

Academic Program Review  
Sociology  
Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts & Letters  
CIP 450010  
2013

## **1. Mission and purpose of the program**

The Department of Sociology's mission is to (a) provide high-quality education and co-curricular opportunities in sociology to students in the university's Intellectual Foundations Program, the BA in Sociology, the upper-division courses that invite the enrollment of students from outside the major and across the university, and the MA in Sociology; (b) contribute to the university's QEP ("quality improvement plan," pursuant to SACS reaccreditation) initiative on "Undergraduate Research and Inquiry"; (c) provide access to the BA in Sociology on two campuses; (d) contribute to the development of research and scholarship in the discipline; (e) contribute to the institutional development and effective functioning of Florida Atlantic University.

The Department of Sociology contributes to Goal One of FAU's 2006-2013 Strategic Plan:

Florida Atlantic University will continue to provide access to higher education for residents of the region, the state and the nation and will respond to the competitive economic environment by increasing the number of degrees granted to students at all levels.

The Department of Sociology contributes to Goal Three of FAU's 2006-2013 Strategic Plan:

Florida Atlantic University will develop academic and research programs of the highest caliber to support Florida's strategic engagement in building an economy based on high technology and to foster a culture enriched by scholarly inquiry.

## **2. The last review: recommendations, consequent changes**

This program's last review was seven years ago, when it was reviewed along with the other social sciences. The following recommendations were made for all of the social science programs, and the following responses to them have occurred:

- More tenure-track lines.
  - Since the last review, the department has seen little growth in tenure-track faculty: one tenure-track position was added, three instructional positions were added. The growth in enrollment (discussed below) outstripped these modest increases in staff; the department still has the highest FTE per instructional year in the College of Arts & Letters and considerably outstrips the university average.

- More reliable and better funding of infrastructure, operating expenses, and graduate assistantships.
  - The most positive development since the last review has been in physical infrastructure: both the Boca and Davie Sociology faculty are now in well-designed and recently constructed buildings. In the Boca building, the department has much better space for its GTA's.
  - Operating expenses and the amount and terms of graduate assistantships, though, have not improved. The operating budget has been reduced to deal with university-wide cutbacks. Assistantships are still at a non-competitive \$4000 per term, and tuition/fee waivers are only at 80%.
- Professionalization of undergraduate advisement on the Boca campus and professionalization of career planning as well as publicizing the major.
  - This year, undergraduate advisement on the Boca Raton campus was moved to the Office of Student Academic Services. The College does not offer career planning services, but it does assist in some efforts to publicize the major.
- Additional support for new instructional technologies and pedagogies, especially those relevant to large classes.
  - Classrooms now have adequate equipment, although staffing for its maintenance lags behind what is needed. There are still few resources to assist faculty in learning about pedagogies useful in classes of any size. The university has one resident Blackboard consultant, for example, and no instructional design staff except for those available to faculty doing on-line teaching. Since the last review, the university has developed a modest Center for Teaching and Learning: it has no staff resources, although it does offer the opportunity for mutual aid through a variety of thematic faculty learning communities.

### 3. Instruction

**3A - Faculty:** There are sixteen full-time sociology faculty. They are divided between two campuses. The Boca Raton campus has four instructional (non tenure-track) and seven tenure-track faculty members (including the chair); the Davie campus has four tenure-track and one instructional (non tenure-track) faculty members. Both campuses have some adjunct instruction, with more on the Boca Raton than the Davie campus, but 75% of classes were taught by full-time faculty in 2011-12. (See DDI's – Faculty, Table B3)<sup>1</sup>. As we have been through a budget reduction that required a decrease in

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<sup>1</sup> The basic data for this program review are the “Departmental Dashboard Indicators,” a set of very basic indicators of departmental functioning. They are available on-line at <http://www.fau.edu/iea/deptreview.php>. They are also appended to this report.

adjunct instruction, the proportion of classes taught by full-time faculty has increased. Needless to say, we would rather have had this happen through an increase in full-time faculty lines.

**Assignment:** The standard instructional assignment for tenure-track faculty is 3/2, with research and service assignment taking up the remainder of available time and effort; the standard assignment for instructional faculty is 4/4. Instructional assignments are decreased only in unusual cases, like a reassignment to some administrative task (e.g., directing a program) or some large responsibility to institutional service (e.g., chairing the University promotion and tenure committee).

**Research areas:** The faculty have a broad range of research interests within a broad framework of critical sociology (also, see Section 4, Research). Several focus on the analysis of various global trends in social and political change and conflict; their research sites tend to be in the nations of “the global South.” Several focus on a range of questions related to race and ethnicity, ranging from issues of inequality and conflict to the structure of leisure activities. Several have ongoing research interests in questions of gender inequality. Most have an interest in the development and consequences of neo-liberalism and, therefore, an interest in questions of social class. Methodologically, the Sociology faculty tend to be qualitative or historical researchers; only a single member of the faculty consistently does quantitative work.

The research interests of the Boca Raton faculty (8 faculty) are more diverse than those of the Davie faculty (4 faculty). Understanding the structure of the faculty’s scholarly interests requires understanding that the current department is the outgrowth of a merger of two colleges that took place just over a decade ago. Each campus originally belonged to a different college although, even when the campuses were in two different colleges, they had a common curriculum. The two colleges had different hiring strategies. The Davie campus consistently hired faculty with a strong emphasis on global issues, and the scholarly focus of the current Davie faculty continues to reflect that emphasis. The Boca Raton campus consistently hired faculty in order to ensure coverage of the major areas of the discipline, and that campus faculty’s research interests continue to be relatively diverse.

**Diversity:** The full-time Sociology faculty is diverse in its sex ratio (about equally male and female); it currently has its first female chair. It is also ethnically diverse; in 2011-12, there were six white faculty and four who were Black, Hispanic or Asian. (See DDI’s – Faculty, Table B-2-1.)

**3B - Lower division program:** Sociology has four courses that are part of FAU’s core curriculum: Sociological Perspectives (i.e., introductory sociology); Social Problems; Race, Class, Gender & Sexuality; Global Society. Multiple sections of these are offered every term on the Boca Raton campus. Articulation agreements with the state colleges forbid us to offer lower-division courses on the Davie campus.

These four lower-division courses currently are part of two different categories in the university’s core curriculum (called the “intellectual foundations program”). (See Appendix A.) The core curriculum is relatively new but is already going through changes due to legislative mandates. The legislature has reduced the number of credits in the core curriculum from 36 to 30, effective Fall of 2015. It also mandated that 15 of those credits will consist of five courses in each of five categories. Introductory Sociology is one of the five courses in the social and behavioral sciences category, but none of the other courses is part of this state-mandated and statewide common core curriculum. At this point, we do not

know how the rest of the core curriculum will develop. There is some chance that the other three courses (Social Problems; Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality; Global Society) will remain in a revised core curriculum, but they likely will have much more competition for enrollment than they current have.

Responding to assessment of the lower-division courses in the core curriculum, we are currently working on strategies to (a) more directly align course content with the objectives of the core curriculum (see Appendix B); (b) improve our documentation of critical thinking skills as developed in these courses; (c) increase the amount of active learning done in these courses through the strategic use of i-clickers. Faculty are also transitioning to more extensive use of on-line strategies like requiring the completion of mastery quizzes prior to class, discussion board posts, etc. We have had some discussions about the logistical challenges of requiring zero-credit discussion sections to accompany the lower-division courses, and we do have some interest in that strategy. We are constrained by the necessity of maintaining enrollments, though, and are analyzing whether we would need to have our course(s) approved as “Gordon rule” (i.e., writing) courses in order to make this work for at least one or two of them.

**3C - Upper division program (BA):** Sociology’s BA program requires that students take 30 credits of sociology. The number of credits required by and the structure of the major are quite typical for the discipline (see Appendix C). Students must take a theory course (out of a set) and a methods course (also out of a set). They must also take one course from each of four categories: global sociology; social inequality and social change; gender, family and sexuality; culture, identity and sociology of everyday life. This curriculum has been in place for about a decade. It was designed to ensure that students acquired substantive breadth in the discipline. Now that we have had substantial experience with it and assessed its effectiveness, we are working on its revision.

Currently, we are considering the following changes:

- Developing two or three 3000-level courses that would be required of all majors but would also be designed to appeal to non-majors. These would provide students with the fundamental content knowledge and the beginning of appropriate basic skills for the sociology major. For those who had taken one or more of our lower-division classes, this would reinforce what they had learned. For the significant proportion of our majors who are transfers from the state colleges, these courses would ensure adequate orientation to the core disciplinary knowledge and basic skills. These courses would be designed to be large-enrollment courses with substantial GTA support and on-line active learning components.
- In addition to developing new 3000-level course, designating some of our current 4000 level courses to be taught as 3000-level courses, anticipating large enrollments from both majors and non-majors and with substantial GTA support and on-line active learning components.
- Decreasing the number of categories within which majors must take courses, to make it easier to complete the degree without having to seek permission to waive a requirement.

We are actively working on these projects:

- Developing a strong curriculum map that connects the degree program’s learning objectives to our classes, with the goal of increasing our majors’ skill and knowledge levels beyond what we have been able to accomplish with our current structure.

- Developing an enrollment plan that will permit us to decrease the size of the 4000-level courses. We believe that larger 3000-level classes will let us shrink the size of the 4000-level classes which, on the Boca Raton campus, regularly fill to 50 and would go higher if we let them: we want smaller classes so that we can work on student skills and knowledge in a more focused way within them.
- Maintaining a balance between setting the bar too high for many students and too low for what is necessary to ensure that our graduates leave FAU with the knowledge and skills appropriate to a Sociology BA. We are particularly committed to building a curriculum that will permit us to cultivate students who arrive at FAU with poor academic preparation but who are motivated to study sociology. We want to build a curriculum – and an assessment system – that enables us to continue our commitment to this type of student rather than taking the easier route of attempting to attract “better” (i.e., stronger academic preparation, typically associated with a more privileged class background) students. We also want the well-prepared student to realize that sociology is a strong liberal arts education, certainly as “useful” as history or political science or English.

***Admissions, compliance with state-approved prerequisites:*** Sociology is not a limited enrollment program, so there are no admission standards beyond those of the university. The major is fully in compliance with the state-approved prerequisites.

***Honors:*** We also have ambitions to develop an honors program but are currently too stretched to devote significant faculty resources to teaching in it. Offering earmarked honors courses would not work well for our students. Most of our students work and live far away from campus, so it is not easy for them to take a particular course that is available only once a year. So, we need to design an honors program that (a) uses honors compacts in 4000-level courses and (b) permits undergraduate students to enroll in some designated graduate seminars and (c) offers honors students the chance to be involved in faculty research. We are currently working on various designs for such a program.

***Service-learning, internships, etc.:*** If resources permitted, we would wish to offer service-learning and similar opportunities to our undergraduate students, many of whom hope to work in the non-profit sector. Because we have so few faculty and so little departmental staff (a single staff person handles everything), we are unable to move forward in this area. We are hoping that the College of Arts & Letters will be able to staff a college-wide office for service-learning initiatives, a direction that the current dean is exploring.

***Advisement:*** On both campuses, advisement on the major is provided by the professional advisors of the Office of Student Academic Services in the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts & Letters. Students consult with the faculty on questions of graduate school applications and other disciplinary matters.

***Who our students are:*** Our students are a diverse set. About 40% of them are Black, Hispanic or Asian, roughly the same as at the last review. Since the last review, though, our students have become more heavily female than male: about 60% of our students were female seven years ago, but about 75% of them are female now. (See DDI’s – Enrollment, Table B-4.)

***What do our graduates do:*** We know little about what our graduates do after they leave us, unless they are applying to professional school and have asked us for recommendations. We hope that we will be able to stay in better touch with our graduates in the future, as the university now encourages FAU graduates to keep their FAU email addresses for a lifetime.

***Retention:*** Sociology's retention and graduation rates for its undergraduate majors are at or slightly higher than the college average for Arts & Letters: for AA transfers, the four-year graduation rate is 68.5% for last majors<sup>2</sup>; for Sociology, the same rate is 70%; 17% have departed at year four in A&L; 16.5% have departed in Sociology. For A&L, the six-year graduation rate for FTIC students (last major) is 44.4%; the departure rate is 35.9%. For Sociology, the rates are 56.3% and 12.5%. (See Appendices D through G.)

**3D – Graduate program (MA):** The Sociology MA can be and typically is completed in two years of study that require a total of 36 credits. Our program permits students to earn their degrees through the traditional route (the “specialist track,” as we have called it) of seminars + thesis and a “generalist track” that permits them to study broadly in sociology by taking twelve seminars. All students are admitted into the generalist program of study and, in their second term of study, must apply to the faculty to be permitted to embark upon a thesis. This application process ensures that all of the faculty who have taught or supervised the student have the opportunity to reflect on the likelihood that s/he can complete a thesis; it also ensures that the students recognize the process as one that requires a substantial and early commitment to a particular project. We adopted this practice after we realized that many of our students came into the program with enthusiasm and potential to do well but without a sufficiently strong undergraduate education to permit them to develop a thesis topic in their second term of study and implement it during their second year of study. The generalist track has proved to be the most attractive of the two tracks.

The MA curriculum requires at least one theory and one methods course. Beyond that, students must develop a plan of study that requires the approval of the graduate director. We offer at least four seminars per term, trying to offer as broad a range as possible while also having some synergy between at least two of them. Due to the small size of our faculty, small shifts in staffing – a sabbatical, for example – can require a reshuffling of graduate teaching assignments. This has made it difficult to develop a multi-year schedule of courses.

FAU's recent reaccreditation process has enhanced our awareness of the relationship between graduate seminars and our students' ability to teach after receiving the MA degree. To maximize their ability to teach after graduation and their breadth of exposure to the discipline, we are moving our seminars away from the more specialized topics that were characteristic of a decade ago and towards broader topics. Assessment of the effectiveness of our graduate program has also persuaded us that we need a more articulated connection between our MA programs' student learning outcomes and the content of our seminars. As we have been a typically decentralized graduate program, this is a shift in departmental culture and process.

