<center>

SOCIOLOGY PROGRAM

Addendum to the Spring 2021 Self-Study

October 2022

</center>

Faculty Updates

New Tenure Track Colleague: In Fall 2022, Sociology welcomed a new tenure-track colleague, Assistant Professor Dr. José Luis Collazo, Jr. He was a first-generation college student and is a proud product of the CSU System. He earned his BA and MA at CSU Dominguez. His research is influenced by his immigrant family and community. He investigates the social inequalities Latin Americans face in their country of origin and abroad. For instance, he examines the effects of U.S. immigration policies on Latin American immigrants' earnings in the U.S. and how Latin Americans integrate in the country of Italy. Another body of research he focuses on is how work and organizational factors affect third-party observers' perceptions and reactions to discrimination.

Returning Colleagues: We are happy to welcome back several faculty who were on leaves and sabbaticals at the time of the self-study. In Fall 2022, 57.8% of our courses are being taught by tenure track faculty and 60.5% of Spring courses will be taught by tenure track faculty. This compares to 36.4% in Fall 2020, as reported in the self-study (p. 32). The increasing tenure density is due both to the return of tenure track faculty and the precipitous decline in classes offered (see below).
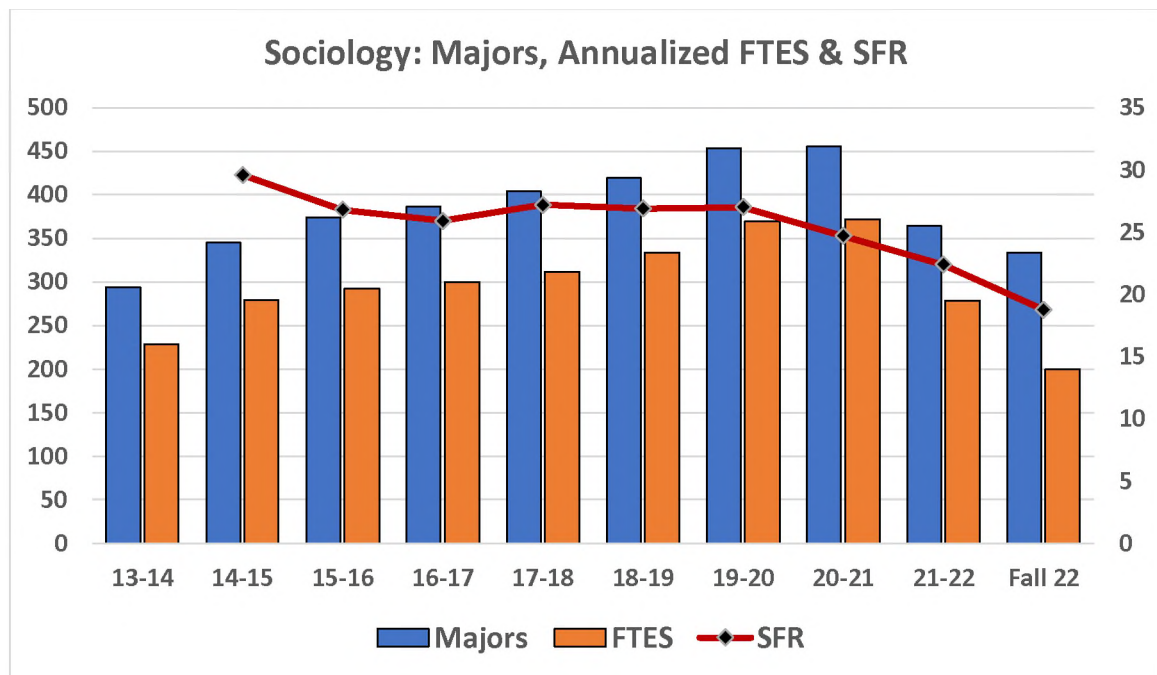
Interim Chair: Dr. Sunghee Nam served as interim Chair of Sociology while our external Chair, Dr. Andrea Grove, was on sabbatical in Spring 2022.

Editorship: Dr. Elizabeth Sowers was selected as co-editor of *Sociological Perspectives*, the journal of the Pacific Sociological Association. The Publications Committee noted: "We are excited about this application and the vision of the prospective co-editors. More specifically, we see their vision of 'more directly addressing anti-blackness, white supremacy, transphobia, disability, homophobia, misogyny, heteropatriarchy, and their intersections' to be incredibly important, as is their desire 'to consider and implement new strategies for increasing the submission and publication by authors from segments of the population directly impacted by such multiple systems of oppression.' Their vision speaks directly to both the present of the discipline and its future, centering sociology on Black, Brown and Indigenous forms of knowledge."

Ongoing Service: Our faculty have continued to serve in numerous roles across the University and engaged in research and publishing. Within the next two years, we expect to have two more tenured professors.

Enrollment, Curriculum, Scheduling, and Budget

For the first five years following our last external review (2013-2014), the Sociology program experienced significant growth. Last year, and continuing this year, Sociology has experienced a significant and ongoing drop in enrollment. The graph below tracks those trends across the key metrics of Majors, FTES, and SFR since our last review.

Sociology: Majors, Annualized FTES & SFR

Most of the decline since AY 20-21 is explained by general causes beyond Sociology – specifically, the effects of the pandemic and the demographic shifts that are affecting the university and higher education broadly. However, we do have some concern, since the decline in Sociology enrollments has been significantly sharper than across the university as a whole. From Fall 2020 to Fall 2022, while university enrollment FTES decreased by about 23%, Sociology FTES decreased by nearly 42%. That is a very concerning figure. (Equally interesting, FTES growth covering the five years from Fall 2014 to Fall 2020 saw a growth in Sociology that was significantly *greater* than the university as a whole: 37% compared to 23%.) This leaves us with deep concerns, but without clear answers, or a clear focus for our concerns.

