

Sociology

College of Arts

Dean's Summary

Submitted by:

Dr. Sylvie Murray, Dean, College of Arts

Accepted by:

Senate in June 2022

Academic Planning and Priorities Committee in May 2022

MEMORANDUM

Academic Planning and Priorities Committee

TO: Joanne MacLean, Chair, Senate

FROM: James Mandigo, Chair, Academic Planning and Priorities Committee

CC: Sylvie Murray, Dean, College of Arts; Chantelle Marlor, Director, School of Culture, Media, and Society; Claire Carolan, Associate Director, PDQA

DATE: May 26, 2022

RE: Sociology Program Review

The Sociology Program within the College of Arts underwent a program review in 2020-21. The Academic Planning and Priorities Committee reviewed all of the documentation related to the program review and accepted them at its May 11, 2022 meeting and recommend to Senate for approval.

It was a positive review with good recommendations, which included recommendations for curriculum changes. It was noted that the department has already commenced work on some of the recommendations.

Discussion was had and the Dean's office recognizes recommendation 4.9* and is working on resolving the crosslisting issue by working on matching practice with procedures, align with BCCAT Guidelines, and reviewing the programs and their demands. UFV International noted that it is working on outbound mobility partnerships and asked to refer names of institutions in other regions to UFV International. It was also suggested that only permanent faculty/staff attend in-camera portions of department meetings.

The APPC recognized the considerable amount of work that went into this review and thanked the Deans office, PDQA, and the department.

SUGGESTED MOTION:

THAT Senate accept the Dean's Summary Report of the Sociology Program Review as presented.

Attachments:

- Dean's Summary Report

Remainder of the documents located:

- UFV Drive: S:\Public\UFVinfo\APPC\Sociology Program Review
- Blackboard: COM-APPC (Senate Committee – APPC)

* Recommendation 4.9 – "Review the current practice of multiple cross-listing of courses. In the past, the triple crosslisting of a significant number of courses was utilized to support smaller programs within SCMS. As programs have grown, this no longer seems necessary and the triple crosslisting creates unnecessary confusion and often results in transcripts that do not accurately represent a student's disciplinary depth (which can be a problem when applying to graduate school or certain types of employment)."

Dean's Summary Report, Sociology Program Review

Dr. Sylvie Murray, Dean of Arts, March 30, 2022

Introduction

Program review for the Sociology program occurred in 2021-2021, in accordance with Policy 189, and culminated with a site visit on May 27 and 28, 2021. The External Review Report (ERR) was received in June 18, 2021 and an initial response was provided by the department in late September 2021.

The Program Review was informed by the Sociology caucus' self-study, which was in turn informed by the Dean's scope letter. The department drew on data provided by Institutional Research and from surveys conducted with students. The External Review Committee (ERC) met with several stakeholders, including students, faculty, sessional instructors, staff and members of UFV's senior administration. They also toured the campus to assess facilities and supports for faculty and students.

The Sociology program is administered by the School of Culture, Media and Society (previously to Jan 1 2022, the Department of Social, Cultural and Media Studies) within the Faculty of Social Sciences in the College of Arts.

Programs under review are the Sociology major, extended minor, minor and the Sociology Research Concentration (the latter part of the Sociology major).

The School includes six permanent full-time sociologists and several sessional instructors who teach sociology courses.

The School and the Dean wish to express their sincere gratitude to the external reviewers for their time, energy and thoughtfulness. They made a number of suggestions and comments that will be helpful as we move forward with the Sociology program.

The external reviewers commended the sociology program for its many successes, not the least of which are high student and alumni satisfaction, strong teaching evaluation averages, flexible programming, and emerging research and collaboration among faculty. They noted positively the focus on research methods and experiential learning. They appreciated that the self-study was honest and candid, pointing to issues that the Sociology Caucus recognizes the need to address, including updating curriculum, student recruitment/retention, and faculty recruitment.

The External Review's recommendations can be summarized as the following nine:

1. Develop a curriculum committee who will take primary responsibility for pushing through changes to sociology courses that will update and diversify course offerings.
2. Review and revise current program learning outcomes for clarity, coherence, and greater congruence with UFV's Institutional Learning Outcomes.
3. Consider revising the current (underutilized) Social Research Option, with a view to creating an Honours credential.
4. Ensure greater inclusion of both Sessional faculty members and students in program/departmental affairs, including attendance at meetings.
5. Make a concerted, organized effort to recruit students and to inform them of sociology program offerings.

