

**MAJOR FIELD ASSESSMENT  
M.S. APPLIED SOCIOLOGY  
February 2005**

The mission of Southeastern Louisiana University is to meet the education 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 purposes of the M.S. in Applied sociology is to prepare to research, analyze and develop strategies for the effective and efficient functioning of community institutions, organizations and groups of individuals.

**1. Goal 1**

To provide students with a strong knowledge of the field of applied sociology.

a. Assessment

- (1) Criterion: Students completing the masters program in Applied Sociology will be able to demonstrate a high level of understanding of applied sociological theory, methods, statistics and evaluation.

Procedure: An understanding of this criterion is established by examining formal coursework grades corresponding to these four areas. All students are required to take SOC 603 Applied Social Theory, SOC 604 Applied Research Design and Methodology, SOC 605 Advanced Statistics for Applied Sociology, and SOC 606 Evaluation and Assessment. Further, student skills are measured by faculty committee evaluations of student performance on Internship/ Thesis Defense-Oral Exams.

Results Obtained: The four students who successfully earned a M.S. degree in Applied Sociology during the assessment period were able to demonstrate a high level of understanding of applied sociological theory, methods, statistics and evaluation. An examination of their grades in these four core classes shows:

- 1) One student earned an 'A' and three earned a 'B' in SOC 603 Applied Social Theory;
- 2) Three earned an 'A' and one earned a 'B' in SOC 604 Applied Research Design and Methodology;
- 3) All earned an 'A' grade in SOC 605 Advanced Statistics for Applied Sociology;
- 4) Three earned an 'A' and one earned a 'B' in SOC 606 Evaluation and Assessment.

These students also earned a grade of 'A' in SOC 701 Field Internship and high faculty committee evaluations of their performance of their Internship Defense-Oral Exams.

- (2) Criterion: A student graduating with the M.S. in Applied Sociology will have a GPA no lower than 3.0.

Procedure: An understanding of this criterion is established by examining GPAs of students who have successfully completed the M.S. in Applied Sociology degree since the inception of the program in 2002.

Results Obtained: The four students who successfully earned a M.S. degree in Applied Sociology during the assessment period displayed a high level of academic performance as measured by their GPA. One student finished with a perfect 4.0 while another earned only one grade of 'B' and finished with a 3.92 GPA. Another students finished with a 3.81 GPA while the lowest GPA earned was a 3.5. All four earned GPAs well above the 2002 Plan target GPA of 3.0 and displayed an ability to process important sociological information and successfully apply it to their respective internship research projects.

## **2. Goal 2**

To provide students with the skills needed for work in middle to upper management of public agencies or similar organizations or for further graduate study.

- (1) Criterion: Students graduating with the M.S. in Applied Sociology will complete a field internship or applied research thesis project in which they will master applied sociological skills.

Procedure: An understanding of this criterion is established by examining successful completion of field internship or applied research thesis projects the M.S. in Applied Sociology program since the inception of the program in 2002.

Results Obtained: During the assessment period, four students have successfully completed field internship projects, defended their work and been awarded a M.S. degree in Applied Sociology. Field internships require 200 hours of practical work within public or private agencies and entail access to middle or upper management in order to facilitate a research / practical project to further the ability of the agency to provide its services to the public. All four students received the praise and thanks of the agency supervisors, two of whom attended students' Internship Defense-Oral Exams on campus to show support for the project.

### **3. Goal 3**

To provide students with a cultural or global perspective.

- (1) Criterion: Students completing the masters program in Applied Sociology will gain an awareness of an applied sociologist's role in a multicultural environment through an internship in an agency that serves the public or through a research project with a multicultural or global perspective and submit and successfully defend a written internship report or thesis to the graduate faculty.

Procedure: An understanding of this criterion is established by examining successful completion of field internship or applied research thesis projects the M.S. in Applied Sociology program since the inception of the program in 2002.

Results Obtained: During the assessment period, four students have successfully completed field internship projects, defended their work and been awarded a M.S. degree in Applied Sociology. Two of the students examined the provision of policing services to members of local communities, served by the police agency, as well as the public in general. The other two students conducted work dealing with the provision of services to the members of the homeless community. All four projects, therefore, examined the role of governmental agencies in providing needed services to members of ethnically diverse communities furthering a multicultural perspective.

### **Conclusion**

The Applied Sociology Graduate Faculty Committee will continue to monitor assessment data and other indicators of the program's development and make curriculum changes based on these results.