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<sup>2</sup> “Last major” refers to the final major declared by the student. Students often change majors over the course of their university enrollment.

Students may propose a plan of study that includes courses outside of the department in their second 18 credits, but students take their first 18 credits inside the department. This ensures that they get a solid initial exposure to graduate-level work in sociology. Additionally, it provides them with the minimum number of credits in sociology (18) to qualify them to teach their own sections of Introductory Sociology in their second year, provided that they are (as required by our accrediting body) teaching under direct faculty supervision and with regular in-service training.

Students are offered the opportunity to teach a 35-seat section of Introductory Sociology in their second year of study if their performance in seminars has been outstanding and their work as teaching assistants (generally, to the faculty teaching the lower division courses) has also been well reviewed. If they wish to teach (and a surprising number of them do), they must agree to start their preparation during the summer between their first and second year. They meet for three workshop days, read and write about pedagogy, finalize their syllabi, begin to write their objectives for each class meeting, and generally prepare to walk into the classroom in the Fall term. When Fall term begins, they meet regularly with their teaching supervisor; they register for a directed independent study on Teaching Sociology with that supervisor. Currently, we have five GTA's teaching sections of introductory sociology.

One drawback to teaching is that it may not be compatible with timely completion of a thesis: the first term of teaching coincides with the term in which the bulk of the thesis research would need to be completed, and it is the rare student who can juggle these two commitments successfully. In practice, we have had few students who have wished to write a thesis and to teach: overwhelmingly, if they are interested in one of these options for developing their skills, they are interested in the chance to teach.

**Who our students are:** Our graduate students tend to be white and female, although we do always manage to recruit at least two or three Black, Hispanic or other minority students as part of each cohort. (DDI's – Enrollment, Table B-4.)

**What do our graduates do:** A recent analysis of what our MA graduates went on to do after receiving their degrees shows that their paths are similar to those in many MA-only degree programs. A few go on to doctoral study in sociology: in recent years, two received assistantship funding at University of California – Irvin and others at the University of Miami and University of Tennessee. Most go on to work in the public or nonprofit sectors, for example: teaching at local high schools; working in supervisory and planning positions (e.g., AIDS Program Center of Palm Beach County, South County Mental Health Center, Social Security Administration). Some continue in the jobs that they had prior to or while in the program as, for example, our recent MA graduate who is a statistician in the Student Assessment and Research Department of the Broward County Public Schools. A few have work in social change organizations like the Peace Corps or Public Allies.

**Retention:** Almost all of the students enrolled in the program complete it and most complete it within two years: in 07/08, 14 admitted and 9 graduated within two years with three more graduating in the following year; in 08/09, seven admitted and all graduated within two years; in 09/10, five were admitted and four graduated within two years; in 11/12, 11 were admitted and 10 graduated within two years.

**3E - Contributions to interdisciplinary programs:** Sociology is committed to continuing to contribute to a range of interdisciplinary programs: we are significant contributors to the undergraduate certificates in Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Peace Studies, and Ethnic Studies. We also contribute to the graduate degree in Women's Studies. We are working on becoming more connected to the College of Science's interdisciplinary degree in Environmental Studies, as we now offer Environmental Sociology on both campuses as well as a more specialized course on Climate and Disasters on the Davie campus. Part of our mission is to infuse as many curricula as possible with the sociological perspective.

**3F - Assessment and improvement:** assessment is done at all levels of the curriculum. As discussed in the earlier sections (3B-D), we are currently involved in a complex set of responses to earlier rounds of assessment of our courses' and curricular effectiveness.

**3F1 – Assessment and improvement, lower division:** Assessment of the lower division is done at the university level but with the involvement of the department. Recent assessment of our lower-division courses has focused our attention on the importance of (a) documenting the work that we do in meeting the objectives of the sections of the core curriculum in which our courses are located and (b) supplementing the “sage on the stage” with a broader range of activities to enhance student learning of content and mastery of critical thinking skills and (c) providing preliminary exposure to methods of inquiry (“asking and answering questions”) in sociology as a foundation for further work in FAU's SACS-required QEP (Quality Enhancement Program) that focuses on engaging undergraduate students in the research process. We are currently working on strategies to (a) more directly align course content with the objectives of the core curriculum; (b) increase the amount of active learning done in these courses through the strategic use of i-clickers. Faculty are also transitioning to more extensive use of on-line strategies like requiring the completion of mastery quizzes prior to class, discussion board posts, etc. We also want to shift our practices of using GTA's in our large-enrollment classes to make them more directly involved in student learning, through some of the Blackboard-based practices like discussion boards and journals and wikis.

**3F2 – Assessment and improvement in the major:** The department's undergraduate assessment plan focuses and generally has focused on critical thinking skills, communication skills, and content knowledge in the field. (See Appendix H on Student Learning Outcomes.) As reported in the assessment database, our students typically have met our standards in each of these areas. As also reported in the assessment database, though, we continue to be concerned about how to increase the quality of students' writing, their analytical skills, and their mastery of key sociological concepts. It has been difficult to integrate systematic work on student skills and knowledge into our curriculum because (a) we have no curricular sequencing and (b) so many of the students in our upper-division classes are non-majors, due to our longstanding practice of having limited or no prerequisites. Our reluctance to adopt curricular sequencing and a strong pre-requisite system has been a consequence of multiple factors (see section 3G3). Given enrollment pressures, we have not found it easy to develop a strategy to move towards a curriculum that builds skills and knowledge more systematically and effectively. Nevertheless, over the past year, we have started to create such a curriculum (see section 3C above). To date, we have anchored our assessment work on data gathered from the two required courses (theory, methods). This narrow focus is an artifact of an earlier era in assessment at FAU, and we are transitioning away from it.



Our goals are to: (1) develop consensus on core content knowledge; agree on the courses in which each element will be covered; embed assessment of content knowledge in every course, permitting us to compare students in their final term at FAU with those at an earlier point in their studies and (2) develop course-specific commitment to skills development, with a particular emphasis on skills related to FAU's QEP project on involving undergraduates in research and inquiry (the SACS-mandated "quality enhancement plan") and embed assessment in each of the courses.

**3F3 – Assessment and improvement in the graduate major (MA):** Assessment of the effectiveness of our MA program has, over the years, led the faculty to be increasingly explicit about some very basic skills (e.g., a literature review) that we used to assume students would either bring to the MA program or learn on their own with very little need for our teaching. With every round of feedback about our students' level of knowledge and skills as they completed the program, we have become more deliberate in our teaching about critical reading, analytical writing, and the stages of the research process. Over the past year, we have decided on a number of changes in our approach to graduate education. We have determined that the faculty who teach seminars during the Fall term need to take particular responsibility to design their courses with the entering cohort in mind. First-term graduate students will also be required to take Library-designed workshops on using on-line resources for literature reviews, plagiarism, and using RefWorks for managing a database of references. We will have a speaker from the University Center for Excellence in Writing provide an orientation to graduate-level writing. Faculty in the department will offer first-term students a series of talks on subjects such as: strategies for thoughtful and effective seminar participation; best practices in critical and close reading; strategies for informed and respectful disagreement and challenge in seminar and in less formal discussion; etc.

At the middle of the first term, the graduate director will survey all of the faculty teaching graduate seminars. First-term students who are having problems in any of the major areas of performance (seminar participation, writing) will be counseled about the problem and asked to develop a strategy for solving it. Students with writing problems will be required to take full advantage of the UCEW resources for graduate students, which are considerable. The department is building up a library of resources and references to which students can be directed for solutions to other kinds of issues.

At the end of every term, the faculty who have taught graduate students will complete an evaluation of student progress. That evaluation is intended as a record of where the student was when s/he started the seminar and how s/he has developed during it. In particular, we want to have a record of what problem areas were identified to the student by the faculty member. We want to stress to the students that, as they move through the program, we expect them to be improving their level of content knowledge and skill. We will identify areas that are problematic; we will provide resources for the resolution of any problems; the student must take responsibility for implementing the resolution. The faculty will also set goals for students whose performance is unproblematic: we want to ensure that our best students continue to build their skills and knowledge. At the end of the first year of graduate school, every first-year student will have an individual meeting with the graduate director or a faculty advisor in which the year's progress is discussed and goals are set for the second year. To sum it up: we are moving to a more individual-centered approach to student development during graduate education. We know that our students start at different levels, and so we cannot expect them to complete the program at the same level. Nevertheless, we expect each of them to improve every term. We hope that this system will support that goal.

In their seminars, the faculty will support the MA programs objectives by more explicit attention to teaching core skills and, when possible, drawing on the same supplementary material on them (e.g., on how to do a literature review). We also are working on a shared rubric for grading writing, to which faculty would be able to add items but which would have a core of items that are consistently used.

**3G – Enrollment:** The DDI data (DDI's - Enrollment, Table C2) indicate that enrollment is up by 36% at the lower division, 5% at the upper division, and 16% at the graduate level over the past four years. The five-year trend data available from the interactive reporting database (Appendix H Soc FTE Trends) show a similar result: up by 40% at the lower division, by 17% at the upper division, and down by 5% at the graduate level. The department generates 12.8% of the college's undergraduate FTE, as well as about 6.5% of its graduate FTE's (calculated from Table C1, DDI's – Comparative Data), while having only 6.8% of the college's FTE assigned to instruction (calculated from Table B1, Appendix K – DDI's – Comparative Data).

Graduate enrollment is small, ranging from 17-25, so percentages are not particularly meaningful: clearly, though, graduate enrollment is not growing and we have had trouble sustaining it. As was pointed out in the self-study of seven years ago, the faculty is too small to handle growth at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. We have added instructional faculty over the intervening seven years, so we have been able to handle – barely – the growth in lower division enrollment, but a static number of tenure-line faculty and a declining budget for adjunct faculty has meant that we have not had the resources to grow both the undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

Comparing trends in Sociology to the university's, we find that FAU's lower-division enrollment is up by 34% and upper-division enrollment is up by 6% over the past five years (see Appendix I FAU Productivity Five Year Trends): so, we have matched the university's lower-division growth and exceeded its upper-division growth. Comparing trends in Sociology to those in the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts & Letters (see Appendix J A&L FTE Productivity Five Year Trend), we find that Sociology exceeds the college averages (34% increase, lower division; 6.5% increase, upper division) and is about the same (down by 5%, MA) as college trends in graduate degrees.

The undergraduate major has been growing, but the graduate program has faced increasing challenges in recruitment. We have always recruited students from the region, drawing particularly from amongst our own BA graduates. Until several years ago, though, we also had a substantial number of part-time students in the program; many public sector employees had employer support to attend graduate school, and we benefitted from this investment in employee development. We were also able to attract at least a few students who were working and willing to pay tuition for part-time study. More recently, though, our part-time students have disappeared. In the wake of the crash, we believe that potential students are increasingly conservative about spending money on education; in particular, they are reluctant to go into debt or forego income to attend graduate school. So, if they don't get support for graduate study, they don't even consider graduate school. Consequently, all of our current graduate students (except for one) are full-time graduate students and are supported either by graduate teaching assistantships or some other form of scholarship that pays tuition and living expenses.

Our graduate teaching assistantships are very modest, offering a stipend of \$4000 per term plus tuition. Students pay their own fees. GTA support does not continue across the summer months, thereby producing a difficult situation for students who might be relying heavily on it. As noted in the second section, the program review done seven years ago recommended that assistantship levels be increased; unfortunately, deepening financial problems for the university have made that impossible.

Despite the low level of the assistantship support, we have been able to recruit students to the graduate program and retain them through completion of their degrees. In every cohort, we have had several outstanding students; in every cohort, we have had several students who arrived with great potential and relatively poor preparation but who have made significant progress during their graduate education. We are proud of both kinds of students, and we encourage as much peer mentoring as possible within the graduate cohorts. In view of the large classes that Sociology teaches at both the lower and upper division, we are pleased at the number of assistantships that the department has been awarded: currently, we have 17 students on assistantships.

We are struggling with recruitment in the wake of the economic downturn. We believe that the development of an undergraduate honors program could increase both our participation in the university's QEP initiative on involving undergraduate students in research and our likelihood of recruiting the best FAU students into our graduate program. A more specialized graduate program might be able to carve out a niche in the academic marketplace; during the last self-study, Sociology made such a proposal but was unable to get the resources (primarily, faculty lines) to pursue it. Now that the university has adopted "contemporary societal issues" as one of its three "signature themes," we might have a better chance of garnering necessary support. Our faculty have energetically pursued all opportunities for involvement in the theme's development.

**3G1 - Student access to the faculty:** The faculty-student ratio is captured by data on annualized FTE (see DDI's – FTE, Table D-1 and Appendix K<sup>3</sup> Table D-1 with college and university averages): for undergraduate classes, Sociology's annualized FTE of 33.0 is higher than the college's average (19.8) or university's average (17). At the graduate level, Sociology's average annualized FTE is .7 with college's average at .8 and the university's average at 2.5: so, we are at about the level typical of A&L, and A&L devotes a lower proportion of faculty assignment to graduate instruction than is the case in other colleges.

Almost 75% of our classes are taught by full-time faculty; 75% of the faculty are tenure-track faculty. Instructional faculty have heavier instructional assignments, so one-third of the faculty effort assigned to teaching (FTE assigned to instruction) comes from the instructional faculty.

**3G2 - Class sizes in the graduate and undergraduate majors** are large in sociology. Our average (all levels, both campuses) undergraduate class has 67 students (DDI's – Enrollment, Table B-3), up from 54 students at the beginning of the DDI period. In 2012, Sociology had substantially larger classes than the college average (35) or university average (35) (see Appendix K, Table B-3 with college and university averages). Some of this is a consequence of our very large lower division classes, which range from 100-250 and average about 130. Nevertheless, it is important to note that classes on the Boca campus have been capped at and typically close out at 50 students. Enrollments at the Davie campus have been lower but are coming closer to Boca-campus levels as we have cut back adjunct

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<sup>3</sup> Appendix K shows the DDI data for Sociology as well as college and university averages for each of the indicators.

staffing as part of a required budget reduction: fewer classes + stable demand = higher enrollments in each class. While pleased with the higher enrollments in these classes, we nevertheless worry that the smaller number of classes might slow progress towards graduation: over the next few years, we need to develop better knowledge of barriers in progress towards graduation and how to respond to them with our scheduling.

