's own, are directly influenced by culture, history, geography and economic, political and social structures	<u>Direct measurements</u> Essay exams Research papers <u>Indirect measurements</u> Grades Student survey
Compare and contrast micro and macro perspectives and illustrate how each explains the status and experiences, past and present, of minority or marginalized groups	<u>Direct measurements</u> Essay exams Research papers <u>Indirect measurements</u> Grades Student survey
Interpret how historical and social contexts create diverse groups and identities and shape the role of the individual within society and human relations across cultures	<u>Direct measurements</u> Essay exams Research papers <u>Indirect measurements</u> Grades Student survey

	#1.Demonstrate Critical Thinking	#2. Demonstrate Understanding of Methodology	#3. Demonstrate Effective Communication	#4. Demonstrate Self Awareness, Cultural Competence
Core Courses				
ANTHR 100	Research Papers	Research Papers	Research Papers	Research Papers
ECON 201	Research Paper		Research Paper	Research Paper
GEOG 103	Research Papers		Research Papers	Research Papers
HIST 103	Not Offered	Not Offered	Not Offered	Not Offered
HIST 202	Proctored Exam Research Papers Discussion Questions		Proctored Exam Research Papers Discussion Questions	Proctored Exam Research Papers Discussion Questions
POLSC 101	Research Paper		Research Paper	Research Paper
SOC 101	Proctored Exams Research Papers	Proctored Exams Research Papers	Proctored Exams Research Papers	Proctored Exams Research Papers

Curriculum map for social science core courses (Spring 2012)

Curriculum:

As demonstrated in the above table, the core curriculum in the social science program does support the student learning outcomes.

Assessment Process:

Data will be gathered annually for all graduating (January – December) social science majors and compiled to provide the indirect measures of grades. The report will be prepared annually during the month of May.

For assessment data drawn from students' essay exams and research papers the following procedure will be followed:

1. Instructors of upper division social science courses will be asked to provide the following student work to the Office of Continuing Education: essay exams and research papers.
2. Each year (January – December) a sample of work from all graduating social science majors (up to 8 students) will be assessed. If there are more than 8 graduates, a random sample of up to 8 individuals will be drawn.
3. For each student, essay exams and/or research papers from their last two completed upper division social science courses will be selected for assessment purposes.
4. In the first year (2012-2013) of formal assessment, student learning outcomes #1 (Critical Thinking) and #3 (Written Communication) will be assessed using the social science assessment rubric (see attachment A)

Within 3 months of completing their degree requirements social science graduates will be asked to complete a student assessment survey. The questionnaire will be mailed as well as available online. Data collected between April 1 and March 31 will be compiled and presented in an annual summary report. Results will be distributed to faculty, students, and program staff for comment and recommendations for ways to improve the program.

Prior to December 2012, a student survey will be developed and a pilot test will be conducted using recent and summer 2012 graduates. The intent is to be able to revise, if necessary, the student survey after the pilot test results are evaluated and to use the new student survey for annual assessment, beginning with fall 2012 graduates.

Continuous Processes:

The Chair of the department, in collaboration with the program manager in the Department of Continuing Education, is the individual responsible for initiating and supporting the on-going program assessment process, including curricular changes and other program improvements based on assessment results.

ATTACHMENT A

Social Science Assessment Rubric

Social Science Program - student learning outcomes	Exceeds Expectations Accomplished	Meets Expectations Competent	Below Expectations Developing	Not Acceptable Beginning
1. Demonstrate Critical Thinking	Able to articulate a comprehensive, intellectual understanding of research, theory, and historical context, from a balanced perspective within the social science disciplines by encompassing multiple theoretical perspectives from two or more disciplines within the social science program	Able to communicate a general understanding of research, theory, and historical context, from a balanced perspective by encompassing one theoretical perspective from at least two disciplines within the social science program	Able to convey some understanding of research, theory, and historical context within the social science disciplines but did not integrate the different theories in the final analysis	Did not incorporate theoretical perspectives from two different disciplines
2. Demonstrate Understanding of Methodology	Able to articulate a comprehensive, intellectual understanding of qualitative and quantitative methodology by applying multiple methodologies in the analysis	Able to communicate a general understanding of qualitative and quantitative methodology by applying at least one acceptable methodology in the analysis	Able to convey some understanding of qualitative and quantitative methodology but did not integrate the findings into the analysis	Did not incorporate any methodology in the analysis
3. Demonstrate Effective Communication	Able to articulate and convey a comprehensive intellectual understanding of ideas, perspectives and concepts by incorporating several detailed examples, studies	Able to communicate a general understanding of ideas, perspectives and concepts by incorporating an example, study or	Able to convey some ideas, perspectives and concepts but did not fully explain how the issues are analyzed	Did not effectively communicate the findings of the analysis

	or references which expand on the theories or perspectives presented	reference for each theory or perspective presented		
4. Demonstrate Self Awareness and Cultural Competence	Able to articulate a comprehensive, intellectual understanding of the influences of cultural, economic, political, historical and social phenomena on the individual and social structures by expressing personal growth, awareness and appreciation of other cultures and perspectives	Able to communicate a general understanding of the influences of cultural, economic, political, historical and social phenomena on the individual and social structures by expressing self awareness and appreciation of other cultures and perspectives	Able to convey some ideas of a the influences of cultural, economic, political, historical and social phenomena on the individual and social structures but did not see the influence on self	Did not demonstrate an understanding of the influences of culture and society on the individual