

CAN Program Review (Instructional) - Sociology (Odd Year)

Program Review Narratives

2019-2020

Instructional Program Review (IPR)

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Executive Summary

0. Executive Summary: The department of sociology at Canada College has a mission to help students understand, analyze, and critique the modern social order empowering them to act as agents for self and social transformation. The program strives to implement the highest level of teaching introducing students to the basic concepts, theories, methodologies, and epistemological assumptions associated with the contemporary field of sociology. This program is designed to serve students interested in transfer, especially but not exclusively to the CSU and UC systems. It is designed to facilitate the completion of lower division sociology courses so that students will be able to transfer to nearby institutions as juniors. However, since sociology courses can serve various needs (i.e., GE requirements, general interest) all types of students are welcome and will be served.

The sociology department remains a productive, efficient, and growing department within the Humanities and Social Sciences division. Overall, headcounts are steady and efficiency measures remain one of the highest within the division. Student enrollment includes an extremely wide-range of students in terms of race, gender, age, and more, and, course offerings include a wide-range of modalities from face-to-face, online, and hybrid courses. And, sociology classes continue to be offered in the evenings and online as part of the College For Working Adults program.

Furthermore, students are graduating and transferring to local institutions.

Despite these positive results and trends, there are some challenges and opportunities. First, the sociology department has only one full-time faculty. Most of the teaching and virtually all non-teaching activities are administered by one person. Second, a somewhat limited number of sociology classes are offered each year. This past semester, though more sections of Introduction to Sociology and Research Methods were offered, no other course was offered more than once. These limitations are a challenge to students wanting to quickly complete their degrees and transfer. Yet, many students are choosing sociology as a major and working towards graduation. Faculty moral is strong and the support of the division dean is greatly appreciated. In many ways, the sociology department should continue to grow and remain a productive department at Canada College.

Program Context

1. Mission: The department of sociology at Canada College has a mission to help students understand, analyze, and critique the modern social order empowering them to act as agents for self and social transformation. The program strives to implement the highest level of teaching introducing students to the basic concepts, theories, methodologies, and epistemological assumptions associated with the contemporary field of sociology.

This program is designed to serve students interested in transfer, especially but not exclusively to the CSU and UC systems. It is designed to facilitate the completion of lower division sociology courses with the intention that students will transfer to nearby institutions. However, since sociology courses can serve various needs (i.e., GE requirements, general interest) all types of students are welcome and will be served.

2. Articulation: The sociology department aspires to stay updated with curriculum and degree requirements, especially in relation to the UC and CSU systems. The goal is to create a program whereby increasing numbers of students are able to transfer as juniors into sociology programs across the state.

To accommodate this goal, the sociology department has integrated itself with the Course Identification System (C-ID). C-ID is a supra-numbering system developed to ease the transfer and articulation burdens in California's higher educational institutions.

All four sociology classes (Introduction, Social Problems, Ethnicity and Race in Society, and Social Science Research Methods) have been aligned and accepted into the C-ID system. To further facilitate transfers to the CSU, the sociology AA-T degree has been implemented. The degree is designed to create a clear pathway to the CSUs whereby students are guaranteed junior standing in their major.

3. Community & Labor Needs: No known changes

Looking Back

4. Curricular Changes: This past year, curriculum was modified for the Sociology of Social Problems course to facilitate the offering of this course for the CWA program (previously only Introduction to Sociology and Research Methods had the authorized changes made to the curriculum). As a result, this academic year will see Sociology 105 offered for the first time as part of the CWA course offerings.

In 2018, a new honors sociology course was created and offered. The Sociology of Human Personhood: Sociology 325 resembles Political Science 325 in its honors designation and seminar format and is designed for sociology majors that want to go beyond the standard course offerings, explore new cutting-edge areas in sociological theory, and/or add honors units for the honors program. The course examines the critical realist school of thought within sociology and philosophy and synthesizes new and important ideas on the nature of human personhood.

5A. Progress Report - IPC Feedback: Adjustments have been made in this program review to reflect the recommendations from the previous IPC report which include the following:

1. A more detailed analysis of the "use" data pertaining to the Social Sciences Hub along with information related to events and number of students.
2. More specific quantitative data in relation to enrollment trends.
3. More specific data on student demographics as related to access and completion.
4. A more detailed assessment of student demographics by modality and changes by modality.

5B. Progress Report - Prior Action Plans: There were no action plans identified in the last program review.

