Comprehensive Program Review Report

Program Review - Sociology

Program Summary

2022-2023

Prepared by: Catherine R Medrano

What are the strengths of your area?:

1. We hired a full-time tenure-track Sociology faculty member, Esther Sandoval, whose first year teaching with us was Fall 2021-Spring 2022. She has a split appointment between the Tulare and Visalia campuses. Although Fall 21 was fully online due to Covid, she was able to teach a Soc 1 (Intro to Soc) and Soc 2 (Social Problems) class designated for Tulare. For Spring 22, she taught two face-to-face sections - Soc 1 and Soc 26 (Marriage and Family Life)! Prior to hiring Professor Sandoval, we had not offered two Soc sections on the Tulare campus since Fall 2013!

2. The Soc Dept generated 188 Full-Time Equivalent Students (FTES) for 21-22. This makes us the 4th largest generator of FTES in the Social Sciences (behind History, Psychology, and Political Science).

3. Sociology continues to have the third highest number of majors in the Social Sciences Division, (behind Psychology and Administration of Justice), with 288 majors for the 21-22 academic year and a multi-year total of 629 (up from a multi-year total of 618 last year).

4. Sociology has a productivity ratio (Full-Time Equivalent Students/Full-Time Equivalent Faculty) of 20. This means the average class has 40 students. This rate is 14.29% above the target ratio of 17.5, or 35 students per class. This makes the Soc Dept the second most efficient department in the Social Sciences (behind Ethnic Studies).

5. Specifically for Soc 1, the productivity ratio stands at 21.87, which is 24.97% higher than the target of 17.5.

6. Sociology classes had a fill rate of 88% at Census for 21-22.

7. Three of our five Soc courses had success rates above 80% (Soc 2, 10, and 26).

8. For Soc 2, the success rate for in-person courses increased from 81% to 90.5%!

9. Outcomes and assessments are a part of ongoing department dialogue.

10. New forms to collect student learning outcomes have been created and distributed to all faculty.

12. "Giants in Recovery" was started in Spring 2018 and continues to meet.

12. Students' self-report positive experiences in our courses and with our faculty.

13. Students self-report that our Sociology courses teach useful and practical skills, which helps students to relate, recognize, differentiate and interpret their surroundings. These skills are valuable and translate directly to the job market as well as provide lifelong learning.

What improvements are needed?:

The Sociology department needs to hire a full-time faculty member so that we may offer more face-to-face classes and continue to meet student demand. Hiring a new faculty member will help the Soc department:

1. Address Cancelling Classes Due to Lack of Staff:
The Soc department has 3 full-timers and 3 adjunct faculty members. However, only two faculty (both full-timers) can teach face-to-face classes. For Fall 22, we had to CANCEL 6 face-to-face classes--not due to low enrollment--but because we could not staff the classes. The Soc department set up interviews with applicants in the adjunct pool and reached out to neighboring colleges and universities to recruit faculty, however, the department has not been successful in hiring any new adjuncts. In a normal year, the Soc department offers 51 Soc sections. For the 22-23 academic year, only 39 sections will be offered.

2. Address Offering Too Many Online Classes:
Since all adjunct Soc faculty can only teach online, we are offering a disproportionate amount of online classes. For Fall 22, 12/19 Soc classes are currently being offered online (63%). For Spring 23, 11/20 classes will be offered in an online modality (55%). Ideally, we would like to offer 75% of our classes as face-to-face, and only 25% online.

3. Address Exceedingly High Class Caps:

The Soc department is struggling to continue to meet student demand with fewer faculty. For Fall 21, the Soc department served 950 students across 24 sections. Currently for Fall 22, the Soc department is serving 949 students across 19 sections. As you can see, even though we are offering 5 less sections, we are still serving almost the exact same number of students. How are we doing this? Soc faculty are increasing their class sizes to accommodate student demand. Out of 19 total Soc classes, 18 have class caps of 40 or above. Of those 18, 5 classes have caps of 50, 1 has a cap of 65, 1 has a cap of 90, 1 has a cap of 110, and one has a cap of 150! These large class sections are not sustainable in the long run and faculty are exposing themselves to burn-out.

4. Address Lower Success Rates:

The Soc department aims to attain an overall student success of at least 80%, including for disproportionately impacted groups like African Americans and Hispanics. From 19-20 to 21-22, we saw Hispanic success rates (including EWs) drop by 9% (80.6% to 71.6%), and for African Americans we saw a drop of 13.4% (69.8% to 56.4%). Prior to the pandemic, the Soc department had higher success rates. During the pandemic, classes were shifted to online. Not only did students have to deal with the pandemic, but they also had to learn through a new modality. We are hoping that our success rates will improve now that we are exiting the pandemic and shifting more classes back to campus. However, without an additional full-time faculty member, we will not be able to offer more face-to-face classes that typically have higher success rates. If we want to have more personable connections with our students, particularly disproportionately impacted groups, we need to offer more face-to-face classes.

