

Sociology/Anthropology Assessment meeting for Spring 2022

Meeting date: May 30, 2022

Attendees: Anne Goldberg, Stacey Schwartzkopf (Brett Hill – Sabbatical)

**Report:**

As indicated in our Student Assessment Plan, this year we are evaluating Department Learning Goals (DLG) 9-12 (see below), which respectively relate to written and oral communication, intellectual curiosity and interdisciplinarity, linking knowledge to the world, and lifelong learning toward the “whole person”. During our meeting we reviewed the data from our senior survey (2022) and our capstone rubric for the class of 2022 for those learning goals, based on their performance in our capstone course from the fall of 2021, filled out by the instructor, Anne Goldberg. Because two students who took the capstone course did not graduate, there is a difference between the total number of capstone assessments (8) and the number of students sent the survey (6). Out of the latter, we received 3 responses (50%).

The responses to the survey were broadly positive, with the almost all responses for the questions related to the learning goals falling into the “very well” or “well” category. Only the question relating to linking knowledge and opportunities beyond Hendrix received a response of “neither well nor poorly”. In the capstone assessment, the instructor found that, except for a student who did not pass the course, a large majority of students (7 of 8) showed a “very evident” level of achievement in goals 10-12. Only for learning goal 9, relating to writing and oral communication, were the assessments weaker, with 5 students having “very evident” and 2 having “evident.” The instructor attributed this to a lack of scaffolded writing assignments in sociology courses leading to the capstone.

Based on all of that data, we discussed changes we could make that would address these learning goals or strengthen what we are already doing. First, we made teaching writing a key element of our hiring of an incoming sociologist and will actively work to mentor this in their teaching. For the next capstone, we will also provide more resources for writing through providing more models of successful student writing and guides to disciplinary writing standards. In relation to interdisciplinarity, we continue to have a strong emphasis in multiple classes (some of which are cross-listed) on providing opportunities for connections across disciplines. As for linking knowledge and opportunities beyond Hendrix, we regularly feature guest speakers (e.g. 8 in one semester for Goldberg’s Applied Anthropology class), visits from Career Services to our capstone, and our students complete a large number of internships. Finally, with regards to lifelong learning to the “whole person” we regularly include visits from four alumni (1 and 5 years from graduation) in our capstone course.

Although in our last report we discussed making changes to the learning goals in the current year to reduce their number, due to staffing issues that left us with only two full-time anthropology faculty members in the spring semester, we have deferred these changes until another year when we have a permanent sociologist.

## Sociology/Anthropology Department Learning Goals

1. Students will develop their “sociological (and anthropological) imagination,” the ability to think creatively and meaningfully link individual biographical events to larger social patterns in society; to see the connection between “personal troubles” and “public issues” (Mills 1959).
2. Students will acquire general “sociological and anthropological literacy,” the ability to perceive and systematically analyze social structures (stable, persistent patterns of interaction) in society, from small-scale micro-level symbolic interactions to large-scale global social arrangements.
3. Students will engage with an intellectually rigorous theoretical core including using a wide variety of classical and contemporary sociological/anthropological theories to interpret social reality.
4. Students will strengthen their methodological sophistication through an acquaintance with the research methods of sociology/anthropology and their appropriate uses, and independent research skills, including qualitative and quantitative approaches.
5. Students will be able to articulate the ethical implications of their knowledge.
6. Students will cultivate a sensitivity to issues of social stratification and social justice.
7. Students will synthesize their knowledge as they progress through sequential learning experiences and a capstone course.
8. Students will responsibly use their acquired sociological/anthropological knowledge through an active sense of citizenship/community participation locally, nationally, and globally.
9. **Students will improve their communication skills through writing and presentations.**
10. **Students will nurture their intellectual curiosity and interdisciplinary interests consistent with a “liberating” liberal arts education.**
11. **Students will link to the world beyond Hendrix College through information about such things as internships, career choices, fellowships, graduate schools, service opportunities, cross-cultural experiences, and other opportunities.**
12. **Students will reach “unto the whole person” by engaging in a lifelong sociologically/anthropologically informed search for meaning that is intellectually, ethically, and aesthetically rewarding.**

**Senior Survey Questions for DLG 9-12 – 2022 (3 respondents total)**

**Q17**

How well did your experiences in the department help you develop your writing and presentation skills?

Very well - 2

Well – 1

Weighted average 4.67

**Q18**

How well did your experiences in the department help foster your intellectual and interdisciplinary interests within a liberal arts education?

Well - 3

Weighted average 4.00

**Q19**

How well did your experiences in the department help you learn about opportunities beyond Hendrix?

Very well – 1

Well – 1

Neither well nor poorly – 1

Weighted average 4.00

**Q20**

How well did your experiences in the department help you engage in a “whole person” search for meaning?

Very well – 1

Well – 2

Weighted average 4.33

## Sociology/Anthropology Learning Goals Capstone Assessment Rubric (1\*)

Class of: \_SOCI/ANTH 497 (8 students)

Date: \_May 30, 2022 Assessor: \_Anne Goldberg

Please indicate the number of students in a given class achieving each level of proficiency on each learning goal. Space for open response questions at the end of rubric.

	<b>No Evidence</b> (student's paper and presentation revealed no exercise of this goal)	<b>Evident</b> (student's paper and presentation revealed the exercise of this goal)	<b>Very Evident</b> (student's paper and presentation revealed substantial exercise of this goal)
Sociological and anthropological imagination (DLG1)	1	2	5
Comments	One student made almost no progress and failed the course. Another made substantial progress but did not finish the thesis or present.		
Ability to analyze social structures (DLG2)	1	2	5
Comments			
Application of theory(ies) (DLG3)	1	1	6
Comments:			
Methodological sophistication (DLG4)	1	1	6
Comments:			
Ethical implications of their knowledge (DLG5)	1	2	5
Comments			

	<b>No Evidence</b> (student's presentation revealed no exercise of this goal)	<b>Evident</b> (student's presentation revealed the exercise of this goal)	<b>Very Evident</b> (student's presentation revealed substantial exercise of this goal)
Sensitivity to social stratification and social justice (DLG6)	1		7
Comments:			
Synthesis of accumulated knowledge (DLG7)	1	2	5
Comments:			
Active sense of citizenship/community participation locally/nationally/globally (DLG8)	1		7
Comments:			
Communication skills, both written and presentation (DLG9)	1	2	5
Comments:			
Intellectual (and potentially interdisciplinary) curiosity (DLG10)	1		7
Comments:			
Link to their future beyond Hendrix College (DLG11)	1		7
Comments:			
Engagement in lifelong search for meaning through an anthropological/sociological lens (DLG12)	1		7
Comments:			

Were there important things that students gained from their major that were NOT depicted in the above rubric? If so, please list or explain.

What would you say were the goals most thoroughly achieved through the capstone? Which goals appeared to be the least achieved?

*-Their sensitivity to social stratification is very well developed, as if their sense of being an active member of their community.*

**Additional notes:** one student who failed the course did eventually pass and wrote a thesis. I assessed them for the course. If I had assessed them for their final project, the scores would have been slightly different (but they received a D on the capstone).