

# **Instructional Program Review American River College 2015 - 2016**

**Instructional Area: Instruction - C (Lawrenson)**

**Department: Behavioral and Social Sciences**

**Discipline: Sociology**

**Submitted: Friday, March 4, 2016**

## Mission Statement

Over the last six years, please describe how your program has supported the College's mission as shown above.

Sociology is the study of human society in all its manifestations. Its aim is to discover the process and structure of human interaction, to identify the main forces that sustain or weaken social groups, and to determine the conditions that transform social life. Sociology, like any science, is a disciplined, intellectual quest for knowledge about the fundamental nature of things.

Our Sociology Department challenges our students use their education and classroom skills to be active and thinking citizens of our college and society. We support the development of an appreciation of diversity and successful life skills. Our focus on connecting systems and structure to the individual supports job skills required to lead and navigate in the workplace.

We engage instructional support programs as part of our instruction to ensure successful course completion in flexible ways that meet the students needs as well as maintains academic rigor. Our instructors use WAC, RAD, Beacon, Tutoring Services, Librarian resources, and peer learning. We offer courses that meet the multi-cultural requirement at ARC. Our faculty are engaged in the International Studies Program, Diversity in the Classroom Professional Development facilitation, Equity Work, Advising the Sociology Club, and many other activities that enhance student learning and student life.

We offer the Sociology AAT. This degree provides a path to students who wish to transfer to a CSU campus in Sociology and serves the diverse needs of students who wish to obtain a broad and an in-depth understanding of the field. Additionally, this degree allows students to learn the fundamental principles and practices of Sociology in order to create a solid foundation for their future personal, academic, or vocational endeavors.

In addition to transfer, this foundation would be appropriate for entry into a variety of related fields and careers.

The Associate in Arts degree in Sociology for Transfer provides students with a major that fulfills the general requirements of the California State University for transfer. Students with this degree will receive priority admission with junior status to the California State University system.

The Sociology degree is designed to facilitate students' successful transfer to four-year colleges that prepare them for advanced study in a variety of graduate programs as well as a variety of career opportunities that include social work, law, criminology, law enforcement, teaching, health services, urban planning and development, and research.

## Stated Outcomes and Recommendations from Previous Program Reviews

### *Recommendation from Previous Program Review Report*

Were the previous program review outcomes, addressing **strengths**, achieved and how did these outcomes improve student learning?

No Significant recommendations to address in strengths

The Sociology Department has focused on developing and strengthening its Associate of Arts Transfer degree and continuing collaboration with other departments and programs. We were the second department mandated by legislature to offer the degree.

Since the development of the AAT degree, our department of three is regularly offering ten different courses. We have developed several new courses to expand the diversity of our offerings and to address

the diversity in our student population. We currently have several more courses in various stages of development, including Sociological Research Methods, Sociology of Aging, and Sociology of Marriage and Family. We are also exploring the options of creating a certificate program that focuses on diverse social issues. The projected completion dates of these depend on resources available to us.

We have expanded our offerings at Outreach Centers and are working of operating a full complement of courses at Natomas.

The Sociology Department also continues to collaborate with departments and programs. In collaboration with Political Science, one of our Sociology faculty is core in the International Studies Program. We all work with counseling, the library, RAD, WAC, and the Tutoring Center for Beacon and individual Tutors. Our faculty have worked with the CTL and regularly offer professional development activities.

We continue to do high school outreach to counselors and programs. We have developed a sociology information sheet that we distribute.

We are invested in the ongoing diversity and equity work on campus. From academic expertise on international issues to practical activities to create more inclusive classrooms, sociology faculty remain engaged and active in championing diverse perspectives. One of our faculty shadowed the New Faculty Academy and regularly introduced equity literacy skills. Our faculty also directed the Community and Diversity Center, offered a series of racial, gender, and socioeconomic class equity workshops for the college community, and created and facilitated the district wide Diversity in the Classroom: A Reaching and Learning Institute professional development teaching series.

