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**University of North Alabama
Academic Department Program Review**

Department of Sociology

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2. Five-Year Departmental Enrollment and Faculty Data

Five-year enrollment data provided by the Office of Institutional, Research, Planning and Assessment (OIRPA) for the Department of Sociology indicate a slight decrease in the number of full-time majors from Fall 2003 to Fall 2007 (approximately 20%). However, when the data is examined in greater detail (by academic year) the number of majors may actually be increasing. According to OIRPA data the number of full-time Fall 2007 majors stood at 62: a 24% increase over the reported 2006-2007 academic year figure. The Department also experienced a 19% increase in the number of full-time students between the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 academic years. Focusing on those latter years, the data suggest a slight 6% decrease in the number of full-time majors (53 to 50) and a 42% decrease in the number of part-time majors (36 to 21) from 2004 through 2007. Although there appears to be an overall decline in majors and minors these trends should be examined in light of institutional history.

The separation of what had been a highly successful joint department involving Sociology and Criminal Justice (see 2000-2001 Bulletin for program descriptions) occurred Fall 2000. Up to this point in time the interdisciplinary focus of the programs had produced a substantial number of double majors in Sociology and Criminal Justice as well as a highly successful graduate program in Criminal Justice. Beginning Fall 2000 and for the next three/four years students seeking the double major were moved through their individual programs of study to graduation. The OIRPA provided data identifying 114 and 95 unduplicated majors for the 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 academic years respectively. For the 2004-2005, 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 academic years, 89, 78 and 71 total majors are presented respectively; these latter three years present more valid data for the Sociology Department as they are no longer skewed by institutional history.

In some respects the data reflect a national cyclical trend where growth in political science, criminal justice and economics may be drawing students away from Sociology. This trend is not cause for alarm as political and economic uncertainties will likely draw students back to the discipline that has historically encouraged critical thinking and objective research revolving around national and global social problems and issues. A recent Yale Daily News article (<http://www.yaledailynews.com/articles/view/24025>) noted that the national decline in sociology majors has some benefits including increased one-on-one contact with professors and more effective undergraduate advising. As this report will clearly show, UNA's Sociology Department excels in these areas while maintaining its solid academic footing.

With its four full-time instructors (including the department chair who has a one-course reduction each semester) the department averaged (2004-2007) approximately 15 full-time students and 840 credit hours per faculty member over a typical academic year (including summer). On average, 22 students enrolled in each Sociology class. The department's average cost per credit hour was approximately \$97.00 compared to the University average per credit hour tuition cost of approximately \$144.00 over the same time period. Despite a 24% increase in cost per credit hour during the 2004-2007 period, the department efficiently controls its costs (for comparative purposes, the department

saw an approximate 6% increase in cost per credit hour from 2004-2005 through 2005-2006). Since 2005, the department expenditures increased by \$43,212 but approximately \$15,000 of this amount is attributable to our departmental secretary moving from a part-time to full-time position on Oct. 2006. This increase brought us to a level of personnel support that nearly all academic departments had enjoyed for many years. The increase must also be understood relative to a faculty promotion which went into effect Fall 2007 as well as substantial cost of living and salary adjustment increases during the 2006-2007 academic year.

3. Assess the department as it relates to students

Enrollment

The OIRPA data describing enrollments are presented below. Produced across the five-year period the department averaged approximately 3,450 student credit hours. A more valid assessment of departmental productivity, achieved from averaging the data for the latter three academic years (i.e., 2004-2005, 2005-2006 and 2006-2007) is approximately 3,358 student credit hours. Prior to the 2005-2006 academic year, approximately 5% of the department's total student credit hour production came from distance learning/on-line courses. Over the last two years approximately 19% of the total credit hours produced in the department came from distance learning courses.

Table 1.	Student Credit Hour Production (SCH) from In-Class and Distance Learning Courses (percent figures represent percent of total)					
	2002-2007	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
In-Class SCH	15,446 (90%)	3,518 (95%)	3,339 (96%)	3,168 (95%)	2,976 (87%)	2,445 (74%)
Distance Learning SCH	1,804 (10%)	172 (5%)	147 (4%)	183 (5%)	441 (13%)	861 (26%)
Total SCH	17,250 (100%)	3,690 (100%)	3,486 (100%)	3,351 (100%)	3,417 (100%)	3,306 (100%)

Growth in distance learning enrollments stems from the department's mission statement to "serve the university, community and region through our collective effort, combined knowledge and unique skills as a group of educators in the scientific discipline of Sociology" and is consistent with the University's goals to "To offer High Quality Programs" and "To Build and Maintain a Student-Centered University". The Department accomplished this goal efficiently and with minimal cost to the University (outside of stipends for distance-learning course development) and no increase in full-time or part-time instructors. Today, our new on-line program is attracting student interest and will likely attract new majors. It demonstrates that the department was engaged in continuous assessment of our number of majors and enrollments and that our responsiveness was proactive and consistent with University goals.

Degree productivity

Sixty-seven sociology majors graduated from the program between Fall 2004 and Summer 2007. The three academic-year average of 22.3 graduates certainly defines the department as “viable” by state standards but clearly the department has experienced a multi-year decline since 2002 and a “major-specific” decline since 2004. Across the five year period the department graduated one student for every 4.10 students but it is more reasonable to just examine the last three years where the department graduated one student for every 3.62 total students.

Student services

Sociology majors/minors have opportunities to join and take leadership roles in the department’s Sociology Club and the International Sociology Honorary – Alpha Kappa Delta. Faculty members are assigned to these recognized student organizations as advisors. Unfortunately these organizations have not shown a history of sustained activity though the department has, in response to graduating senior exit survey data, aimed to increase organizational activities as part of our departmental annual goals. Over the last three years, the Sociology Club has sponsored pizza luncheons organized around visits by former students who addressed student options for approaching graduate study, participated in Habitat building projects, and hosted career workshops (speakers from Three Springs, Inc. have addressed our students about course specific issues as well as employment opportunities with their company). The two organizations hosted “life-raft” debates, raised money for hurricane relief, and sponsored their own fund-raising events with proceeds being donated to a non-profit organization that helped victims of sexual abuse. More recently the Sociology Club hosted Dr. Robert Koch who spoke about the UNA Writing Center and the APA Style to a group of Sociology, Psychology and Social Work students. Alpha Kappa Delta and the Sociology Club also sponsored a historical tour of the Shoals area last year. During the Fall 2005 semester, Dr. Tom Kersen took the initiative in his Community course (SO 322) to invite to campus nationally recognized speakers who discussed communal life in the United States in a public forum. During the previous year he invited Mr. Max Herzl, a holocaust survivor, to speak on campus. Faculty commitment and engagement with these organizations stems in part from our ongoing assessment of graduating seniors and alumni who consistently observed that they would have appreciated more extra-curricular activities at the departmental level while attending UNA.

Outcome information including student performance on licensure/certification exams, job placement of graduates, student, alumni and employer surveys

Since 2001, the Department of Sociology has surveyed (N=116) its graduating seniors and alumni immediately before they completed their Major Field Test in Sociology (MFT). The results suggest that the faculty are doing an excellent job in meeting our goals (benchmark set at 70% “agree” or “strongly agree” responses) in terms of student approval of our required courses and instructional faculty (see Tables 2-6). Across the five-year study period, approximately 96% of our graduating seniors (i.e., 112 of 116)

“agreed” or “strongly agreed” that their required courses helped them understand social forces. Further, approximately 81% of our seniors (i.e., 95 of 116) “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that our required courses prepared students for graduate study.

