

Sociology Program MOU, Spring 2023

The Sociology Program has carefully reviewed and considered the assessment and recommendations of the External Reviewers and the Dean. The Program appreciates the recognition of the many strengths of the program. Using the template provided, the table below summarizes, in the first two columns, the recommendations and rationale that were submitted by the reviewers. The next four columns are the Program's responses. The Program has added the color coding to the template. The color coding in the first column indicates whether the Program will create steps to address the recommendations (green), the Program is unsure of either the capacity or willingness to address the recommendations (orange), the work is already ongoing (blue), or the decision of the Program not to proceed with the recommendation (red). In the case of the latter, the third column explains the rationale behind our decision not to pursue the recommendation. It is important to emphasize that the efforts to address the recommendations depend upon all faculty participating (at least TTF, with NTTF most welcome to do so if they choose) and upon the support from external parties as indicated. These conditions have not been present in recent years and may interfere with the completion of the below recommendations.

A final and critical point to address is the climate culture challenge. The Sociology faculty was among the most active and productive for many years working together to serve its students. That led to significant achievements, but also led to a range of dissatisfactions with program dynamics. Efforts to identify underlying issues (primarily by the Ombuds Office) were unsuccessful, and arguably exacerbated program divisions. There are a range of different issues at play. One issue is the baseline unsustainability of workload. Another issue is faculty who have decided to step away from program service on their own account. Another issue is that some faculty felt there was undue influence of other faculty several years ago and wanted more leadership roles. Those faculty who had worked hard in those leadership roles have understandably decided to step back and let others take the lead. This kind of complexity is why the "program culture" issue is so difficult to address. Therefore, the program remains in a suspended state in which members have heightened reticence to step into leadership roles, and the ability of faculty to work together has been greatly eroded. Issues of workload equity, professional priorities, respect for past investments in program development, concerns about institutional directions, and more, all prevent productive program engagement – at a time when all of that is essential to the future of the program. As the reviewers pointed out (section I, row 4), an imbalance of workload and some faculty opting out is not sustainable. To accomplish the steps the reviewers recommend, the Program will do best with the need for everyone's contributions valued and all back on board, although getting to that point will be a significant challenge in itself.

I. Program Purpose and University Goals

| Review recommendations | Program citation and rationale | Responsible parties | Resource implications | Two-year plan deliverable | Five-year plan deliverable |
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| Highlight faculty's community work into the mission statement | Though not everyone engages in this work, it is a strong ethos for the majority of the faculty and valued by students | Jose Luis Collazo, students | Faculty service time Funds for student help | Website revised to better reflect community work, etc. | Continual updating of website |
| Dean invest in external help of conflict resolution experts | Improve trust and collegiality as precursor to improving organizational procedures | Dean's office, Sociology faculty | Funds from Dean Full faculty participation (which has been a challenge) | External party helps move the program to a point where there is more trust and collegiality so that all participate in the workload | Hopefully in five years, the same problem won't exist |
| TTF create a policy to rotate into the chair position | Expected role for TTF, plan will allow for prior expectations and anticipation of workload/plans | Sociology faculty—all faculty should participate | Dean's office support in terms of offering ideas for other models used on campus | A policy for chair succession will be in place. | Review policy and adjust if needed |
| Create rotating schedule of faculty for other forms of departmental service | Imbalance of workload at present, opting out | Sociology faculty Dean's office in supporting not opting out | Same as above | A policy for departmental service will be in place; it will insure that the workload is shared | Same as above |
| Form committees to support formal departmental roles | Faculty should consider departmental committee support as routine and expected service that is included in their workload as faculty | Sociology faculty | Faculty time for department service | A clear structure of faculty roles and which should have committee support | Revisit how committees are functioning |
| Distribute student advising evenly across all TTF | Address heavy load on adviser | The program values the advising model we have and plan to continue it as long as it is supported with reassigned time | | | |