The Sociology Department is positioning itself to grow and strengthen. Our goal is to become the premier sociology department in the region.

Were the previous program review outcomes, addressing **challenges**, achieved and how did these outcomes improve student learning?

We have been both successful and unsuccessful in reaching our outcomes to diversify our offerings to meet the needs of a diverse and increasingly non-traditional student population. We have added sociology curriculum, developed and offer our AAT degree, increased the offerings at outreach centers, and increased distance learning opportunities.

We continue to be challenged by the ongoing lack of resources for classroom space, fte, and new faculty in solidifying our AAT degree, increasing our productivity, and expanding our course offerings.

We requested a new faculty for our department in prior years and again in fall 2015. We have not received a position for a new faculty member. A new full-time faculty member in Sociology who is able to teach quantitative and qualitative sociology research methods is crucial for us to fulfill our agreement for the 2012 legislature mandated AAT degree. The psychology research methods course has been inserted into our AAT as a stopgap measure. Without a sociology research methods course, our students are at a marked disadvantage. Not only are sociological and psychological research methods markedly different, but our students are also lacking a core component to their sociological knowledge. It weakens our sociology department and our students as they transfer. The integrity of our program demands a full-time faculty member who is able to work with students in the Sociological Research Methods Course.

We are a three-person department. None of us has the expertise to teach a sociology research course that includes both qualitative and quantitative methods. Without a new faculty member who can teach this specialized research methods course, we have no choice but to keep Psych 335 as an AAT degree core course requirement. Psych 335 has Psych 300 and Psych 330 as prerequisites. This means any student who wishes to complete our Sociology AAT degree will be taking three Psychology courses rather than the one research methods course. This creates an additional time-to-degree commitment for Sociology AAT students.. This defeats the purpose and intent of the new AAT degree, which includes expanding the sociology program by offering diverse sociology courses, increasing enrollment in the sociology classes, increasing sociology productivity, and expediting the transfer process for students.

As other departments grow, the shared classroom space shrinks. Sociology has primary scheduling of one classroom. We are being frozen out of classroom space during prime time by other departments who are exercising their priority scheduling of classrooms. Sociology has historically been conservative in its growth. We are a small department and small changes have a large impact--both positively and negatively. We have been good citizens of the college. We have created new classes, developed the AAT degree without additional resources, co-created the International Studies Program, developed two honors courses, and

made conservative choices in times of conservation and cutback. Continuing to do what we do as classroom availability shrinks for us makes scheduling a daunting task. From the KEI data, the Sociology department has consistently held average enrollment numbers larger than the average enrollment numbers for our division every fall, spring and summer between 2011-2015. In comparison to every department in our division, Sociology's course averages are higher than every department but Political Sciences during this period each fall, and higher than all but History and Psychology in individual years (very close-a difference of 1 or 2 students) and Political Science. Our average numbers have declined over the past five years, but this decline is consistent with overall enrollment figures in the college, division, and in comparison to our other departments. Our unduplicated student counts have grown by 68.02% in distance education from 2010-11 to 2014-15. We are working on offering more online and hybrid classes with an eye toward the commitments and integrity of our discipline. Sociology studies social human behavior. The face-to-face interaction in classrooms offers a dimension of learning in our subject matter that cannot be lost.

Were the previous program review outcomes, addressing **SLOs**, achieved and how did these outcomes improve student learning?

Our department has worked with supplemental programs so that student learning can be enhanced. We utilize RAD, WAC, Beacon and tutoring services. We link students to the transfer center and career services. We offer and attend professional development activities that enhance our successes in the classroom in working with our diverse and increasingly nontraditional students. We offer them an opportunity to see how sociology is applicable academically and to our day to day lives. I think our conscious attention to the learning that goes on in our classrooms and departmental discussions on how effective we are remains the most effective way of ensuring learning and departmental outcomes are met. Our department is also very diverse in style and in content focus so we are able to meet a wide array of needs amongst our students.