Table 2.	Required Courses Trained Students to Understand Social Forces (Benchmark Met)					
	2002-2007	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Strongly Disagree						
Disagree	2 (1.7%)	1 (4%)		1 (3.4%)		
Neutral	2 (1.7%)	1 (4%)			1 (5.6%)	
Agree	64 (55.2%)	13 (52%)	13 (52%)	19 (65.5%)	11 (61.1%)	8 (42.1%)
Strongly Agree	48 (41.4%)	10 (40%)	12 (48%)	9 (31%)	6 (33.3%)	11 (57.9%)
Total	116 (100%)	25 (100%)	25 (100%)	29 (100%)	18 (100%)	19 (100%)

Table 3.	Required Courses Prepared Students for Graduate Studies (Benchmark Met)					
	2002-2007	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Strongly Disagree						
Disagree	4 (3.4%)		2 (8.0%)		1 (5.6%)	1 (5.3%)
Neutral	17 (14.7%)	4 (16%)	4 (16%)	5 (17.2%)	3 (16.7%)	1 (5.3%)
Agree	55 (47.4%)	13 (52%)	8 (32%)	15 (51.7%)	9 (50%)	10 (52.6%)
Strongly Agree	40 (34.5%)	8 (32%)	11 (44%)	9 (31.0%)	5 (27.8%)	7 (36.8%)
Total	116 (100%)	25 (100%)	25 (100%)	29 (100%)	18 (100%)	19 (100%)

As shown in Tables 4-5, graduating students also viewed the department faculty in a most favorable light. Across the two measures of perceived satisfaction with the instructional faculty, approximately 97% of our seniors “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the faculty trained them to better understand social forces and prepared them for graduate studies.

Over the last two academic years in the study period, 100% of our graduating seniors thought the faculty had prepared them for graduate studies. Simply put, these data clearly demonstrate how fortunate the university is to have within such a small academic department a faculty held in such high regard by students.

Table 4.	Instructors Trained Me to Understand Social Forces (Benchmark Met)					
	2002-2007	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Strongly Disagree	1 (.9%)		1 (4%)			
Disagree						
Neutral	2 (1.7%)	1 (4%)		1 (3.4%)		
Agree	59 (50.9%)	13 (52%)	11 (44%)	18 (62.1%)	10 (55.6%)	7 (36.8%)
Strongly Agree	54 (46.6%)	11 (44%)	13 (52%)	10 (34.5%)	8 (44.4%)	12 (63.2%)
Total	116 (100%)	25 (100%)	25 (100%)	29 (100%)	18 (100%)	19 (100%)

Table 5.	Instructors Prepared Students for Graduate Studies (Benchmark Met)					
	2002-2007	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Strongly Disagree	1 (.9%)		1 (4%)			
Disagree						
Neutral	2 (1.7%)	1 (4%)		1 (3.4%)		
Agree	59 (50.9%)	13 (52%)	11 (44%)	18 (62.1%)	10 (55.6%)	7 (36.8%)
Strongly Agree	54 (46.6%)	11 (44%)	13 (52%)	10 (34.5%)	8 (44.4%)	12 (63.2%)
Total	116 (100%)	25 (100%)	25 (100%)	29 (100%)	18 (100%)	19 (100%)

Throughout the study period, approximately 93% (108 of 116) of our graduating seniors were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the education received from the department faculty. A remarkably stable pattern is expressed in these data suggesting that our students perceive themselves to be the recipients of a quality education while being challenged with substantive course expectations that develop their understanding of human behavior as well as their potential for subsequent graduate study.

Table 6.	Student Satisfaction with Education Received from Sociology Department (Benchmark Met)					
	2002-2007	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Very Dissatisfied						
Dissatisfied	2 (1.7%)		1 (4%)	1 (3.4%)		
Neutral	6 (5.2%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	1 (3.4%)	1 (5.6%)	2 (10.5%)
Satisfied	37 (31.9%)	13 (52%)	6 (24%)	7 (24.1%)	7 (38.9%)	4 (21.1%)
Very Satisfied	71 (61.2%)	11 (44%)	17 (68%)	20 (69%)	10 (55.6%)	13 (68.4%)
Total	116 (100%)	25 (100%)	25 (100%)	29 (100%)	18 (100%)	19 (100%)

As mentioned above, surveys of department alumni were conducted annually from 2002 through 2007. During those administration periods only 50 surveys were returned yielding a response rate of only 43%. Approximately 70% of our departmental alumni responded in the 6-10 range (see Table 7) indicating moderate to high levels of satisfaction with their current occupational status (mean = 6.5 , median = 7, mode = 8).

Our alumni also cross-validate our exit survey data in that 88% of those surveyed thought the department had done an “above average” or “outstanding” job in teaching students to better understand social problems. With respect to learning and applying theoretical assumptions, 80% of those surveyed thought the department had done an “above average” or “outstanding” job. Approximately 88% of our alumni thought the department had done an “above average” or “outstanding” job in teaching students to better understand cultural diversity.

Table 7.	Department Alumni Perceptions of Current Occupational Satisfaction		
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
1. Low Satisfaction	1	2.0	2.0
2.	2	4.0	4.1
3.	4	8.0	8.2
4.	5	10.0	10.2
5. Middle-range	3	6.0	6.1
6.	7	14.0	14.3
7.	7	14.0	14.3
8.	10	20.0	20.4
9.	2	4.0	4.1
10. High Satisfaction	8	16.0	16.3
Total	49	98.0	100.0
Missing	1	2.0	

The Department of Sociology has historically valued this element of our academic field and has not had to substantially reinvent its courses or instructional models around cultural diversity. Despite these positive assessments, some data point to important areas around which this department must make progress.

Despite performing well on the nationally standardized MFT (data presented below) and its specific assessment indicators germane to applied research skills, our alumni data suggested some needed improvements. Among those surveyed, only 64% thought the department had done an “above average” or “outstanding” job preparing students to better apply their knowledge of research methods and only 52% expressed the same attitudes with respect to their statistical analytical skills. Only 34% of our alumni thought the department had prepared them in terms of basic computer skills. These data are not expressing anything new as the department responded to this problem in 2002 by experimenting with a computer applications/data analysis class as a SO 395 – Special Topics course. This course became an approved elective for inclusion in the 2006-2007 Bulletin as SO 311 – Computer Applications in the Social Sciences and since then has been offered each spring semester. However, despite our efforts to advise students into the course, enrollments have been low (averaging approximately 8 students each spring semester). A strategy to enhance enrollments in this important class will be discussed below.

An important element of the department’s assessment strategy involves use of the MFT. From 2002 through 2005 (December), our graduating seniors performed very well on the Core Sociology Subtest relative to the national average and 67% of the cohorts exceeded the national average on the Critical Thinking Subtest. The May 2006 through May 2007 scores represent true departures from those standards. Student GPAs were examined for the May 2006 to partly explain this abysmal performance. The five students in this cohort collectively averaged a 2.44 cumulative GPA and one student actually did not graduate that semester because of a GPA deficiency (1.87). Another student in the same cohort graduated with a cumulative GPA of 2.01. This clearly was not the strongest cohort to come through our department. However, we are still at a loss to explain why

such poor performance characterized the next two cohorts. Fortunately a strong recovery is seen in the Dec. 07 data and the May 08 data (May 08 data show a 57 on Core, 54 on Critical as well as data exceeding the national averages across all assessment indicators).