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| Clarify the role of lecturers who are doing major service and who actively participate in department culture | Sociology NTTF are an asset to the program and show tremendous dedication to students | Chair in discussion with TT and NTTF (will have to define "major service," etc.) Dean for any stipend or reassigned time support | Some service requires a stipend or reassigned time | Devise a plan to classify specifically what service should be awarded with resources and to what extent, while also insuring TTF contribute to program service | NTTF service at a high level is compensated with a stipend or reassigned time |
| Create a transparent compensation plan for lecturer service | NTTF service has to be compensated | See above | See above | See above | See above |
| Consider faculty participation in Center for International Affairs opportunities | Mission is central but this pillar less visible | Individual faculty may have interest in teaching a short-term study abroad course; expertise and experience in-country is required Director of Center of International Affairs | Program commitment to support 3 WTUs for teaching a UNIV 392 course CIA director provides mentoring and assistance in course design | Faculty who may be interested meet with CIA Director to explore opportunities | Interested faculty propose a UNIV 392 course or apply for an International Faculty Development Grants |
| Hire Sociology majors to help keep the bulletin boards and website current | Self-study noted lack of resources to maintain board and website | See first row above; Jose Luis planning for website can include students | Funds to pay students a stipend | Students will have better online and in person resources to understand current opportunities, policies, etc. | Assess how this is going; make adjustments as needed |
| Edit "Teaching..." publication to submit to Admissions for use as a recruiting tool | Highlight program more and draw students | Constitute two faculty team to work on this | Funds to make copies available to Admissions | Make revisions so the pamphlet is less text-heavy (and includes a few photos of students and faculty) to work with recruiters in the Admissions office to distribute the pamphlet at recruiting events, including feeder community colleges (Moorpark, Oxnard, | Revisit pamphlet to see if updates are needed |

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| | | | | Ventura, and Santa Barbara Community College). | |
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II. Achieving Educational Outcomes/Assessment

| Review recommendations | Program citation and rationale | Responsible parties | Resource implications | Two-year plan deliverable | Five-year plan deliverable |
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| Using course and assessment data, examine the areas where the new curriculum may have unnecessary bottlenecks | Students report the sequence of core courses is difficult to navigate with limited time and modalities of offerings | Chair, Program Advisor, and University Advisor | Faculty time for department service | A study of the bottlenecks will be completed, with adjustments to be made if possible | Execute plan to eliminate bottlenecks |
| Distill the research methods into two course, qualitative and quantitative | One lower division and three upper division methods courses are a heavy load for students | The program will give more time to teach in the new curriculum, then assess | | | |
| Assess the two-semester capstone and consider converting to one semester capstone and one internship course, with an option to choose one | Students want internships to have experiences for graduate school in social service fields and careers | Faculty AA Faculty Internship Coordinator | Faculty time for department service | Collaborate with new internship coordinator to generate a database of opportunities for students and a simple way for them to access it | |
| Make 450 first in a capstone sequence and the second the implementation of the content-driven project that 450 faculty develops | Another suggestion for moving away from two-semester capstone | The program does not want to adjust the new curriculum until it has been in place longer and has been assessed | | | |

