

## PROGRAM REVIEW 2008-2011

**Division:** Social Sciences and Humanities

**Department or Program:** Sociology

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### I. Description and Mission of the Program

Which area(s) does this program considerably address (check all that apply):

Basic Skills     Transfer     Career/Technical     Other (describe)

- A. The sociology department offers lower division classes in sociology, which include Introduction to Sociology, Social Problems, the Sociology of Globalization, the Sociology of Marriage and Intimate Relationships, the Sociology of Men and Women, and the Sociology of Religion. The sociology department also shares several courses with Psychology and with Administration of Justice. The mission of our lower division classes is to develop students' sociological imagination and to introduce them to the discipline.
- B. Our primary strength is the quality of our teaching and curriculum. The department has dynamic, intellectually engaged, and pedagogically diverse instructors and a challenging curriculum that includes an emphasis on primary sources, rather than textbooks, and analytical writing.
- C. The sociology department continues its quest to provide equitable education to students across all racial/ethnic and class demographic groups. We also could increase the amount of community engagement we expect from students as well. We could also further develop our interdisciplinary connections.
- D. As part of the lower division general education pattern, transfer is a central goal and outcome of the sociology department. However, we also value lifelong learning and see the cultivation of a sociological imagination as useful in people's family lives, work lives and community/global contributions, regardless of educational credential.

### II. Retention and Growth

- A. Access and Growth: Over the last three years, the enrollment in sociology has remained fairly steady: from 2300 (WSCH at roughly 9800) in 2005-2006 to 2360 (WSCH at roughly 9800) in 2007-2008.

Retention: Our retention rates increased slightly from 86% in the 2005-2006 year to 89% by the 2007-2008 academic year. We are pleased with this increase, since our success rates also increased slightly during this same period from 73% to 75%. This measure of retention is not a very sensitive one, as it counts retention as staying in

class until the end of the quarter and higher retention sometimes means lower success rates. We would be interested in seeing our data for quarter to quarter persistence.

During this time, we have had fluctuations in staffing, because of a full-time member's 30% release to work for the Faculty Association. In addition, we have lost one full-time member during the 2008-2009 that will be replaced by a transfer starting in Fall 2009. This may have an impact on enrollment, especially if we offer more sections of SOC1 relative to the more specialized classes. We have made no special attempts to increase enrollment, since many of our classes during the day have waitlists as it is. We would need to offer more sections to increase enrollment. As far as the goal of increasing retention, the Sociology Department has almost unanimous participation in the division's Conversation/Application/Reflection project and sees continuous improvement in teaching as a major retention strategy.

- B. The Sociology Department has seen increased success rates for De Anza's targeted student groups—African-Americans, Filipinos and Latinos—since the previous program review. In 2004-2005, only 57% of Black students, 70% of Filipino students, and 59% of Latino students passed sociology classes with a grade of C or better (relative to 73% of White students and 78% of Asian students). By the 2007-2008 academic year, 66% of Black students, 75% of Filipino students, and 71% of Latino students passed with a C or better (relative to 71% of White students and 85% of Asian students). The success rate for all student groups except White and Other went up since the last program review, with a striking 12 point increase for Latino students. Targeted groups account for 25-28% of the total number of sociology students in the last three years. In 2007-2008, there was only a 3% gap in retention between targeted (87%) and non-targeted groups (90%).

We are not sure what accounts for the narrowing of the success gap over the last five years in Sociology. As mentioned above, there has been nearly unanimous participation in C.A.R., and in that project we have devoted considerable study to issues of student equity. Several of our faculty are known on campus for their anti-racist work and this generates word-of-mouth referrals from faculty and counselors who are trusted by students of color. At the last curriculum revision, we continued our efforts at multicultural infusion and this infusion has happened not just in the course outline but in practice, in our syllabi.

Finally, in terms of the future, one of the sociology instructors has become part of the First Year Experience program, which targets first-generation college students, and is comprised predominantly of students from the targeted groups. FYE is a multi-class learning community that spans an entire year. The first quarter links two reading classes, two writing classes and two introductory sociology classes with a counselor and an academic advisor. The curriculum focuses on the sociology of schooling and encourages students to examine their own K-12 experiences and begin to develop an intellectual identity as a college student. This year, approximately two-thirds of the students leaped from the lowest level of developmental English into college level English by the winter quarter. We are still evaluating the success of this program but anecdotal evidence suggests that the students have seen huge leaps in their skill

levels, self-confidence and academic identity. We hope to continue the program in future years, if budgets allow.

