Academic Program Assessment Report

Assessment is a term commonly used to encompass the process of gathering and using evidence to guide improvements.

SACSCOC requires that an institution "<u>identifies</u> expected outcomes, <u>assesses</u> the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and <u>provides evidence of seeking improvement</u> based on analysis of the results".

Be sure to SAVE your progress as you work!

Academic Program Sociology, B.S.

Submission Year 2022-2023

Assessment Coordinator Name Dr. Zach Rubin Enter Assessment Coordinator Email zrubin@lander.edu

Program Goal

Goal

Goal 1

Program Goals are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Program Goal

Demonstrate disciplinary knowledge in the field of sociology.

Pillar of Success Supported

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

Outcomes

Outcome 1

Outcomes are specific, measurable statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add? Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Percentage of graduating students demonstrating an ability to describe and use key sociological concepts by scoring at least 70% on Sociology Disciplinary Knowledge Assessment.

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2021-2022

Performance Target for "Met"

Over 75% of students score at least 70% on Sociology Disciplinary Knowledge Assessment.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 50 and 74% score at least 70% on Sociology Disciplinary Knowledge Assessment.

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 50% score at least 70% on Sociology Disciplinary Knowledge Assessment.

Assessment Measure Used Sociology Disciplinary Knowledge Assessment	Frequency of Assessment Yearly (spring), at the beginning of Sociology 499 capstone (or in the Crim 499 Capstone if they graduate in December)
Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results) 25%	Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1) 1

Comments/Narrative

12 graduating seniors took the in-house Sociological Knowledge Disciplinary Assessment at the end of Fall 2021 or the beginning of Spring 2022. The average score was a 60%. 25% of students scored at least 70% or higher. This percentage is down from last year (2020-2021), when the average score was a 67%, and 53% of students scored a 70% or better. These results are slightly disappointing. Unfortunately, national trends indicate that assessment measures are down across many disciplines. Last year we said that we would be revising the in-house instrument to make it better align with actual instruction. The revisions are now complete. The new instrument is being implemented this academic year.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Outcome 2

Outcomes are specific, measurable statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Percentage of students demonstrating disciplinary knowledge by scoring at or above the national average (40-57 is the range for 50th percentile) on the Core portion of ETS Sociology Field Test.

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2021-2022

Performance Target for "Met"

Over 75% score at or above average national score on core portion of Sociology Field Test.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 50 and 74% score at or above average national score on core portion of Sociology Field Test.

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 50% score at or above average national score on core portion of Sociology Field Test.

Assessment Measure Used ETS Sociology Field Test	Frequency of Assessment Annually, in Soc 499 Sociology Capstone Experience (or in the Crim 499 Capstone if students are graduating in the fall).
Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1) 2

Comments/Narrative

In the 2021-2022 AY, 12 students took the Sociology Field Test (ETS). The average score on the "core" portion of the test for our students was a 41 (on a scale of 20-100) with a range from 22 to 77. The national average score on the assessment is between 40 and 57 (50th percentile). We are happy to report that our average student score was on a par with the national sample, with 58% of our students scoring at or better than the national average. This was up not only from last year (2020-2021) where 38% of our students scored above the national average, but also exceeds our scores from 2019-2020 when 56% of our students scored at or above the national average. This data indicates that Lander sociology students continue to do well demonstrating sociological competence relative to their peers nationwide.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments

The measures for this goal are drawn almost entirely from our majors, whereas below goal 2 the measures have significant overlap with other majors as they come from courses required for a couple different disciplines. So, these give us both the clearest look at the achievement level of our majors as well as the smallest sample size - which partially explains the fluctuation year to year. Over the past few years, our students have been on par if not above average for the external measure from ETS, and have scored satisfactorily on our internal measure.