## Analysis of Data: A 6 Year Reflection

### *Student Enrollments and Characteristics*

After each data set below, provide a narrative reflection about the significance of the data for the program for the past five years.

Includes the following sections:

- Using the course enrollment and demographic profile. Are there any data that are significantly different than the college? If yes, can you explain why there is a difference?

Sociology has consistently performed better in all data sets when compared to the "all disciplines" percentages. While all disciplines have lost -13.35% of duplicated and -16.81% of unduplicated counts in 2014-15 as compared to 2010-11, the numbers are -3.49% and -7.5% for sociology.

Our success rates for each year are roughly 10% lower than the rates for all of the disciplines.

Our numbers are very different when it comes to duplicated and unduplicated counts by ethnicity. Where in unduplicated counts, all disciplines in 2014-15 had a -4.89% loss of African American Students, Sociology gained 13.9%. All disciplines had -2.87 for Filipinos, and Sociology -24.07%. All disciplines had 2.14% for Latinos and Sociology gained 12.86%. All disciplines had 17.61% for Multi-Race and Sociology had 30.77%. All disciplines posted -20.38 for Native Americans and Sociology gained 26.32%

I'm uncertain what analysis to do about these numbers, what I do see is that more than 60% of Sociology's students are students of color as compared to 41% of all disciplines students. 40% of Sociology's students are African American and Latino as compared to 30% of all disciplines. This can be interpreted to mean that Sociology's resources and instructors can have a large impact on our traditionally underserved students. A possible interpretation can also be that these students are drawn to Sociology because the content either reflects them or their experiences or that they find the subject matter relevant to their lives. When compared to other departments in BSS,

Sociology's numbers for these populations tend to be higher as well.

- Does the difference affect the program, planning and/or student success?

I do think these numbers have implications for programming , planning, and student success. I believe sociology has made great efforts to consider underserved populations in the context of equity. What sociology does can have a huge impact. We will continue discussing how to implement student success strategies while maintaining rigor, particularly with underserved populations. We will also continue to develop curriculum that reflects our diverse student interests and needs.

- What, if anything, can you do to address these differences?

Sociology already invests a great deal in diversity, equity, basic skills, and student success efforts on our campus. We will continue to do so and continue to ask for additional fte and a new faculty member so we can offer more relevant courses as well as round out our AAT degree. A new full-time tenure track faculty member could also offer the time and mentoring to our students as part of their job description. Part-time faculty invest in our students as well, but they are not paid to do so and often do not have office space and similar resources. Our department will also continue to discuss ways to provide academic resources to underserved populations.

## Student Learning Reflection

### *Curriculum*

For all programs with degree and certificates: How well do your courses support the program student learning outcomes? How do you know?

Our course SLOs reflect the AAT SLOs in multiple ways. We map the individual course SLOs to the Program SLOs. In many of the courses, there are course section SLOs in the syllabus that correspond to the course SLOs. Our department regularly meets and discusses the success of our students. We have also given assessments to test for student understanding of our SLOs.

Are students able to complete the courses required for your degrees and/or program in a "normal" timeframe?

Yes, we offer all of the courses in our AAT degree at least once a year. We offer multiple sections of the Social Problems and the Race courses each semester and have increased the Gender and the Popular Culture elective offerings to once each semester. We are also increasing the kinds of courses offered at outreach centers. Our major stumbling block is that we still do not offer a Sociological Research Methods Course. The Psychological Research Methods course is temporarily in place for the AAT degree, but it does extend the time to complete the degree because it has two additional psychology courses as a prerequisite.

Explain major additions, changes, or deletions to the program's curriculum over the last six years.

We have created a Sociology AAT degree  
 We have updated all courses (or are in the process of updating)  
 Complete rewrite of Soc 325  
 New Courses include Soc 302--Research methods (in process);  
 Soc 309, Self and Society; Soc 480 Honors Introductory Sociology

Have all course and program outlines been updated within the last 6 years? Yes

## Information Literacy

Information literacy is a college-wide goal. Using the checklist below, how do your courses help students learn to recognize when information is needed and give students the ability to locate, evaluate, and effectively use the needed information? Choose all that apply.