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| Put an Assessment Committee in place that provides regular reports to the department through email or meeting reports | Contrasting statements and critiques about various courses from faculty; need a respectful discourse about various ways courses are taught, collective ways to address challenges in assessment data | Assessment Coordinator working with an Assessment Committee | | The Assessment Coordinator currently provides reports to instructors, but will start doing so to the entire department | The Assessment Committee will assess all courses that match up to PLOs and distribute results to the entire department |
| Distill PLOs further focusing on communication, Sociological content area, Sociological imagination, theory, and methods | Some learning outcomes may be difficult to operationalize; create 3-5 PLOs and create assessment activities that are meaningful to program's curricular goals and vision | Assessment Coordinator and Assessment Committee Work with Continuous Improvement office Faculty Dean's Office | Dean's Office or CI office to provide funding for this work | Completed holistic Assessment Plan that articulates when and how each PLO will be assessed | Completed report on the Assessment of PLOs |
| Additional support from University's assessment office to condense PLOs and create assessment plans | Need to map the curriculum to assessment | Assessment Coordinator and Assessment Committee Work with Continuous Improvement office Faculty Dean's Office | Support from Continuous Improvement for training | The Assessment Plan will be completed by the end of Spring 2023 and carried out over the next 5 years. By year 2, half of the PLOs will be assessed | By this point, all current PLOs will be assessed via corresponding course SLOs |
| Establish a Curriculum Committee with non-tenured and tenured faculty | Need more than 1 person, need to reflect continuity and new directions | | | | |
| Begin to use course and program data for program improvement | Need to assess impact and effectiveness of new curriculum | Chair, Assessment Committee, Institutional Research | | | |

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| Consider letting students take 201 at the same time as 202 or offer 201 during summer | Avoid bottleneck for students declaring major late | Students can take the two at the same time; courses are offered in summer when faculty are available to staff it | | | |
| Continue student opportunities—list on Soc website | Students appreciate the opportunities; website can spread the word and highlight them | See above about website and bulletin boards | | | |
| Dean's office work with campus entities to create more equitable practices of inclusion and compensation | SURF doesn't allow students to receive stipend and undocumented students not eligible for pay | This recommendation is not actionable by the Program; SURF now works with VCCF and UndocuFund to provide compensation for SURF students | | | |
| Faculty initiate discussions on incorporating internships into the curriculum | Students want these opportunities | Faculty and program Curriculum Committee | See above about internships | The program will make a decision about whether to create an internship course for Soc elective credit | If a course is created, revisit and assess |
| Program chair and associate chair arrange meeting with director of Academic Advising to discuss challenges with new curriculum | Students have some confusion | This has been an ongoing process (we are doing this) | Chair and Program Advisor service time | This has been accomplished | |
| Advisor meet with Advising regularly | Improve relations with Advising | This is being done and the relations are good | | | |
| Invite Advising to program meetings | Improve relations with Advising | Chair, Program Faculty Advising staff | Chair and Program program service time Advising staff time | Relations with Advising are not problematic but more contact with all faculty will improve knowledge and understanding of the | Ongoing from 2 year deliverable |

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| Dean's Office play role in connecting academic advisors and departments | Improve relations with Advising | This recommendation is not actionable by the Program | | | |
| Chair invite leads from student services offices to program meetings to share about their services and for faculty to share news and updates (also via email) | Cultivate more intentional relationship with student services and connect with more students. (This has been the practice in past years – inviting representatives from Academic Advising, CAPS, DASS, CARE, etc.) | | | | |
| List links on Sociology website to help students identify support services, Career Center, etc.; could ask the latter to report on number of Soc students using | Improve student engagement with needed services; give program baseline data with goal of increasing engagement | See above about website | | | |
| Units that work with transfer students lead a smooth integration of transfers | Provide transfers better ways of integrating into the program | This recommendation is not actionable by the Program | | | |
| Institutional Research provide program with data about student success and equity metrics about transfer student experiences | Assist the chair and other faculty plan programmatic goals | Chair IR | | | |
| With IR, identify factors contributing to drop in retention rate during 2 nd year | Address the challenge of drop in retention rate | | | | |