We've also noticed that unlike some related programs, students often come to sociology late. Anecdotally, we've had students come from other colleges on campus and try to finish their degree with a sociology major in 3-4 semesters with mixed success. As they add late, they are often taking SOCI 499 (where we draw data for two of these outcomes) alongside several other disciplinary courses in the same semester. This will be something for us to monitor going forward as we work to incorporate those students and address some of the special challenges that come with adding the major late. They may also have taken SOCI 101 at other institutions (like technical colleges) and transferred it in, therefore giving them a different grounding some of the material.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

This year, we will implementing the new in-house sociology knowledge instrument. It had not been updated in several years, and with the addition of Professors Rubin and Kerr it was in dire need of one to reflect the topics the three of us teach. Each sociology faculty has contributed a list of "should know" questions that we hope more accurately reflect the breadth of knowledge they acquire in the major and will be a more accurate and valid measure of their disciplinary knowledge. Results of that new instrument will be available on the next AY assessment report.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files

Goal 2

Program Goals are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Program Goal

Demonstrate the ability to think analytically.

Pillar of Success Supported

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

Outcomes

Outcome 1

Outcomes are specific, measurable statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Percentage of students demonstrating analytical knowledge by scoring at or above the national average on the Critical Thinking portion of the ETS Sociology Field Test.

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 20)21-2022
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Performance Target for "Met"

Over 75% score at or above average national score on assessment.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 50 and 74% score above or at average national score on assessment.

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Below 50% score above average national score on assessment.

Assessment Measure Used Sociological Field Test (Critical Thinking)	Frequency of Assessment Each time Soc 499 Sociology Capstone Experience is offered (or in the Crim 499 Capstone class if they are graduating in the fall term).
Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1) 2

Comments/Narrative

Twelve sociology graduates took the Critical Thinking portion of the ETS Field Test during the 2021-2022 AY. 50% of our students scored at or above the national average (39-56) on critical thinking skills. Our students' average score was a 39, with a high score of a 62 and a low score of a 22. While the percentage of students scoring at our above the national average is lower than it was in AY 2020-2021, it is higher than in AY 2019-2021 when only 44% of students scored at or above the national average. It nice to see that our students have done reasonably well on this assessment two years in a row. This data indicates that our students continue to demonstrate the ability to think critically and analytically.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Outcome 2

Outcomes are specific, measurable statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Percentage of students demonstrating analytic knowledge by scoring grade of 70 % or higher on

analytical essay question.

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2021-2022

Performance Target for "Met"

Over 75% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 50 and 74% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Below 50% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Assessment Measure Used

Frequency of Assessment

Students are given a Final Examination essay question which asks them to pick a theorist, discuss their life and work, a concept associated with their work, what the concept means and apply the concept to a social institution in society. The essay is graded on a 50 point scale, with 10 pts. for each part of the question. Scores are then converted to percentages.

Each time Soc 499 Sociology Capstone Experience is offered (or in the Crim 499 Capstone class if they are graduating in the fall term).

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results) 75%

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

Comments/Narrative

Twelve students completed the assessment in the fall 2021 or spring 2022 term. Nine of these students (75%) scored a 70% or better. This score is slightly higher than last year, where 70% of students earned a 70% or higher. We are glad to see this improvement in student scores.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Outcome 3

Outcomes are specific, measurable statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Percentage of Students Satisfactorily completing an assignment that demonstrates the ability to read and comprehend a peer reviewed journal article.

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2021-2022

Performance Target for "Met"

Over 75% of students score at least 70% or better on assignment

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 50 and 74% students score at least 70% on assessment.

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Below 50% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Assessment Measure Used

Frequency of Assessment Every semester.

Students were given a peer-reviewed article from I a sociology journal and tasked with summarizing several dimensions of it: what is already known about the topic, what gap in knowledge the author(s) are attempting to fill, what type of method was used, and what the results were. Students were also asked to reflect on how they would change parameters if they were to repeat the study in order to generate new knowledge.

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

85.5% (average over both semesters).

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1) 3

Comments/Narrative

Nineteen students took the assessment in the fall term and averaged a 83.3%. Nineteen students took the assessment in the spring and averaged an 87.8%. This shows that we are meeting our goal of teaching students to think critically (as demonstrated by their ability to analyze a peer-reviewed scholarly publication). In AY 2020-21, the scores increased an entire letter grade from the year prior, and this year they decreased from that level back to the prior one. We're uncertain about what affected that swing - perhaps it was just an exceptional year - and will continue monitoring the trend line to ensure that we use a reliable measure for this outcome.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments

We have used outcomes 1 and 2 for several years now, and the results remain relatively consistent. Outcome 3 is newer (started two years ago) and so we will need some more time to interpret any trends. The data indicates that we are doing well attempting to meet our goals of teaching our students to think critically about sociological concepts. Despite it being only "partially met," outcome 1 is still encouraging because it is a very high standard to meet and compared to students at other institutions our majors score on par with the national average.