Our graduate classes have tended to be reasonable in size but they are verging on a number that makes it hard to give each student the individual attention necessary in a graduate program like ours: numbers of sections have decreased over the past four years (see DDI's – Enrollment, Table B-3), going from 12 to 8 per year, and class size has increased concomitantly (7.8 to 13.8).

### **3G3 - Enrollment in upper-division classes drawn from outside the major and the college:**

Appendix L shows a modification of DDI tableC-2 that shows that includes a calculation of the proportion of students in upper-division sociology classes who were Sociology majors in 2011-2012: one third of the students were majors, and the rest were non-majors. This shows the popularity of sociology as a discipline, the faculty's dedication to bringing "the sociological imagination" to as many students as possible, and one of the most serious challenges to the major.

In other liberal arts disciplines such as English and History, out-of-college students taking upper-division courses typically are majoring in Education but preparing to teach in these substantive areas. This is not the case in Sociology. Out-of-college students in our upper-division classes are coming to take Sociology classes because they are interested in the topic – but we can have no expectation that they have any background in sociology (except in those few courses that have prerequisites in place, typically a modest requirement for a lower-division sociology course) or will go on to any further study of sociology. Consequently, our upper-division classes have students with a wide range of backgrounds: in faculty meetings focusing on assessment and curricular development, we have returned repeatedly to this challenge. Do we increase our sequencing and requirements, thereby cutting down on the number of students who can take our classes but making it easier for us to build our majors' skills and knowledge more systematically and effectively? Or, do we continue to keep our classes as open as possible?

We have developed a range of strategies to deal with our commitment to access: providing "for more information, read..." recommendations for those lacking background; spending some portion of each class going over material that many of the majors have covered in other classes within the department; providing coaching to underprepared but highly motivated students; designing our courses around the assumption that our students may have little or no familiarity with disciplinary basics. We are unsatisfied with our strategies, but we are also reluctant to move to more rigid sequencing. Many FAU students are part-time students, and they would find it very difficult to complete the major in a timely manner if we were more restrictive: we do not have the faculty to offer the number of upper-division courses across the array of times (evening, days) that would be required to maximize access under a sequenced curriculum. Hence, as discussed in the earlier section on the major, we are considering the development of a substantial 3000-level sector of classes that would be designed to serve majors and non-majors. These would be required of majors, but without a rigid sequencing. So, for example, students might be required to have "one of the following 3000-level classes" in order to take a 4000-level class. This would retain the flexibility that our students need but could improve our ability to more effectively teach our majors.

It is unusual to have such a large proportion of out-of-college students in upper-division classes. In 2011-2012, for example, 60% of the students in Psychology's upper-division classes were Psychology majors (Appendix M). In Criminal Justice's BA program, 73% of all students in upper-division courses are majors (Appendix N). In Communication Studies, 82% of students in upper-division courses are majors (Appendix O). In History, 45% of students in upper-division courses are majors (Appendix P); however, History also draws on students who are majors in Education and who plan on teaching history. In Political Science, 65% of the students in upper-division courses are majors (Appendix Q). We would like to push the proportion of students in our 4000-level courses who are Sociology majors up beyond its current 33%, so that every class doesn't have to include a substantial component of basic sociology, and so that we can be more effective in developing students' skills (analyzing, writing, critical reading) and knowledge. We are committed to continuing to offer so-called "service" courses that draw students from other majors, but we want to find a way to do so that maintains the pedagogical integrity of the major

**3G4 - Enrollment in the major/class size/challenges:** Sociology has increased its number of majors significantly over the past five years (DDI's – Degrees, Table C3; Appendix R A&L Five Year Trends in Majors). Overall, the number of majors increased by 2% in A&L: in contrast, sociology's majors increased by 34%. Consider a comparison with the Department of History, another liberal arts program that began the five-year period reported in these data with slightly fewer majors than Sociology: History has 18.5 total FTE available from its tenure-track and tenured faculty (DDI's – History - Faculty, Table B1); Sociology, a smaller department, has 13.8 FTE available from the tenure-track and tenured faculty; despite this, though, History's growth in majors was 10% during the period covered by the DDI data (DDI's – History - Majors, Table B3), compared to Sociology's 34%. In 2011-12, Sociology's average class size was 65; History's was 43.4 (DDI's – History - Faculty, Table C3). Sociology's annualized FTE (a measure of faculty/student ratio) was 33; History's was 20.8 (DDI's – History – Enrollment, Table B4). Our point here is not that History is underperforming; rather, it is an exploration of the way that Sociology has stretched itself – perhaps too thin – to respond to student demand and university need.

As we reconstruct it, sociology has fallen behind comparable departments in its stock of tenure-track faculty and ability to develop its degree programs in order to build a thriving and much-needed (from the College's and University's perspective) set of lower-division offerings. Four outstanding full-time instructors (teaching a 4/4) are almost exclusively devoted to the Sociology component of the university's core curriculum on the Boca Raton. As noted earlier, lower division FTE has increased by 40%. This has meant, though, that the department has foregone tenure-track lines in order to build the instructional faculty. That has meant less instructional effort available for teaching in the graduate and undergraduate majors. Despite this, we have increased our upper-division enrollment and our undergraduate majors. To go any further, we will need additional faculty resources.

Although the tenure-track faculty's numbers have remained static, sociology has increased its numbers of majors and degree awarded. The DDI data (Table C3) show an increase of 17% in BA and 10% in MA degrees. The five year data available from the interactive reports database (see Appendix R) show a 34% increase in numbers of undergraduate majors from Fall 2008 to Fall 2012. There are 13.7 BA degrees per faculty instructional year awarded, compared to the average of 7.9 in the college and 10.2 in

university. Awarding of 1.2 graduate degrees per faculty instructional year, is lower than university ratio (2.6) but higher than the college ratio (.8).

**3G5 - Campus contributions:** The two campuses (Boca Raton, Davie) make different contributions to the department. All of the lower division and graduate courses are taught on the Boca Raton campus, and Davie offers only upper-division courses. Over the past five years, an average of one-third of the department's upper division FTE has come from the Davie campus (see Appendix S); about one-quarter of the department's majors have their primary enrollment on the Davie campus (Appendix T).

**3H - Pedagogy:** Sociology's lower-division classes have been typical "sage on the stage" classes over the past several years, although enhanced significantly by the technologies available in the large teaching auditoriums. As discussed above, we are moving to more interactive in-class strategies (through i-clickers, for example) as well as out-of-class enhancements through on-line (Blackboard and other software) strategies.

In the major, Sociology has a mix of pedagogies. Fifty person classes (as is typical on the Boca Raton campus) have a tendency towards a lecture or Q&A format, but other strategies are in use. Some Sociology faculty have been experimenting with "flipping" the classroom after participating in a Center for Teaching and Learning-sponsored seminar on learner-centered teaching. A number of faculty use group projects and presentations. Several use writing assignments that require multiple iterations and revisions. Most require some "real world" application of concepts and theories. Two faculty have completed e-learning training, and one is currently enrolled. Following completion of the e-learning training, faculty agree that they are more knowledgeable about pedagogy generally and that they have used that knowledge to significantly change their face-to-face classes.

**3I - Quality of instruction:** The Sociology faculty receive positive reviews from their students. The average student satisfaction score for sociology faculty is more positive than the average score for the faculty of the College of Arts & Letters or the entire university: the quality of courses in Sociology is rated an average of 3.1, versus 2.9 for college and 3.0 for university; the quality of instructors in Sociology is rated at 3.3 compared to college and university averages of 3.0 and 3.0 (See Appendix K, Table E1). (Note: the higher the scores, the greater the student satisfaction: so, a 5 is the best score and a 1 is the worst.) The department's overall scores on the two designated items of the Student Perception of Instruction (SPOT) instrument are a bit lower than the university and college averages (see Appendix K, Table E2) but this changes when we distinguish between the huge lower-division core curriculum courses and the upper-division courses. Comparing Sociology's upper division courses on items 20 and 21 to the average score on 20 and 21 for all upper-division courses between 35 and 51, we find that sociology is at or lower than the college average. (Note: on this instrument, the lower the score, the more positive the evaluation: a 1 is the best score, while a 5 is the worst.) So, although Sociology teaches larger courses at the upper-division than almost every other department, student ratings of instructional quality are strong.

#### 4. Research

The faculty in Sociology are committed to research and scholarship. (See DDI's – Research and Service, C19.) With only 12 tenured or tenure-track faculty, the department reports a book/monograph per year for all but one of the years reported in the DDI's, as well as an average of a dozen peer-

reviewed articles and 13 conference presentations a year. Department faculty are persistent in grant applications, submitting at least two per year. Grant funding over the past several years is modest, generally supporting a single faculty member's research: FY09, \$9,400; FY10, \$40,000; FY11, \$24,600; FY12, \$24,600.

Faculty have active research collaborations across a range of institutions, for example: grant-supported research on rural poverty in the Mississippi delta region, collaborative with faculty at the University of Mississippi; research on peasant dispossession and land struggles, collaborative with faculty at the University of Colorado. There is also internal collaboration as, for example, a project (funded by FAU internal grant) that involves a senior and a junior faculty member collaborating on a project related to local food systems. As is typical in department of sociology, though, much research is solo work: a faculty member conceptualizes a project, develops the research question, gathers and analyzes the data, and writes up the results. Most of our faculty members' current projects utilize qualitative and/or historical methods. Consequently, their work often requires significant time and travel to various research sites. For example, during the upcoming academic year, one of the faculty is taking a year-long sabbatical to travel to New Zealand to study beginning of a new research project on how that nation balances climate change awareness and concerns with increased commitments to oil production. During the prior academic year, another faculty member devoted a sabbatical to extending her ongoing research on local and alternative economic strategies and how they interact with large-scale global economic forces. Other faculty have on-going research projects that involve historical research on ethnic variations in leisure-time activity, the international women's movement, the development of disciplines, and the evolution of neo-liberal social policies. A few do research on how social position (especially, race) shapes attitudes and behaviors. By some measures, we are a diverse group of scholars. By others, though, we are unified in our critical perspective and shared interest in various facets of inequality and social difference.

Departmental research goals are: active participation in national and international conferences; publication in peer-reviewed journals; publication of well-reviewed books. The overwhelming majority of research in the department contributes to one of FAU's three "signature themes": contemporary societal issues. As we look towards the future, we are engaged in conversations about how we can embed some portion of our research in work that focuses on South Florida: this would provide research sites that would permit us to readily involve both graduate and undergraduate students, offer opportunities for collaboration, and contribute to Goal Four of FAU's Strategic Plan: to make FAU "...a full participant in the life of its seven-county region...encourage regional cooperation and sustainability, build partnerships in key areas of community need...."

## **5. Service/Community Engagement**

The department's faculty are actively engaged in institutional service to department, college and university. (See DDI's – Research and Service, Tables B-13 and B-14). At the level of the college and university, over the past few years, Sociology faculty have, for example: chaired the college and university promotion and tenure committees; chaired the college's undergraduate programs committee and represented the college on the university's undergraduate program committee; served on the steering committee to develop the university's initiative to develop undergraduate research and inquiry as an institutional theme (part of reaccreditation); served on the university assessment council; served on the university's accreditation task force for faculty credentialing; served on the college's strategic planning

task force; served on the executive committees of the Center for Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies; served on the executive committee for Peace Studies. Given our relatively small tenured faculty (10) and the fact that four of our number are located on a campus that is about 40 minutes away from the main campus, we make significant contributions.

Sociology faculty are also committed to and engaged in the collective decision-making processes of the department. Nevertheless, because the faculty are on different campuses and those campuses are separated by about a 40 minute drive, departmental and committee meetings are difficult to schedule. In addition to the time devoted to a meeting, at least some of the participants must drive for more than an hour to and from the meeting site. So, we try to have fewer but longer meetings: this makes it harder to do continuous work on program improvement, though, so we are trying to develop new practices such as using discussion boards in a department Blackboard site. We do not have good technology for on-line meetings, and we are unsure of the wisdom of committing to cyber-meetings. As we are entering a period of rather extensive curricular and related work, we are struggling to find a good solution. Despite these challenges, though, there is a strong tradition of collegial work.

The department's faculty are actively engaged in service to the discipline. They are active as organizers of and presiders at conferences, particularly the American Sociological Association and the Southern Sociological Society. During the period of this review, department faculty hosted the annual meeting of the ASA's Political Economy of the World System section. In addition to supporting the discipline through its associations, they regularly review books and manuscripts and provide reviews for promotion and tenure applications.

The department's faculty have an appropriate level of engagement in service to the local and regional community, given that they have little or no assignment to such activities. Some speak at community events as, for example, at a recent commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr. at the Spady Cultural Heritage Museum. Others are involved in community groups, such as the Broward Human Trafficking Coalition. Still others contribute to on-going university outreach efforts such as the Peace Studies Film Series. We would welcome more connection but, as is clear, we are stretched thin.

**6. Other program goals:** None. All have been discussed and described.

## **7. Strengths and opportunities that support achievement of program goals**

Goals for our degree programs: to bring "the sociological imagination" to as many students as possible; to provide a sociological perspective on contemporary social life and problems to as many students as possible; to offer a high-quality undergraduate and graduate major that develop higher-order thinking skills, provide methodological training, familiarize students with the historical development of social thought, and bring students into active engagement with the research questions and findings of a wide range of sociological subfields.