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III. Developing Resources to Ensure Sustainability

| Review recommendations | Program citation and rationale | Responsible parties | Resource implications | Two-year plan deliverable | Five-year plan deliverable |
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| Hire more TT faculty | Cannot support program objectives with 8.5 faculty | With the collapse in enrollment, this is no longer the case and getting a line is exceedingly unlikely | | | |
| Create equity in reassigned time policy for TT and NTTF | Inequitable distribution of reassigned time between TT/NTTF | See above; Faculty need to discuss what equity means Faculty Affairs | Faculty Affairs provides guidance and external (unbiased) suggestions | Completed discussion and agreed on what this means and plan to move forward | Assessment of the plan |
| Process for rotating leadership roles with adequate reassigned time | Share work while providing time to do the work | See above: Faculty need to create a plan Dean's Office | Reassigned time | Plan created, begin implementation | Plan evaluated and adjusted if needed |
| Distribute service work at program level equally among faculty | Current situation where it is possible to do no program service is not equitable or sustainable | Faculty Dean's Office Faculty Affairs if needed | Support for doing this from Dean Faculty Affairs time and expertise | Organized, transparent plan for service work across the faculty | Assessment of the plan |
| Reallocate space to have support coordinator in same building as program; Sociology needs a 100% support person dedicated to it | Insufficient staff to support the program | This recommendation is not actionable by the Program Provost's Office | Hiring process for additional staff, salary, and space | Sociology will have its own support coordinator with an office near the Sociology faculty | Sociology Program Support Coordinator assists the program in tasks that faculty currently do but shouldn't do |

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| Reassigned time should be consistently awarded to TTF and NTT; all TTF should do some program service without reassigned time; other rank-appropriate faculty can conduct lecturer evaluations so that does not all fall on the chair | Faculty workload is heavy and ill-distributed for service in the program | Provost's Office Dean's Office Program Chair and Faculty Note that the assignment of evaluations is mandated by policy | Reassigned time from Dean's Office | See above about NTTF and service | |
| Additional professional development to support research and teaching | Faculty report having "ample opportunities" for professional development but more resources would be beneficial | This recommendation is not actionable by the Program Provost Dean' Office | Increased opportunities for stipends for research and teaching development | | |
| Offer alternative course substitutions instead of trying to maintain two versions of the curriculum | Burden on chair for scheduling two versions of the curriculum | Chair, Program Advisor | May need WTU from Dean's Office | Students on the old curriculum will be graduating within the next year; going forward the program will offer substitutions and are offering some now as needed | N/A |
| Work with Advancement to showcase HIPs in capstone to share with potential donors | Faculty do not have time to fundraise | The Program recognizes this is a good idea but takes more service time when we already don't have enough | | | |
| Work with RSP to learn more about programs related to HSI status | Faculty do not have time to find grant opportunities | The Program recognizes this is a good idea but takes more service time when we already don't have enough | | | |

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| Work with alumni office to connect and communicate with alumni | Faculty do not have time to build alumni network | The Program recognizes this is a good idea but takes more service time when we already don't have enough | | | |
| Dean's Office can take lead in leveraging these support offices toward the social sciences | Need help in strengthening professional development and retention/promotion process | This recommendation is not actionable by the Program | | | |
| Work with IT to purchase institutional licenses for software | Not enough access to useful software | Program Faculty | Funds for software—generally have enough budget. Need faculty to make demand | All needed software will be owned by the University | |
| Campus should offer more loaner laptops for students in the classroom | Student space in lab is limited | This recommendation is not actionable by the Program | | | |
| Alumni Career Panel should receive funding | This was a successful practice but no longer funded | Alumni Office Dean's Office | Funding for the event | Sociology will receive funding for annual event and support from Alumni Office in reaching Sociology alumni | Alumni Career Panel will occur each year |

IV. Creating a Learning-Centered Organization

| Review recommendations | Program citation and rationale | Responsible parties | Resource implications | Two-year plan deliverable | Five-year plan deliverable |
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| Postpone strategic planning until workload issues are improved and interpersonal conflict is resolved | Program lacks strategic planning in relations to the college | N/A | | | |

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| Annually, engage in general planning with knowledge of previous year's budget | Difficult to plan without knowledge of budget until mid-year | Chair, program faculty | Better idea from Dean's Office what resources the program is likely to have | This will be discussed at an early fall meeting, annually | |
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