6A. Impact of Resource Applications: The SS HUB has been incorporated to serve sociology students in many ways. The most meaningful usage has been periodic meetings with prospective sociology students. Every semester a Sociology Majors meeting is held along with the Social Sciences Discipline Day where for one afternoon, sociology as a discipline, is highlighted. Last year, about 12-16 students attended these two events for sociology. Many more attended other sections of Discipline Day. At these meetings, about half of the students were non-sociology majors inquiring about the major while the other half were declared majors. A number of information was disseminated related to future careers options for sociology majors, graduate school preparation details, and information on specific courses in sociology.

6B. Impact of Staffing Changes: There have been no changes to the number of faculty. There is currently one full time faculty member and two adjunct faculty members.

Current State of the Program

7. Enrollment Trends: Enrollment trends in the sociology department have been steady and have moved slightly against the general enrollment decline of the college as a whole. Overall, headcount numbers have ranged from a low of 391 in 2016-17 to a high of 510 in 2015-2016. In terms of FTES, rates have remained steady with a low of 39.1 in 2016-2017 to a high of 51.3 in 2015-2016. Finally, in terms of Load, the numbers have been consistent ranging from a low of 451 in 2016-2017 to a high of 513 in 2015-2016.

As for the productivity of courses by each semester, the data clearly indicate that productivity is highest every semester with Sociology 100: Introduction to Sociology ranging from a low of 342 (WSCH) to a high of 545 (WSCH). On the other hand, Sociology 205 continues to show the lowest rate of efficiency with a low WSCH of 21 and a high WSCH of 48. This class will continue to have the lowest efficiency score going forward because Sociology 205 is cross-listed with Psychology 205.

It is not clear from the data what could improve these trends in light of the general decline of student enrollment at Canada College, but here are two different ideas. First, the sociology department might consider offering more sections of Introduction to Sociology since that class is in high demand. Although, only two morning sections are typically offered each semester, a third offering should be considered later in the day, perhaps in the afternoons. Second, the sociology department should consider expanding its online offerings from one section a semester to two per semester.

8-A. Access & Completion: After a thorough examination of the data packet regarding student access and completion, a few points stand out. First, there is no statistically significant gap regarding underrepresented minorities for all categories in both access and retention. Second, gaps do exist (as will be highlighted below), but they remain below the level of statistical significance.

In terms of student access, there is an overrepresentation of females (7%) and an underrepresentation of males (-6%) in the sociology classes compared with the college as a whole. There is a large overrepresentation of Hispanics (12.4%) and an underrepresentation of Asians (-7.9) in the sociology classes compared with the college as a whole. In terms of veteran status, there is a very slight underrepresentation in sociology classes at (-.4%) compared with the college as a whole. In terms of age cohorts, sociology classes are more heavily weighted with students in the 18-22 age range and underrepresented with students in the 29-39 age range. Finally, disabled students are overrepresented (1.6%) while non disabled students underrepresented (-3.1%) in sociology classes compared with the college as a whole.

In terms of student completion, a slightly different picture emerges. Although, there is no statistically significant gap in student success when comparing the sociology department with the college, some interesting differences exist. First, in terms of ethnicity, Filipino students underperform in sociology compared with the college as a whole by (-9.2%). On the other hand, other minorities are over performing in sociology as compared with the college as a whole: Pacific Islanders (16.5%), African Americans (4.6%), and Hispanics (.5%). Two other gaps emerged in the data along different demographic characteristics that are worth discussing. First, veterans underperformed (-24.5%) in sociology as compared with the college as a whole. Second, students under the age of 18 over performed (6.7%) while students in the age range of 29-39 underperformed in sociology compared with the college as a whole.

Since none of these findings are statistically significant, it is unclear what kinds of gaps actually exist. Having stated that, however, a few ideas could be implemented to see if any positive effects could be created in areas where access and success are low. For example, since the age cohort from 29-39 is underrepresented, more evening class offering should be considered since evening classes draw older students. In a similar vein, since the largest underrepresented ethnic group are Asians, more attention should be paid to offering classes off campus in collaboration with high schools where Asian students are well represented. Finally, in terms of student success, one idea to improve the success rate of veteran students as well as Filipino students would be to make an announcement at the beginning of the semester about how veterans and minority students can find support from campus programs.

8-B. Completion - Success Online: Overall, both face-to-face and DE courses have exceeded the success goals outlined by the college. For non-DE classes, 12/12 or 100% of the classes met the basic criteria for success. For DE classes, 89.5% or 17/19 met the basic criteria for success.