Describe any external opportunities or challenges.:

It is very hard to recruit, hire, and retain Soc adjuncts and there is a very limited pool from which to draw qualified instructors. After reviewing over 50 applications in the adjunct pool over the past few years, the Soc department has not been successful in hiring ANY new adjuncts. In fact, since Spring 19, we have lost three adjuncts.

Overall SLO Achievement:

The Soc department aims for at least 80% of its students to attain a 75% or better on assessments. Sociology faculty assessed all 3 Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for Soc 1 using data from Spring 22 and found that we exceeded our target goal!

Changes Based on SLO Achievement:

The Soc department is exploring using common assessments for all instructors. Additionally, we are currently working on re-wording some of our Soc 1 SLOs for clarity. These updates will be implemented Spring 23.

Overall PLO Achievement:

SLO data from Soc 1 indicated that a majority (over 80%) of students are satisfying both Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) in Sociology.

Changes Based on PLO Achievement:

No changes are necessary at this time.

Outcome cycle evaluation:

Fall 2022 - Assess Soc 1 SLOs (using data from Spring 2022)
Fall 2023 - Assess Soc 10 and Soc 43 SLOs (using data from Spring 2023)
Fall 2024 - Assess Soc 2 and Soc 26 SLOs (using data from Spring 2024)

The Sociology department recently created a form to help us collect data from full-time and adjunct faculty. All Sociology faculty participate in the assessment of SLO and PLO data.

Action: Increase Student Access & Success

We would like to hire a full-time tenure-track Sociology professor in order to offer additional face-to-face classes.

Leave Blank:
Implementation Timeline: 2022 - 2023
Leave Blank:
Leave Blank:
Identify related course/program outcomes: Soc Program Learning Outcome #1 - Students will be able to describe the major sociological theories and apply them to a variety of social phenomena.

Soc Program Learning Outcome #2 - Students will be able to demonstrate how social structures, institutions, cultural practices, and social inequality have influenced their personal lives.
Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Sociology Professors: Catherine R Medrano and Esther Sandoval
Rationale (With supporting data):

The Sociology department needs to hire a full-time faculty member so that we may offer more face-to-face classes and continue to meet student demand. Hiring a new faculty member will help the Soc department:

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1. Address Cancelling Classes Due to Lack of Staff:
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4. Address Lower Success Rates:
The Soc department aims to attain an overall student success of at least 80%, including for disproportionately impacted groups like African Americans and Hispanics. From 19-20 to 21-22, we saw Hispanic success rates (including EWs) drop by 9% (80.6% to 71.6%), and for African Americans we saw a drop of 13.4% (69.8% to 56.4%). Prior to the pandemic, the Soc department had higher success rates. During the pandemic, classes were shifted to online. Not only did students have to deal with the pandemic, but they also had to learn through a new modality. We are hoping that our success rates will improve now that we are exiting the pandemic and shifting more classes back to campus. However, without an additional full-time faculty member, we will not be able to offer more face-to-face classes that typically have higher success rates. If we want to have more personable connections with our students, particularly disproportionately impacted groups, we need to offer more face-to-face classes.
Priority: High
Safety Issue: No
External Mandate: No
Safety/Mandate Explanation:

Resources Description

Personnel - Faculty - Hiring a full-time tenure track Sociology professor. (Active)
Why is this resource required for this action?:
The Sociology department needs to hire a full-time faculty member so that we may offer more face-to-face classes and continue to meet student demand. Hiring a new faculty member will help the Soc department:

1. Avoid Cancelling Classes Due to Lack of Staff:
The Soc department has 3 full-timers and 3 adjunct faculty members. However, only two faculty (both full-timers) can teach face-to-face classes. For Fall 22, we had to CANCEL 6 face-to-face classes--not due to low enrollment--but because we could not staff the classes. The Soc department set up interviews with applicants in the adjunct pool and reached out to neighboring colleges and universities to recruit faculty, however, the department has not been successful in hiring any new adjuncts. In a normal year, the Soc department offers 51 Soc sections. For the 22-23 academic year, only 39 sections will be offered.