MFT subscore data provide the two best measures of overall departmental performance. Beyond the 2006 data, we can conclude that our students are leaving us secure in their core knowledge of Sociology. In only half of the data collection periods are our students exceeding the national average score on the critical thinking component. Where they are below the national average the difference is often less than one point but this difference still represents failure to achieve our benchmark standard. Obviously, we must address this shortcoming and an effort to that end can begin with the addition of Dr. May Takeuchi who will be responsible for teaching our Computer Applications in the Social Sciences course and will likely split duties with Dr. Robertson in teaching Methods of Social Research (Dr. Robertson taught research methods up to the Dec. 2004 semester.

Table 8.	Department Major Field Test Data and National Averages (in parentheses) for Subscores and Assessment Indicators (shaded = below national average)									
Subscores	Dec. 02	May 03	May 04	Dec. 04	May 05	Dec. 05	May 06	Dec. 06	May 07	Dec. 07
Core Sociology	54.9 (49.2)	55.7 (49.2)	52.7 (49.2)	54.3 (49.2)	51.7 (49.2)	52.8 (49.2)	43.0 (49.2)	46 (48.5)	48 (48.5)	50 (48.5)
Critical Thinking	49.5 (48.5)	50.3 (48.5)	51.6 (48.5)	47.9 (48.5)	47.8 (48.5)	53.9 (48.5)	39.0 (48.5)	47 (47.8)	45 (47.8)	49 (47.8)
Assessment Indicators										
General Theory	51.4 (41.0)	52.9 (41.0)	47.1 (41.0)	44.7 (41.0)	50.1 (41.0)	50.8 (41.0)	37.2 (41.0)	45 (48.5)	47 (48.5)	48 (48.5)
Methods & Statistics	51.1 (45.1)	51.3 (45.1)	48.6 (45.1)	54.1 (45.1)	44.4 (45.1)	46.9 (45.1)	33.0 (45.1)	47 (53.1)	51 (53.1)	54 (53.1)
Deviance & Soc. Probs.	59.4 (56.4)	55.4 (56.4)	60.5 (56.4)	52.4 (56.4)	57.3 (56.4)	60.9 (56.4)	44.6 (56.4)	43 (50.2)	44 (50.2)	51 (50.2)
Demog. & Community	41.7 (43.2)	50.1 (43.2)	46.7 (43.2)	46.1 (43.2)	44.9 (43.2)	51.5 (43.2)	41.2 (43.2)	52 (50.8)	56 (50.8)	43 (50.8)
Multi-culturalism	45.7 (55.9)	60.0 (55.9)	56.3 (55.9)	58.2 (55.9)	56.3 (55.9)	61.0 (55.9)	65.2 (55.9)	48 (51.6)	49 (51.6)	44 (51.6)
Social Institutions	42.3 (46.1)	48.8 (46.1)	50.4 (46.1)	44.7 (46.1)	44.8 (46.1)	48.4 (46.1)	38.6 (46.1)	53 (57.1)	54 (57.1)	61 (57.1)
Social Psychology	51.1 (47.7)	47.1 (47.7)	49.9 (47.7)	45.3 (47.7)	52.2 (47.7)	58.2 (47.7)	28.4 (47.7)	38 (42.7)	43 (42.7)	46 (42.7)
Gender	46.1 (53.1)	50.2 (53.1)	54.4 (53.1)	46.1 (53.1)	48.6 (53.1)	53.8 (53.1)	40.0 (53.1)	51 (56.9)	55 (56.9)	58 (56.9)
Globalization	45.0 (53.7)	58.5 (53.7)	51.6 (53.7)	46.7 (53.7)	45.8 (53.7)	55.2 (53.7)	44.8 (53.7)	47 (52.4)	40 (52.4)	45 (52.4)

Table 8 also presents trend data across the nine assessment indicators of the MFT Sociology Exam. Here, it is important to note that, with the exception of General Theory and Methods & Statistics, students are not required to take courses built around the assessment indicators. Six of ten cohorts exceeded the national average on both the General Theory and Methods & Statistics assessment indicators. A number of students do express an interest in Criminology (Deviance & Social Problems) as well as Social Psychology and so we would expect students to, overall, do well in those areas. Five of

the ten cohorts exceeded the national average on the Deviance & Social Problems assessment indicator as did six of ten cohorts on the Social Psychology assessment indicator and six of ten cohorts on the Multiculturalism assessment indicator. A similar achievement was noted on the Demography & Community assessment indicator.

Beginning Fall 2008 we will have in place course redesigns for Introductory Sociology (SO 221) and Social Problems (SO 222) that will, consistent with the University's goals, emphasize more global content. Since these are both required courses in the major, we anticipate stronger cohort scores on the Multiculturalism and Globalization assessment indicators within two or three academic years.

4. Assess the department as it relates to faculty

Teaching productivity and activities designed to enhance teaching and the curriculum

Consistent with the primary mission of UNA as a regional institution of higher education to serve the public through teaching, the sociology faculty also embrace quality teaching as our primary mission. To that end, our faculty's most notable achievements in the area of teaching over the last five years can be seen in two interrelated matters: developing an online version of Sociology courses to make our program available to a more diverse population, who may not traditionally have had such educational opportunities, and incorporating the latest technology into our courses to enhance and enrich student learning experiences.

Online courses: Distance learning, particularly online delivery of various courses in our program has been the major focus of the faculty's collective as well as individual efforts to enhance our pedagogical practices. As a matter of fact, since 2003, all departmental faculty members have prepared and taught some or all of their regular courses online. As of summer 2008, the total number of sociology courses that have been converted to and also taught online (as well as in traditional classroom setting) is 14, which is more than a half of our entire course offerings (excluding SO 495 "Internship in Sociological Practice" and SO 499 "Independent Study-Practicum").

Use of latest technology in class: To complement our collective effort to expand our online course offerings, the sociology faculty have employed the latest technology in their individual pedagogical practices both in traditional classroom settings and, of course, in online courses. Specifically, all faculty members of the Department have already adopted WebCT/Blackboard extensively in all of their on-campus/in-class courses. Additionally, at least 50% of our faculty members have started incorporating the latest technology such as Tegrity and the Turning Point Interactive Response System in their online as well as on-campus/in-class courses.

Research productivity

As highlighted below (see 9. Program Overview), the sociology faculty have been actively involved in research activities beyond and above the expectation standard set by the Department. Despite our rather heavy teaching load averaging 11 courses per one academic year for each faculty member (except for the Department Chair who has one course reduction per semester), the sociology faculty have presented a total of seven research papers that they authored at respected regional professional meetings and conferences. Moreover, the sociology faculty have also published two articles in two peer reviewed journals (i.e., *Adolescence* and *Marriage & Family Review*) and two book chapters that were published internationally.

Service, including service to public schools

The sociology faculty members have also engaged in active services to the local community and to the professional community beyond university committee services that are highlighted in another section of this report. Here is a sample of service activities by our faculty members to the local community and the professional community.