In addition to these outcomes, Dr. Rubin worked in AY 2021-2022 with a student to gather data and produce a project that has now been published in a peer reviewed journal. He has taken another student on this fall in an attempt to repeat that success. Likewise, Dr. Harrison brought six students to present research from their capstone final projects to the Carolina Undergraduate Social Science Symposium (CUSSS). Their presentations received acclaim from sociology faculty from across the state for having rigorous and well-develop methods and analyses. That conference being hosted at Lander this year, so we hope to build on that success.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

We will continue to monitor the journal article assignment's outcome to see if student performance stabilizes or continues to vary to such a great extent. If it does continue to vary like that, we will have to consider a different assignment.

Last year we noted that we were going to have conversations with the newly hired sociologist in the department about developing new measures for this goal to be deployed across at least one additional course. While we began that conversation, what it ultimately led to was a decision to create new courses (see below in Changes Made for Goal 3). Therefore, we will look next year at collecting a measure from one of those new courses.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files

Goal 3

Program Goals are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Program Goal

Demonstrate the ability to apply sociological theory.

Pillar of Success Supported

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

Outcomes

Outcome 1

Outcomes are specific, measurable statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Percentage of students demonstrating ability to apply of sociological theory by scoring at least 70% on Soc 202 final paper assignment.

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2021-2022

Performance Target for "Met"

Over 75% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 50 and 75% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 50% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Assessment Measure Used

Frequency of Assessment

Each semester in Soc 202 Social Problems.

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

The Sociology 202 final paper allows students to pick a social problem and report its nature and potential solutions using sociological theories. Students are assigned to apply at least two of the four major theoretical paradigms of sociology presented in the class to their understand of the nature of the problem (E.g. conflict, functionalist, feminist, and symbolic interactionist theories).

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

88.2% average across both terms.

3

Comments/Narrative

The level of achievement for this measure remained essentially constant, going from 89% in the previous year to 88.2% in this assessed year. This indicates that the measure is likely a reliable indicator of student performance towards the measured goal of analytical thinking. Despite being a 200 level course it is disproportionately populated with junior and senior level students which might explain the high scores relative to the level of difficulty in a course designed more for freshmen and sophomores.

This was a new measure for AY 2020-2021, and repeated for AY 2021-2022, and in repeating it we were also able to establish a baseline for comparison. Across both fall and spring semesters, 3/76 students did not pass this assignment, 29/76 passed the assignment but received less than an A, while 44/76 got an A (perfect or near perfect score). We plan on using this measure for at least two more years at which point we will revisit its utility.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Outcome 2

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop Operational Outcomes, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Percentage of students demonstrating ability to apply sociological theory by earning at least a 70% on the Sociological Imagination paper in Soc 399

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2021-2022

Performance Target for "Met"

Over 75% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 50 and 74% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 50% of students score at least 70% on assessment.

Assessment Measure Used

Frequency of Assessment Sociological Imagination Research paper. Students Every semester in Sociological Theory research a pivotal event in their life and apply sociological theory to understand their experiences.

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results) 85%

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1) 3

Comments/Narrative

Twenty-one students were given this assignment in Fall 2021 and Spring 2022 (in Soc 399). The average score on the assignment was an 84%. (One student did not submit a paper and earned a score of a zero). This is an improvement over AY 2020-2021 when the average score was a 79% of students earned a 70% or better. Most students continue to do well with this assignment and continue to successfully apply sociological theory to a pivotal event in their life. This year students are required to meet with students twice during the term to discuss progress on their papers. It is hoped that this assistance will improve the guality of student work event more.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments

As with previous years, the results from this goal suggest that students continue to perform well when measured for their ability to sociological concepts to real world problems. We consider this to be a strength of the program that prepares students to be sociological thinkers after they leave Lander. This is not just for sociology majors - as we note below, our classes are in high demand for other fields and so the higher scores on these measures demonstrate a beneficial synergy between sociology and related fields.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

We only have two outcomes measured for this goal, and we think a third might be warranted. As noted above in goal 2 we will have conversations during AY 2022-2023 about an additional measure as pursue adding new courses to the curriculum.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files

Goal 4

Program Goals are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Program Goal

To comply with Program Productivity standards as defined by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education.