- Strength/opportunity: strong student demand for our courses, going well beyond our own majors
- Strength: faculty commitment to high-quality teaching; willingness to consider and adopt new pedagogies to increase our effectiveness



- Strength: faculty commitment to teaching students with poor preparation but high levels of motivation as well as to teaching those who arrive at FAU well prepared
- Strength/opportunity: the potential for a strong connection to the university's QEP emphasis on "Undergraduate research and inquiry" because all sociology classes have a substantial component of exposing students to research/inquiry and, in upper division classes, a emphasis on teaching the skills of inquiry and providing experience with research/inquiry
- Strength/opportunity: direct connection in classes and research to "contemporary societal issues," one of the university's three recently-adopted signature themes
- Strength: offering the full undergraduate major at two FAU campuses

## **8. Weaknesses and threats that impede program progress**

- Too few faculty to develop the program beyond its current state – for example, we are struggling to figure out how to add Honors to the undergraduate curriculum
- Too few faculty to implement the highest level of activity that is part of the university's initiative on "Undergraduate Research and Inquiry": involving students in faculty research. While this would be of great benefit to students, the training and supervision of student researchers takes substantial time. We have discussed some possibilities for local research projects that might involve students, but we have difficulty figuring out how we would reallocate faculty time to do the necessary startup work.
- Large classes: make it difficult to build students' skills, as there often is not enough time to do so through the small group and one-on-one mentoring that is required; the extremely large lower division classes are a particular challenge, particularly in light of the university's concern about student retention
- Inadequate staffing: despite the faculty's interest in service-learning, for example, we do not have the support staff or the faculty to devote the necessary time to starting up and maintaining an academic service learning program
- Difficulty recruiting students into the major early enough. Students often come to the sociology major late in their university career. They don't know what sociology is, because it doesn't exist in the high schools, so they don't consider it as a major until they discover it. The likelihood of a change in majors to follow interests is going to diminish due to a new tuition structure. FAU has just implemented a system in which tuition goes up precipitously if a student takes more credits than the minimum number of credits required to complete their first declared degree. So, we have to find potential students earlier and get them into the major earlier.
- Difficulty recruiting students to graduate program: stipends are too low; summer support is not available.
- Lack of lab facilities for graduate students, as the current facilities do not have computers that can run the standard software (SPSS) used for quantitative analysis in sociology.

## **9. Resource analysis**

Currently-available resources will enable us to maintain our undergraduate programs but not to develop them; they may be inadequate to even maintain our graduate program, an important part of the department's way of life as a community of researchers/scholars. Given the university's and college's emphasis on moving "to the next level," program development is essential. Therefore, currently-available resources are insufficient.

***Tenure-line faculty:***

Our greatest resource need is for additional tenure-line faculty. Our instructional faculty are outstanding, but they cannot do the work necessary to build the undergraduate and graduate degree programs. To illustrate:

- We need additional tenure-line faculty in order to take a leadership role in the URI: with only modest additional faculty resources, we could create research projects that could fully engage our best undergraduates and, moreover, connect directly to the university's signature theme of "contemporary societal issues." With additional faculty resources (and staffing assistance), we could develop academic service-learning options for both graduate and undergraduate students: identify appropriate community organization, cultivate on-going relationships with them, and regularly place students in them.
- With additional faculty resources, the department could be more heavily involved in college and university initiatives, whether curricular initiatives such as interdisciplinary degree programs (e.g., the Ph.D. in Comparative Studies and the MA in Women's Studies) or institutional development projects. FAU is a university undergoing tremendous development and change: Sociology needs to be part of a broad array of initiatives in order to assure that the department's interests are represented and, even more importantly, the discipline's insights are included. With so few people to do the considerable work of the department, it is difficult to add additional components to many service assignments.
- Additional faculty resources are needed because our tenure-line faculty are split across two campuses (and the split is closer to being an even one than in any other department) and each campus struggles to offer a sufficiently broad range of courses, develop programs like Honors and the URI, and provide the BA students with co-curricular opportunities.

***Staff support:***

The department is staffed by a single senior secretary, assisted by workstudy students. Therefore:

- Need some staffing assistance (perhaps at the College level) in order to implement service-learning or similar initiatives

The department needs assistance in helping its students (majors and non-majors) succeed. Therefore,

- Need more university-level workshops and short courses on things like study skills, life management skills, dealing with procrastination, note-taking, and other skills that underprepared students don't have and can't acquire on their own without falling far behind.

The department needs assistance in developing its pedagogical repertoire. Therefore,

- Need university-level assistance with instructional design and pedagogical technique so that we can learn how to be more effective in our teaching. The University's Center for Teaching and Learning is still a very small operation, mostly focused on self-help; it needs the kind of professional staffing that e-learning has. Faculty need more access to training on Blackboard and similar programs.

### ***GTA funding:***

To be competitive in attracting graduate students, we need to increase stipends and the coverage of the waiver; we need some summer GTA support for students working on thesis projects.

## **10. Future Directions**

We have the following questions for the review team.

How can we develop a curriculum that is more effective at the cumulative development of student skills and disciplinary knowledge, given the constraints posed for us by the nature of our student body (part-time, multi-campus, often poorly prepared for academic success), the necessity of maintaining access and timely completion of degree, and our relatively small number of faculty?

Given the relatively large size of our upper-division classes, what can we do to enhance the effectiveness of our BA program? Given our commitment to working with students who are highly motivated but may lack strong academic preparation, we are concerned about our effectiveness for the full range of students in the major. In this document, we describe various strategies that we are considering. Are there alternate or additional strategies that we should be considering?

What could we be doing to more effectively recruit students to our MA program? What could we – or are we – doing in the MA program that is distinctive enough to be featured in recruitment and appealing enough to potential students to draw them here?

We anticipate that our meetings with the review team will add to this list of questions, and we look forward to the team's insights about and recommendations for our programs.

**Report on the Sociology Department**

**Florida Atlantic University**

**Submitted: June 24, 2013**

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## **The External Review Process**

This report on Florida Atlantic University's Sociology Department is based on a review of materials and a site visit (April 17, 18, and 19, 2013). The materials reviewed in advance of the visit included the following spreadsheets: Workload Comparison of Sociology and similar disciplines; DDI's-Research and service; DDI's-Degrees; DDI's-Enrollment; DDI's-Faculty; DDI's- FTE; DDI's-Student Ratings; DDI's-History Faculty; DDI's-History FTE; DDI's-History majors. Documents reviewed included: A&L Sociology Self Study Academic Program Review 2013 Final Version; DDI's Comparative Data; Revised FAU APR-Procedures summary, Janet Cramer from Dec. 2012; Intellectual Foundations Program; Learning Outcomes for Core Curriculum; BA in Sociology; A&L retention FTIC last major; A&L retention FTIC last major; SOC Retention FTIC last major; BA Student Learning Outcomes; FAU FTE productivity five year trend; A&L FTE productivity five year trend; Comparative Data; SOC FTE UD % from outside major in 11-12; Psych % majors and nonmajors UD; CJ% of nonmajors in UC classes 11-12; COMM ST% nonmajors FTE UD 11-12; Hist % majors and nonmajors UD classes, 11-12; Poli Sci % majors and nonmajors in UD classes 11-12; AL five year trends in majors; SOC majors on Boca and Davie Campuses; SOC FTE Boca and Davie Campuses, and faculty CVs.

In the process of our visit, we had the opportunity to see the Department and faculty offices; data computer lab; the graduate student office; and the Department meeting room.

The review team began work on Wednesday night, and then met again on Thursday morning. Lynn Appleton, the department chair, was always available to answer our questions throughout the review process. Starting at 10 a.m. on Thursday morning, we met successively with Edward Pratt, Dean of Undergraduate Studies, and Barry Rosson, Dean of the Graduate College. Between 1 and 2:00 p.m., we met with undergraduate students, including Alexandra Casuso, Julianne David, Kathy Buerosse, Hannah Taylor, Mary Hutchinson and several others. This meeting was followed by a meeting between 2-4:00 p.m. with the graduate students. In attendance were Nathalie Rita, Tammy Ebanks, Emily Bushey, Paul Clements, Mike Suarez, Bradley Rosendorf, Mitch Jacobs, Elizabeth Roos, Joshua Werner, Gary Goldberg, Andrea Toth, Antonette Wint, and Ian Wright. We then adjourned to a dinner meeting with Drs. Branaman and Appleton from Sociology, and the review team, including Charles Roberts, Liz Grauerholz, and Rebecca Adams.

Friday morning, we met with Associate Provost Diane Alperin at 8:30 a.m., followed by a meeting with the interim Dean of the Arts and Letters College, Dr. Heather Coltman. This was followed by a long lunch meeting with the faculty of the Sociology department. This was accomplished in two stages. Between 11 a.m. and 12:00 p.m., we met with the faculty to discuss the sociology curriculum. Then at noon, the the instructional faculty who had classes to meet left and those remaining spent approximately two hours discussing the undergraduate curriculum and the graduate program. The following faculty

were in attendance: Maritza Flores, Gina Carreno-Lukasik, Farshad Araghi, Marina Karides, Patricia Widener, Phillip Hough, Mark Harvey, Marsha Rose, Ann Branaman, Tom Wilson, Art Evans, and Greg Lukasik.

After the meeting with the faculty, we spent several hours going over events, asking questions of the chair, Lynn Appleton, and organizing the outline of the final report. We completed this report after departing from campus.

The Sociology Department posed several questions to be addressed in this report regarding the improvement of the curriculum within the constraints posed by the nature of their student body, the necessity of maintaining access and timely completion of degree, and relatively small faculty; the effectiveness of the bachelor's program, and recruitment to and distinctiveness of the MA program. These questions will be addressed in part as we discuss the following topics: (1) Departmental mission and goals; (2) the Undergraduate Program, (3) the Graduate Program, (4) the Faculty, and (5) Other Resources; and in the conclusion of this report. We include our recommendations regarding each of these areas within these sections.

### **Mission and Goals**

Whatever changes the Department decides to make in response to this review process, the discussion should start with the development of a clear mission statement. Although the Academic Program Review document includes a mission statement, it is more of a list of duties to be accomplished and obligations to the University than a statement to be used to guide decision-making. Clearly the main mission of the Department is instructional: programs offered include a bachelor of arts in sociology, an undergraduate minor, and a master's of arts in sociology (with generalist and specialist options, the latter requiring a thesis), and the Department also contributes to the University's Intellectual Foundations program. Sociology faculty also strive to contribute to disciplinary scholarship and to serve the University, the discipline, and the community.

What is not clear is what distinguishes their approach to these tasks from other departments at FAU or from sociology programs at other universities. It is not clear, for example, what sorts of students the Department would like to attract or what futures the faculty envision for their students. As sociologists, we understand that an unspoken goal of any sociology department is to recruit marginalized and disadvantaged members of society to our professional ranks. This constant process of recruiting "outsiders" is what gives our discipline its critical edge. Sociologists also want to help all students, whatever their level of preparation, to achieve success in whatever future they choose, however. These dual goals tend to lead sociology departments to try to "do it all" and this department is no exception.

It is clear that most graduates of the Sociology Department's undergraduate program pursue jobs locally and only a few pursue a master's degree at FAU let alone a graduate degree elsewhere. Similarly, very few of the graduates of the master's program pursue PhD's. So one decision the Department needs to make is whether to emphasize the

preparation of students to apply sociological theory and methods in whatever job they pursue or their preparation to be professional sociologists. Similarly, it would be useful for the Department to decide on whether to emphasize the development of an infrastructure to support the eventual success of academically under-prepared students or to encourage better-prepared students to excel. During a discussion of the Department's mission, it will be important for faculty to remember that deciding what to emphasize does not mean blocking any path for any student. It merely means focusing resources on what the Department values most.

Although reaching consensus on what faculty value is more pertinent to the development of the Department's undergraduate mission, as is discussed below, it applies to the clarification of its graduate mission as well. The Department is constrained by limited resources and it is difficult to sustain a vibrant graduate program under these conditions. It is important for the Department to clarify what is unique about this Master's program and whether it is able to prepare students for applied or academic professions. The possibility of eliminating the MA program, or possibly just its thesis option, and focusing on building and sustaining an outstanding undergraduate program should be considered. It is our impression, however, that this department will decide to maintain the MA with a thesis option and therefore our recommendations are based on this assumption.

Once the Department has reached clarity on its mission, faculty can then engage in discussions of how to allocate resources to achieve it. In addition to providing a framework for decisions regarding which of the recommendations in this report to implement and what sort of faculty should be hired in the future, mission clarity will help the Department decide how it can best contribute to the University's strategic plan and which of university-wide and college initiatives to support most extensively. Possibilities mentioned to us include supporting one or more of the goals of the strategic plan (e.g., access, workforce development, community needs, information technology, physical environment, visibility) or possibly the signature theme of "contemporary social issues" if it ultimately included in the version of the plan that is eventually approved by FAU's Board of Trustees. Other initiatives the Department might consider, depending on their agreed-upon mission, include contributing to the Interdisciplinary PhD program offered in the College of Arts and Letters, supporting the undergraduate research initiative outlined in FAU's Quality Enhancement plan, collaborating with other departments to offer a PhD in social science, supporting the University's STEAM initiative, developing an Honors program, offering service learning courses, and participation in Project Q.

**Recommendation #1: Develop a clear mission statement.** The Department should develop a mission statement that clearly describes the types of students who might be interested in Sociology and the types of careers that students will be prepared to pursue. As part of the discussion, the Department should consider whether, and with what options, to offer a master's program. Afterwards, the Department should engage in a discussion of how to allocate resources to support this departmental mission and what strategic goals and initiatives to support that are compatible with it.

## **The Undergraduate Program**

Overall, the undergraduate program in sociology at FAU appears strong. There has been a 17% increase in number of majors between academic years 2008-2009 and 2011-2012. The number of degrees awarded during this period also increased 17%. Enrollments remain high—346 in fall 2012—and show a consistent increase over past four years, ranking it 5<sup>th</sup> out of 16 departments in the College and Arts & Letters in terms of overall enrollment. Quality of instruction ratings from Student Perception of Teaching are consistent with the College and University means.

Sociology offers four courses that are integral to FAU's Intellectual Foundation Program—SYG1000, SYG2010, SYD2790, SYP2450. These lower-level sections are all taught on the Boca Raton campus. Courses at the lower-levels (1000 & 2000) tend to enroll large numbers of students, which according to faculty we interviewed, makes it difficult for instructors to use innovative teaching techniques or extensive writing. Some of these courses are also taught by students in the Masters' program (these courses are capped at 35).