Service to the local community

Dr. Jerri Bullard:

2008 Member, Mental Health Advisory Council, Florence, Alabama.

2007 - Present ACT Prep for High School Students on a voluntary basis.

2004 - 2007 Member, Board of Directors, Riverhill School, Florence, Alabama.

2003 - 2005 Vice, President, Board of Directors, Northwest Alabama Community Health Association, Florence, Alabama.

2002 - 2003 Treasurer, Board of Directors, Northwest Alabama Community Health Association, Florence, Alabama.

1999 - 2005 Member, Finance Committee, First United Methodist Church, Florence, Alabama.

Dr. Craig Robertson:

2008 - Prepared and made a presentation to the Cherokee High School Introductory Sociology Students (CHS teacher Kathy Hayes). The presentation was titled "Socialization and Normalcy: Sometimes Being Normal is Abnormally Good." May 8, 2008.

2008 - Prepared and made a presentation to the congregation of Trinity Missionary Baptist Church. This presentation was titled "Overweight and Obesity: Social Problems with Social Solutions".

2008 - Panelist for session on Underage Drinking Prevention Strategies, The Alabama State Underage Drinking Conference, Florence, AL.

2007 and 2006 - Prepared and made a presentation to parents whose children were enrolled in the Kilby Child Development Center. This presentation was titled "Pre-School and the Organizational Child: An Informal Presentation of Kilby CDC Parents.

Since 2003 - Participated in 10 interviews for articles on various social issues that subsequently appeared in the Florence Times Daily.

Dr. Alex Takeuchi:

2008 - Offered "Iaido Seminar" to introduce a traditional martial art of Japan at the 19th Annual World Tang Soo Do Association Masters' Clinic organized jointly by UNA Department of Geography and North Alabama Tang Soo Do.

2006 - Organized through UNA Sociology Club and Alpha Kappa Delta "Charitable Dinner" to raise fund for female victims of sexual abuse in local shelter.

2005 - Organized through UNA Sociology Club "The 2nd Annual Life Raft Debate" as a charitable event where the significant portion of the admission fees collected was donated to help hurricane Katrina victims.

2003 - Organized through UNA Sociology Club house building activity for the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity.

Since 2003 - Participated in 8 interviews for articles on various social issues that subsequently appeared in the Florence Times Daily as well as a national (i.e., Main Street) news papers.

Service to the professional community

Dr. Jerri Bullard:

Since 2006 - UNA Learning Communities Coordinator.

Since 2001 - UNA Summer School Coordinator.

Dr. Tom Kersen:

2005-2008 - Served as Communications Directors for the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association.

Dr. Craig Robertson:

2008 - Presenter at UNA's Distance learning Best Practices Conference. Presentation titled: "Best Practices for the First Two Weeks of Class."

2008 - Organizer and panelist for roundtable discussion titled "Teaching Sociology to an On-line World," Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association's Annual Meeting, Starkville, MS.

2001-2005 Treasurer for the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association.

Dr. Alex Takeuchi:

Since 2007- Editorial Review Board Member. *Scientific Journals International*. (Divisions of Sociology and Psychology)

Since 2006 - Editorial Board Member. *Marriage and Family Review*.

Reviewed 3 books in the discipline and 6 articles submitted for consideration for publication in refereed journals since 2003.

5. Assess the department as it relates to facilities and resources

Library

Library resources have been adequate to provide the Department faculty and students with access to information in the field. The Department receives an annual allocation of \$11,569.21 for the purchase of library holdings (includes print materials, audio, and video). This budget has increased from \$10,149.75 since 2003. Although the University provides the Department with on-site journal access, significant increases have been made in University access to electronic data bases (see <http://www2.una.edu/library/> for a complete listing).

Print Periodicals in Sociology Subscribed (2003): 18

Expenditures for Print Periodicals in Sociology (2003): \$5,337.75

Print Periodicals in Sociology Subscribed (2008): 16

Expenditures for Print Periodicals in Sociology (2008): \$7,065.21

Materials Budget for Sociology Department (2002/03): \$4,812

Actual Materials Expenditures by Sociology Department (2002/03): \$2,109.17

Materials Budget for Sociology Department (2007/08): \$4,504

Actual Materials Expenditures (as of July 14) by Sociology Department (2007/08): \$2,698

Laboratories

The Department of Sociology is in the process establishing a computer laboratory for use by faculty, staff, and students from Sociology, Social Work and Criminal Justice. Room 303 in Stevens Hall has been wired for computer access and is expected to have approximately 30 terminals by Fall 2008. We hope this lab will increase study use and

application technology, emphasize the importance of such skills, and increase the likelihood that students will gravitate toward our research applications course and their own research paper presentations. As noted earlier, respondents in our Senior Exit Survey and Alumni Survey indicated that they would have liked to have had greater opportunity to develop these skills.

Equipment

The Department has an annual budget of \$6,000.00 for equipment and supplies. All faculty have personal computers and printers that are updated through the University technology fund on a regular basis (historically on a 3-year rotation). These computers are adequate in terms of current use patterns. An up-grade of computer equipment can be requested in less time dependent upon faculty needs. Equipment that is available to faculty and staff includes: a scantron, scanner, audio/video cameras on desktops, fax machine, binder, shredder, typewriter and portable laptop with projection system.

Space

The Department is housed in fifth-floor Stevens Hall and is provided adequate office and classroom space. At present, four faculty, one full-time secretary, and 1-2 student workers are housed in 6 offices surrounding a central reception space. All faculty have separate offices. The departmental secretary works from the central reception space which has convenient access for faculty and students. Student workers are provided a work area that also functions as storage for departmental equipment and supplies that spills over from the final room traditionally used for storage.

The Department is allocated classroom space on the third floor of Stevens Hall. Priority is given to the Department of Sociology for rooms 301 and 302 and 303 will be jointly used by Sociology, Social Work and Criminal Justice faculty. By scheduling classes throughout the day the Department has been able to meet all classroom needs.

Support personnel

Since 2006 the Department of Sociology has had one full-time, twelve month secretary and 1-2 student workers (number is dependent upon availability of students and the number of hours they are able to work).

6. List any notable achievements by the department

Departmental achievements

The department's most notable achievement over the last five years is in launching the first online major in the College of Arts and Sciences in Spring 2007. This program relies heavily upon use of Blackboard and recently increased use of Tegrity. Since then the Department has kept adding more elective courses to our online offerings. In Spring 2008, the Department successfully converted and made available all courses required for

the Certificate of Gerontology program (which is housed in the Department of Sociology) through internet based distance program. As of summer 2008, the total number of sociology courses that have been converted to and also taught online (as well as in traditional classroom setting) is 14, which is more than a half of our entire course offerings (except for SO 495 “Internship in Sociological Practice” and SO 499 “Independent Study-Practicum”).

Student achievements

Sociology majors and graduates have made noteworthy achievements in terms of their scholarly activities and post graduate training in sociology and related fields. Each academic year, the Sociology Department solicits applications for “The Scholarship for Advancement in Sociological Study.” This scholarship recognizes the highest academic and service achievements of junior and senior students majoring in sociology. Since 2003, eight sociology majors have been awarded this highly prestigious and competitive scholarship (in 2003 and 2006 co-recipients were named). Approximately \$4,260.00 have been awarded from this scholarship.

