ASSESSMENT REPORT
2015-2016

<u>**Criminal Justice Studies**</u>   <u>**B.A.**</u>
(Instructional Degree Program)   (Degree Level)

Program Mission:
The mission of the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences is to: a) contribute to meeting the educational and research needs in criminal justice, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and related fields; b) contribute to meeting the career needs in social services and social sciences, as well as contribute to training for careers in criminal justice, social services, and other related fields; and c) provide socio-cultural service and expertise for the region, as well as the greater global community.

<u>**Student Learning Outcome 1:**</u>

Demonstrate critical thinking and an understanding of criminal justice as applied to everyday life.

<u>**NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 1**</u>

First Means of Assessment for Outcome 1:
Grades from the final exams (with essay) assigned in Sociology 231 – Criminal Justice Systems, papers/chapter analyses in Sociology 300-Sociocultural Theory, research papers assigned in Sociology 427 – Criminology, final exams (with essay) assigned in Sociology 329 – Institutional Corrections and research papers assigned in Sociology 493 – Race and Ethnic Relations. Successful completion of this objective will be demonstrated by 70% of students in those classes receiving a grade of C or better on these papers.

Summary of Data:

Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	136	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	31
Total Number of Students Assessed:	167	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:	81.4%

Interpretation of Results for Outcome 1:

Regarding Outcome 1, Means 1, we continue to meet our goal with 81.4% of our students receiving a C or better on the relevant assignments in the assessed criminal justice required courses, an increase of 5.1% from last year. Our efforts to restructure and redesign core CJ courses, which started 3 years ago, have been successful so far. We see a continued increase in our success rate, reflecting our efforts to work with our students to improve their reading, class participation, writing and critical thinking skills. We expect to see similar success rates in this area in the future.

On Outcome 1, Means 2, no data was available. We are still exploring the idea of conducting our own exit survey for our graduating seniors. This survey would ask for non-University email addresses that would allow us to contact students a year after graduation.

Student Learning Outcome 2:

Be able to read, understand and critique sociological and criminal justice literature.

NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 2

First Means of Assessment for Outcome 2:

Grades from papers in Sociology 330 – Research Methods, Sociology 300 – Sociocultural Theory, and Sociology 427 – Criminology will be used for this assessment. Successful completion of this objective will be demonstrated by 70% of students in the class receiving a grade of C or better on their papers.

Summary of Data

Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	54	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	18
Total Number of Students Assessed:	72	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:	75%

Second Means of Assessment for Outcome 2:

Successful completion of Criminal Justice core classes (SOC 231, SOC 329, SOC 427 and SOC 493). Successful completion of this objective will be demonstrated by 80% of students receiving 70% or better in the Criminal Justice core classes.

Summary of Data:

Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	173	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	14
Total Number of Students Assessed:	187	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:	92.5%

Interpretation of Results for Outcome 2:

Regarding Outcome 2, Means 1, we are pleased to note that we met our goal, with 75% of our students receiving a C or better on the papers in SOC 330, SOC 300 and SOC 427. The increase in this success rate suggests students are better prepared for our courses. The improvement also suggests we did a better job of effectively communicating our course objectives and expectations. We believe we will continue to see success in this area.

On Outcome 2, Means 2, we had a huge increase in our success rate with 92.5% of the students earning a C or better in these courses. This is an increase of 13% from last year. This success is a direct reflection of our willingness to work closely with students on all assignments (e.g., quizzes, exams, class participation, writing assignments). We expect to continue meeting our goal in this area.

Student Learning Outcome 3:

Ability to design, analyze and interpret the results of research and to report the results in written form using ASA.

NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 3

First Means of Assessment for Outcome 3:

Grades from the final paper assigned in Sociology 330 – Research Methods and Sociology 427 – Criminology will be used. Successful completion of this objective will be demonstrated by 70% of students in the class receiving a grade of C or better on these assignments.

Summary of Data

Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	65	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	21
Total Number of Students Assessed:	86	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:	75.6%

Interpretation of Results for Outcome 3:

Regarding Outcome 3, Means 1, we met our goal with 75.6% of our students receiving a C or better on the final papers in SOC 330 and SOC 427. We recognize our students need more assistance writing papers and interpreting data and we have been providing this assistance consistently. Our expectation is that next year we will continue to meet this goal.

ADDITIONAL INTERPRETATIONS:

The Outcomes Assessment process has encouraged us to look more closely at our overall program. We want to offer a program that is carefully aligned with our students' academic and post-graduation needs. One area we have identified as a potential area for change is the required statistics course, SOC 430. This advanced research and data analysis course is designed for students who plan to attend graduate school. Anecdotal data reveal that most of our criminal justice majors do not attend graduate school. Instead, they enter professions like probation, corrections and policing (among others) immediately after graduation. This has encouraged us to consider removing SOC 430 from the required list of courses and requiring students to take an advanced course in social stratification and/or gender instead. These courses, which focus on notions of inequality, are better aligned with the professional needs of our students and the

diversity aspect of Highland's mission.

Highlands Mission Statement: New Mexico Highlands University is a public comprehensive university serving our local and global communities. Our mission is to provide opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to attain an exceptional education by fostering creativity, critical thinking and research in the liberal arts, sciences, *and professions within a diverse community.*