<div align="center">**ASSESSMENT REPORT**
2016-2017</div>

<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>
- Mastery of Content Knowledge and Skills
- Critical and Reflective Thinking Skills

<u>First Means of Assessment for Outcome 1:</u>
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:	93	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	36
Total Number of Students Assessed:	129	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:	72%

Interpretation of Results for Outcome 1:

Regarding Outcome 1, Means 1, we did meet our goal with 72% of our students receiving a C or better on the relevant assignments in the assessed criminal justice required courses. However, this is a decrease of 9% from last year and we were not content with this decrease. We believe our efforts to restructure and redesign core CJ courses, which started 3 years ago, are still successful, but we hired a new faculty member and there is typically an adjustment period of at least one year. Additionally, we have been evaluating the sequencing of courses as well as discussing adding a writing requirement to lower level courses (e.g., SOC 231, SOC 329). We are optimistic we will

meet our goal again next year.

On Outcome 1, Means 2, limited data was available. However, we piloted an exit survey this year (17 students) with the following results:

QUESTIONS – REGARDING ADVISING	SCORES/RESULTS
The academic advising system for students was clearly explained to me.	3.0 (out of 4)
My academic advisor was readily accessible to me.	3.25
My academic advisor treated me with respect.	3.76
My advisor was sufficiently familiar with the degree programs and curricula to guide me in selecting my course of study.	3.75
QUESTIONS – REGARDING FACULTY	
I was intellectually challenged by my interactions with Sociology and Criminal Justice faculty members.	3.47
Sociology and Criminal Justice (CJ) faculty members were approachable.	3.53
Sociology and CJ faculty members were enthusiastic about their subject.	3.53
Sociology and CJ faculty members were effective teachers	3.59
Sociology and CJ faculty members treated me with respect.	3.53
QUESTIONS – COURSE MODALITY	
Percent taking Soc/CJ classes via ITV	59%
Of those who took an ITV course: my experience with ITV was satisfactory	90%
Of those who took an ITV course: I would recommend an ITV course to a fellow student	80%
Percent taking a hybrid Soc/CJ classes?	63%
Of those who took a hybrid course: my experience online was satisfactory	100%
Of those who took a hybrid course: I would recommend a hybrid course to a fellow student	90%
Percent taking an online Soc/CJ classes?	41%
Of those who took an online course: my experience with the online course was satisfactory	100%
Of those who took an online course: I would recommend an online course to a fellow student	86%
QUESTIONS – FUTURE PREPARATION	
I feel properly prepared for graduate or professional school.	88% said Yes
I feel properly prepared for a technological world.	100% said Yes
I feel properly prepared for employment in my major.	88% said Yes
QUESTIONS – FUTURE PLANS	
Percent planning to work part-time	12%
Percent planning to work full-time	65%
Percent that already accepted offer for employment	18%
QUESTIONS – FUTURE EDUCATION	
Percent planning to pursue graduate/professional education	53%
Of those planning to attend, what percent already admitted?	44%

In general, the program seems to be effective. One area that clearly needs work is the way in which we explain the advising process. Future surveys will allow for longitudinal comparisons.

<u>Student Learning Outcome 2:</u>

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

<u>NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 2</u>
- Mastery of Content Knowledge and Skills

<u>First Means of Assessment for Outcome 2:</u>
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:	52	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	27
Total Number of Students Assessed:	79	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:	66%

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 70% of students receiving 70% or better in the Criminal Justice core classes.

Summary of Data:

Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	75	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	32
Total Number of Students Assessed:	107	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:	70%

Interpretation of Results for Outcome 2:

Regarding Outcome 2, Means 1, we did meet our goal, with 66% of our students receiving a C or better on the papers in SOC 330, SOC 300 and SOC 427. The decrease from last year, again, most likely reflects the hiring of a new faculty member. We believe we will see success in this area next year.

On Outcome 2, Means 2, 70% of the students earned a C or better in these courses, but this is a *significant* decrease from last year. We are still working closely with students on all assignments (e.g., quizzes, exams, class participation, writing assignments), but it is possible students need exposure to these expectations before they take upper-level courses. Students also need time to adjust to a new faculty member. We expect to meet our goal in this area next year.

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
- Mastery of Content Knowledge and Skills

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:	49	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	18
Total Number of Students Assessed:	67	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:	73%

Interpretation of Results for Outcome 3:

Regarding Outcome 3, Means 1, we met our goal with 73% of our students receiving a C or better on the final papers in SOC 330 and SOC 427. This is a slight decrease from last year. This decrease, we believe, reflects the new faculty hire as well as the recognition that our students need more assistance writing papers and interpreting data. We have been providing this assistance consistently and will continue to do so. We are evaluating the merits of instituting a course in research paper writing. Our expectation is that next year, as we continue to work with our students, we will improve this percentage.

ADDITIONAL INTERPRETATIONS:

The pilot exit survey suggests the program is working although there are some areas we need to improve. An increase in the number of surveys collected, as well as comparison over time, will allow for a more comprehensive analysis in the future.

Utilization of Results & Changes to Program Based on Results:

The Outcomes Assessment process has encouraged us to look more closely at our overall program. We want to offer a program that prepares students to succeed at the later stages and is carefully aligned with our students' academic and post-graduation needs. One area we had 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. We thought most

of our students did not plan to attend graduate school, but the pilot exit survey revealed that about half of our criminal justice majors do plan to attend graduate school. The other half enter professions like probation, corrections and policing (among others) immediately after graduation. This encouraged us to consider allowing students who do not plan to attend graduate school to substitute an advanced gender or social stratification course for SOC 430. 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.[i] The department is considering this substitution and discussing the possible creation of "tracks" within the major, one for those who plan to attend graduate school and one for those who do not. The department is also planning to incorporate SOC 430 into the assessment tool.

Another area we plan to discuss is course sequencing and preparation for SOC 427, SOC 493 and SOC 430, courses where we expect a mastery of the content, advanced critical thinking and an ability to write advanced papers. The department plans to discuss whether or not we are addressing these skills in lower-level courses (e.g., SOC 231, SOC 327, SOC 329) and if not how we can effectively do so.

Retention Strategies:
We plan to continue working with the Writing Center and utilizing NetTutor to help improve students' writing skills. The department is discussing the creation of a course titled "Writing in the Social Science" to provide additional writing assistance. Each faculty member has evaluated their individual course assessments and has made relevant changes to assist students (e.g., Dr. Ward has created 5 shorter writing assignments instead of one large term paper in SOC 300, Dr. Derkas and Dr. Gadsden both *require* paper drafts and provide extensive feedback on said drafts, Dr. Alvarez plans to offer extra credit for students who submit paper drafts in her courses).

The faculty has also been working with relevant community members to increase the number of guest speakers in class. For example, Dr. Gadsden plans to have police officers, all former Highlands students, speak in her criminal justice courses during Fall 2017.

The department plans to keep upper-level courses relatively small to ensure that students receive sufficient attention from faculty members.

Finally, the department is discussing a way of mandating at least one advising session every semester before students can enroll in future courses. One suggestion is to make all required courses "instructor permission" courses in order to ensure that students visit with a faculty member before they can enroll in these courses.

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[i] 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.