- Lecture, in-class discussions, or activities

- Research-based assignments
- Research workshop(s), led by a librarian or other research specialist
- Online library research guide or instructional video tutorials
- Individual guidance from a librarian or the instructor
- Assigned readings or other course materials

Other

- Does not apply

List the courses in your discipline that include the components identified above.  
(example: ENGWR 300, STAT 300)

If the questions above do not pertain to your discipline, please explain why your discipline does not include components of information literacy in your program.

This question is for English, ESL, and Business only (i.e. departments fulfilling ARC General Education Requirement II-A, CSU GE Pattern A-2, and IGETC Pattern A-1). How are information literacy skills evaluated in your program?

## Student Success

After each data set provide a narrative reflection about the significance of the data for its programs for the past five years.

Provide a short, written reflection for the following sections:

- Course sequence and scheduling: How effective are course scheduling, offerings, and sequence in students completing their educational goal? How do you know?

We have worked to schedule our core classes at different times, in different lengths, and in different modalities. All of our courses are transferable, so many students who are not Sociology majors take our courses to fulfill their transfer requirements.

- How successful are students in your courses? How do you know?

Sociology's success rate is similar to the other academic departments in our Behavioral and Social Science division.

## SLO Assessment

Please provide a summary of your discipline's SLO Assessment results over the last 6 years.

Our department has made a strong effort to map our courses to program level SLOs so that we can ensure that our program SLOs are fully supported by course level SLOs. We have reviewed our SLO maps and find that they are current and that they do show broad and deep support for our program SLOs. Curriculum Tech Review shows that in general, our department writes SLOs that follow Bloom's taxonomy, and can be assessed by authentic assessment methods. Our faculty did participate strongly in the Broad Assessment Process and the Focused Assessment of Course level SLOs.

Across the six years at the different levels of assessment, our results show that the range of results shows our students are meeting the SLOs.

Based on your discipline's SLO assessment work, what improvements to student learning have occurred?

Students have reported in student survey self assessments that they are confident in their understanding in course SLOs. Faculty in the department, through formal and informal assessment means have indicated confidence that students are meeting SLOs. Given the SLOs, course content across sociology classes are more readily understood, connected, and used by students.

List, as a set of outcomes, the discipline's plans for continuous quality improvement for student learning outcomes.

**Grow and strengthen Sociology to lead in region** - We continue to look for opportunities to schedule courses that are appealing to students and community members, harness the strengths of our faculty, increase student enrollment and success, and grow our department to be the premier sociology department in this region.

**Develop AAT Degree** - Increase the number of students who will be able earn a AAT degree in sociology. Offer entire program at Natomas.

**Diverse curriculum development** - We have developed three new courses over the last three years and are currently developing Sociology of Aging, Sociology of Marriage and Family, and an equity and diversity based certificate program for the future. We are looking for ways to address the needs of a diverse student population and ways to reflect the diversity of course offerings that should be available in a premier sociology department. We are also looking for ways to address the needs of the Equity Initiative in our course development.

**Hire a new full-time sociologist in a tenure-track** - A new full-time faculty member in Sociology who is able to teach quantitative and qualitative sociology research methods is crucial for us to fulfill our agreement for the 2012 legislature mandated AAT degree. The psychology research methods course has been inserted into our AAT as a stopgap measure. Without a sociology research methods course, our students are at a clear disadvantage. Not only are sociological and psychological research methods markedly different, but our students are also lacking a core component to their sociological knowledge. This reflects on ARC, our sociology department, and our students as they transfer. The integrity of our program demands a full-time faculty member who is able to work with students in the Sociological Research Methods Course.

**Departmental support for Institutional Equity** - Faculty members will work with programs to expand the practices related to serving underserved students and achieving student equity.

**Diversity in the Classroom: A Reaching and Learning Institute** - A sociology faculty member has developed and lead for the past three years the district wide "Diversity in the Classroom: A Reaching and Learning Institute." It is currently being offered each spring semester.

