

Fall 2008

MAJOR FIELD ASSESSMENT BI-ANNUAL REPORT
B.A. SOCIOLOGY
FALL 2005 TO SPRING 2007

The mission of Southeastern Louisiana University is to meet the educational and cultural needs, primarily of Southeast Louisiana, to disseminate knowledge and to facilitate life-long learning through quality instruction, research and service in a safe, student-centered environment.

The purpose of the B.A. degree in Sociology is to prepare students for citizenship in the modern world by giving them a better knowledge and understanding of their social, cultural, economic, and physical environment.

Goal 1

The baccalaureate program in Sociology will provide students with the skills needed for work in areas such as public and private agencies and organizations and for graduate study.

A. Expected Outcome

Students completing the baccalaureate program in Sociology will be able to identify, analyze, and research various problems related to societies and organizations. They will also demonstrate competence in written and oral communications, analytical skills, and critical thinking skills.

Assessment

Sociology seniors will score a minimum of 50% on the Major Field Assessment test in Sociology.

Results Obtained

Very few students have completed this test during this assessment period and, of those, only around half of them scored above 50%. The faculty is currently designing a testing process that will be able to include more students and more accurately measure their knowledge of sociology in relation to the specific sociology curriculum at Southeastern Louisiana University.

Goal 2

Student will be satisfied with the skills, knowledge and support they received in the Sociology program.

A. Expected Outcome

Students completing the baccalaureate program in Sociology will feel their ability for critical thinking was broadened and their skills in working with individuals, groups, and organizations were enhanced.

Assessment

- a. On the SLU Exit Survey, majors will express satisfaction with the quality of instruction, the relevance of the learning content, and the willingness of faculty to work with students.

Results Obtained

The 2005-2006 Southeastern Exit Survey provides some insight into this expected outcome. Of the 25 SOC-BA students who provided information 72% indicated that they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the effectiveness of the faculty as teachers and 76% indicated that they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the quality of instruction in advanced courses. However, only 52% were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with opportunities for meaningful interaction with faculty in research or other scholarly activities, while 76% were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the interest shown by faculty in their academic development. This may indicate that sociology professors concentrate on classroom related activities more than research and other scholarly activities that involve undergraduate sociology majors and/or that funds and time are limited to pursue research activities with students. 80% were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the relevancy of courses, but only 52% were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the help they received from faculty in the department with regard to finding employment in their field.

The 2006-2007 Southeastern Exit Survey provides some insight into this expected outcome. Of the 14 SOC-BA students who provided information 100% indicated that they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the effectiveness of the faculty as teachers and 92.9% indicated that they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the quality of instruction in advanced courses. However, only 64.3% were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with opportunities for meaningful interaction with faculty in research or other scholarly activities, while 85.8% were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the interest shown by faculty in their academic development. This may indicate that sociology professors concentrate on classroom related activities more than research and other scholarly activities that involve undergraduate sociology majors and/or that funds and time are limited to pursue research activities with students. 85.8% were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the relevancy of courses, but only 42.9% were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the help they received from faculty in the department with regard to finding employment in their field.

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This seems to indicate that the department needs to assess career advising and how to more effectively link the educational environment with post-educational opportunities and student career-paths.

- b. On the Undergraduate Alumni Survey, majors will express satisfaction with the quality of instruction, the relevance of the learning content, and the willingness of faculty to work with students.

Results Obtained

The department is not able to determine if this expected outcome has been met from the above assessment strategy, as the department has not received the 2005-2006 Undergraduate Alumni Survey. Clearly, the department must try to ensure that this survey becomes a more useful assessment tool in the future or/and develop a more effective assessment strategy for this expected outcome in the future.

APPLICATION OF ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

In August 2008 the faculty of the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminal Justice held its second faculty retreat to discuss the current state of the department and develop a five year plan to address the Major Field Assessment Process, the recruiting and retention of majors and the development of departmental faculty. The outcome of this retreat will be reflected in the next MFA plan to be filed in the fall semester of 2008.

The department began the Social Justice Speaker Series in the fall of 2005 to address issues of importance to the citizens of Louisiana, develop community-department relationships, and to attract interested students to the Criminal Justice program.

The department began its Study Abroad program in 2002 and participating students have been exposed to cross-cultural immersion experiences that foster a greater understanding of global and cultural issues.