6. Hire at least two tenure-track faculty members in the next four years.
7. Work with administration to identify a computer lab and funding source for NVivo software to aid in the delivery of SOC 356 - Qualitative Research Methods.
8. Focus on increasing and improving Indigenization and Internationalization within the Sociology Program.
9. Find ways to support our sessional and permanent faculty members more fully.

What follows is a detailed response as agreed upon in consultation with the School Director and Sociology Caucus.

Recommendations (general)	Associated Specific Recommendations from ER Report	Action Items and Projected Timeline
<p>1. Develop a curriculum committee who will take primary responsibility for pushing through changes to sociology courses that will update and diversify course offerings.</p>	<p>2.1: Develop courses that more directly include content and perspectives drawn from communities outside of North America and Europe.</p> <p>3.2: Prioritize an overall review of courses in the Sociology Program. There are a significant number of courses that are still on the books which have not been offered in the last few years</p> <p>4.4: Cull the current list of courses and discontinue (or revise and place in the regular rotation) any course not offered in the last five years.</p>	<p>Completed since review:</p> <p>SCMS Curriculum Committee created. In the initial stages of drafting Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Short term:</p> <p>SMCS Curriculum Committee: Review and revise Official Course Outlines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In initial planning stages of SCMS curriculum review, to involve SCMS Curriculum Committee and other members of SCMS • In conjunction with the above, increase degree to which Sociology courses address ILO # 9 (Contribute regionally and globally), ILO #5 (Communicate effectively) and ILO # 6 (Pursue self-motivated and self-reflective learning). • Director is undertaking cross-listing “fact-finding” review of how cross-listed courses are being taught. Will be completed by end of February/early March 2022. (addresses 4.9 and 3.1, even though 3.1. is about Learning Outcomes and not courses, <i>per se</i>) • As noted in section below, the revised Sociology Program Learning Outcomes

4.5: Consider regularizing those special topics courses which are offered frequently and which most closely align with the program orientation and objectives.

4.6: Make available on a regular basis courses which are required for program completion, such as Sociology 356 (Qualitative Research Methods) more than once per calendar year.

4.7: Consider offering Sociology 254 as a regular course, rather than as a directed study. This course is required for the Social Research Option and students are often unaware that they must take this class until they are close to completing the credential.

4.8: Develop a Contemporary Theories course to follow on the existing SOC 350 (Classical Sociological Thought). Because Classical Sociological Thought is currently offered at the 300-level, one possibility might be to renumber it to 200-level, and then introduce

will be used as guidelines for revising our Official Course Outlines and conducting our Curriculum Review (addresses 3.3)

For Director/Sociology caucus:

- In consultation with the Sociology Caucus, Director to create a course rotation that includes more than one offering per calendar year of courses which are required for program completion (such as Soc 356, Qual. Research Methods) and in high enough demand for additional sections (addressed 4.6)
- consider offering Sociology 254 as a regular course (addresses 4.7)

Soc caucus and/or SCMS Curriculum Committee (as determined by Terms of Reference for SCMS Curriculum Committee):

Review and revise the current Sociology curriculum and catalogue of Sociology courses listed in UFV's Academic Calendar:

- Assess frequently-offered special topics courses for whether they should become official courses (addresses 4.5)
- Cull the current list of courses and discontinue (or revise and place in the regular rotation) any course not offered in the last five years (addresses 4.4)
- Determine what other new courses we want to create, potentially including a contemporary theory course (addresses 4.8)
- In conjunction with the above point, the Caucus/Committee will assess whether we need to change the Sociology program requirements at all (e.g. by adding Contemporary Theory as a requirement to the Soc Major, or giving Soc Majors an option between Classical

Contemporary Theory at the 300-level. Alternatively, perhaps they could both be placed at the 300-level (for instance SOC 350 and 351), but with Classical serving as a prerequisite for Contemporary.

and Contemporary Theory courses) (addresses 4.8)

4.9: Review the current practice of multiple cross-listing of courses. In the past, the triple crosslisting of a significant number of courses was utilized to support smaller programs within SCMS. As programs have grown, this no longer seems necessary and the triple crosslisting creates unnecessary confusion and often results in transcripts that do not accurately represent a student's disciplinary depth (which can be a problem when applying to graduate school or certain types of employment).

2. Review and revise current program learning outcomes for clarity, coherence and greater congruence with UFV's Institutional Outcomes.

3.1: Review and revise current program learning outcomes for clarity, coherence and greater congruence with UFV's Institutional Learning Outcomes. In

Completed since review:

We have revised our Program Learning Outcomes (see below). These are being included in the Anthropology program self-study report (as part of the discussion related to the Sociology-Anthropology Major).

particular, consider adding or enhancing PLOs to address ILO # 9 (Contribute regionally and globally), ILO #5 (Communicate effectively) and ILO # 6 (Pursue self-motivated and self-reflective learning).