**Collaboration in Programs** - Sociology faculty have collaborated with the CTL, Basic Skills, and other faculty members to shadow the New Faculty Academy and classified staff training, guest lecture in the annual fall teaching institute, offer college-wide equity workshops, and work with faculty across the college.

**Collaborative Workshops** - Creating opportunities for faculty to collaborate in order to shift the institutional culture from underachieving students to increasing institutional effectiveness and addressing the needs of underserved students. The current Spring 2016 Diversity in the Classroom Institute is one such example.

**Reduced AAT Sociology degree completion time** - A new full-time faculty member in Sociology who is able to teach quantitative and qualitative sociology research methods is crucial for us to fulfill our agreement for the 2012 legislature mandated AAT degree. The psychology research methods course has been inserted into our AAT as a stopgap measure. Without a sociology research methods course, our students are at a marked disadvantage. Not only are sociological and psychological research methods markedly different, but our students are also lacking a core component to their sociological knowledge. It weakens our sociology department and our students as they transfer. The integrity of our program demands a full-time faculty member who is able to work with students in the Sociological Research Methods Course.

## Distance Education

**For every course offered in both Distance Ed and face-to-face formats:**

For distance education courses: What percentages of your student population enroll in DE courses?

Approximately 10% of unduplicated student counts and 11% of duplicated student counts are distance ed students.

How successful are students who enroll in DE courses? How do you know?

Over the last two years, distance education success rates are close to face-to-face sociology course success rates. There are slightly more A's and B's.

Compare and contrast success rates for Distance Education sections of the same course offered in face-to-face sections. How does a distance education course differ from face-to-face? (e.g., offerings, scheduling, and success rates)

We have been very conservative in offering distance education courses. Those classes that are being taught are very similar in workload and content to those being taught face-to-face.

## Vocational Programs Only

**A. How well does your department prepare student for a job? What are the indicators?**

**B. Does your program provide any assistance with job placement? If so, describe the activities and include any data you have on results.**

**Optional: What evidence exists that program completers (or near completers) are successful on the job? What, if available, are their beginning salaries?**

## Findings

Based on the analyses and reflections conducted during the program review process, answer the following questions:

- **What other major developments and accomplishments occurred over the last six years?**

Over the last 6 years the Sociology Department has engaged in the following highlighted activities:

Curriculum and Program Development:

- Develop Sociology AAT Degree
- Develop Soc 302
- Develop Soc 309
- Develop Soc 480
- Rewrite Soc 325
- Co-developed and taught in the International Studies Major
- Established contact with several local high schools
- Created an information sheet on Sociology for prospective students
- Expanded the offerings of all courses to a minimum of once a year. Expand offerings at outreach centers with the goal of ultimately offering all AAT degrees at Natomas.

Departmental Support for Institutional Equity:

- Department member directed the Community and Diversity Center
- Created and Offered three rotating equity workshops
- Created and facilitated the Diversity in the Classroom: A Reaching and Learning Institute in Spring 2014, Spring 2015, and Spring 2016
- Shadowed in the New faculty Academy

Collaboration to support learning opportunities:

- WAC
- RAD
- Beacon
- Tutoring Services
- Community and Diversity Center
- Counseling
- Reference Librarians
- Career Center
- CTL



- Student Leadership
- Basic Skills
- DSPS
- EOP&S
- Hub/Student Leadership Center
- SALAM Center
- New faculty Academy
- Transfer Center

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Based on the analyses and reflections conducted during the program review process, answer the following questions:

### **1A. What are the strengths of the program?**

The collective diversity of the faculty members' content expertise, the commitment of the faculty members, the new AAT degree, the opportunity (given the demographics of ARC sociology students) to make a difference in the student equity benchmarks, and the potential for growth in the department are all strengths.