In Spring 2008, two sociology majors presented their research (including a video documentary) on intentional communities at UNA’s student /faculty research day. The research stemmed from their enrollment in a SO 499 Independent Study course. Dr. Tom Kersen helped supervise these two students.

What is even more noteworthy about our students’ academic achievements is the number of UNA sociology graduates that have been accepted into graduate programs in sociology and related fields such as Counseling, Criminal Justice and Law. Though the Department could not obtain information on all of our graduates over the last five years, we have been able to confirm that at least six of our graduates have been admitted to UNA’s graduate Community Counseling program, two have been admitted to UNA’s graduate Criminal Justice program, one has been admitted to a law school, one has been admitted to Doctoral program in Social Geography, three have been admitted to Doctoral programs in Sociology. Thus, at very minimum, 14 of our department’s graduates over the last five years (approximately 11%) have pursued post-graduate education in sociology or related fields.

7. How has the department responded to previous program review recommendations?

The Sociology Department participated in the University’s previous assessment system where annual and triennial reports were produced. From the last triennial report, submitted May 2003, the faculty arrived at the following recommendations/goals:

1. To consistently produce students that score above national averages on the core sociological knowledge and critical thinking components of the nationally standardized MFT exam.

Response: The departmental faculty engages in an annual discussion of our MFT results and the data are expressed in each Annual Report produced by the department. We consider the above stated recommendation/goal as a realistic objective and take seriously observed shortcomings and impediments threatening this objective.

2. Greater than 50% of responses to the departmental alumni follow-up study shall indicate adequate self-reported employment or graduate school preparation.

Response: The departmental faculty, as noted in the above Tables, clearly have met these goals though we acknowledge that our students would likely experience greater overall satisfaction after graduation were they better prepared in terms of applied research skills. As noted above, we proactively addressed this matter with creation of the SO 311 course.

3. Greater than 50% of department faculty will exhibit a commitment to research and scholarly activity as demonstrated through attendance or presentation at professional association meetings.

Response: Review of faculty summary evaluation report and goal planning forms suggest that the department faculty reach or actually exceed this goal on an annual basis. Despite involvement in research activity, the faculty are hampered in presenting their work at conferences in part because of the limited travel budget. Approximately 70% of the standard individual allocation can be consumed by attending, for example, the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Associations annual meeting. Attending the regional Mid-South Sociological Association annual meeting will consume the standard individual travel allocation. The department has not historically had any input into the budgeting process to determine annual travel allocations though money can be transferred from supplies or a foundation account to enhance availability of travel money. The Chair is reluctant to use foundation money to these ends as funds are rolled into the department's scholarship account or were used to support a research assistant. Foundation funds should be used to support students. University budgets should be used to support faculty.

4. All faculty will engage in professional service to the University and community.

Response: Review of the summary evaluation report and goal planning form suggests that the department faculty reach or actually exceed this goal on an annual basis. Faculty members are involved in committee work related to shared governance and in other committee's specifically created to meet needed functions related to the ongoing operations of this academic institution. A sampling of our collective involvement from 2002-2007 is presented below:

Dr. Bullard has served on the following committees: Ad Hoc Committee on Learning Communities, Readmissions Committee, Homecoming Committee, Faculty Publications and Scholarship Committee, Eminent Scholar and Professor of Accounting Search

Committee, Research Committee, and is currently serving as Learning Communities Coordinator and Summer School Coordinator.

Dr. Craig T. Robertson has served on the following committees: General Studies Degree Committee, SACS Steering Committee Member and Physical Resources Committee Chair, Faculty Affairs Committee and Committee Chair, Faculty Attitude Survey Committee and Committee Chair, Human Subjects Research Review Committee, Academic and Student Affairs Committee.

Dr. Alex Takeuchi has served on the following Committees: United Nations of UNA Japanese Delegate; 2000-2002, Catalog and Graduate Bulletin Committee, International Programs/Offerings Committee, Faculty Advisor of the department's Sociology Club, Department Scholarship Committee, Chair of Department Head Evaluation Committee, Departmental Goals Statement Committee and Exit Survey Committee, Department of Sociology Faculty Senate Representative, Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee, Grievance/Due Process Committee and Advisor for Japanese Global Network (i.e., UNA's Japanese Students Association)

8. State the vision and plans for the future of the department

Over next five years, assuming no additional state resources, the department anticipates increasing the number of students we service, additional majors within and graduates from the Department and an increased role within Area IV of the General Education component. Growth associated with our on-line major in sociology is expected along with moderate increases in majors/minors. To generate an increase in majors/minors and meet the needs of a changing student body the Department will complete the development of a third area of specialization in family studies. If long-term growth is sustained in Family Studies the Department will begin the application process for a new major in this area. Our plan to expand the General Education component will involve writing a curriculum proposal for SO 231 (Introduction to Anthropology) to be included as an Area IV elective. We will also explore including SO 222 (Social Problems) as an additional elective choice for students.

Over next five years, assuming availability of additional state resources, the department would like to develop a major in Family Studies, a Master of Science Sociology degree, and have two additional faculty to assume on-line teaching responsibilities and support the family studies major or the graduate program.

9. Program Overview

Overview of Program: The Sociology Department offers an undergraduate program (Bachelors of Arts and Bachelors of Science) in Sociology with areas of concentrations in Criminology and Gerontology. The academic program is also available to students online by rotating required courses from traditional in-class to distance learning offerings.

Department Mission Statement: The Department of Sociology's mission is to serve the university, community and region through our collective effort, combined knowledge and unique skills as a group of educators in the scientific discipline of Sociology. The academic major aims to prepare students for citizenship in the global world by giving them a better understanding of their social, cultural, economic and physical environment and a set of conceptual and research tools to build upon that understanding.

The Department's mission statement complements the University's mission to teach, conduct research and engage in service that, combined, maintain opportunities for students while advancing their interests and those of the immediate community, state and region.

Program Goals and Objectives: Flowing from the University and Department mission statements, the department faculty identified a set of basic student-centered learning goals. Our goals and objectives were developed, assessed and refined as a product of our own long-term assessment efforts and were recently reviewed and approved in a report (*“Department of Sociology Program Assessment for the Baccalaureate Program”*) submitted January 2008 to the College of Arts and Sciences Dean.

Student Learning Goals - Upon completion of the academic major in Sociology we expect students to demonstrate the following:

Goal 1 - Understand the sociological imagination and the conceptual links between individual and group experiences and broader social forces and between social forces and history.

Goal 2 - Understand issues, such as generally agreed upon social problems, relative to the forces of culture and social structures, the relationships between individuals, groups and society, effects of stratification systems and apply to those issues the macro and micro levels of analysis.

Goal 3 - Understand how to conduct, interpret and apply sociological research, review and understand the existing research literature, critically assess the advantages and disadvantages of research methods specific to research questions.

Goal 4 - Understand the role of sociological theories and demonstrate the ability to discuss, apply, and describe some basic theories or theoretical orientations and apply them to issues of interest.

Goal 5 - Students will be satisfied with the support they received while enrolled in the Sociology program.

Evidence of program performance related to these stated goals is presented below in the section titled “Program Evaluation”.