3.3 As courses are reviewed, adjust the course learning outcomes to more closely align with the new PLOs.

4.1: The Sociology Program should follow through on its commitment to form an External Program Advisory Committee with which it will consult on a regular basis, especially with regard to new and revised programming that addresses specific workplace skills program students may acquire to enhance postgraduation career options.

Short term:

The revised Sociology Program Learning Outcomes will be used as guidelines for revising our Official Course Outlines and conducting our upcoming Curriculum Review (addresses 3.3)

Medium Term:

- With some assistance of the Dean’s Office (e.g. support from WIL coordinators), SCMS will be creating an External Program Advisory Committee (addresses 4.1)

3. Consider revising the current (underutilized) Social Research Option, with a view to creating an Honours credential.

4.2: Consider revising the current (underutilized) Social Research Option, with a view to creating an Honours credential. This would bring the UFV Sociology program into

Short term:

For now, we have decided to make a concerted effort to recruit students into the Social Research Concentration in the Sociology Major instead of converting it into an Honours degree. We see the Concentration as a credential that connotes a

line with most of its comparator institutions.

specific set of skills to prospective employers, whereas an Honours degree is more of an academic credential. While the Research Concentration is of benefit to students who want to get a graduate degree, it is also valuable to students who do not plan to get such a degree. The Research Concentration can thus serve as a valuable asset for a wider variety of students. Moreover, we feel the Honours designation does not indicate this same set of skills to employers, and therefore cannot assist students as well in their search for meaningful sociology-related employment. Streamlining courses will help highlight the Social Research Option, and might increase its utilization. (addresses 4.2)

Long-term:

Related to the above, we plan to explore the possibility of creating a new Social Science Research Certificate that can be taken by any UFV student and/or a post-graduate Social Science Research Certificate or Diploma for graduated students. This will hopefully help reinforce the value of (and enrolments in) our Research Concentration.

4. Ensure greater inclusion of both Sessional faculty members and students in program/departmental affairs, including attendance at meetings.

2.4: Improve communication with program students regarding when courses are being offered and other information relevant to their timely progress through the credential. Suggestions for how to facilitate better communication could include: one-on-one check-ins with the Chair on an annual basis; the establishment of an Undergraduate

Completed/ongoing:

We have invited sessionals to School meetings.

We have already started to include sessionals in more Department/School activities. For example, sessionals were invited to the Annual 2021 SCMS Department Retreat.

Short-term:

SCMS: Explore the possibility of including a student rep at School meetings (addresses 2.7).

Advisor; a periodic newsletter sent to students with key information and timelines.

2.7: Welcome student representatives at Caucus meetings, when matters do not require confidentiality.

2.8: The Caucus is encouraged to strengthen its relationship with the Sociology Anthropology Undergraduate Association and to jointly organize events, both social and informational.

2.9: Create more ways to celebrate student success, such as annual events recognizing high achievement, use of social media as a spotlight on individual accomplishments, and an annual student showcase/conference highlighting student research.

Sociology Caucus: We will explore the possibility of including student and sessional reps (who can act as liaisons between their “constituents”) on the Sociology Caucus (addresses 2.7):

- reporting ideas/suggestions from students/sessionals
- reporting back to students/sessionals

Medium-term:

SCMS Director and Department Assistant:

- Collect feedback from students to find out their needs (e.g. through short SurveyMonkey questionnaires). This feedback to be used to inform us on how to strengthen our connection between students and faculty outside of the classroom setting (addresses 2.4).
- Develop a means to improve communication with students regarding when courses are being offered and other information relevant to their timely progress through the credential (e.g. Blackboard site for Soc program students, one-on-one check-ins with the Chair on an annual basis; the establishment of an Undergraduate Advisor; a periodic newsletter sent to students with key information and timelines) (addresses 2.4)

SCMS School (with specific responsibility TBA):

- Support the (re-)creation of the SCMS Undergraduate Student Association (addresses 2.8)
- Strengthen faculty relationship with SCMS Undergraduate Student Association (addresses 2.8)

Director, Department Assistant and additional SCMS faculty:

- Organize research presentation day for SCMS students who have completed their own DIS research projects and/or planning to present at a conference (addresses 2.9)
- In planning stages to organize/run an regional SCMS student conference. To be assisted by work study students (addresses 2.9)
- Convey outcomes of these events through SCMS’s social media (addresses 2.9)

5. Make a concerted, organized effort to recruit students and to inform them of sociology program offerings.

Suggestions that hint at the larger issue addressed here:

2.5: Work with Institutional Research to analyze the recent trends in Sociology majors and minors, specifically to ascertain the slight decline of the former and concomitant rise of the latter.

