

**ASSESSMENT PLAN
2015-2016**

Public Affairs: Applied Sociology
(Instructional Degree Program)

M.A.
(Degree Level)

Program Mission:

The Master of Arts in Public Affairs is an interdisciplinary program in the Social Sciences that provides academic training for careers in public and private organizations, both nationally and internationally. The multidisciplinary core curriculum includes courses in political theory, social theory and historical thought, human culture and economic theory. These courses foster a comprehensive understanding of the social and cultural environment or public and private organizational policy design and implementation. The program prepares students for professional positions in managerial and leadership roles in government agencies, consulting firms, human services, public-interest organizations and businesses significantly affected by public policies, as well as train for entry level doctoral studies.

Student Learning Outcome 1:

That students exhibit an understanding and appreciation of a multidisciplinary approach in relation to the work they eventually do and the social environments in which they live.

First Means of Assessment for Outcome 1:

Assessed through the successful completion of the Interdisciplinary Core requirements earning a B or above:

- Anthropology 651—Seminar: Concepts of Human Culture (3)
- Political Science 563—Political Economy (3)

Summary of Data:

Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	0	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	0
Total Number of Students Assessed:	0	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion: not useful given small cohort	

Interpretation of Results for Outcome 1:

Meeting this outcome criterion will mean that our faculty will determine which methods and activities were most fruitful and how they may be enhanced. The discussion will include a conversation among faculty regarding the factors that contributed to the inability for those students who did not meet the criterion. Approaches to address the issues identified will be developed.

Student Learning Outcome 2:

That students exhibit reading and writing skills that will benefit them as teachers in secondary schools and community colleges and also benefit them in Ph. D. programs.

First Means of Assessment for Outcome 2:

Assessment through the successful presentation of the thesis or professional papers. The data will be qualitative and come from the members of the student's thesis/professional papers committee. Successful performance will be based on presentation at a national conference where students may demonstrate understanding of sociological theoretical principles and concepts in her/his thesis/papers.

The sociology program has been motivating students to present their research at various conferences. This is not a requirement but one that is highly valued and supported. A club formed out of a graduate course to foster presentation opportunities, The Association for Sociology. All graduate students are highly encouraged to join and present.

- Soc 699—Thesis (6 credits) or completion of two professional papers and six additional hours of coursework.

Summary of Data :

Number of Students Meeting Criterion for Presentation:	3	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion for presentation:	3*students were new to the program and did not have developed research projects
Number of Students Meeting Criterion for Thesis hours:	5	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion for Thesis:	1 (on track to complete)
Total Number of Students	6	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion: not useful given small	

Assessed for Presentations:		cohort	
Total Number of Students Assessed for Thesis:	5		

Interpretation of Results for Outcome 2:

Meeting this outcome criterion will mean that our faculty will determine which methods and activities were most fruitful and how they may be enhanced. The discussion will include a conversation among faculty regarding the factors that contributed to the inability for those students who did not meet the criterion. Approaches to address the issues identified will be developed.

Student Learning Outcome 3:

That students exhibit critical thinking and research skills and demonstrate an understanding of and ability to use qualitative and quantitative sociological research methods of data collection and analysis. They should demonstrate the ability to interpret social scientific research as well as the ability to conduct sociological research through the appropriate application of data collection methods and data analysis techniques.

First Means of Assessment for Outcome 3:

Assessment based on the successful completion of course earning a B or above in the on midterm and final exams.

- Soc 630- Research Methods in Sociology
- Soc 530 or Psych 601 - Statistical Analysis

Summary of Data:

Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	5 (1 audit)	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion	0
Total Number of Students Assessed:	6	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion: not useful given small cohort	

Interpretation of Results for Outcome 3:

Meeting this outcome criterion will mean that our faculty will determine which methods and activities were most fruitful and how they may be enhanced. The discussion will include a conversation among faculty regarding the factors that contributed to the inability for those students who did not meet the criterion. Approaches to address the issues identified will be developed.

Student Learning Outcome 4:

That students demonstrate an understanding of sociology and its contribution to understanding society and human behavior through their familiarity with the theoretical and substantive literature. The students should demonstrate:

- the ability to compare and contrast theoretical perspectives within sociology and understand their application to society
- a theoretical understanding of the impact of race/ethnicity, social class, and gender on the life experiences, changes, and opportunities of people in society.

First Means of Assessment for Outcome 4:

Assessment based on the successful completion of course earning a B or above on midterm and final exams.

- Sociology 539—Classical Sociological Theories (3)
- Soc 512—Social Stratification—Assessment based on midterm and final exams.
- Soc 593—Race and Ethnic Relations—Assessment based on midterm and final exams.
- **Summary of Data:**
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Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	0	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion	0
Total Number of Students Assessed:	0	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion: not useful given small cohort	

*courses already taken in previous year for this cohort

Interpretation of Results for Outcomes 4:

Meeting this outcome criterion will mean that our faculty will determine which methods and activities were most fruitful and how they may be enhanced. The discussion will include a conversation among faculty regarding the factors that contributed to the inability for those students who did not meet the criterion. Approaches to address the issues identified will be developed.

Utilization of Results:

The intent for assessing results are as follows:

Given the small cohort of graduate students in the Public Affairs Program for Sociology faculty will discuss each student individually and their progress. We will identify issues that are observed as factors for success and those seen as obstacles. Faculty will devise possible strategies to enhance student success given each case.

Faculty will identify early on – through consistent meetings among faculty- those who seem to be struggling and intervene within reason by discussing with students the issue and strategize to improve standing.

For those students who are fulfilling the expectations for success, faculty will reinforce those factors and attempt to enhance those through further interaction and opportunity building.

Faculty will discuss the innovative activities that are being conducted in class and out of class that seem successful and share with faculty those strategies.