Research Goals and Objectives - The departmental faculty are expected to engage in research activity with this expectation being expressed such that "greater than 50% of department faculty will exhibit a commitment to research and scholarly activity as demonstrated through attendance or presentation at professional association meetings". The faculty's research efforts enhance our program by enhancing classroom instruction, improving interaction and extra-curricular instruction with select students and enhancing personal and professional development.

During the 2003-2004 academic year the Department of Sociology faculty engaged in research activities with half of the departmental faculty (i.e., Dr. Jerry Miley and Dr. Craig Robertson) attending various regional association meetings. The research activities and interests among the faculty also benefited the immediate community via interviews given by Dr. Alex Takeuchi and Dr. Craig Robertson to the local newspaper. In an excellent demonstration of their commitments to research and community service, Dr. Jerri Bullard and Dr. Craig Robertson separately assisted local agencies in their grant writing efforts (see annual goals statements for these faculty).

During the 2004-2005 academic year the Department of Sociology faculty engaged in research activities with 100% of the departmental faculty (i.e., Dr. Jerri Bullard, Dr. Tom Kersen, Dr. Craig Robertson and Dr. Alex Takeuchi) attending various regional association meetings. As a department we set as our annual goal in our 2003-2004 report greater than 50% participation of department faculty in scholarly activity as demonstrated through attendance or presentation at professional association meetings. Dr. Takeuchi presented original co-authored work at the annual meeting of the Pacific Sociological Association. His attendance at this meeting in Portland, Oregon was facilitated by additional funds obtained from Dean Vagn Hansen and from funds disseminated to the general faculty by President Cale. Dr. Tom Kersen's research efforts were featured in a publication by the American Academy of Pediatrics titled "About Childhood: An Authoritative Resource on the State of Childhood Today". Dr. Kersen also co-authored a paper presented at the 2005 annual meeting of Population Association of American. Finally, Dr. Kersen attended the annual meeting of the Southern Sociological Society where he participated as an invited speaker in a panel titled "The Promotion of Scholarship, Service and Collegiality Through Student Participation in Alpha Kappa Delta."

During the 2005-2006 Academic Year, Dr. Bullard attended the 2006 Annual Meeting of the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association in Oxford, Mississippi and also mentored a local high school student in a national scholarship competition who presented research for her study of sleep apnea. Dr. Tom Kersen presented papers to the Southern Demographic Association in Oxford, Mississippi, the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association in Oxford, Mississippi and the Southern Sociological Society in New Orleans, Louisiana. Dr. Takeuchi's research accomplishments have been particularly noteworthy this year. During the Fall, 2005 semester his work on feudal era Japanese social structures was published in a book by Dr. Teruhito Sako and Dr. Suzanne K. Steinmetz titled "Japanese Family and Society: Words from Tongo Takebe, a Meiji Era Sociologist." Dr. Takeuchi's research involving mate selection was also recently

accepted for publication in the prestigious journal *Marriage and Family Review*. Dr. Takeuchi also coauthored an article on the historical development of Japanese samurai swords and their mountings. This article will be published this summer by the Macau Public Museum of Art in China.

Dr. Jerri Bullard, Dr. Tom Kersen and Dr. Craig Robertson attended the 2007 Annual Meeting of the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association. Dr. Tom Kersen attended the 2006 Annual Meeting of the Southern Demographic Association.

Service Goals and Objectives: The departmental faculty are expected to engage in professional service to the University and community. An accounting of the faculty's extensive history of University service was highlighted above. No direct program or initiative to involve the department, its faculty or its students in direct community service has been developed though efforts to involve the students in community service activities through Alpha Kappa Delta (the International Sociology Honorary) and the Sociology Club were encouraged but met with little success. Student involvement in these organizations, despite the best efforts of the faculty, has not substantially improved. Students will join these organizations but rarely show up for meetings, activity planning sessions and, surprisingly, sponsored events.

Student Learning Outcomes of the Program:

Goal 1 - Understand the sociological imagination and the conceptual links between individual and group experiences and broader social forces and between social forces and history. The domain assumption of Sociology are introduced to students in Introductory Sociology (SO 221) and reinforced in Social Problems (SO 222) and both courses reinforce to students the essential ways sociologists think and how they conduct research within the field. These foundational lessons become the framework for advanced as well as specialized study within the major.

Goal 2 - Understand issues, such as generally agreed upon social problems, relative to the forces of culture and social structures, the relationships between individuals, groups and society, effects of stratification systems and apply to those issues the macro and micro levels of analysis. The department offers numerous courses where students can apply sociological ideas, concepts, theory, and research to areas specific to their own intellectual growth. Those include Marriage and the Family (SO 223), Sex Roles (SO 300), Medical Sociology (SO 307), Criminology (SO 323), Juvenile Delinquency (SO 330), Gerontological Studies (SO 308, 309 and 403), Self and Social Interaction (SO 342), Social Change (SO 410), Divided Cultures (SO 421) Social Psychology (SO 442), and Law and Society (SO 430). With the exception of Marriage and the Family (SO 223), these courses represent electives within the major/minor.

The scope of our elective offerings is broad and covering them all puts a strain on the faculty that has not been alleviated despite submission of proposals requesting new faculty. Response to that strain however results in results in Major Field Test scores showing that our graduates appear well trained across several topic-specific assessment

areas and an overall high level of student satisfaction with the department. However, it should be emphasized and appreciated that such strain adversely affects faculty research productivity and service.

Goal 3 - Understand how to conduct, interpret and apply sociological research, review and understand the existing research literature, critically assess the advantages and disadvantages of research methods specific to research questions. Discussions of applied research in the elective courses, including the strengths and weaknesses of particular research designs, are central to teaching all subject matter in the Department. Many of the elective courses require assignments where students must review and summarize published academic research articles thus exposing them to applied research and functional methodologies. Sociology majors are required to take Methods of Social Research (SO 310W) and strongly encouraged through academic advisement to take Computer Applications in the Social Sciences (SO 311).

Goal 4 - Understand the role of sociological theories and demonstrate the ability to discuss, apply, and describe some basic theories or theoretical orientations and apply them to issues of interest. Simply put, every course taught in this department contains a solid theoretical component. Focused study of historical as well as contemporary theoretical concepts, logic, propositions and derived hypotheses takes place in the following required courses: History of Social Thought (SO 423) and Modern Sociological Theory (SO 428).

Governance Structure of the Program: Not Applicable

Admissions Requirements: Not Applicable

Degree Requirements, Curriculum and Prerequisites: In addition to completing the General Education Component and an academic minor (minors often involve 18-24 credit hours), Sociology majors are required to complete the following course requirements with a minimum total, within major and within minor, cumulative grade point average of 2.00. Including Area V requirements, the Sociology major consists of 36 hours. Students are also required to take the Major Field Test in Sociology as a final graduation requirement.

Students may elect to pursue either a Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts degree program. During the last five years approximately 12% of all Sociology majors have pursued the Bachelor of Arts degree. This degree option is recommended by the American Sociological Association and students are encouraged to pursue this option during academic advising.

The overall curriculum is designed around our mission statement and its specific goal of preparing “students for citizenship in the global world by giving them a better understanding of their social, cultural, economic and physical environment and a set of conceptual and research tools to build upon that understanding”.