There are a large number and range of courses taught at the upper-levels (3000 & 4000). These courses are generally capped (around 50) and fill to capacity at the Boca Raton campus. Currently the program is structured so that upper-level courses are not restricted to majors. Given the class size and unrestricted enrollment, the students (majors) with whom we spoke said they felt that there was not enough opportunity to gain hands-on research experience, to have in-depth sociological discussions, or work closely with faculty on projects. Faculty also reported that it was challenging to teach both majors and students with no background in sociology simultaneously.

The sociology BA is a 30 credit-hour major. The major is organized around four components: theory, methods, substantive areas, and electives. To satisfy requirements for the major, students must take three credits of theory, three credits of methods, and three upper-level credits within each of four substantive areas (global; social inequality and social change; gender, family and sexuality; and culture, identity and sociology of everyday life); the remaining 12 credit hours are elective. Students may take these courses in any order.

Within the "theory" category, students have the option of taking one of three courses (SYA4010, SYA2120, SYA4511). Within the methods category (Sociological Analysis), students also have three options (SYA4300, SYA4310, SYA4400). In reviewing data since fall 2009, course offerings are actually more limited than the course catalog suggests. For example, within the "Methods" category, other than SYA4310 (Qualitative and/or Comparative-Historical Methods) which was taught twice (2009 and 2010), only SYA4300 has been taught. Hence, students are most likely receiving no statistical training at the undergraduate level. Similarly, within the Theory category, only SYA4010 (Sociological Theory) has been taught on the Davie campus and only SYA4010 and



SYA4120 (Contemporary Social Theory) has been taught on the Boca Raton campus. Although students may receive adequate theoretical training in a general theory course, they are probably not receiving adequate training in statistics and methods.

The four substantive areas, from which students must take a minimum of three hours per area, appear to reflect faculty areas of expertise rather than disciplinary areas or desired student learning outcomes. For example, analysis of four semesters (spring 2010, spring 2011, spring 2012, fall 2011), shows that only one course in category D (Culture, Identity and Sociology of Everyday Life) was taught on Davie campus; during these same semesters, only one course listed in category A (Global Sociology) was offered on the Boca Raton campus, although faculty did teach Special Topics courses in this area during each of the other semesters. These findings support to some degree undergraduate students' concern that it was difficult to satisfy requirements within the four categories due to lack of offerings. By contrast, multiple special topics courses (which count as general electives) are often taught each semester. For instance, during spring 2012 alone, e.g., six special topics courses were offered (two were cancelled) on Boca Raton campus. Again, it appears that course offerings correspond to faculty areas of expertise and interests rather than dictated by a sociological framework designed to achieve specific learning outcomes. Undergraduate students also noted that they did not see real differences between courses taught across categories nor did they understand why particular substantive distinctions existed.

Similarly, according to faculty and students we interviewed, there is no distinction between 3000 and 4000 level courses in terms of skill development or substantive coverage. That is, there is no expectation that 4000 level courses will require more reading, writing, data analysis, and so forth.

The department has a well-developed assessment plan, with an emphasis on research, technical, analytical, and communication skills. As mentioned above, all students must successfully complete one of two theory courses. In addition, they must successfully complete one of three courses in Sociological Analysis: SYA4510 (Quantitative Methods), SYA4310 (Qualitative and/or Comparative Historical Methods), or SYA4300 (Survey of Methods). In each of these courses, students complete a research project or write an analytical paper on an issue central to contemporary sociology. On the face of it, it seems like the curriculum is designed to help students achieve the stated learning outcomes, but given that relevant courses are not offered on a regular basis, at least not at both campuses, the curriculum mapping the Department already intends to undertake as part of its assessment process will most likely demonstrate otherwise.

Sociology departments often develop student learning outcomes that emphasize disciplinary knowledge rather than job-related skills. In contrast, the assessment plan for this sociology department emphasizes skills almost to the exclusion of other discipline-specific knowledge. Such an assessment plan seems appropriate for a department where most of the graduates pursue applied positions but is also appropriate for those students who decide to pursue graduate degrees. It is not clear, however, how successful students are in obtaining jobs that require these skills because the Department does not currently

collect job placement data on its graduates. Furthermore the assessment plan does not reflect the structure of the undergraduate curriculum which, as discussed above, is structured around content areas where faculty have expertise rather than around skills.

The Department also contributes to the Intellectual Foundations Program by offering two courses under Foundations of Society and Human Behavior (Sociological Perspectives and Social Problems) and two under Foundations in Global Citizenship (Global Society and Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality). The learning outcomes for both of these areas are not only compatible with the goals of most sociology programs, but actually specify content knowledge not covered by the Department's own learning outcomes which, with the exception of one critical thinking goal, could serve as generic learning goals for most social science programs. This general education curriculum is under revision and sociology is likely to enroll more students as a result.

Advisement of undergraduate students is currently handled officially through the university/college advisers. Several undergraduate students remarked that they found this resource to be unsatisfactory, however. Instead, most mentioned that they consulted faculty members about which courses they should take. As a consequence, certain faculty (who tend to be sought out most often as resources) are unofficially assuming more service but receive no recognition for doing so. It also appears that mean ratings from student satisfaction surveys of advising by college advising office (2.7) and by faculty (3.0) were somewhat low.

**Recommendation #2: Create a more enriched learning experience for sociology majors.** The American Sociological Association's Taskforce on the Undergraduate Major recommends that students majoring in sociology have "repeated experiences in posing sociological questions, developing theoretical explanations, and bringing data to bear on them." We believe some sociology majors at FAU, especially those planning to attend graduate school, would benefit greatly from experience applying theory and methods. To facilitate such an experience, several options exist.

- a. Develop a capstone course that allows students to read and discuss contemporary sociological research, participate in data analysis, and make results of their study public (e.g., presenting posters or papers at conferences, or publishing in [undergraduate] research journals). In order to do so, the sociology program at FAU would need to develop a course that is devoted to serving a small number of select students and one restricted to majors.
- b. Develop dual-level course(s) (4000/5000) that would also enroll graduate students. Such a course should be limited to majors and graduate students.
- c. Create Honors in the Major program in sociology in which students gain direct experience conducting sociological research.

**Recommendation #3: Teach SYA4400 (Quantitative Methods) on a regular basis.** We recommend all sociology majors be trained in basic social statistics. In order to provide this training, the department should consider requiring SYA4400. SYA4300 and

SYA4310 could be offered as elective courses (or perhaps serve as a capstone course discussed above).

**Recommendation #4: Consider restructuring major around skills rather than substantive areas.** As noted above, the four substantive areas lack clear organizational rationale. In addition, courses taught at the 3000 level versus 4000 level are not clearly distinct. We recommend that the department consider restructuring the curriculum to provide greater coherence. One possibility is to structure the curriculum around skills. For example, 3000-level courses could be (re)designed so that basic sociological perspectives and theoretical foundations were integral to the course; 4000-level courses could be (re)designed to emphasize contemporary empirical research, writing, more sophisticated sociological analysis, and so on. The ASA's goals for the sociology major (McKinney et al., 2004) could provide insights into which areas (including broad substantive categories) to emphasize.

**Recommendation #5: Align learning outcomes with the structure of the undergraduate major.** Whatever the decision about whether to reconfigure the undergraduate major requirements as a skill-based curriculum, the learning outcomes need to be aligned with the requirements for the program. Furthermore, a curriculum map needs to be developed and used to decide upon what courses will be offered each semester to allow students the opportunity to achieve whatever learning outcomes are established.

**Recommendation #6: Strengthen academic advising.** Because the faculty members are already stretched, we do not recommend that academic advising be moved officially to the Department. Rather, we recommend that the Department explore ways to build stronger communication between the sociology department and academic advising. Annual meetings with academic advisors in order to educate them about course offerings, the nature of undergraduate courses and requirements for majors and minors is recommended. It would also be helpful to prepare materials about the major (e.g., "quick facts" or FAQs) to share with advisors.

**Recommendation #7: Collect job placement data.** For the purposes of accountability and student recruitment, the Department should collect job placement statistics on graduates and if possible, those who leave the program for various reasons.

### **The Graduate Program**

The Department of Sociology currently offers a Masters of Arts degree. There are two options: Specialist (thesis) and Generalist (non-thesis). During academic year 2011-2012, 24 MA students were enrolled and 11 degrees were awarded. Student Perception of Teaching ratings suggest that quality of instruction is consistent with college and university means. Despite this consistency, our review suggests that the graduate program is one of the main areas that need strengthening.

The Masters' degree is a 36-hour program. Students are required to take one theory course, one methods course, and an additional 30 credit hours of electives (for the Generalist degree) or 24 hours elective and 6 hours thesis (for the Specialist degree). Based on course listings for the past four years (fall 2009-2013), the Department has offered between two and five regular elective courses each semester. Course offerings are varied and sufficient to allow students to graduate in two years, but many of the courses in the catalog are not offered during a two year period and graduate students did express frustration over a lack of elective options. Overall course enrollments for those courses offered are robust.

A deficit in graduate training is the lack of training in quantitative methods, a core skill for sociologists whether they work outside the academy or within it. Over the past four years (fall 2009-spring 2013), qualitative methods has been taught twice and research methods only once. There is no social statistics course being offered. Currently, computer facilities in the department are not adequate to allow students to conduct quantitative analysis or for faculty to teach courses in statistics.

The vast majority of students do not pursue the Specialist (thesis) option (spring 2010 was last semester a student was enrolled in thesis hours). Indeed, there was strong agreement among students we interviewed that pursuing the thesis option was discouraged. Students in the Generalist (non-thesis option) graduate without a capstone requirement. As a result, most students participate in no "capstone" experience in which they bring theory, research, and cumulative sociological knowledge to bear on a theoretical question or practical problem. Many of the best graduate assistants opted to accept department invitations to teach a class, an experience they saw related to their professional development but also as demanding enough to preclude the completion of a thesis.

Although in the self-study document it states that the graduate program has been improved in response to assessments, which is to be commended, it is not clear what learning outcomes were assessed or what the specific results were. Nonetheless, in response to assessment results, the Department intends to move in the direction of an individual-centered approach to student development during graduate education in recognition that not all students start in or want to end up in the same places.

Although students remarked positively about faculty availability, many did not feel that they received adequate mentoring. Unless students decide to complete a thesis, they are not assigned a faculty advisor. Furthermore, with the exception of those who teach a class, graduate assistants tend to perform routine tasks for faculty, often without needing much contact with them. Students who are not planning to pursue a doctoral degree feel they have not been introduced to alternatives. Students, both those planning to pursue a PhD and those hoping to obtain a job outside of the academy, expressed strong interest in more involvement in faculty research, including co-authoring and co-presenting at professional meetings. Faculty, on the other hand, expressed concerns about moving in this direction given the low-level of writing and research skills of some students.

Although not all graduates intend to go on for doctoral work, many do. Our review suggests that these students may not be adequately prepared to succeed in these programs for four reasons: lack of quantitative training, preponderance of non-thesis students, lack of publications with faculty, and limited travel to conferences. These conclusions are consistent with graduate student comments which indicated a lack of guidance on what is expected, a desire for research opportunities, and an interest in having an assigned faculty advisor.

**Recommendation # 8: Reduce required hours to 30 for Masters' program.** Given the heavy demands for undergraduate teaching, it may be advisable to reduce the number of hours required of masters' students from 36 to 30. This would not alleviate the course-load problem, however, since the number of sections of graduate-level courses should not be reduced. It would allow more time for students to focus on thesis research, however. Under such a model, full-time students would enroll in nine credit hours during fall and spring of Year One, nine hours during fall of Year Two (three of which should be thesis credit), and three hours of thesis in spring of Year Two.

**Recommendation #9: Develop student learning outcomes for each option in the graduate program and individualized plans of study to achieve them.** Although the student learning outcomes for both options should overlap considerably and can probably be addressed in the same sociology courses, a discussion of possible distinctions would help faculty develop the student-centered approach they describe in the Academic Program Review document. Depending on the career a student plans to pursue, however, some electives, cognate courses, and graduate teaching assistant experiences may be more useful than others. In developing plans of study to enable graduate students to achieve their designated learning outcomes, it will be important to consider the student experience outside of the classroom as well as in it.

**Recommendation # 10: Require social statistics course of all masters' students.** If resources within the department are not available to teach such a course, the department should coordinate with other departments (e.g., political science) to do so.

**Recommendation #11: Develop dual-level enrollment courses.** Dual-level enrollment courses would also provide more coursework and research opportunities for graduate students. Graduate students were highly receptive to the idea of taking courses with strong undergraduate students. As mentioned under Recommendation #2, these courses would also contribute to a more enriched learning experience for undergraduate sociology majors.

**Recommendation #12: Consider offering an accelerated BA/MA.** The department should consider an accelerated BA/MA degree, since it draws some of its best students from the undergraduate program. Many programs at FAU have adopted the accelerated degree, which allows a student to start taking graduate courses in the senior year and count them towards both the undergraduate and graduate degrees. A student could have 9 credits of the graduate degree completed by the first semester of graduate status, and thus

be 25% finished with the MA degree. Accelerated degrees are common in the Engineering program, and there are several in the Science programs.

**Recommendation #13: Develop and teach a pro-seminar course for graduate students.** The graduate students with whom we spoke expressed frustration with the lack of guidelines for helping them transition successfully into graduate-level work. We recommend that the Department develop and teach a required pro-seminar during the fall semester of students' first year designed to prepare them to learn the skills necessary for their futures in the academy or applied settings. Such a course would expose students to sociology as a field, introduce them to alternative career possibilities, emphasize disciplinary and professional writing, teach them to develop research questions and proposals, and cover other matters pertaining to professional socialization (Reviewer Liz Grauerholz has been taught such a seminar; her syllabus is included in the Appendix.)

