

Appendix C: Student Learning Assessment

According to UH Hilo's external accreditor, the WASC Senior Commission of University and Colleges (WSCUC), "Institutions of higher education have a responsibility to document that students acquire knowledge to develop higher-order intellectual skills appropriate to the degree earned." This mandate comes from the U.S. Department of Education which requires universities to ensure "baseline levels of acceptable quality and performance" in order to participate in the distribution of federal student aid. Below is a list of what WSCUC considers "core competencies" and a minimum level of skills that all undergraduate students, regardless of their major, should master by the time they graduate with their baccalaureate degrees. These are skills that are not taught by any one class, but are mastered through the collective study of multiple disciplines and subjects. Included is Sociology's Assessment of these skills where available.

Written Communication/Critical Thinking

UH Hilo's statement on Information Written Communication:

The ability to logically construct a line of reasoning in well-organized and eloquent prose that effectively communicates information, makes a convincing argument, and/or expresses important viewpoints to an intended audience is a marketable skill in the professional world.

Sociology's Program Learning Outcomes link to Core Competency in Written Communication through our commitment that:

"Sociology majors and minors should also develop basic skills in social research, equipping them to apply what they have learned in real-life settings."

2013-2014

Process of Core Competency Assessment:

A random sample of ten final papers was drawn from SOC 430 (Seminar in Social Change). The chart below shows average scores for the sample across the four rubric dimensions. The weakest of all scores can be found in the line of reasoning scores (critical thinking), with an average score of 1.7 (of a possible 4), suggesting students are close to but have not achieved 'emerging' competence. None of the other average scores surpass 'emerging' competence (3).

SOC 430 Final Paper - Average Scores N=10

Assignment:

Students will engage in a policy analysis in which they focus on a specific issue then write an op-ed suitable for publication. Paper Requirement include a three to five pages paper with sources.

Line of Reasoning	1.7
Organization and Structure	2.5
Content	2.1
Language/Prose/Syntax	2.6

Action Taken in Response to Results:

Meet with the Department to discuss the nature of written assignments at the 300 level, ensuring that students are exposed to the Sociological literature. SOC 380, our research methods course, and SOC 390, our theory course, should be primary targets for increasing competency in critical thinking. Learning outcomes for all courses should be reviewed.

2017-2018

The University conducted a Written Communication Assessment this year but Sociology did not participate.

2019-2020

The University conducted an assessment of its Writing Intensive Courses. Sociology completed an assessment of SOC 377 Writing Intensive (WI) Indigenous Feminisms, cross-listed with Women and Gender Studies.

Rubric and Scoring of SOC 377 Final Writing Assignment

Student	Reader 1				Reader 2			
	Learning of course materials (vocabulary)	Prose/ Discourse	Analysis/ Insight	Total	Learning of course materials (vocabulary)	Prose/ Discourse	Analysis/ Insight	Total
1	3	3	3	9	3	3	3	9
2	3	2	3	8	3	2	3	8
3	3	3	3	9	3	3	3	9
4	3	3	3	9	3	3	3	9
5	3	2	3	8	3	2	3	8
6	3	2	2	7	3	3	2	8
7	3	3	2	8	3	3	2	8
8	3	3	3	9	3	3	3	9
9	3	3	3	9	3	3	2	8
10	3	3	2	8	3	3	3	9
11	2	2	2	6	2	2	2	6

The above table demonstrates the efficacy of a writing intensive courses in Sociology. The evaluations of Readers 1 and 2 were made of a Final Essay Paper that required students to identify central principles of Indigenous feminism and make an analysis. The papers were revised two times prior to submission including based on peer reviews and global revisions recommended by the faculty. The scores demonstrate that for most students, opportunities to revise papers, as required for writing intensive designation at UH Hilo, support student success in writing. Scores ranged from 1-3 for the three areas of evaluation.

Quantitative Reasoning Assessment

UH Hilo's statement on Quantitative Reasoning:

Students may not need to be mathematical wizzes, but all individuals need to understand numbers and what they mean (and don't mean). Often, poor arguments are based on haphazard or misuse of data and statistics—completing a college degree ensures students will have the ability to identify & solve problems from a quantitative perspective through the critical collection and scrutiny of data and how to best visually produce data in ways that are effective.

2014-2015

The University conducted a Quantitative Reasoning Assessment and submitted a report on August 2015. The test was provided to students in MATH 205 and lower. Sociology was not part of this campus wide Assessment.

2018-2019

This academic year, the campus assessed Quantitative Reasoning. Departments were asked to administer a short quiz to capstone/400-level classes this semester. Sociology faculty had requested an on-line option for this quiz. However, it was not administered.

Oral Communication/Critical Thinking

UH Hilo's statement on Oral Communication:

Oral Communication refers to verbal/oral eloquence (spoken language). Students should be able to choose appropriate language for any given audience (professional or casual), and deliver a message or main points through an organized and engaging speech or presentation that may employ visual aids, body language, and other non-verbal elements that enhance the meaning or argument put forth.

The Department has not established program learning outcomes or student learning outcomes for this Competency.

2016-2017

Process of Core Competency Assessment:

Five (n=5) presentations were evaluated by two sociology faculty members. Average scores for each category were high. The average score was 3.6/4 for Organization, 3.8 for Content, 3.7 for Language, and 3.3 for Delivery. This indicates that Sociology Majors are developing competency in oral communication.

SOC 409 Project Presentation

Assignment:

10–20 minutes presentation of Case Study on Social Movement Organization.