### **1B. List, as a set of recommendations, your plans for maintaining the quality of the instructional program.**

**Grow and strengthen Sociology to lead in region** - We continue to look for opportunities to schedule courses that are appealing to students and community members, harness the strengths of our faculty, increase student enrollment and success, and grow our department to be the premier sociology department in this region.

**Diverse curriculum development** - We have developed three new courses over the last three years and are currently developing Sociology of Aging, Sociology of Marriage and Family, and an equity and diversity based certificate program for the future. We are looking for ways to address the needs of a diverse student population and ways to reflect the diversity of course offerings that should be available in a premier sociology department. We are also looking for ways to address the needs of the Equity Initiative in our course development.

**Hire a new full-time sociologist in a tenure-track** - A new full-time faculty member in Sociology who is able to teach quantitative and qualitative sociology research methods is crucial for us to fulfill our agreement for the 2012 legislature mandated AAT degree. The psychology research methods course has been inserted into our AAT as a stopgap measure. Without a sociology research methods course, our students are at a clear disadvantage. Not only are sociological and psychological research methods markedly different, but our students are also lacking a core component to their sociological knowledge. This reflects on ARC, our sociology department, and our students as they transfer. The integrity of our program demands a full-time faculty member who is able to work with students in the Sociological Research Methods Course.

**Departmental support for Institutional Equity** - Faculty members will work with programs to expand the practices related to serving underserved students and achieving student equity.

**Diversity in the Classroom: A Reaching and Learning Institute** - A sociology faculty member has developed and lead for the past three years the district wide "Diversity in the Classroom: A Reaching and learning Institute." It is currently being offered each spring semester.

**Collaboration in Programs** - Sociology faculty have collaborated with the CTL, Basic Skills, and other faculty members to shadow the New Faculty Academy and classified staff training, guest lecture in the annual fall teaching institute, offer college-wide equity workshops, and work with faculty across the college.

### **2A. What are the challenges of the program?**

Our biggest challenge is lack of resources. We have already noted the importance of having a new faculty member who is able to teach quantitative and qualitative sociological research methods. We also require more fte to program the courses we have and plan on developing. We also lack classroom space. We have a difficult time scheduling prime time classes and if we had the opportunity, Sociology could fill a lecture size classroom.

We also face the challenges of student success and equity given the number of underserved students who are our students. We are committed to a rigorous program that will prepare all of our students for transfer and for jobs.

***2B. List, as a set of recommendations, your plans for addressing these challenges.***

**Diverse learning opportunities** - Increase the opportunities for students to supplement their sociological learning through exposure to guest speakers, films, and workshops on campus that relate to course material. Our department is looking for opportunities to collaborate with UNITE, CTL, and Student Leadership to co-sponsor sociological programming.

**Maintain contact with area high schools** - This is a work in progress, and we continue in our efforts to establish contact with counselors in high schools located in the area to inform them about the sociology program at ARC. We also have created a degree information sheet available to students to give them a clear idea of what is needed to major in sociology and transfer. Working with counselors and providing concrete information encourages students to take sociology courses at ARC.

**Develop AAT Degree** - Increase the number of students who will be able earn a AAT degree in sociology. Offer entire program at Natomas.

**Relevant Courses for local workplace needs** - Create courses and a certificate program to address workplace needs in the local region

**Collaborative Workshops** - Creating opportunities for faculty to collaborate in order to shift the institutional culture from underachieving students to increasing institutional effectiveness and addressing the needs of underserved students. The current Spring 2016 Diversity in the Classroom Institute is one such example.

**Reduced AAT Sociology degree completion time** - A new full-time faculty member in Sociology who is able to teach quantitative and qualitative sociology research methods is crucial for us to fulfill our agreement for the 2012 legislature mandated AAT degree. The psychology research methods course has been inserted into our AAT as a stopgap measure. Without a sociology research methods course, our students are at a marked disadvantage. Not only are sociological and psychological research methods markedly different, but our students are also lacking a core component to their sociological knowledge. It weakens our sociology department and our students as they transfer. The integrity of our program demands a full-time faculty member who is able to work with students in the Sociological Research Methods Course.