**Recommendation #14: Restructure the graduate teaching assistant program into a training program.** Rather than assigning graduate teaching assistants to specific faculty, assign them to specific tasks, rotating them through a series of experiences designed to support their professional development and ending with their assignment during their final semester as assistants to a task as directly related as possible to the career they wish to pursue. Not only would this approach allow for the centralization of support for faculty and perhaps introduce efficiencies, it would allow students to experience a sense of development as they moved from routine tasks they could accomplish without much experience to tasks that require greater knowledge of the discipline and professional skills.

**Recommendation #15: Increase faculty-student collaborations.** Some of the recommendations made thus far, such as requiring the students to take a pro-seminar emphasizing writing and research skills, restructuring the graduate assistant experience to enhance professional development, and encouraging more graduate students to complete theses, might make the possibility of collaborating with students more attractive to faculty. In addition, faculty should invite more discussion about ongoing research projects with students. These conversations could take place in a pro-seminar or in "brown-bags" in which faculty and graduate students present their research. Hosting events and outside speakers could also facilitate these conversations and shift the culture of the department to one that values and emphasizes collaboration between faculty and students.

**Recommendation #16: Increase graduate stipends.** The stipends the graduate assistants in the Sociology Department receive are not competitive, even at FAU, where Science stipends have been frozen at \$5000 per semester for more than ten years. Sociology stipends are even less. The college needs to raise stipends for Sociology, or the Department should consider the impact of offering fewer assistantships at higher rates. The efficiencies introduced by centralizing the work of graduate teaching assistants as part of a training program could help reduce the need for student teaching assistants and offset the increase in stipends.

## Faculty

There are sixteen full-time faculty divided between two campuses—seven tenure-track and four non-tenure track faculty on the Boca Raton campus and four tenure-track and one non-tenure track faculty member on the Davie campus. The faculty are diverse in gender and ethnicity, a reflection of the students who are generally attracted to sociology. Faculty research productivity varies, and they are appropriately engaged in service to the department, college, university, profession, and community.

Seventy-five percent of the classes are taught by full-time faculty. The standard teaching assignment for non-tenure track faculty is 4/4 and for tenure-track faculty it is 3/2. The annualized FTE is higher in sociology (33.0) than for the College of Arts and Letters average (19.8) and University average (17.0), which is a result of larger class sizes. At the graduate level, Sociology's average annualized FTE (.7) is comparable to that of the College of A&L (.8) but lower than the average for the University (2.5). Given that the Department and College of A&L does not have a functioning doctoral program, this relatively low graduate FTE is consistent with expectations. Nonetheless, the 3/2 teaching load seems low for a faculty not overseeing many capstone projects in addition to classroom teaching responsibilities, and especially low for those who are less productive as researchers.

Although together the faculty on the two campuses that comprise the Department are sufficient to cover the key substantive areas typically included in Sociology programs, almost all faculty use historical-comparative or qualitative methods. Unless the Department wants to describe its programs as non-quantitative, which seems unlikely given their current student learning outcomes, this imbalance represents a weakness of the faculty.

It is not really possible, however, to discuss “the Faculty” assigned to the undergraduate and graduate programs, because there appear to be three faculties—the lower-division faculty who teach exclusively on the Boca Raton campus, the upper-division and graduate faculty who teach on the Boca Raton campus, and the upper-division faculty who teach on the Davie campus (articulation agreements prohibit the teaching of lower-level courses at the Davie campus). The lower-division faculty and upper division faculty on the Boca Raton campus seem to be distinguished from each other mainly by a matter of emphasis in their orientation to undergraduate students, with the lower-division faculty focusing more on inclusiveness and access and the upper-division faculty more concerned with student excellence. This difference is totally understandable given that lower-division faculty welcome students to FAU and the upper-division faculty prepare them to graduate, but as discussed in the section on the department's mission, this difference needs to be recognized and addressed.

The differences between the upper-division faculty on the two campuses run deeper. Historically these faculties were separate and had very distinct departmental identities.

The Boca Raton department was designed to offer a general program in Sociology while the Davie department developed more focused expertise in World Systems theory. Although some more advanced students benefit from the depth of knowledge Davie faculty have to share in this area and the Department is nationally-known for its contributions in this area, the concentration of faculty with a shared focus in a department that offers two general degree programs to students who are unlikely to become academic sociologists is a luxury.

Based on current workload expectations (4/4 or 3/2) and faculty distribution, on the Boca Raton campus seven tenure-track faculty and four non-tenure track faculty can teach 67 sections per year and on the Davie campus, four tenure-track faculty and one non-tenure track faculty can teach 28 sections (minus two or three when Davie faculty teach graduate seminars). Therefore the Davie faculty have the capacity to teach 29-30% of the course sections offered for both programs.

The review found that a greater burden of the undergraduate program is carried by the Boca Raton faculty, who meet the high demand for courses on their campus by teaching larger sections. For example, all IFP courses, for which there are multiple sections each semester, are held on the Boca campus. Based on fall 2012 “headcount” data provided, Davie campus enrolled 22.81% of all students. In terms of SCH/FTE Productivity data provided, the divide between the two campus was fairly equal in 2007-2008 but has become less equitable since (in 2011-2012, the percent attributable to Davie was 33.36%).

**Recommendation #17: Create a more equitable workload between Boca and Davie campuses.**

Faculty on the Boca Raton campus do appear to be carrying a heavier load, not only in terms of undergraduate education but in terms of graduate education as well. Although there may be too many structural challenges to creating a truly equitable division, one possibility would be for Davie faculty to develop and teach courses online, which would allow students on Boca Raton campus to enroll (we should note that one faculty member from the Davie campus is currently training to teach online). It should also be noted, however, that students with whom we spoke were not in favor of online courses so before such a change were made, it would be important to determine whether the demand exists. If new faculty lines open, these should be allotted to the Boca Raton campus. Another solution might be to transfer a line to the Boca Raton campus from the Davie campus.

**Recommendation #18: Allocate a faculty line for a new hire with expertise in quantitative methods and statistics.**

If a new faculty line is not available to be allocated to the Boca Raton campus for someone with expertise in quantitative methods and statistics, the Department should identify a non-tenure track faculty member to hire in this area. Even if the Department decides to supplement its offerings by allowing students to take courses on these topics in



another social science department, the graduate students will need additional support in this area from within the Department.

**Recommendation #19: If no additional lines are forthcoming, prioritize expansion goals and cut back on successful course offerings to accommodate change.**

The Sociology Department is experiencing more demand for courses than the current faculty can meet. We would like to recommend the allocation of more than one additional line to Sociology, but recognize such a recommendation might not be implemented in this fiscal situation. In the future, if no additional lines are forthcoming, the Department will likely be forced to prioritize any expansion goals and to cut back on successful offerings in order to accommodate change.

### **Other Resources**

A review of other resources revealed the following additional areas where increases are needed:

**Recommendation #20: Identify additional large classroom spaces for sociology instruction.** A number of sociology classes could be expanded in size if there were larger classrooms available. FAU is limited in the number of large classrooms and all degree programs are forced to compete for the same space. This severely limits the ability of the Sociology program to expand class sizes at a time when they are rapidly increasing the number of students at the University. The needs of the Sociology Department relative to other departments with large enrollments should be compared and room assignments prioritized accordingly.

**Recommendation #21: Provide a computer lab to foster the development of student quantitative and qualitative analysis skills.** The software requirements for Sociology are simple: SPSS and a qualitative data analysis program are the main ones needed. The science college mathematics lab or the Geosciences undergraduate teaching labs could be models and should be explored and investigated for the purpose of designing a methods lab for sociology.

**Recommendation #22: Provide the Department with assistance in updating, maintaining, and expanding its web presence.** It is likely that this is true of other departments in the College. Perhaps the College could benefit from a web designer position, shared between departments.

**Recommendation #23: Provide more funding for travel for faculty and students.** Travel support for students and faculty is very low. The College and Department need to think of better ways to fund faculty and student participation in professional conferences. Their attendance at professional meetings will help market the FAU program. Perhaps the College can provide matching funds when the students apply for money from the Graduate Student Association.

**Recommendation #24: Create two advisory committees (one undergraduate and one graduate) and appoint faculty members to chair each.** Appoint two standing committees, one to advise the chair on the undergraduate program and one to advise her on the graduate program. Consider giving the chairs of these committees each a course release time for one year to work with the Department Head to develop and coordinate the implementation of changes in response to this departmental review.

### Conclusions

In many respects, the Department of Sociology at FAU is doing a fine job with limited resources. The faculty seem genuinely devoted to undergraduate teaching and the Department plays an important role within the larger institutional structure in terms of undergraduate education. The Department has maintained a Master's program with a healthy enrollment.

The Department posed several questions to the review team in their Self-Study. Specifically:

How can we develop a curriculum that is more effective at the cumulative development of student skills and disciplinary knowledge, given the constraints posed for us by the nature of our student body (part-time, multi-campus, often poorly prepared for academic success), the necessity of maintaining access and timely completion of degree, and our relatively small number of faculty?

Given the relatively large size of our upper-division classes, what can we do to enhance the effectiveness of our BA program? Given our commitment to working with students who are highly motivated but may lack strong academic preparation, we are concerned about our effectiveness for the full range of students in the major. In this document, we describe various strategies that we are considering. Are there alternate or additional strategies that we should be considering?

What could we be doing to more effectively recruit students to our MA program? What could we – or are we – doing in the MA program that is distinctive enough to be featured in recruitment and appealing enough to potential students to draw them here?

Recommendations related to these questions are found throughout this report but here we highlight some key suggestions.

- Revise the curriculum to focus on skills while also ensuring that core sociological knowledge is covered. For guidance on such skills and content, we recommend the faculty read and discuss McKinney, et al.'s 2004 *Liberal Learning and the Sociology Major Updated* (published by ASA).
- Create unique learning experiences for upper-level students/majors by developing dual-level and capstone courses. Once these changes are in place, the Department may wish to develop additional courses restricted to undergraduate majors.
- If the Department decides to retain the Master's program, it must divert more resources to the program in order to recruit students and provide a quality graduate education to these students. Competitive stipends would help recruit students from outside FAU.

As we noted at the beginning of this report, whatever changes the Department decides to make in response to this review process, the Department should begin with a serious discussion of its goals for students and how these can be obtained with limited resources. Implementation of these recommendations most likely will require reallocation of resources and therefore will require difficult decision-making concerning the faculty's values and the Department's mission.

## APPENDIX

### **SYA 5625: ProSeminar in Applied Sociology Fall 2012 Wednesdays, 6-8:50 p.m. PH 406I**

Professor Liz Grauerholz  
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3026

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Office hours: Tues 2-3, Thurs 4-5, or by appt

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## OBJECTIVES

The primary purpose of the *Proseminar* is to prepare new sociology graduate students for a successful career in graduate school and beyond. To this end, you will develop and practice certain skills required of graduate students such as presenting papers to audiences, critiquing others' works, critically evaluating and synthesizing literature, and developing a vita. You will also be introduced to the faculty in the Sociology department to learn about their areas of teaching and research, which will be helpful as you plan your course work and consider thesis or research options. This is also a setting where you will receive advice and information about graduate school, including common obstacles, available resources and ways to navigate this new terrain.

## STRUCTURE

The typical structure of graduate seminars is the cooperative discussion group rather than lecture format more common in undergraduate courses. In order to facilitate discussion, graduate seminars are purposely kept small and conducted in a room where everyone can see each other. This also means that you must come to class prepared, having read the materials and able to discuss and analyze the issues, as it's impossible to be "invisible" in the class. Indeed, the main difference between graduate and undergraduate education is that in graduate school, the responsibility for learning is placed squarely on the student rather than the instructor. As such, you are expected to take more responsibility and initiative in graduate school than you probably did as an undergraduate. That starts here, in the Proseminar, but will be expected throughout your graduate career. The structure of this course ("M") will require considerable initiative on your part as we will meet in person half the time, and the rest will be conducted online. Thus, there will be some structure and support, but you must be self-directed, self-

motivated and invested in your own learning. This is the essence of graduate education and you will begin to ease into that role in the Proseminar.

Unlike other graduate courses, this class is somewhat light on readings and heavy on projects. This is intended to allow you to focus on substantive literature in other classes and to allow more time to practice skills in this class to prepare you for and sustain you in your graduate work. Thus, each week you will have assignments for this class but you will not be expected to complete a major research paper at the end of the semester.

### **A NOTE ABOUT “BUSYWORK” AND LEARNING**

This course may strike you as a bunch of “busywork,” which the dictionary defines as “active work of little value.” It is true that there is much “active work” required in this course—weekly assignments, sometimes multiple ones. While these may seem to be of little value, I assure you that I have spent considerable time thinking about the key skills needed to succeed in graduate school and constructing activities that will build or hone those skills. Some of you may already have mastered a skill so completing a particular assignment may seem unnecessary; in these cases, seize the chance to practice the skill or better yet, breeze through the assignment and assist someone else in class who is not as proficient. Doing so will not only help the other student and build goodwill, but will improve another valuable skill--teaching.

As a final note, in the past I’ve noticed that those students who feel the course is just busywork are typically the worst procrastinators. If you procrastinate in this course, you *will* fail (remember, B is passing). If you are such an individual, then use this course to practice time management skills, which are essentially to success in graduate school.

### **READINGS**

#### **Required**

Johnson, William A., Richard P. Rettig, Gregory M. Scott and Stephen M. Garrison. 2010. *Sociology Student Writer’s Manual*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition. Pearson.

Journal articles online.

Handouts, available on Webcourses.

#### **Recommended**

Becker, Howard S. 2007. *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Locke, Lawrence F., Stephen J. Silverman and Waneen Wyrick Spirduso. 2010. *Reading and Understanding Research*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

**Webcourses.** All written assignments should be submitted electronically via Webcourses (WC), unless instructed otherwise, and all (graded) online discussions will take place over WC. You are expected to keep track of grades on WC as well. Thus, if you're not familiar with WC, it's time to learn. Remember to check WC daily.

**Attendance and Participation:** *Everyone* is expected to attend all classes and come prepared to participate in class discussion. Participation *does* count, and you will obviously lose participation points if you miss classes.

