**Department or Program and Degree(s), College:**

Department: Social Science

Degrees: BA in Social Science, and BS in Social Science

College: College of Liberal Arts

This department is not externally accredited.

## Assessment coordinator (program level):

Dr. A. Sample. Undergraduate Coordinator, Department of Social Science

## Program Outcomes:

Upon completion of the BA degree, students will be able to:

* Articulate a social science research question and design a qualitative or quantitative study of appropriate scope to gather relevant data
* Interpret a range of social science data by applying social science analytical methods
* Present findings and interpretations of social science data orally in a clear and concise manner with appropriate use of visual tools
* Present findings and interpretations of social science data in writing that is clear, concise, uses appropriate terminology and is free of errors.
* Demonstrate a social science perspective applying critical thinking and problem solving skills to a given problem or issue

Upon completion of the BS degree, students will be able to:

* Articulate a social science research question and design a quantitative study of appropriate scope to gather relevant data
* Interpret a range of social science data by applying statistical methods, alone or in combination with other social science analytical methods
* Present findings and interpretations of social science data orally in a clear and concise manner with appropriate use of visual tools, including description of statistical findings.
* Present findings and interpretations of social science data in writing that is clear, concise, uses appropriate terminology and description of statistical methods and findings, and is free of errors.
* Demonstrate a quantitative and qualitative social science perspective applying critical thinking and problem solving skills to a given problem or issue

## Components of the Plan (see plan chart at the end of this document)

The department’s assessment plan runs on a three-year cycle and includes both direct and indirect assessment components.

**Direct assessment:**

1) Every other year, the undergraduate coordinator and faculty teaching capstone seminars will review a sample from the previous two years of capstone research project proposals and completed projects for both BA and BS students. Reviewers will evaluate the proposals and the projects using a rubric designed to assess the quality of the research design, data gathered, appropriate application of analytical methods and presentation of results.

2) Every year a separate rubric will be used by individual faculty to evaluate oral presentations of senior research projects, in the course of their regular grading activities for the capstone seminars.

3) Each faculty member teaching a capstone will offer a short generalized summary of strengths and weaknesses of BOTH the research projects and the oral presentations, as relevant to the departmental learning outcomes.

4) Each year, the Undergraduate coordinator will prepare a brief summary report of these findings and present it at the Fall departmental retreat.

**Indirect assessment**:

1. An electronic survey of graduating majors will be sent out every year. The Undergraduate Coordinator will prepare a brief summary of the results for the Fall departmental retreat each year. Every third year, the results will be aggregated for comparison with the alumni survey. The survey asks students to rate their overall experience in the major, self-assess their achievement of learning outcomes, and provide feedback on specific experiences in the major, including research experiences and methodological training, and asks about seniors’ plan after graduation.
2. Every three years, an alumni survey will be sent out to department graduates from the previous five years. In addition to questions regarding graduate training and employment, the survey also asks what aspects of their undergraduate education and major have been most and least valuable in their education or employment after graduation.

**Application of results:**

Every year, the Undergraduate coordinator will present a summary of direct and indirect assessment of student learning outcomes along with any recommendations for changes. The department will discuss this summary and decide whether any immediate action needs to be taken, and if so, what. Appropriate actions may range from an immediate change to a course or internal departmental policy, to tasking the curriculum committee with proposing a plan for curricular change.

Every three years, the department will conduct a one-day curricular retreat in May, with the purpose of review direct and indirect evidence of student achievement of departmental outcomes and results of any curricular changes made in response to that evidence over the past several years. The goal of the retreat will be to determine where there is the greatest need for further assessment and to make decisions regarding any short or long term changes needed.

## Communication

Yearly and three-year assessment reports from the Undergraduate Coordinator will be made available to department faculty through a sharepoint site. An updated assessment plan and copies of departmental assessment reports will also be made available to the Unit Assessment coordinator for the College.

General information about survey results and curricular changes will be communicated to current students and alumni through the annual departmental newsletter.

**Three Year Assessment Plan (Chart)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 1 | Year 2 |
| **Assessment**  **Activity** | Online survey of majors | Online survey of majors | Online survey of majors | Online survey of majors | Online survey of majors |
| **Assessment**  **Activity** |  |  | Online survey of alumn |  |  |
| **Assessment**  **Activity** | Oral presentation rubric for senior projects | Oral presentation rubric for senior projects | Oral presentation rubric for senior projects | Oral presentation rubric for senior projects | Oral presentation rubric for senior projects |
| **Assessment**  **Activity** |  | Review and rating of sample senior projects |  | Review and rating of sample senior projects |  |
| **Assessment**  **Activity** | Report to department | Report to department | Departmental curricular assessment retreat | Report to Department | Report to department |