2. Avoid Offering Too Many Online Classes:
Since all adjunct Soc faculty can only teach online, we are offering a disproportionate amount of online classes. For Fall 22, 12/19 Soc classes are currently being offered online (63%). For Spring 23, 11/20 classes will be offered in an online modality (55%). Ideally, we would like to offer 75% of our classes as face-to-face.

3. Avoid Exceedingly High Class Caps:
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4. Increase Student Success Rates:
The Soc department aims to attain an overall student success of at least 80%, including for disproportionately impacted groups like African Americans and Hispanics. From 19-20 to 21-22, we saw Hispanic success rates (including EWs) drop by 9% (80.6% to 71.6%), and for African Americans we saw a drop of 13.4% (69.8% to 56.4%). Prior to the pandemic, the Soc department had higher success rates. During the pandemic, classes were shifted to online. Not only did students have to deal with the pandemic, but they also had to learn through a new modality. We are hoping that our success rates will improve now that we are exiting the pandemic and shifting more classes back to campus. However, without an additional full-time faculty member, we will not be able to offer more face-to-face classes that typically have higher success rates. If we want to have more personable connections with our students, particularly disproportionately impacted groups, we need to offer more face-to-face classes.
Notes (optional):
Cost of Request (Nothing will be funded over the amount listed.): 100000

Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2021-2025
District Objective 1.1 - The District will increase FTES 2% from 2021 to 2025.
District Objective 2.1 - Increase the number of students who earn an associate degree or certificate (CTE and non-CTE) by 5% from 2021-2025.
District Objective 2.2 - Increase the number of students who are transfer-ready by 15% and students who transfer to four-year institutions by 10% from 2021-2025.
District Objective 3.1 - Reduce equity gaps in course success rates across all departments by 40% from 2021-2025.

Action: 2021-2022 Increase Student Access and Success in all Sociology Courses

Purchase two laptop carts to be shared by all departments in the Social Sciences.

Leave Blank:
Implementation Timeline: 2021 - 2022
Leave Blank:
Leave Blank:
Identify related course/program outcomes:
PLO #1 - "Sociological Theory" - Students will be able to describe the major sociological theories and apply them to a variety of social phenomena.
PLO #2 - "Sociological Understanding" - Students will be able to demonstrate how social structures, institutions, cultural practices, and social inequality have influenced their personal lives.
Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Catherine R Medrano, Sociology Full-Time Faculty
Rationale (With supporting data):
Several sociology courses feature group presentations, research papers, literature reviews, and essays. For group projects, it is beneficial to have students work in the classroom rather than have students try to meet on their own time. It may be hard to schedule time outside of the class period to work together when students have work, other classes, and other commitments. For research papers, literature reviews, and essays, it can be hard to reserve a computer room in the LRC for librarian presentations and for students to search academic databases. Right now, unless students bring their own laptops, working in class is not very

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feasible. This is also not equitable given many students may not have access to a laptop. Therefore, having laptops that we can utilize in the classroom is advantageous to facilitating equity and success for disproportionately impacted student groups.
Priority: High
Safety Issue: No
External Mandate: No
Safety/Mandate Explanation:

Update on Action

Updates

Update Year: 2022 - 2023   09/28/2022
Status: Continue Action Next Year
Although we were approved to purchase 2 laptop carts, the Social Sciences Division did not receive the items. We're hoping to acquire them this year.
Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes (Not Required):

Resources Description

Equipment - Instructional - Two laptop carts with 20 laptops. (Active)

Why is this resource required for this action?: Several sociology courses feature group presentations, research papers, literature reviews, and essays. For these projects, it is beneficial to have students work in the classroom rather than have students try to meet on their own time. It may be hard to schedule time outside of the class period to work together when students have work, other classes, and other commitments. Right now, unless students bring their own laptops, working in class is not very feasible. This is also not an equitable method of instruction given many students may not have access to a laptop. Therefore, having laptops that we can utilize in the classroom is advantageous to facilitating equity and success for disproportionately impacted student groups.

Other departments in the Social Sciences such as Psychology, Econ, and History have all expressed interest in having access to a laptop cart. In particular, these carts will be exceptionally valuable to Social Science Stats classes (SSCI 25, SSCI 325). These classes require computer access and every semester I have to ask permission to use a computer lab in Kern. If the Social Sciences had their own laptop carts we could schedule the classes in any available room that the Social Sciences "owns." Given such division-wide support, we'd like to request two carts--one to be housed in Kern and one to be housed in Sycamore--that can be shared by ALL departments in the Social Sciences.
Notes (optional):
Cost of Request (Nothing will be funded over the amount listed.): 12200
Related Documents:
Laptop Quote.pdf

Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2021-2025

District Objective 2.1 - Increase the number of students who earn an associate degree or certificate (CTE and non-CTE) by 5% from 2021-2025.