- C. The sociology department does not explicitly address basic skills, as the advisory for our classes is ENGL1A. However, many of the instructors do address reading and writing skills in their classes to support student success on reading and writing assignments, and how we go about this is something we have often discussed at C.A.R. meetings. In addition, some instructors have offered tutorial support in their classes. The Reading Department developed a Reading Across the Disciplines class for SOC1, but due to struggles in getting enough enrollment, we have not yet worked out how best to offer the RAD classes. Finally, as mentioned above, the First Year Experience program enrolls students who test in at development levels of English and directly targets basic skills across the reading, writing and sociology curricula.

### III. Student Equity

- A. As mentioned above, the Sociology department has witnessed a narrowing of the success gap between targeted and non-targeted groups since the last program review. Again, in 2004-2005, only 57% of Black students, 70% of Filipino students, and 59% of Latino students passed sociology classes with a grade of C or better (relative to 73% of White students and 78% of Asian students). By the 2007-2008 academic year, 66% of Black students, 75% of Filipino students, and 71% of Latino students passed with a C or better (relative to 71% of White students and 85% of Asian students).
- B. Each of the instructors in the Sociology Department is personally committed to student equity and professional development in this area. We will continue to participate in the division's C.A.R. project and continue to look for ways to deepen the infusion of multiculturalism into our curriculum and our pedagogical strategies. Several of us attend workshops and conferences specifically focused on issues of student equity. We will continue to develop connections with faculty members across the college working toward the same goal to learn from them. It has been the goal of the co-chairs over the last five years to diversify our faculty. We now have a valuable mix of faculty with different cultural and racial backgrounds, as well as different areas of expertise within the discipline. Finally, the one current full-time faculty member is devoting her Professional Development Leave to diversifying the canon in sociology and will be developing a resource guide for other faculty. The goal of this project is for our many different racial and cultural groups to be able to see themselves in the founding and history of the discipline.
- C. Our challenges, as ever, are time and resources. Part-time faculty are under-compensated relative to their worth (not just here but everywhere). The Sociology department is incredibly fortunate to have an adjunct faculty that is particularly committed to the college and student well-being. They go well beyond the call of duty in terms of service to students and to the broader college community, despite the lack of material reward and social respect afforded adjuncts on the campus. In addition, the Sociology faculty have often taken students beyond the enrollment cap out of the goodness of our hearts. If we had more time and ease, we would read

more, learn more, try new things more, talk more and generally devote more effort to our professional development.

IV. **Budget Limitations** (Please be specific in your responses.)

- A. With more funding, we could offer more sections of SOC1. Even double sections or two different sections of SOC1 offered at the same time during the primetime hours between 9:30 and 1:30 will easily fill, because of the demand for sociology classes and the popularity of our instructors. With more funding, we could hire a third full-time faculty member, which was the original size of the sociology department until our third position was given to the History Department eight years ago. A third full-time faculty member would offer students more continuity and could help develop the department. Finally, additional funding might allow us more smart classrooms and if not smart classrooms then at least classrooms with functioning overheads, projectors, etc. The designated classroom for sociology is not a smart classroom and has no internet access even for faculty who manage to bring in their own laptops and projectors.
- B. More sections of SOC1 would increase access for students. There is substantial student demand for sociology classes and, we think, substantial benefits of the kinds of critical perspectives that sociology offers people. Sociology is part of the liberal arts education that produces socially aware and thoughtful democratic citizens and if the department is cut, that would suggest abandonment of the college's core values.

V. • **Additional Comments (optional):**

It is a very odd experience to have to “sell” your own department to the college which houses it. Sociology is part of the Social Sciences and Humanities division, which has the highest WSCH of the college and varies between the second and third highest productivity rate. We contribute our share to that achievement.

• **Strategic Planning Initiatives (Community Collaborations, Cultural Competency, Outreach, and Individualized Attention for Retention):**

Three of the Strategic Planning Initiatives are at the core of what we do in sociology. Our curriculum explicitly addresses issue of Cultural Competency by teaching students about culture and allowing them to practice “taking the role of the other” in regards to cultural perspectives. Several of our classes have service learning components, which address the Community Collaborations initiative. Sociology faculty have participated in several learning communities whose explicit goals involved Individualized Attention for Retention. Finally, like other departments in the SSH division, the Sociology Department now has a website to aid in Outreach.

• **Relationships with Other Programs:**

As mentioned above the Sociology Department has worked directly with two other programs on campus—the LinC program and the First Year Experience program.

- **State and Federal Mandates:**

One state mandate that directly affects the department is the 75/25 ratio and we are currently out of compliance. The addition of a third full-time faculty member would rectify this.

- **Comparable Programs at other Institutions:**

Finally, the Sociology Department has an excellent reputation in the wider community. We have been told directly by faculty at Santa Clara University that our students are exceptionally well prepared for their upper division coursework there. In addition, students from San Jose State University have shared that De Anza sociology faculty get many more shout-outs in the graduation speeches than do San Jose State faculty. ☺