**Penalties for Late Assignments:** All assignments are due by 6 pm on the due date, unless specified otherwise. Unless prior arrangements have been made, 10 points will be deducted from your *final course* grade for each day an assignment is late.

**Incompletes:** An incomplete will be granted only in accordance with university policy.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Plagiarism is one of the most serious offenses within academia. After all, the most tangible product of our professional efforts is the written word. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and any incident of plagiarism will result in appropriate consequences. This is likely to mean failing the course, and a letter in your file. In egregious cases, I will recommend expulsion from the graduate program. If you have *any* question about what constitutes plagiarism, it is imperative that you ask me or another faculty member to clarify the boundaries.

**Contacting the professor:** If you need to get in touch with me outside of class, the best method is via email. I am usually quite prompt in responding—within a day—unless I am out of town or it's the weekend (I rarely check email on weekends). I will inform you if I am out of town and unavailable. Otherwise, you can expect to hear from me within 48 hours. If you have not heard back from me—call and leave a message—it's likely that I didn't get the email.

## **REQUIREMENTS (listed in order of when due)**

### **1. Personal statement (due Aug 26 ) (50 pts)**

**Part 1:** Write a short paper (approx 500 words) describing: 1) your own reasons (personal and/or professional) for wanting a master's degree, 2) your expectations of what graduate school at UCF will be like (as well as your expectations of faculty and your fellow graduate students), 3) any barriers you perceive that might prevent your success in graduate school.

**Part 2:** Indicate your area of research interest and one or two faculty members who you could approach about your interests.

**Submit via WC.**

## **2. CITI training (due Aug 31) (50 pts)**

To conduct research involving people you must receive training on conducting ethical research. This is required before IRB (Internal Review Board) at UCF will approve any type of research. To complete the training, go to the website for the Office of Research & Commercialization ([www.research.ucf.edu](http://www.research.ucf.edu)) -> compliance -> IRB -> Training and Education -> UCF Investigator Educational Requirement. **Save a copy of your certification and submit via Webcourses as an attachment, or present a hard copy to Dr. G.**

## **3. Locating and reading research studies (due Sept 14) (100 pts total)**

Locate 1 quantitative and 1 qualitative refereed study. These should be on the topic you plan to focus on in this class and (ideally) through your Masters' program. You must answer questions about both studies, then choose one for a more focused analysis. You will also be asked to reflect on the process.

**Part 1: Comparing qualitative and quantitative studies (40 pts):** 1) What methods were used in the studies? 2) What major difference do you see? Here you should not be concerned with findings, but rather in the structure of the research report, language, how researchers make their cases, etc. 3) Were these studies published in refereed journals? How do you know? 4) Do you find one of the studies more credible than the other? Why or why not? 5) List all unfamiliar concepts ("language") that you think may be important to understanding the phenomena being studied.

**Part 2: Reading a research study critically (40 pts):** Choose one of the studies for a detailed, critical analysis. If it is a quantitative study, complete questions listed in Locke, et al. Form 7.1 (on WC); use Locke et al. Form 11.1 (on WC) if it is qualitative.

**Part 3: Reflection (20%).** How much time did it take you to complete Parts 1 and 2 above? Was this significantly different from the way you read as an undergraduate? What did you learn from this exercise that will help you in graduate school?

**Turn in answers to Parts 1 and 2, along with Reflection, via WC.**

## **4. Survey of studies and identifying gap in literature (due Sept 19) (50 pts)**

**Part 1: Survey of studies.** Read at least 6 *additional* studies that are directly related to your topic (these may be reviews). As you do, keep in mind questions posed by Locke, et al, Table 2.1. (on WC). Make certain you make detailed notes on each study—these must be included in an Appendix.

**Part 2: Identify gaps in literature.** Based upon your literature review, identify gaps in what we currently know about the area.

**Submit notes/maps for each of the studies you reviewed and list of gaps you identified via WC.**

## **5. Checking it out and developing a research Q (due Sept 28) (50 pts)**

**Part 1: Narrow in on gap(s).** Choose one or two of the most interesting gaps you identified in assignment 4. Now, check it out. Conduct a quick library search to

find out if others have addressed this gap adequately. Create a list of all sources you checked out or those that look interesting and relevant and plan to check out later. This should be in ASA style.

**Part 2: Develop your research question.** Based upon what you've learned in Part 1, develop a research question that will help address this gap. What appropriate method might be used to address this gap?

**Part 3: Significance of problem.** In one paragraph, state why an answer to this question is important. For example: What debate does it address? What implications does it have for understanding the social world or solving social problems? Why is this question sociologically important?

**Submit list of reference, research question & possible method, and significance of problem via WC.**

### **6. Compose an Introduction (due Oct 3) (50 pts)**

Now that you've identified a research question/problem, write your Introduction. This should clearly frame your study in a broader literature and clearly specify your research question. Keep in concise and straightforward, usually no more than 3 paragraphs.

**Submit to WC**

### **7. Draft of Literature Review (due Oct 17) (50 pts)**

Conduct a review of the scholarly literature related to your research topic. This review must be a *synthesis* of the literature. Take care to **avoid** the following: 1) "and then" writing, or chronological narrative that represents a simple summary of the literature, 2) "all about" writing, or encyclopedic approach that says a little about everything, and 3) "data dumping" that puts everything out there with no discernable structure. Follow the principles outlined by Johnson, et al. and use as a model the best study you have found during your research.

A minimum of 8 empirical sources must be used. The paper should be double spaced and approximately 2500 words, not including references.

Include Introduction with the Literature Review when you submit to peer reviewers.

**Submit to instructor AND peer reviewers via WC.**

### **8. Peer review I (due Oct 24) (50 pts)**

You will be assigned to a writing group, consisting of 2-3 students from the course. These peers will read and critique your literature review, and you will be expected to do the same for them. You are expected to provide thoughtful, constructive written feedback to your group members, and to turn in your polished work to others on time. Further guidelines will be provided on WC.

**Submit reviews to peers via WC, and copy instructor.**

### **9. Professional conferences and journals (due Oct 26) (50 pts)**

**Part 1: Conferences.** Locate a professional conference that would be appropriate for your research. Explore the perimeters of the conference: Where is it held?



Dates? What is the process of submitting proposals? What types of sessions does the conference offer? Where do you see yourself fitting in?

Outline, in writing, the conference you plan to attend, the paper are you planning to submit, the type of session you will submit it to, and the process (deadline, submission protocols, etc.).

**Part 2: Journals.** List 3 sociological journals that publish the type of research you plan to conduct and in which you think you have a reasonable chance of being published.

**Submit conference and journal write-ups via WC.**

### **10. Draft of research proposal (due Oct 31) (50 pts)**

The first part of the research proposal has been written—your introduction, research question, significance, and literature review. Now write the methods section. Keep in mind that you will be using *future* tense rather than past tense because you are describing what you will be doing.

**Submit to writing group members, and copy instructor, via WC.**

### **11. Peer Review II (due Nov 9) (50 pts)**

In your writing group, exchange proposals and critique each others' works.

**Submit reviews of peers' work on WC, and copy instructor.**

### **12. POS & CV (due Nov. 14) (50 pts)**

**Part I:** Download the Plan of Study form from the departmental website and complete the form, based upon information you currently have.

**Part II:** After reviewing faculty CVs and templates, you will create your own CV. Bring 2 copies to class.

**Bring hard copy to class, as we will be finalizing them during class.**

### **13. Final Research Proposal & memo (due Nov 21) (100 pts)**

**Part I: Submit your final literature review.** The same criteria outlined for the draft apply but this copy should have incorporated the suggestions you received from your writing group and instructor.

**Part II: Memo.** Provide a memo/letter outlining the changes you made in response to comments by your writing group members, or rationale for not making certain changes. This memo must accompany the final proposal. Obviously, if you turned in your draft late (or not at all), you may not receive comments and therefore will not be able to adequately complete this assignment.

**Submit revised and final draft, and accompanying memo, via WC.**

### **14. Poster presentation (Nov 28 or Dec 5) (50 pts)**

Create a one-slide Powerpoint presentation ("poster") on your proposed research. Present the poster to the class.

### **15. Online discussions (ongoing) (100 pts)**

The course meets half the time online so online discussions are an integral part of the course. Most weeks there will be topics introduced on Webcourses discussion that require your response. Although there are specific topics/questions raised,

you should feel free to use the discussion board to raise other concerns and questions about graduate school that you might have.

**16. Class participation (ongoing) (100 pts)**

You are expected to participate in class discussions on a regular basis. Of course, to do so you must come to class prepared, having read and pondered the readings and engaged in class assignments.

**GRADING SCALE\***

Letter Grade	Percentage	Points
A	93.5-100	935-1000
A-	89.5-93.4	895-934
B+	86.5-89.4	865-894
B	83.5-86.4	835-864
B-	79.5-83.4	795-834
C+	76.5-79.4	765-794
C	73.5-76.4	735-764
Etc.		

- SYA5625 is a core, required course for the MA in sociology. You must earn B or better for it to count toward your degree.

**Outline: Dates, topics and assignments**

\*highlighted weeks indicate face-to-face meetings

<p><b>Week 1: August 22</b></p>	<p><i>What have I gotten myself into?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• Expectations for graduate school</li> <li>• The sociology MA degree at UCF</li> <li>• What it takes to succeed in graduate school and as a sociologist</li> <li>• Meet the faculty</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Explore</b> the UCF Soc departmental website especially the link to Current (Graduate) Students</li> <li><b>2. Online Discussion I</b> (post by Aug 26):               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you are new this fall, what surprises did you encounter during your first week?</li> <li>• If you entered during spring or summer, what would you give to new students?</li> <li>• What Qs do you have at this point about the program?</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>3. Submit</b> Personal Statement by Aug 26 via Web</li> </ol>
<p><b>Week 2: August 29</b></p>	<p><b>The discipline, ASA and professional associations</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Read</b> Johnson, et al., Introduction</li> <li><b>2. Explore</b> the ASA’s website at asanet.org and regional or specialty association or society (e.g. Southern Sociological Society (SSS), Society</li> </ol>

		<p>Study of Social Problems [SSSP] or American Association of Criminology [ASC])</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Read</b> at least 2 research report on the ASA website about the discipline (-&gt;Research on Sociology Trends in Sociology)</li> <li><b>Online Discussion II</b> (post by Aug 31): What do you learn about sociology as a discipline? What benefits does the ASA offer that might be of help to your career? What benefits do(es) the other associations offer? How much do the associations you are interested in cost for graduate students? Will you?</li> <li><b>Complete</b> CITI training &amp; submit certification via WC (by Aug 31)</li> </ol>
<b>Week 3: Sept 5</b>	<p><b>Graduate Careers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Socialization into the graduate student role</li> <li>Meet the faculty</li> <li>Graduate students discuss their journeys</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Read:</b> Shulman and Silver “The business of being a professional sociologist.” <i>The American Sociologist</i> 34(3): 56-72.</li> <li><b>Read:</b> Adler &amp; Adler “The identity career of the graduate student.” <i>The American Sociologist</i> 34(3) (for class)</li> <li><b>Begin reading</b> Part II (Conducting Research in Sociology) of Johnson, et al.</li> </ol>
<b>Week 4: Sept 12</b>	<p><b>What sociologists do</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Read:</b> Burawoy “2004 presidential address: for sociology.” <i>American Sociological Review</i> 70(1)</li> <li><b>Read:</b> Wright, et al. “Greedy institutions.” <i>Teaching Sociology</i> 32:144-159.</li> <li><b>Online Discussion III</b> (post by Sept 12): Do you see yourself as a sociologist? A public sociologist? After reading Wright, et al., do you think you want to work in academia? If so, what type of institution would you prefer and why? If not, what type of work/career do you see yourself pursuing?</li> <li><b>Read</b> Johnson, et al., Section 10.2, 10.3, &amp; 10.4</li> <li><b>Submit</b> Locating and reading research studies assignment (by Sept. 14)</li> </ol>
<b>Week 5: Sept 19</b>	<p><b>The research process &amp; ethics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thinking about research as process and outcome</li> <li>Ethical conduct in research</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Finish Reading</b> Johnson, et al., Part II and Chapter 12</li> <li><b>Submit</b> Survey of studies and identifying gaps in literature (by Sept 19)</li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet the faculty</li> </ul>	
<b>Week 6: Sept 26</b>	<p><b>Developing a research question &amp; getting focused</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What makes a good research Q?</li> <li>• Constructing your research Q</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Review</b> “Developing your research question” <a href="http://www.uk.sagepub.com/resources/oleary/oleary.ppt">www.uk.sagepub.com/resources/oleary/oleary.ppt</a></li> <li>2. <b>Revisit</b> the studies you reviewed for your survey studies. Can you clearly and easily identify the question? Pay attention to how questions are phrased by researchers.</li> <li>3. <b>Online Discussion II</b> (post by Sept 26): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What topic/area will you focus on for your project?</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. <b>Checking it out and developing a research question</b> (post by Sept 28)</li> </ol>
<b>Week 7: Oct 3</b>	<p><b>Mentoring and networking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding a mentor &amp; expectations for mentors</li> <li>• Why and how to network</li> <li>• Meet the faculty</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Read</b> Schulman “Things my mentor never told me” (class)</li> <li>2. <b>Read:</b> Stenken and Zajicek “The importance of mentoring and building networks for academic success.” <i>Anal Bioanal Chem</i> 396: 541-546.</li> <li>3. <b>Review</b> the Faculty Areas of Interests handout (class orientation). Come to class prepared to discuss projects that sound most interesting to you.</li> <li>4. <b>Submit</b> Compose an Introduction (due Oct 3)</li> </ol>
<b>Week 8: Oct 10</b>	<p><b>Putting it all together</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The literature review</li> <li>• Writing as private endeavor</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Read</b> Belcher “Designing your plan for writing a literature review”</li> <li>2. <b>Continue</b> working on your literature review</li> <li>3. <b>Reflect</b> upon your own writing style.</li> <li>4. <b>Online discussion V</b> (post by Oct 10): What are your own writing obstacles? What do you plan to do about this excuse, I mean ... obstacle?</li> </ol>
<b>Week 9: Oct 17</b>	<p><b>Writing as a public endeavor &amp; journals and publishing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet the faculty</li> <li>• Getting published</li> <li>• Submission and editorial processes</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Submit</b> Draft of literature review (due Oct 17) to instructor and peer reviewers via WC.</li> <li>2. <b>Read</b> Johnson, et al., Part III (A Handbook of Writing for Scientists)</li> </ol>
<b>Week 10: Oct 24</b>	<p><b>Writing as public endeavor, cont.</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Submit</b> Peer review I (by Oct 24)</li> <li>2. <b>Submit</b> Professional Conferences and Journal assignment (Oct 26)</li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The art of critique</li> <li>• Dealing with criticism</li> </ul>	<b>3. Online discussion VI</b> (post by Oct 26): Is sharing work with others a new experience? Was the process beneficial? How so or why not?
<b>Week 11: Oct 31</b>	<b>Research day</b>	<b>1. Submit Draft of research proposal</b> to writing members (due Oct 31)
<b>Week 12: Nov 7</b>	<b>Research day</b>	<b>1. Submit Peer Review II</b> (due Nov 9) <b>2. Continue working on revisions</b>
<b>Week 13: Nov 14</b>	<b>POS and CV (curriculum vitae)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet the faculty</li> <li>• Creating a CV</li> <li>• Finalizing your POS</li> </ul>	<b>1. Complete</b> your POS. Bring to class. <b>2. Review</b> faculty vita. Note what you like and don't like. <b>3. Complete</b> your CV. Bring 2 copies to class.
<b>Week 14: Nov 21</b>		<b>1. Submit</b> Final proposal and memo (Nov 21)
<b>Week 15: Nov 28</b>	<b>Wrapping up and presentations</b>	<b>1. Poster presentations</b>
<b>Week 16: Dec 5</b>	<b>Wrapping up and presentations</b>	<b>1. Poster presentations</b>

