

Annual Assessment Report AY 23-24

Program: Sociology major and minor

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Sociology is to provide students with a high-quality educational experience where they learn to critically apply sociological theories, frameworks and concepts to the understanding of everyday lives, pressing social problems and structural inequalities at the local and global levels. Our overarching goal is for students to develop what C. Wright Mills called a “sociological imagination.” The program gives students the tools and skills to challenge interlocking systems of oppression and privilege and build just societies as scholars, advocates, policymakers, and activists. It is also part of the Department’s mission to provide a collegial and enriching working environment for the professional growth of its members and associates.

No changes since last report.

Program Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Analyze critically major social practices, structures, and inequalities
- Discuss and differentiate major sociological theories, frameworks and traditions
- Formulate, conduct, and communicate independent social research
- Connect sociological analysis to practical social action

No changes since last report.

Curricular Map

See Appendix A.

No changes since last report.

Assessment schedule between APRs:

18 - 19												x		
19 - 20	Reflections on adapting to a remote/distance learning environment.													
20 - 21	The department was granted permission to indirectly assess all PLOs through the creation/ administration of an exit survey of Dec 2021 graduating seniors													

2 1 - 2 2	Our department elected to administer a modified version of the American Sociological Association's Survey of Seniors Majoring in Sociology. We made some updates and revisions to the survey and put the survey into Qualtrics for administration (and for future use). Both the survey itself, and the report of findings, are attached (Appendices B and C). After the survey was administered, we created a shared Google document where we could record our responses to the results. We then held a sustained discussion of our experiences at a Department of Sociology meeting held in late January 2022.
2 2 - 2 3	Our department again elected to do an alternative assessment focused on career planning and graduate school advising for our students, based on feedback from the prior year's assessment. This included a focus group, meetings with Career Services, and planned events such as a graduate school speaker panel.
2 3 - 2 4	Our department again elected to do an alternative assessment focused on students' retention and academic support for our students, based on feedback from the administration about our retention data. This included a retention data analysis and focus group with two largest racial and ethnic groups (White identified and Latinx identified students) in our program.

Description of the assessment methodology

Given the many curricular changes afoot at USF (revision of Core Curriculum) and the College of Arts & Sciences (creation of Divisions), the Sociology Department's 2024-25 assessment is a "year of reflection" to consider "how to work towards bettering the program and/or assessment plan in the future." In particular, over the past two years we have been in ongoing conversations regarding the department's curriculum, as we consider significant changes. The possible changes include a reduction in required courses, and possibly a reframing of our foundational courses around thinking, studying, and acting as a sociologist (as opposed to the standard Intro, Theory, Methods, etc. framing); the replacement of our current "Emphases" with career-centered "Pathways"; the addition of an experiential learning requirement (internship, CEL, or research apprenticeship); and revision of our Honors criteria.

We aim to inform our reflections this year with data from student surveys and focus groups. We are currently designing these tools. They aim to assess student response to the range of possible changes we are considering, with a particular focus on the Pathways design (which could be thematic, methodological, or career-focused) and possible Pathways (e.g., Health and Medicine; Media, Culture & Technology; Crime, Law and Society; etc.). These measures assess students' perceptions of desired outcomes and learning structures. We would be happy to provide the data when we have finished collecting it, and to provide information about our proposed curricular changes.

On the basis of these data and our own reflection and deliberation, we then intend to submit a Program Change proposal in fall 2025, if not earlier.