

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
WSU Department of Sociology & Anthropology  
Sociology Program Self-Study Document, Fall 2022

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**The following is a summary of the self-study document, highlighting important points. For complete information, please refer to the full, self-study document itself.**

**Mission Statement:** As an undergraduate-only sociology program, we are focused on training students in skills that can be marketable in a variety of occupations and careers. This training takes place both inside and outside the traditional classroom as students engage in online education, serve the community through **community engaged learning** (CEL) courses, **conduct primary research, do internships** in local companies and organizations, and participate in Study Abroad programs. It's our goal that students who graduate with a Sociology major or minor degree will have acquired discipline-specific **content knowledge** (concepts, theories, methods, research findings) and had an opportunity to **apply sociological analysis** and ways of thinking—e.g., the so-called “sociological imagination”—in practice. Regardless of students' future career paths, these skills are both relevant and valuable in the labor market. The program also serves the university's Liberal Arts tradition by contributing to the General Education curriculum and thus preparing students as **engaged and responsible citizens** who can navigate the unique social, political, and economic challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Mission goals: a. Equip students with a broad *sociological perspective* (or the “sociological imagination”) by teaching them how social structures, individuals, and groups interact in society. b. Provide *knowledge and skills*, both sociological (theory, research methods, data analysis) and general (critical thinking, writing), to pursue a broad range of careers and graduate degrees (e.g., in Sociology, Law, Public Administration). c. Prepare students to *recognize a plurality of perspectives*, including their own, to navigate today's multicultural and global society. d. Build a *stimulating learning environment* by using a variety of pedagogies, including collaboration, collective learning, and community engagement.

**Curriculum:**

The sociology curriculum is well aligned with the six programmatic outcomes: 1). Research & data analysis. 2). Communicate skillfully. 3). Terms, concepts & theories of sociology. 4). Practice critical thinking. 5). Historical, cultural, global perspective. And 6). Careers, graduate studies, informed participation in complex society. Although the level at which each outcome is met by each course varies, students will have mastered all of them by the time they graduate. The program developed its strategic plan in 2018 and has since reported progress and updates every year.

**Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment:**

In the past five years, we systematically assessed all the courses we offer in the program. The *Sociology program* learning outcomes have been successfully met when at least 70% of students perform at 70% (grade C) level or better. This threshold has been in effect for the past decade and will be up for review after this self-study. This 70/70 threshold was pegged to the existing grade requirement of C or better to earn Sociology major/minor credit.

We also conduct Exit Survey of our graduating students based on our six learning outcomes, the result also shows great improvement of their knowledge, skills and application capability compared before they took our courses.

**Academic Advising:**

All new students (majors, minors, BIS) are encouraged to come in person or online, on Zoom (during COVID) to declare major/minor/BIS and to be advised by the Chair/Program Coordinator. The advising appointment entails a discussion of the required courses, the two-year rotation, and the ways student's interests can be met with a specific set of courses. A tentative plan of courses and requirements and projected schedule of course work is drawn up for minors and BIS sociology emphasis, dated and signed by the student and the coordinator/ advisor. We have worked out a sociology graduation map for sociology major students, any students who declared sociology major will meet (or virtually) with the Program Coordinator and be provided with a graduation map.

**Faculty:**

There are currently six full-time faculty, all tenured, 4 full professors and 2 associate professors in Sociology. They all hold Ph. D. degrees in sociology. There are currently Six adjunct faculty in sociology. Three of them currently hold a doctoral degree and three have master's degrees. Three full-time faculty members are female and three are male. Five full-time faculty members are of Euro-American ethnicity and one is of Asian-American ethnicity. Four adjunct faculty members are male and two are female. All adjunct faculty members are Euro-American.

**Program Support:**

There is one full-time staff member for the department Belinda McElheny, who has been in this position for 9 years. The department administration includes the Department Chair, Huiying Hill (Sociology), and Program Coordinators for Sociology (Hill). The department chair works with the dean for the College of Social and Behavioral Science, Dr. Julie Rich, to complete various tasks including budgeting, facilities care, hiring and salary, ranking and tenure, and fundraising as well as institutional administration. Administrative support is appropriate for the program's needs.

**Relations with External Community:** The Sociology program maintains ties to the broader Ogden community through a number of partnerships maintained by various faculty, and through engaged learning practices, including both service work and community research. Many of our alumni work in Ogden and other local communities with skills they acquired in sociology. They work, for example, in law, healthcare, the military, data analysis, social services in both Weber and Davis Counties, the schools (e.g. Weber and Davis Districts and the Utah School for the Deaf and Blind), as well as higher education, and in the private sector.

**Student, Faculty, Contract/Adjunct Faculty and Staff Statistics:**

<b>Sociology</b>	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-22
<b>Sociology SCH</b>	5,329	5,248	4,703	4,460	4281
<b>Sociology FTE</b>	177.6	174.9	156.8	148.7	142.7
<b>Student Majors <sup>3</sup> (Sociology only, including Sociology Teaching)</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>71</b>
Second Major or Concentration	22	20	14	19	13
Minors	75	69	59	48	56
<b>Program Graduates <sup>4</sup> (Sociology only, including Sociology Teaching)</b>					
Associate Degree	0	0	0	0	
Bachelor Degree	7	15	14	8	9
<b>Student Demographic Profile <sup>5</sup></b>					
Female	47	55	50	50	46
Male	23	16	17	23	25
<b>Department Faculty FTE Total <sup>6</sup></b>	<b>17.2</b>	<b>18.2</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>19.0</b>	N/A
Adjunct FTE	6.7	7.6	7.7	7.5	N/A
Contract FTE	10.6	10.7	11.3	11.6	N/A
<b>Department Student/Faculty Ratio <sup>7</sup></b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>19.8</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>20.0</b>	N/A

**Results of Previous Program Reviews:**

**Recommendation 1:** Community engagement capstone. “This Program Review Team recommends the development of a “community engagement pathway” through the major working with existing CCEL courses, expanding into other classes, and most significantly culminating with a capstone internship.”

**Recommendation 2:** Community Advisory Board. “If the department develops the option for a capstone internship, an advisory board could be helpful to facilitate conversations about community needs and the ways that interns might meet those needs.”

**Recommendation 3:** Required, 1 credit hour professional development course (pro seminar) “The team encourages the department to make the “professional development 1-unit seminar” a requirement for students holding between 60 and 90 credit hours. This seminar could be the introduction for students planning to intern in their final year in the program.”

**Recommendation 4:** (a) Rethink assessment; (b) scaffold writing skills through courses (a) “The team is concerned about the amount and intensity of assessment in the department. While clearly meeting university expectations, this model leaves little time for collective meaningful discussion and data driven decision-making . . . A more reasonable long-term assessment plan

for sociology would include annual assessment of “one” learning outcome as part of completing an assessment cycle in “six” years. These more measured processes allow for more focused attention and change related to a single outcome, rather than making too many programmatic changes at once.”

(b) The program “might discuss scaffolding of learning outcomes related to research and academic writing across core required and sequenced classes, breaking down the building blocks. For example, introducing article annotation in an introductory class and teaching synthesis across readings in theory.”

**Recommendation #5:** Required advising “The team recommends a more intrusive advising protocol. The department could require that the department chair advise students before they can officially declare the major.”

**Information Regarding Current Review Team Members:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Tracy Ore (external)	Professor of Sociology	St. Cloud State University
Molly Sween (internal)	Professor of Criminal Justice	Weber State University