2.6: Create an informal process for soliciting student feedback on the program overall, current course offerings, etc. This could be done on an annual basis.

2.9: Create more ways to celebrate student success, such as annual events recognizing high achievement, use of social media as a spotlight on individual accomplishments, and

Short term/ongoing:

SCMS Director and Department Assistant:

- Collect feedback from students to find out their scheduling needs in relation to teaching modality and delivery time (e.g. through short SurveyMonkey questionnaires). This feedback to be used to better inform us on how to organize our timetable (addresses 2.6, helps with 2.4).
- Organize two SCMS student events in Fall and in Winter (addresses other concerns identified in review)

Soc caucus:

- We are taking steps to produce a video featuring Sociology alumni who are working in an area related to Sociology. This video will be shown to current and prospective Sociology students as a recruitment tool, as well as a means for our students to see what aspects of our program are useful for building a career.

Medium term:

SCMS Director:

Conduct surveys and work with Institutional Research and new SEM Plan strategies to analyze and address the recent trends in

an annual student showcase/conference highlighting student research.

Sociology majors and minors, specifically to ascertain the slight decline of the former and concomitant rise of the latter (addresses 2.5).

Tangentially related:

2.4: Improve communication with program students regarding when courses are being offered and other information relevant to their timely progress through the credential. Suggestions for how to facilitate better communication could include: one-on-one check-ins with the Chair on an annual basis; the establishment of an Undergraduate Advisor; a periodic newsletter sent to students with key information and timelines.

[had been omitted] 6.2: The SCMS department currently has collaborative research and social space on the ground floor of DBuilding, but this is underutilized by program students. Create a plan that allows for students to access the room more easily and consistently.

<p>6. Hire at least two tenure-track faculty members in the next four years.</p>	<p>2.1: Develop courses that more directly include content and perspectives drawn from communities outside of North America and Europe</p> <p>1.6: The program should hire at least two tenure-track faculty members over the next four years. The first will replace a faculty member who is retiring, shoring up the program's focus on research methods; Other hires should prioritize critical race theory, gender, and/or anti-colonial work. The Caucus should direct its recruitment efforts toward Indigenous scholars.</p> <p>2.2: Commit to the hiring of a Indigenous Scholar as the first recruitment priority.</p>	<p>Short term:</p> <p>SCMS Director and Sociology Caucus: After the SCMS upcoming curriculum review completed, we will assess our program needs and propose a hiring plan to the Dean's Office.</p> <p>2.2 addressed in Recommendation Section 8.</p>
<p>7. Work with administration to identify a computer lab and funding source for NVivo software to aid in the delivery of SOC 356 - Qualitative Research Methods.</p>	<p>4.6: Make available on a regular basis courses which are required for program completion, such as Sociology 356 (Qualitative Research Methods) more than once per calendar year.</p> <p>[had been left out]: 4.5: With the loss of NVivo-loaded computers (which had been housed in the Kipp Lab),</p>	<p>Medium term:</p> <p>We need to do a needs assessment for how valuable this software is for students as a learning tool (especially students in the Research Concentration). It may be that we offer training on this software in the form of a Badge or other add-on credential of some sort. This needs to be weighed in relation to the high expense of this software and difficulties we have had with finding a computer lab that can be semi-</p>

consider other venues on campus where NVivo could be installed, such as the second floor of the UFV library or D204, External Review Report, Sociology Program, Department of Social, Cultural, and Media Studies, June 2021 11 in addition to loading NVivo onto a few computers in the collaborative space. Alternatively, explore other software options that might be more (a) cost-effective and (b) more accommodating in terms of their subscription parameters. We also hope that the administration will be supportive in helping the program to pay for the costs of software licensing, given how important qualitative data analysis is to any robust sociology program, and how in-demand that skill is for the job market and for graduate school.

dedicated to providing access to this software

8. Focus on increasing and improving Indigenization and Internationalization within the Sociology Program.

2.1: Develop courses that more directly include content and perspectives drawn from communities outside of North America and Europe.

Completed since review:

Our annual 2021 SCMS Retreat was the Sto:lo Place Names Bus Tour (addresses 2.3)

Short term:

SCMS Curriculum Committee:

2.2: Commit to the hiring of a Indigenous Scholar as the first recruitment priority

2.3: Support the important indigenizing work that members of the Caucus have already undertaken through professional development opportunities, both individually and as an academic unit.