Required Courses	Elective Courses
<p>Intro. Sociology (SO 221 – prerequisite to all courses except SO 223)</p> <p>Social Problems (SO 222)</p> <p>Methods of Social Research (SO 310W)</p> <p>History of Social Thought (SO 423)</p> <p>Modern Sociological Theory (SO 428)</p> <p>Area V Requirement</p> <p>Marriage and the Family (SO 223)</p> <p>Computer Instruction (CS 110, 120 or CIS 125)</p>	<p>Students complete 15 hrs. of electives that can be completed in part by choosing an area of concentration. Concentrations are not required.</p> <p>Gerontology Concentration</p> <p>Medical Sociology (SO 307)</p> <p>Death and Dying (SO 308)</p> <p>Aging and Society (SO 309)</p> <p>Gerontology (SO 403)</p> <p>Criminology Concentration</p> <p>Criminology (SO 323)</p> <p>Juvenile Delinquency (SO 330)</p> <p>Theories of Deviance (SO 400)</p> <p>Law and Society (SO 430) or Social Psychology (SO 442)</p> <p>Consult UNA Bulletin for entire list Sociology Department electives</p>

Associated Institutes and Centers: Not Applicable

Involvement of External Constituents in Establishing Goals: Not applicable in terms of some formally organized entity. Alumni data are employed however as questions are designed to assess most and least effective courses. Our academic Dean has been consulted for his input concerning goals and assessment strategies.

Community College Articulation: Not Applicable

Program Productivity – Majors & Degrees Conferred: This issue was addressed above in number 3. Degree productivity.

10. Program Evaluation

Means of Assessing Student-Learning Outcomes: Student learning outcomes have been assessed continuously since May 2001 using survey instruments (i.e., Exit Survey and Alumni Survey) developed by the faculty. The Exit Survey (available upon request) is administered to each graduating cohort before they take the required MFT Examination which is another assessment tool employed each semester. The Alumni Survey (available upon request) is also administered annually to the previous year's graduating cohort. It is designed to acquire information about the success of our graduates as well as for them to assess the overall effectiveness of our courses and the skills they acquired while enrolled in our department. Both surveys and the MFT constitute our most substantive student-learning assessment methods as employed over the last nine years.

Aiming to continuously improve our courses and teaching methods as well as demonstrate our continued commitment to assessment, the department implemented for the Spring 2008 semester a pre- and post-test assessment plan specific to select required courses in the major. The pre- and post-tests are designed to measure how much students have learned from each class across relevant content dimensions. We will expand this aspect of our program assessment to include all required courses in the major during the 2008-2009 academic year.

Selected data from the Senior Exit Survey were presented above in Tables 1 through 6. Data from the Alumni Survey are presented below. The data presented reflect basic skills (Tables 9-14) that we would anticipate to be expected of all college graduates generally and Sociology majors specifically (Tables 15-18). The minimum measure of successful goal attainment is defined as a 70% rating of “average” or “outstanding” or evidence that, if a 70% rating is not met, there is movement over time toward meeting that benchmark.

Table 9.	The Sociology Department Prepared Me to be Diligent in Task Completion (Benchmark Met)					
	2002-2007	2002	2003	2004	2006	2007
Below Average						
Average	9 (18.4%)	2 (15.4%)	2 (18.2%)		3 (27.3%)	2 (25%)
Above Average	24 (49%)	5 (38.5%)	6 (54.5%)	5 (83.3%)	4 (36.4%)	4 (50%)
Outstanding	16 (32%)	6 (46.2%)	3 (27.3%)	1 (16.7%)	4 (36.4%)	2 (25%)
Total	49 (100%)	13 (100%)	11 (100%)	6 (100%)	11 (100%)	8 (100%)
Missing	1 (2%)		1 (8.3%)			

Table 10.	The Sociology Department Improved my Writing Skills (Benchmark Met)					
	2002-2007	2002	2003	2004	2006	2007
Below Average	2 (4.1%)	2 (15.4%)				
Average	10 (20.4%)	1 (7.7%)	3 (27.3%)	1 (16.7%)	4 (36.4%)	1 (12.5%)
Above Average	26 (53.1%)	6 (46.2%)	6 (54.5%)	3 (50%)	4 (36.4%)	7 (87.5%)
Outstanding	11 (22.4%)	4 (30.8%)	2 (18.2%)	2 (33.3%)	3 (27.3%)	
Total	49 (100%)	13 (100%)	11 (100%)	6 (100%)	11 (100%)	8 (100%)
Missing	1 (2%)		1 (8.3%)			

The department faculty must continually address ways to improve our student’s oral communication skills. The 2007 alumni data suggest that we are moving in the right direction but such movement must be pursued without detracting from substantive lectures central to our courses. One strategy that has been pursued is to use the Computer Applications in the Social Sciences (SO 311) course and build into it an oral presentation

Table 11.	The Sociology Department Improved my Oral Communication Skills (Benchmark NOT Met)					
	2002-2007	2002	2003	2004	2006	2007
Below Average	3 (6%)	3 (23.1%)				
Average	19 (38%)	4 (30.8%)	6 (50%)	3 (50%)	5 (45.5%)	1 (12.5%)
Above Average	18 (36%)	4 (30.8%)	5 (41.7%)	1 (16.7%)	3 (27.3%)	5 (62.5%)
Outstanding	10 (20%)	2 (15.4%)	1 (8.3%)	2 (33.3%)	3 (27.3%)	2 (25%)
Total	50 (100%)	13 (100%)	12 (100%)	6 (100%)	11 (100%)	8 (100%)
Missing						

component. This was done Spring 2005, 2006 and 2007 and our new faculty member will be encouraged to continue this course element. However, the problem remains that the SO 311 course is an elective which has, as noted earlier, not produced substantial enrollments. Dean Vagn Hansen has been receptive to our course offering despite lower enrollments.

Table 12.	The Sociology Department Improved my Report Writing Skills (Benchmark NOT Met But Progress Evident)					
	2002-2007	2002	2003	2004	2006	2007
Below Average	1 (2.1%)	1 (8.3%)				
Average	14 (29.8%)	4 (33.3%)	2 (20%)	1 (16.7%)	5 (45.5%)	2 (25%)
Above Average	15 (31.9%)	3 (25%)	3 (30%)	2 (33.3%)	4 (36.4%)	3 (37.5%)
Outstanding	17 (36.2%)	4 (33.3%)	5 (50%)	3 (50.0%)	2 (18.2%)	3 (37.5%)
Total	47 (100%)	12 (100%)	10 (100%)	6 (100%)	11 (100%)	8 (100%)
Missing	3 (6%)	1 (7.7%)	2 (16.7%)			

Table 13.	The Sociology Department Prepared Me to Better Understand Cultural Diversity (Benchmark Met)					
	2002-2007	2002	2003	2004	2006	2007
Below Average	1 (2%)				1 (9.1%)	
Average	5 (10%)	3 (23.1%)	1 (8.3%)			1 (12.5%)
Above Average	21 (42%)	4 (30.8%)	7 (58.3%)	4 (66.7%)	5 (45.5%)	1 (12.5%)
Outstanding	23 (46%)	6 (46.2%)	4 (33.3%)	2 (33.3%)	5 (45.5%)	6 (75%)
Total	50 (100%)	13 (100%)	12 (100%)	6 (100%)	11 (100%)	8 (100%)
Missing						

Table 14.	The Sociology Department Prepared Me to Better Understand Social Problems					
	2002-2007	2002	2003	2004	2006	2007
Below Average	2 (4%)	1 (7.7%)			1 (9.1%)	
Average	4 (8%)	2 (15.4%)	1 (8.3%)			1 (12.5%)
Above Average	15 (30%)	5 (38.5%)	3 (25%)	3 (50%)	2 (18.2%)	2 (25%)
Outstanding	29 (58%)	5 (38.5%)	8 (66.7%)	3 (50%)	8 (72.7%)	5 (62.5%)
Total	50 (100%)	13 (100%)	12 (100%)	6 (100%)	11 (100%)	8 (100%)
Missing						

An important part of being a functioning adult in a global society is the ability to use computer technology and for sociology majors that ability simply must be coupled with and expressed through knowledge of theory, methods and statistical skills. The tables below present data highlighting those related skills.