One exciting and tangentially related development is that we began to implement our new curriculum in the Fall of 2021, after many years of discussions and planning. We currently have students on both the previous and new curriculum, given calendar rights (although the number on the old curriculum is declining quickly). Despite our efforts, the curricular overlap has created a number of challenges with students enrolling without the correct prerequisites in some cases. It also creates some difficulty in scheduling and estimating enrollments for both sets of students. These challenges, while expected, have been time consuming for the Program Chair and Program Advisor.

Enrollment and budget challenges associated with it have made our operating context especially difficult. The University fails to provide a budget for instruction in advance and asks us to

estimate enrollments based on past and current semester enrollments. The collapse of enrollment has made enrollment patterns impossible to predict. This has meant canceled classes, and low-enrolled courses, thus failing to achieve SFR (and FTES) targets, although the university has provided neither training nor tools to facilitate that type of planning. We are also having to deal with changing metrics. While we were using SFR and FTES targets previously, we are now being given a budget based on WTUs. (Information on possible chairs' training beginning next Spring suggest that we will be returning to FTES and SFR metrics.) This spring semester, we are going to be unable to hire many of our part-time lecturers to their entitlement or at all. Some of them have been with us for many years. We would like to avoid having to hire lecturers at the last minute and also have more time to help them develop their teaching. However, the way the scheduling and budget are run makes both of those needs difficult to meet.

We have not been provided an operating budget either, at any level. This is a big step backwards. We have to submit a list of needs and hope for the best. We are concerned of the impact this will have on our ability to honor students by selecting them for our AKD Honor Society chapter or on continuing our tradition of a capstone project celebration at the end of the year.

Master's Program

While our Master's program remains on the Academic Master Plan (where it has been for approximately 15 years), the Sociology faculty have different views about moving it forward. There is agreement that the program on the AMP, an MS, should be an MA and look different from the original idea since faculty are different and ideas have changed. Some think an MA will attract students and also give our alumni a good place to go upon graduation. Others are concerned that we have little bandwidth as faculty to develop that program and teach in it, while still needing to meet the needs of our undergraduate students. On top of that, it is unclear that we can get any administrative support to implement the MA.

Program Maintenance and Dynamics

We still face the challenge of meeting program service needs. Next year we will have only one or two junior faculty members – which inverts the junior-heavy balance that we have had since 2014. This creates potential for addressing this issue of service needs because there are more senior faculty. But the division of labor has been a contentious issue in the past, thus active efforts need to be taken to ensure that the work of the program is done well while the distribution of service workload is equitable. Department service is part of tenure-track workload, but some do more of it than others. This is a challenge perhaps not recognized in the past. We really need everyone pitching in to monitor and assess the new curriculum properly. If the program agrees that they do not have the time to undertake the work to achieve set goals, then we need to "say out loud" that we do not want to try to do so many things for our students.

In the curriculum revision, the faculty worked to create a curriculum that is sequenced/scaffolded to make sure that students get what they need in each class to develop the skills and toolkits necessary for their success to enable them to do more in capstone and also in graduate school and/or other work beyond graduation. To fulfill this promise, coordination and accountability are needed in terms of what is being taught in classes. We have made strides in this area, successfully implementing course-level assessment in two core classes. However, we have also

faced challenges doing so in other core classes because faculty are hesitant to modify their course materials or take on the extra task of assessing student work.

We also must have a new chair elected/appointed soon, to take on the role when the Spring semester ends. Three years ago, eligible faculty did not wish to step into the chair role. The previous chair offered to stay on if someone would commit to take on the role a year or two later and if the dean's office could support three units more of reassigned time. Instead, an external chair was appointed. All are aware of the difficulty of the position. In addition, some faculty receive the same or more reassigned time than the chair position for doing external University work. Currently, the chair receives 9 WTUs of reassigned time, but we recommend at least 12 WTUs of reassigned time. It is nearly impossible to be a mentor, instigate new projects, etc., when there is barely time to keep up with mandatory duties coming from the dean's office and Faculty Affairs. Many essential tasks of program leadership simply cannot be undertaken. It is no small feat that the previous chair was able to lead the creation of the new curriculum under these conditions. It was made possible also by the faculty working in more of an "all hands on deck" mode than we have now (although that created its own conflicts).

Goals for the Program in the External Review

-New curriculum, road mapping, strategic approach with scaffolding
- ❼ We would like to get feedback on the curriculum redesign, and whether they have any ideas about how to improve it or evaluate its effectiveness

-Ideas from reviewers about alumni engagement (what do they do?)
- ❼ What might they recommend, and how would be go about trying to implement it (without any resources)?

-How to approach structural problems we have to deal with: no budget for planning, providing a quality education with many obstacles, service load/high WTUs obstacle to research, class size, little admin support for academic excellence (little attention about curriculum changes and student success workshops); how do we stop the bleeding (enrollment collapse; how do we look relative to what they see at their CSUs)
- ❼ What strategies might work to try to obtain from administrative sources the things that we need to be a strong program? On our campus, how can we work to ensure that quality of education is a priority that is supported (in the context of declining enrollments and the push for increased graduation rates, and not having developed a reputation for academic quality as a university)? How does our *actual* teaching load compare to other campuses across the system? And how can we reverse the serious decline in Sociology enrollments – which are roughly double the size of university-wide declines?

-Common expectations for working together
- ❼ How can we best set collective expectations for program tasks that are equitable and mutually agreed upon, and how can we hold each other accountable to those expectations without generating conflicts?

-Assess idea of MA in Sociology as a viable option in light of structural issues