6.3: The review committee supports the hiring of faculty in the area(s) of: research methods, gender, race and ethnicity and internationally-focused sociology/social issues. We especially encourage the program to recruit an Indigenous scholar with expertise in any one of these areas. In hiring, the sociology program is encouraged to compose a broad set of criteria that recognizes the value of lived experience in conjunction with, or in some cases instead of, traditional academic accreditation.

- Explicitly focus on Indigenizing the curriculum, including Official Course Outlines (to be done during the 2022 SCMS Curriculum Review) (addresses 2.1)

SCMS School:

- Explore the possibility of forming an SCMS committee that facilitates Indigenizing and EDI professional development opportunities for SCMS School members, including sessionals (addresses 2.3)

Medium term:

SOC SAC:

- While we do not feel it is possible to put the hiring of an Indigenous scholar as our top priority (we have concerns, for example that this would result in an extremely small pool of applicants and that it may result in a failed search), we are happy to identify it as a high-priority goal.

Long-term:

SCMS Director/School:

Add “Indigenizing/Internationalizing” as a standing item to the SCMS School meeting agenda. During this time, provide examples and workshop ideas that can be applied to our courses/pedagogy (addresses 2.3).

9. Find ways to support our sessional and permanent faculty members more fully.

5.1: In order to facilitate consistent, inclusive and innovative instructional and evaluative practices across the many

Medium term:

SCMS School (with specific responsibility TBA):

sections of Sociology 101, create a “community of practice” for 101 instructors.

- Create more formal mentoring process that supports both new permanent faculty and the sessional pool of instructors (addresses 5.2)

5.2: Enhance the current informal mentoring process that exists to support both new permanent faculty and the sessional pool of instructors.

Long-term:

Sociology Caucus:

- Create a “community of practice” for 101 instructors (addresses 5.1) (see below for relevant segment from Sociology Program Review Self-Study Report for context)

Revised Sociology Learning Outcomes:

Students can demonstrate an understanding of, and competence related to...

1. ...the discipline of sociology and can articulate its significance to contributing to our understanding of society and social change.
2. ...the role of theory in sociology and can apply theory to examine contemporary social issues.
3. ...the key components of qualitative and quantitative research designs, methodology, and methods in order to critically consume research/literature and can outline their role in advancing understanding of social issues.
4. ...key social science topics, including but not limited to: culture, social change, socialization, stratification, social structure, race/ethnicity, gender and sexuality, age, families, and class.
5. ...how social structures operate in various and complex ways at the micro, meso, and macro levels and the implications for transformative social justice.
6. ...the sociological imagination and can articulate the reciprocal relationship between individuals and society, including how this fits within their own lived experiences.
7. ...at least three specialty areas within sociology.
8. ...diversity in local and global contexts, both past and present, and the implications for creating an equitable and fair society.
9. ...a number of practical skills, including but not limited to: conducting a literature review and synthesizing academic literature; designing or conducting research using basic qualitative and quantitative data collection methods and analysis; applying principles of ethical practice; communicating findings in a social science style; applying critical

thinking skills to contemporary social problems; and demonstrating effective verbal and written communication.

10. ...the interface between history and contemporary social problems, particularly in relation to Indigenous people in Canada and other minority groups.

From page 46 is Sociology Self-Study Report, in relation to teaching of Sociology 101 (as context for discussion of faculty mentoring #9, above):

In order to strengthen introduction to sociology courses at UFV, the following questions emerged from the survey that require further discussion at the department level:

- What are the benefits and limitations of having a standardized textbook used throughout all introduction to sociology courses?
- Should an open-access textbook be required to support inclusivity?
- Are there key topics that must be included in each course (e.g. methods, theory, etc)?
- How can course outlines (and courses more generally) adopt best practices in relation to equity, diversity and inclusion:
 - o Should instructors be required to incorporate ALLY (<https://www.blackboard.com/teaching-learning/accessibility-universal-design/blackboard-ally-lms>) in their learning management system (e.g. Blackboard) in order to support inclusivity?
- Should a written assessment be required in all introduction to sociology courses?

Exploring the questions above are aimed at strengthening the introduction to sociology curriculum across the department. In addition to exploring these questions, the following is recommended based on the Survey:

- The creation of a mentor/buddy system that links up full-time faculty with sessional instructors in order to create a supportive collegial environment that allows opportunities for supportive feedback provided to sessional instructors.
- The creation of a peer-reviewed process of approving course outline for sessional instructors and new faculty in order to ensure quality and consistency across course offerings.
- The establishment of a “soc. 101 coffeeshop chat” – community of practice – whereby full-time and part-time faculty members get together at least once during each semester to explore a variety of topics including but not limited to best practices, pressing issues, “tricks of the trade,” successful/innovative forms of assessment, etc.