Rubric:

Rubric Introduction/ 5 points, Summary of Literature Review/5 points, Research Questions/ 5 points, Explanation of Method/ 5 points, Explanation of Theory/5, Case Analysis/ 15 points

Action Taken in Response to Results:

In response to the findings we will develop formal program learning outcomes, including oral communication, and post these publicly. We will consider any program inefficiencies (such as tracks and prerequisites) that may further improve oral communication training for senior seminar courses. We will emphasize further delivery, which was the lowest measure.

Information Literacy

UH Hilo's statement on Information Literacy:

College-level writing often stresses proper citation formatting in terms of bibliographies and cited material. However, Information Literacy is also about learning to avoid plagiarism (whether intentional or unintentional) as well as locating and utilizing credible sources of information as opposed to just taking anything from the internet as “fact.” Universities try and instill in students an ability to question and to reject information or arguments that are clearly inaccurate or false.

2015-2016

The Department did not participate in the assessment for this competency.

Cultural Diversity

UH Hilo's statement on Cultural Diversity:

Because UH Hilo is located in a very specific place in Hawai‘i, we hope to instill in our students a better understanding of this unique place and its unique peoples and cultures, including the values and histories of Native Hawai‘ians. We also hope to push students’ understanding of the larger world that is home to differing religions, lifestyles, and beliefs; and, we hope to instill in students a sense of empathy and shared interests for even the most difficult and polarizing of issues.

The Department will conduct an assessment for this competency by the end of the academic year 2019-2020.

Critical Thinking

UH Hilo's statement on Critical Thinking:

Critical thinking is about analysis, decision-making, planning, and the synthesis of information and evidence into one’s own work that results in a unique, insightful, and purposeful “product”—whether that be a scholarly paper, an artistic composition, a field experiment, or a lab report. There is no separate rubric for this skill as it is embedded in four of the above-stated competencies.

Collaborative Skills, Civic Participation, and Applied Learning

UH Hilo's statement on Collaborative Skills, Civic Participation, and Applied Learning:

Students are encouraged formulate a rational project that contributes to the environmental, economic, social, or intellectual betterment of the local community or global forum. Articulate how their activity contributing to increased awareness of local or global issues on campus. And define what aspects of his/her group projects with peers contribute to the intellectual development of all involved.

APPENDIX D. THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY CURRICULUM MATRIX

Course	Program Learning Outcomes and Core Competency Connection						
	Explain Major Theoretical Frameworks (/Information Literacy/ Critical Thinking)	Identify processes and structures of social inequalities with an intersectional perspective gender/sexuality/race/ethnicity/Indigeneity/class (Information Literacy/Cultural Diversity)	Distinguish Between Macro, Meso, Micro social structures and Identify Mechanisms of Social Change (Information Literacy)/Critical Thinking)	Understand and Explain how various social forces impact everyday lived experiences in contemporary society. (Information Literacy/Civic Engagement)	Develop applied skills in quantitative and qualitative methods, including collecting, interpreting, and reporting data (Quantitative Reasoning/Written Communication)	Identify scholarly sociological literature and develop literature review (Written Communication/Critical Thinking)	Develop Skills in presenting independent research and apply knowledge and research to current social concerns and community project (Oral Communication/Civic Engagement)
SOC 100	I	I	I		I	I	
All 200-level courses	D	D	D	I	I		I
SOC 280/380					D	D	D
SOC 390	M		M	D			
All 300-level courses	D	M	M	D	D	D	D
All 400-level Courses	M	M	M	M	M	M	D
SOC 440/480	M	M	M	M	M	M	M

I=introduce D=develop M=exhibit mastery

APPENDIX E. THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY PROPOSED ANNUAL ASSESSMENT PLAN

Outcome	Year	Direct Evidence	Indirect Evidence
Identify basic sociological concepts and purpose of social research and theory. (Critical Thinking/Written Communication)	AY 1	Selected sampling of papers from SOC 100 and SOC 260.	Majors focus group (SOC 260)
Demonstrate skills in statistical analysis and understanding of Research process. (Quantitative Reasoning)	AY 2	Selected sampling of papers from SOC 280/280L and SOC 380 to evaluate analysis and presentation of data analysis.	Major focus group (SOC 380)
Distinguish differences among sociological perspectives and levels of analysis -- micro, meso, macro. Information Literacy	AY 3	Selected sampling of papers from SOC 390, and 300-level & 400-level courses.	Majors focus group (SOC 390)
Orally Present Independent Research to Class or Conference (Oral Communication/Critical Thinking)	AY 4	Faculty attend and listen to oral presentation of research in SOC 363 and/or SOC 409 either in class or at a student conference.	Self-Reflection Statements (SOC 363)
Demonstrate cultural sensitive to Hawai'i and Native Hawai'ian knowledge systems (Cultural Diversity/Information Literacy)	AY 4	Selected sampling of papers from SOC 320, SOC 370, SOC 377, and SOC 470 to evaluate of cultural diversity in Hawai'i context.	Majors focus group (SOC 470)
Show participation in community service and/or research (civic engagement/Oral Communication)	AY 5	Report on SOC 391 Student Internships, collect paper from SOC 480 and SOC 440.	Majors focus group (SOC 391)
Apply and/or integrate a range of analytical methods and theories to the study of society (Critical Thinking)	AY 6	Selected sampling of papers 400-level electives	Alumni Survey