District Objective 2.2 - Increase the number of students who are transfer-ready by 15% and students who transfer to four-year institutions by 10% from 2021-2025.

District Objective 3.1 - Reduce equity gaps in course success rates across all departments by 40% from 2021-2025.

Action: 2021-2022 Increase Student Success Rate in Soc 1 to at least 80%

Hire a Supplemental Instructor (SI) for all Soc 1 classes with 50+ students enrolled.

Leave Blank:

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Implementation Timeline: 2021 - 2022
Leave Blank:
Leave Blank:
Identify related course/program outcomes:
SOC 1 - SLO #1 Understand and apply the sociological imagination to everyday life.
SOC 1 - SLO #2 Apply, analyze, and evaluate the primary sociological perspectives.
SOC 1 - SLO #3 Identify and define contemporary issues of social inequality and provide solutions for social change based on sociological concepts.
Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Catherine R Medrano, Sociology Full-Time Faculty
Rationale (With supporting data):
The success rate for Soc 1 decreased from 83% to 77% in 20-21. This is actually the same as it was in 2018-19. We are disheartened that we lost the gains we made just a year ago! Soc 1 for the 20-21 academic year featured very large online enrollments. While it's great that we can serve more students, we have to make sure that large class sizes don't impact course success rates. Historically, many Soc 1 sections used a Supplemental Instructor (SI) to help students study for Soc 1. For 20-21, however, due to the strain of moving to distance education, no SIs were used at all! This 21-22 academic year, a total of seven Soc 1 sections will once again have an SI. This includes ALL sections with student enrollments above 50. We are hoping this will help increase student success in Soc 1.
Priority: High
Safety Issue: No
External Mandate: No
Safety/Mandate Explanation:

Update on Action
Updates

Update Year: 2022 - 2023   09/28/2022
Status: Continue Action Next Year
A Supplemental Instructor (SI) was used for 3 Soc 1 classes during Fall 21; however, no SI was available the following semester. The Soc department is working hard to recruit and retain Supplemental Instructors. They are very valuable to student success rates.
Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes (Not Required):

Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2021-2025
District Objective 2.1 - Increase the number of students who earn an associate degree or certificate (CTE and non-CTE) by 5% from 2021-2025.
District Objective 2.2 - Increase the number of students who are transfer-ready by 15% and students who transfer to four-year institutions by 10% from 2021-2025.
District Objective 3.1 - Reduce equity gaps in course success rates across all departments by 40% from 2021-2025.
District Objective 4.1 - Increase the effective use of data and transparency in decision making at all institutional levels from 2021-2025.
District Objective 4.2 - Improve communication practices needed to support organizational effectiveness and continuous improvement across all District units and constituents from 2021-2025.

Action: 2021-2022 Increase African-American Students' Success Rate in Soc 1 by at least 10%

In addition to utilizing a Supplemental Instructor (SI) in Soc 1, these steps will also be implemented for our African-American students:
1) Increase sending out both encouraging and warning early alerts (even if they are not in EOPS)
2) Reach out to struggling students more often, and

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3) Be more flexible with accepting late assignments for all students (policy to be included in syllabi)

Leave Blank:
Implementation Timeline: 2021 - 2022
Leave Blank:
Leave Blank:
Identify related course/program outcomes: SOC 1 - SLO #1 Understand and apply the sociological imagination to everyday life.
SOC 1 - SLO #2 Apply, analyze, and evaluate the primary sociological perspectives.
SOC 1 - SLO #3 Identify and define contemporary issues of social inequality and provide solutions for social change based on sociological concepts.
Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Catherine R Medrano, Sociology Full-Time Faculty
Rationale (With supporting data): The success rate for African-American students in Soc 1 dropped from 72% to 56.3% in 20-21. Even in a pandemic, this is unacceptable! We need to be sensitive to the fact that while this pandemic is hard on us all, it may be disproportionately impacting some student populations more than others. We hope that by closely monitoring and reaching out to struggling students, we may be able to increase their success rates.
Priority: High
Safety Issue: No
External Mandate: No
Safety/Mandate Explanation:

Update on Action

Updates

Update Year: 2022 - 2023   09/28/2022
Status: Continue Action Next Year
We have not yet met our target of increasing African American success rates. Including "Excused Withdrawals" (EW), the success rate for African Americans in Soc 1 dropped from 50% to 48.3%. Therefore, we will be continuing to implement these practices. Now that we are exiting the pandemic and offering more face-to-face Soc 1 sections, it is our hope that the success rates for Black students will increase.
Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes (Not Required):

Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2021-2025
District Objective 2.1 - Increase the number of students who earn an associate degree or certificate (CTE and non-CTE) by 5% from 2021-2025.
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District Objective 4.1 - Increase the effective use of data and transparency in decision making at all institutional levels from 2021-2025.
District Objective 4.2 - Improve communication practices needed to support organizational effectiveness and continuous improvement across all District units and constituents from 2021-2025.

