

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
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			

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 TT 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

				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
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			

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			

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

				processes, which is needed	
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
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

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's 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			

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
Postpone strategic planning until workload issues are improved and interpersonal conflict is resolved	Program lacks strategic planning in relations to the college	N/A			

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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