Table 15.	The Sociology Department Improved my Applied Computer Skills (Benchmark NOT Met)					
	2002-2007	2002	2003	2004	2006	2007
Below Average	11 (23.9%)	5 (41.7%)	5 (41.7%)		1 (11.1%)	
Average	19 (41.3%)	5 (41.7%)	5 (41.7%)	1 (16.7%)	7 (77.8%)	1 (14.3%)
Above Average	11 (23.9%)	1 (8.3%)	1 (8.3%)	2 (33.3%)	1 (11.1%)	6 (85.7%)
Outstanding	5 (10.9%)	1 (8.3%)	1 (8.3%)	3 (50%)		
Total	46 (100%)	12 (100%)	12 (100%)	6 (100%)	9 (100%)	7 (100%)
Missing	4 (8%)	1 (7.7%)			2 (18.2%)	1 (12.5%)

Table 16.	The Sociology Department Prepared Me to Better Apply Theoretical Assumptions (Benchmark Met)					
	2002-2007	2002	2003	2004	2006	2007
Below Average	2 (4%)			1 (16.7%)	1 (9.1%)	
Average	8 (16%)	2 (15.4%)	2 (16.7%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (9.1%)	2 (25%)
Above Average	26 (52%)	8 (61.5%)	7 (58.3%)	3 (50%)	6 (54.5%)	2 (25%)
Outstanding	14 (28%)	3 (23.2%)	3 (25%)	1 (16.7%)	3 (27.3%)	4 (50%)
Total	50 (100%)	13 (100%)	12 (100%)	6 (100%)	11 (100%)	8 (100%)
Missing						

Table 17.	The Sociology Department Prepared Me to Better Apply Research Methods (Benchmark Met)					
	2002-2007	2002	2003	2004	2006	2007
Below Average						
Average	13 (26%)	4 (30.8%)	2 (16.7%)	1 (16.7%)	2 (18.2%)	4 (50%)
Above Average	21 (42%)	7 (53.8%)	5 (41.7%)	3 (50%)	5 (45.5%)	1 (12.5%)
Outstanding	16 (32%)	2 (15.4%)	5 (41.7%)	2 (33.3%)	4 (36.4%)	3 (37.5%)
Total	50 (100%)	13 (100%)	12 (100%)	6 (100%)	11 (100%)	(100%)
Missing						

A balance must certainly exist between the deductive and inductive orientations in science and, with strong theoretical and research methods skills, our students can competently express those orientations. However, we must do a better job as a department in helping our students confidently face statistical analysis. This must be done using computer-based instruction emphasizing use of SPSS, data manipulation between different file formats, data management, data analysis and data presentation.

During the 2008-2009 academic year, we will take steps to address this issue with substantive changes to be implemented before the end of that academic year. One possible strategy is to redesign the SO 311 course as a 200 level major as well as minor requirement and treat it as both the department's required Area V – Computer Instruction course and the department's oral proficiency course. This approach should ideally produce improved student learning with computer applications, statistical analysis and oral presentation skills.

Table 18.	The Sociology Department Improved my Skills as a Statistical Analyst (Benchmark NOT Met)					
	2002-2007	2002	2003	2004	2006	2007
Below Average	6 (12.5%)	2 (16.7%)	2 (16.7%)		1 (10%)	1 (12.5%)
Average	17 (35.4%)	6 (50%)	4 (33.3%)	2 (33.3%)	2 (20%)	3 (37.5%)
Above Average	19 (39.5%)	3 (25%)	3 (25%)	2 (33.3%)	7 (70%)	4 (50%)
Outstanding	6 (12.5%)	1 (8.3%)	3 (25%)	2 (33.3%)		
Total	48 (100%)	12 (100%)	12 (100%)	6 (100%)	10 (100%)	8 (100%)
Missing	2 (4%)	1 (7.7%)			1 (9.1%)	

In addition to the above measures of student learning, the department also employs the MFT examination in Sociology. Taking the test is a graduation requirement of all Sociology majors. Trend data from the MFT were presented above (see Table 8).

Departmental Continuous Improvement Plan: This plan was described in the above section 10 Program Evaluation.

Grade Distribution Patterns: Table 19 presents five-year grade distribution data which should be examined in the light of the MFT data presented in Table 8. It is interesting to

note that the percentage of earned “A” and “B” grades declined since the 2003-2004 academic year while the general trend of earned “D” and “F” grades as well as variations of withdrawals trended higher. We see this increase in “Ds”, “F’s” and “withdrawals” coincide with lower than average performance on our MFT. The data indirectly suggest that the faculty are maintaining high standards in their courses and that coveted “A” grades are being earned by a small and rather exceptional group of students. “B” grades, the modal category in our data array, are attained by most students though slight percentage differences exist between “B” and “C” grades. This probably should be the case as “A” and “B” grades must remain reserved for the truly “above average” student. One might conclude that Sociology courses are appropriately designed (i.e., with an array of assignments working in concert with exams) so that students must push themselves to truly differentiate themselves from the average pack. Of course, these data are difficult to interpret in light of the University’s traditionally liberal policy of course withdrawals. Approximately 11% of the grades recorded during the five-year period involved “withdrawals” and this percentage figure increased during the program assessment period. The department will more carefully examine our “withdrawal” data to better understand this pattern by obtaining the following information:

- Student’s grade at withdrawal point
- Student’s estimated absences at withdrawal point
- Student’s admitted reason for dropping

Table 19.	Departmental Five-Year Grade Distribution in Percent (All Classes)					
Grade	2002-2007	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
A	17.16%	18.13%	17.58%	18.11%	16.78%	15.15%
B	29.36	31.18	28.20	32.64	27.71	27.09
C	26.22	24.93	27.44	24.18	29.15	25.34
D	9.74	10.33	10.43	8.16	9.40	10.29
F	6.10	5.34	6.49	6.17	5.18	7.38
W, I, WP-F	11.42	10.06	9.87	10.75	11.79	14.76

11. Program Recommendations

Identify recommendations for improvement of the program: The following represent immediate department-level initiatives as well as initiatives that require action at the Dean, Provost or higher administrative levels:

- Prepare 2008-2009 Annual Action Plan considering previous goals and possible contributions of our new faculty member
- Articulate goals for student organizations
- Study curriculum change options for the current Undergraduate Applications in the Social Sciences (SO 311) course
- Study options to develop concentrations in Family Studies and Social Psychology
- Evaluate current rotation of courses from in-class to distance learning offerings
- Pursue curriculum proposal to include Introduction to Anthropology (SO 231) as an Area IV elective