Action: 2021-2022 Meet Student Demand for Face-to-Face Soc Classes

Hire at least 2 adjunct Soc faculty who can teach face-to-face classes starting Fall 2022. To facilitate this, we will outreach and recruit from local colleges and universities as well as network with social work organizations.

Leave Blank:
Implementation Timeline: 2021 - 2022
Leave Blank:

Leave Blank:
Identify related course/program outcomes:
PLO #1 - "Sociological Theory" - Students will be able to describe the major sociological theories and apply them to a variety of social phenomena.
PLO #2 - "Sociological Understanding" - Students will be able to demonstrate how social structures, institutions, cultural practices, and social inequality have influenced their personal lives.
Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Catherine R Medrano, Esther Sandoval, and Annie Silva, Sociology Full-Time Faculty Members
Rationale (With supporting data):
Since Spring 19, we have lost three adjunct instructors who traditionally taught face-to-face classes for us. As of this moment, the Soc department only has two instructors who can teach face-to-face classes. If we do not hire anyone, we will have at least FIVE unstaffed face-to-face Soc classes for Fall 22! In an attempt to address this issue, the Soc department interviewed adjunct applicants during the summer, but unfortunately found no qualified instructors. We will now actively try to network with local colleges/universities, and social work organizations to to recruit new adjuncts.
Priority: High
Safety Issue: No
External Mandate: No
Safety/Mandate Explanation:

Update on Action

Updates

Update Year: 2022 - 2023   09/28/2022
Status: Continue Action Next Year
We were unsuccessful in hiring any adjunct faculty. We will continue the process of recruitment in hopes of increasing our faculty ranks.
Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes (Not Required):

Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2021-2025
District Objective 1.1 - The District will increase FTES 2% from 2021 to 2025.
District Objective 2.1 - Increase the number of students who earn an associate degree or certificate (CTE and non-CTE) by 5% from 2021-2025.
District Objective 2.2 - Increase the number of students who are transfer-ready by 15% and students who transfer to four-year institutions by 10% from 2021-2025.

Action: 2021-2022 Increase Consistency in SLO Reporting

Create a common form that can be distributed to all SOC instructors to collect SLO data (continued from 20-21).

Leave Blank:
Implementation Timeline: 2020 - 2021, 2021 - 2022
Leave Blank:
Leave Blank:
Identify related course/program outcomes:
PLO #1 - "Sociological Theory" - Students will be able to describe the major sociological theories and apply them to a variety of social phenomena.
PLO #2 - "Sociological Understanding" - Students will be able to demonstrate how social structures, institutions, cultural practices, and social inequality have influenced their personal lives.
Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Catherine Medrano, Sociology Professor
Rationale (With supporting data):
Creating a common form will help us collect consistent and comparable SLO data regardless of the type of assessment used.

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Priority: High
Safety Issue: No
External Mandate: No
Safety/Mandate Explanation:

Update on Action

Updates

Update Year: 2022 - 2023   09/28/2022
Status: Action Completed
We created a form and distributed it to all faculty this year! It made collecting and comparing data more efficient!
Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes (Not Required):

Update Year: 2021-2022   09/20/2021
Status: Continue Action Next Year
We were not able to complete this task last year. However, now that we have a new full-time faculty member to help assist us in the process, we are planning to have this common form developed by Spring 22!
Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes (Not Required):

Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2018-2021
District Objective 4.1 - Increase the use of data for decision-making at the District and department/unit level
District Objective 4.2 - Improve organizational effectiveness by strengthening operations of and communication between District departments, divisions, and constituents
District Objective 4.3 - College of the Sequoias Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, and staff will engage in best practices and staff development to sustain effective operational systems for institutional assessment and continuous improvement.

District Objectives: 2021-2025
District Objective 3.1 - Reduce equity gaps in course success rates across all departments by 40% from 2021-2025.
District Objective 4.1 - Increase the effective use of data and transparency in decision making at all institutional levels from 2021-2025.
District Objective 4.2 - Improve communication practices needed to support organizational effectiveness and continuous improvement across all District units and constituents from 2021-2025.
District Objective 4.3 - Improve professional development practices District-wide for all District employees to support equity and operational effectiveness from 2021-2025.