Pillar of Success Supported

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

Outcomes

Outcome 1

Outcomes are specific, measurable statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add? Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome Major Enrollment

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2021-2022

Performance Target for "Met"

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of students enrolled in the major (a) for Baccalaureate programs is greater than or equal to 12.5, (b) for Master's/First Professional is greater than or equal to 6.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Not Applicable.

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of students enrolled in the major (a) for Baccalaureate programs is less than 12.5 (b) for Master's/First Professional is less than 6.

Assessment Measure Used

Enrollment and Graduation data extracted from Banner.

Frequency of Assessment Annually.

Data Collected for this	Timeframe (Results)
53.8	

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1) 3

Comments/Narrative

As noted in previous assessment reports, Sociology now competes heavily with Criminology and Human Services for majors. Several students also opt to pair sociology as a double major with one of the other two. While the five year rolling average has declined somewhat, it is nonetheless well above the minimum standards for meeting the program goal.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Outcome 2

Outcomes are specific, measurable statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add? Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome Completions (Degrees Awarded)

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2021-2022

Performance Target for "Met"

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of degrees awarded (a) for Baccalaureate programs is greater than or equal to 8, (b) for Master's/First Professional is greater than or equal to 3.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Not applicable.

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of degrees awarded (a) for Baccalaureate programs is less than 8 (b) for Master's/First Professional is less than 3.

Assessment Measure Used Enrollment and Graduation data extracted from Banner.	Frequency of Assessment Annually.
Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)
16.2	3

Comments/Narrative

Over the next several years, we are planning to deploy several changes to our Introduction to Sociology approach. First, we have selected a new textbook that takes an approach to the subject which we hope will be more relatable to the students. Second, within three years, we plan to rotate who is teaching some of the sections, with Dr. Rubin taking over from Dr. Harrison. Third, Dr. Harrison and Prof. Kerr are will be updating the Soc 101 E-Core shell.

Even with a modest decline in the overall number of majors, the students who do decide to major in sociology are quite strong. Our students find considerable value in our program, which prepares them for graduate school in various disciplines and careers in a number of different fields

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments

While the number of sociology majors is not as robust as it was (as we lose students to the Criminology major and Human services), sociology continues to be a strong major at Lander University for incoming freshmen, upperclassmen who switch to sociology, and transfer students. The sociology program also has an important role supporting the General Education program, as well as a number of majors and minors.

Our courses continue to be in high demand because they are integral to so many other majors and disciplines. Sociology courses are required for the Criminology and Human Services majors, and can be found as requirements for as far flung fields as Business Entrepreneurship and Medical Biology. The demand is evidenced by the rise in number of courses taught by sociology faculty over the last four years: in Fall 2019 we taught 11 sections, and in Fall 2022 we are teaching 16 sections. (This does not include faculty in other disciplines teaching courses with the SOCI code, or special enrollment courses like our internship or independent research.) Likewise, according to the PowerBI metrics in Fall 2021

Prof. Kerr had the second highest credit hour production among faculty in the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, and in Fall 2020 Dr. Harrison held that same distinction.

As noted in last year's assessment, Dr. Rubin has taken over the internship from Prof. Carson who has been in charge of it for many years. Thus, data reporting on assessment measures related to that core requirement are slated to begin next year.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

Traditionally, our largest source of majors has come from those taking Introduction to Sociology, however this has become a more competitive field. We are adding new general education classes, in part as a means of increasing our majors. These courses include Sociology of World Cultures; and Drugs, Alcohol, and Society. We also plan to eliminate less popular courses such as Sociology of Aging, while looking at renaming other courses. Our goal is to offer courses that are relevant and important to the lives and careers of students post-graduation.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files

Thank you for completing your assessment report. Your report will be sent to your College Dean for their review and approval after you hit "Submit" below. Please enter their email address below.

Dean's Email Address smcmillan@lander.edu

Thank you for reviewing and approving this report. The approval and a copy of the report will be emailed to you and the Assessment Coordinator.