**APR Action Plan  
2013**

DEPARTMENT: SOCIOLOGY

#	Goals and Objectives Action Item	Individual(s) Responsible	Resources Needed	Action Taken/ Status	Projected Start Date	Target Date for Completion	Progress Review Date (if needed)	Funding Request	Dean's Support
<b>Recommendation 1: Prepare a mission statement</b>									
	Fall 2013: will collect and review mission statements from other FAU departments and from sociology departments at comparable universities; Spring, 2014 will formulate mission statement in conjunction with curricular revisions.	Chair and faculty	none	pending	9/1/2013	3/1/2014 to be submitted to the Dean of Arts & Letters for review	n/a	n/a	Yes, I support this course of action and encourage you to review College strategic plan as well.
<b>Recommendation 2: create a more enriched learning experience for sociology majors</b>									
	Will develop an Honors in the Major program to be submitted to curriculum committees for review in Spring 2014; will consider the feasibility of capstone course in a major offered on two campuses.	Chair, Undergraduate Program Committee, faculty	none	pending	9/1/2013	4/1/2014	9/1/14 Chair will report progress to Dean		I fully support the creation of a Honors in the Major program in Sociology.
<b>Recommendation 3: Teach quantitative methods on a regular basis</b>									
	By Fall 2015: Hire a new faculty member with particular expertise in this area; this would contribute directly to the University's undergraduate research initiative.	Dean	new line		Fall 2014 start search if position request is granted	Spring 2015 search completed		\$70,000 (salary and benefits)	The College has a prioritized list of position requests that have been submitted to the Provost, and this position is #6 on that list. Should funding become available, I would support this position.
<b>Recommendation 4: Consider restructuring major around skills rather than substantive areas</b>									

**APR Action Plan  
2013**

#	Goals and Objectives Action Item	Individual(s) Responsible	Resources Needed	Action Taken/ Status	Projected Start Date	Target Date for Completion	Progress Review Date (if needed)	Funding Request	Dean's Support
	During 2012-13, the department began discussing this restructuring. In 2013-14, we will: articulate the essential skills that should be developed in the major; develop a curriculum map in which those skills are embedded; develop consensus on the sequencing of skills; propose a restructured curriculum.	Chair, Undergraduate Program Committee; departmental faculty; curriculum committees at College and University level	none	underway	already started	4/1/2014		0	I support this initiative, especially since it matches FAU's strategic plan goals
<b>Recommendation 5: Align learning outcomes with the structure of the undergraduate major</b>									
	Curriculum restructuring will be the opportunity to create this alignment. Fall 2013: develop curriculum map. Spring 2014: align SLO's with curriculum map.	Chair and Undergraduate Program Committee	none	pending	9/1/2013	4/1/2014		0	I support this initiative, especially since it matches FAU's strategic plan goals
<b>Recommendation 6: Strengthen academic advising for BA</b>									
	Will implement semi-annual meetings with Student Academic Services; will provide Student Academic Services with semester-based updates on the major as well as FAQ's.	Chair, Director of Student Academic Services	none	pending	9/1/2013	10/15/2013		0	I would like to see a more developed plan for improving advising, along with detailed information on how students can best progress towards graduation in a timely manner
<b>Recommendation 7: Collect job placement data</b>									

**APR Action Plan  
2013**

#	Goals and Objectives Action Item	Individual(s) Responsible	Resources Needed	Action Taken/ Status	Projected Start Date	Target Date for Completion	Progress Review Date (if needed)	Funding Request	Dean's Support
	Fall 2014: canvas FAU for "best practices" on post-degree tracking; Spring 2014, implement post-degree tracking.	Chair	none	pending	9/1/2013	4/1/2013			I support this initiative, especially since it matches FAU's strategic plan goals
<b>Recommendation 8: Reduce required hours to 30 for Master's program</b>									
	Fall 2013: will consult with appropriate administrators on how/if this would be feasible. Spring 2014: either propose curricular change or report to Dean on the drawbacks to the idea.	Chair and faculty; Dean, Arts & Letters; Dean, Graduate College;	none	pending	9/1/2013	4/1/2014		0	I support since this would bring the dept. in line with other MA programs in the college whose thesis options are 30 credits.
<b>Recommendation 9: Develop student learning outcomes for each option in the graduate program and individualized plans of study to achieve them.</b>									
	Fall 2013: develop differentiated learning objective for the options within the degree program. Spring 2014: develop agreement on how learning objectives are embedded in graduate courses. Revise assessment plan to reflect new learning objectives.	Chair, Graduate Programs Committee	none	underway	8/23/2103	4/1/2014		0	I support this plan of action.
<b>Recommendation 10: Require social statistics course of all master's students</b>									



**APR Action Plan  
2013**

#	Goals and Objectives Action Item	Individual(s) Responsible	Resources Needed	Action Taken/ Status	Projected Start Date	Target Date for Completion	Progress Review Date (if needed)	Funding Request	Dean's Support
	This would require a new position: tenure-track faculty member who has training in social statistics as well as in a substantive research area. Department will explore available options at FAU as a stopgap measure until a hire can be made. F13: After the revision in MA option learning outcomes (Rec'n 9), will review whether this should be required in one or all options. F14: curricular revision finalized, submitted for review and approval.	Dean, Arts & Letters; Chair and Graduate Program Committee		pending	9/1/2013	Fall, 2014: new hire joins the faculty		\$70,000	No funding is available at this point. The Review Team suggested a joint appointment with Political Science. This can be discussed and proposed, and would be prioritized within all College needs. If funding were then made available, I would support this hire.
<b>Recoomendation 11: Develop dual-level enrollment courses</b>									
	The department is very interested in developing a class schedule that implements this suggestion.	Chair and Graduate Program Committee	This would save resources	pending	1/15/2014	August, 2014		0	I support this initiative which may create efficiencies in scheduling and curricula delivery
<b>Recommendation 12: Consider offering an accelerated BA/MA.</b>									

**APR Action Plan  
2013**

#	Goals and Objectives Action Item	Individual(s) Responsible	Resources Needed	Action Taken/ Status	Projected Start Date	Target Date for Completion	Progress Review Date (if needed)	Funding Request	Dean's Support
	Fall 2013: consult with deans of Arts and Letters and the Graduate College about BA/MA programs' desirability/feasibility; connect to initiatives in recommendations 2 and 9. Spring 14: propose accelerated BA/MA program or respond to Dean of Arts & Letters on why the recommendation should not be implemented at this time.	Chair and Graduate Program Committee	none	pending	9/1/2013	4/1/2014		0	I will wait on your report before deciding on whether or not to support this recommendation.
<b>Recommendation 13: develop and teach pro-seminar for graduate students</b>									
	If staffing resources permit. Develop seminar in Fall 13; propose course in Spring 14; offer for the first time in Fall 14.	Chair, Graduate Program Committee, and faculty	none	pending	9/1/2013	4/1/2104			This seems like an important initiative and I support its implementation.
<b>Recommendation 14: Restructure graduate teaching assistant program into a training program</b>									

**APR Action Plan  
2013**

#	Goals and Objectives Action Item	Individual(s) Responsible	Resources Needed	Action Taken/ Status	Projected Start Date	Target Date for Completion	Progress Review Date (if needed)	Funding Request	Dean's Support
	Evaluating the feasibility of this recommendation has to follow the restructuring of the BA curriculum, as the structure of the curriculum determines how GTA's must be deployed. Fall 2013: review current training and workshop structure; review "best practices" at similar institutions and in other departments at FAU. Spring 2014: revise assignment/training practices for implementation in Fall 2014.	Chair, Graduate Program Committee (for GTA assignments and training) and Undergraduate Program Committee (to determine the level/kind of assistance in the various classes) and faculty	none	pending	9/1/2013	4/1/2014 planning complete; Fall 2014, new system implemented			This should be a dept. priority. I support the plan.
				already underway: started with Blackboard training in Fall 2013; ongoing teacher-training workshops began in Summer 2013.		Will develop comprehensive training program for GTA's during the 2013/14 AY to be implemented with incoming cohort in Fall 2014.			
<b>Recommendation 15: Increase faculty-student collaborations</b>									

**APR Action Plan  
2013**

#	Goals and Objectives Action Item	Individual(s) Responsible	Resources Needed	Action Taken/ Status	Projected Start Date	Target Date for Completion	Progress Review Date (if needed)	Funding Request	Dean's Support
	Will implement recommendations of pro-seminars, "brownbag" presentations, and other methods for increased interaction and collaboration.	Chair, Graduate Program Committee, and faculty			9/1/2013	4/1/2014			I support this initiative.
<b>Recommendation 16: Increase graduate stipends</b>									
	If FAU is going to recruit and retain the best graduate students, stipends must be increased.	Dean, Arts & Letters; Dean, Graduate College	\$28,000 annually to raise 14 assistantships to \$10,000 each	pending				\$28,000 in continuing funds	If new funding becomes available for the College, this will be considered a priority.
<b>Recommendation 17: Create a more equitable workload between Boca and Davie campuses</b>									
	ongoing: will continue to emphasize full involvement of Davie faculty in graduate program through scheduling and advising assignments. Fall 2013, Undergraduate Programs Committee will consider strategies for lowering class sizes (while maintaining overall SCH) for 4000-level courses at the Boca campus. S13: propose curricular changes.	Chair (for assignments); Graduate Program Committee; Undergraduate Program Committee			9/1/2013	4/1/2014			Will request that these issues be discussed as part of a larger conversation about the future of College programs on Davie campus.
<b>Recommendation 18: Allocate a faculty line for a new hire with expertise in quantitative methods and statistics</b>									

**APR Action Plan  
2013**

#	Goals and Objectives Action Item	Individual(s) Responsible	Resources Needed	Action Taken/ Status	Projected Start Date	Target Date for Completion	Progress Review Date (if needed)	Funding Request	Dean's Support
	Request made for a new faculty line that would be central to revisions in the Department's methodological offerings and involvement in FAU's Undergraduate Research Initiative.	Dean of the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts & Letters, Provost						\$70,000/Asst Prof. line (NB: also under Recn. 3)	No funding is available at this time. Should funding become available, this position would be prioritized among all requests in the College.
<b>Recommendation 19: If no additional lines are forthcoming, prioritize expansion goals and cut back on successful course offerings to accommodate change</b>									
	Fall 2013, depending on Provost-level decisions about the request for a new line, will decide whether we can move ahead or have to cut back on plans/offerings.	Provost, Dean of Arts & Letters; Chair and faculty			9/1/2013	4/1/2014			I agree with this cautionary approach to future expansion without new resources.
<b>Recommendation 20: Identify additional large classroom spaces for sociology instruction</b>									
	Will work with the scheduling office of the Registrar on space issues. Will also explore the use of hybrid classes to lessen the space crunch.	Chair, Associate Chair		pending	9/1/2013	4/1/2014			Hybrid formats may be a good solution for future growth.
<b>Recommendation 21: Provide a computer lab to foster the development of student quantitative and qualitative analysis skills.</b>									

**APR Action Plan  
2013**

#	Goals and Objectives Action Item	Individual(s) Responsible	Resources Needed	Action Taken/ Status	Projected Start Date	Target Date for Completion	Progress Review Date (if needed)	Funding Request	Dean's Support
	Completed in Summer 2013 through a successful Technology Fee grant application			completed					Excellent.
<b>Recommendation 22: Provide Department with assistance in updating, maintaining and expanding its web presence</b>									
	Strongly recommend more College-level staffing for web assistance.	Dean, Arts & Letters							Will consider this request as budgets improve.
<b>Recommendation 23: Provide more funding for travel to professional conferences for faculty and graduate students</b>									
	Action: increase awareness of the many sources of funding for faculty and students.	Chair, faculty advisors to graduate students							Given the access Sociology has to the Morrow Fund, I agree that better communication of opportunities is in order.
<b>Recommendation 24: Create two advisory committees (one undergraduate and one graduate) and appoint faculty members to chair each</b>									
	These committees are already in place. The department consensus was that the chair should head them through the period of response to the program review, and then the department would deliberate on what the best system would be for leadership and routine responsibilities.	Chair, faculty		Done					I agree.