When student demographics are assessed in relation to modality, a slightly different picture emerges. All three ethnic groups (Hispanic, white, multiracial) had much lower success rates for DE as compared with face-to-face (Hispanic 76.1% vs. 50%; white 80.4% vs. 72.2%; multiracial 76.5% vs. 57.4%). The one group that had different results were Asians where their face-to-face success rate (84.6%) was lower than their DE counterparts (88.2%). There was no data available for African Americans.

It is not totally clear what is going on, or what should be done. One idea to try and increase the success rate of minority students in DE courses might be to advocate for more online training sessions, especially for Hispanic students where the face-to-face/ DE gap is largest.

9A. SLO Assessment - Compliance: Yes, all SLOs for every sociology course at Canada College has been assessed at least once during the past 3 years (2016- 2019). For a detailed review, including the results, please see Tradact.

The coordination process going forward will involve a new 3-year cycle established with the coordination of the social science faculty. This schedule covers every sociology course currently offered at the college.

Fall 2019: Sociology 100

Spring 2020: Sociology 105 and Sociology 325

Fall 2020: Sociology 141

Spring 2021: Sociology/Psychology 205

Fall 2021: Sociology 100

Spring 2022: Sociology 105

This process was implemented for two reasons. First, it will allow each course to be assessed at least once every two-years without the burden of having to assess every SLO for every class ever year. Second, this process will allow for a more detailed and thorough investigation of SLO practices and results with the expectation more will be learned about the best strategies for

implementing SLOs.

9B. SLO Assessment - Impact: Over the past two years, sociology curriculum and SLO data have interacted in interesting ways. Although concrete conclusions are difficult to draw from SLO data alone, reflecting on the data has helped faculty identify areas of improvement. It has also encouraged sociology faculty to experiment with different pedagogical techniques.

For example, an extra review session during class was implemented before each of the sociology exams beginning in 2019. This was done for two reasons. First, students seemed to have struggled with the first essay exam, and, my long time tutor was no longer available to help students one-on-one. Although, the results are not in yet, the goal is to improve student performance, especially on the essay portion of the midterm exams.

10. PLO Assessment: The Social Sciences consists of nine departments: anthropology, communication studies, economics, geography, history, philosophy, political science, psychology, and sociology, and have three PLOs. Mostly these are one full-time person departments. In order to assess the PLOs efficiently, the Social Science faculty have created a general analytic rubric to be used across the departments to directly measure student writing assignments as a program (note: an analytic rubric is a rubric that provides descriptive feedback along several dimensions or parts, and a general rubric is one that can be used across assignments and/or disciplines). Each department brought 5 ungraded student writing samples selected by lot from one assignment administered during the semester to create a pool of assignments to draw from (the writing prompt was also attached to each of the samples). The rubric was then used to score a random sample of student writing assignments from the program as a whole. All faculty scored student writing assignments outside of their disciplines.??Rubric scoring.

The rubric was organized into three rows, one row for each PLO, and into three columns that included descriptive feedback for each level of competency: "Incomplete", "Acceptable", and "Accomplished." During the 2018-2019 assessment period the Social Science faculty examined the PLO "Produce evidence-based arguments." When evaluating the student writing assignments, the faculty selected one of the five scoring options (0, 0.5, 1, 1.5, or 2) to indicate the students' level of competency ("incomplete" was represented by the scores 0 and 0.5, "acceptable" by 1 or 1.5, and accomplished by a 2). An average score of 1.0 ("acceptable") was desired.

During the 2018-2019 assessment period 76 papers and exams were assessed. 92% (70/76) of the papers/exams received at least a 1 "acceptable" score. The average score for the PLO "Produce evidence-based arguments" was 1.43 which is similar to the previous program review assessment period. The criterion was met. During the first 2 years using the current assessment method major areas of concern that were discussed during the scoring of the samples included: difficulty identifying the social science theories that the writing assignments were targeting (although faculty attached the writing prompt) and confusion with sampling methods. Discussion from the above assessment period demonstrated continued improvement in random sampling. During the previous assessment period faculty discussed difficulty in identifying social science theories that the writing assignments were targeting. This concern was not addressed during the 2018-2019 assessment period as that PLO was not examined. Faculty will address this specific concern during the next assessment period. Also, faculty discussed a benefit to using the rubric as a way to improve instruction. The general analytic rubric was viewed as a tool to share and learn from each other, which was viewed as refreshing given the diversity of the social sciences program.

Looking Ahead

11. Program Planning: Please see program planning module.

Program Review Narrative Status: Complete

No Objective were returned for this Program based upon the selected parameters.