As stated in our 2006-2007 annual report, we were unable to take up our assessment activities earlier in the year due to the absence of two of the department’s senior members during the fall semester. Nonetheless we accomplished many of the tasks we had identified in our previous report.

Electronic copies of the following information are located on the chair’s computer, the secretary’s computer and the P drive. Hard copies are stored in the chair’s office.

**Mission Statement and Learning Outcomes:** See attached

**Data Interpretation:**

We are using the senior seminar final papers to conduct a summative assessment of all four areas of our student learning outcomes.

**Evaluation of Senior Seminar Papers:**

- We collectively read and evaluated five senior seminar final papers according to our rubric. (The rubric and the grading sheet are in appendix A; a sample paper and the corresponding evaluations are contained in appendix B.) As planned in our previous report, the instructor for the senior seminar supplied each student with the rubric and more explicit guidelines for the final paper. As a result, the papers reflected more of what we had envisioned and anticipated.
- Each paper was read by two department members. We then shared the grading sheets and discussed the similarities and differences in inter-rater scoring. We found that for the most part we assessed the papers similarly. When we did not, we discussed that. Furthermore, we decided that the papers must at minimum contain all of the elements described in the rubric in order to receive a “good” rating.

**Interpretation of Results of Evaluating Senior Seminar Papers and Next Steps**

- One question which arose was the level of theoretical sophistication that we expected the students to demonstrate. We decided that they, at minimum, should be able to employ one or more of the theories that had been already applied to their topic by scholars in the field.
  - In SOC 106—Social Research Methods, the instructor has already revised the literature review assignment to help students more explicitly
identify the theoretical models relevant to their topic. We also agreed to advise students to take SOC 171—Sociological Theory no later than the end of the junior year.

- Greater need to help students locate their work within the scholarly literature.
  
  o To facilitate this, we are now focusing more on the development of a solid research proposal in SOC 106-Social Research Methods that they can then use for their senior seminar paper. As noted above, the assignment for the development of the literature review in the research course has also been reorganized to facilitate the development of a more mature literature review.

- All students regardless of major tract must produce either a major theoretical essay or a research project in order to produce more comparable work
  
  o Social Welfare projects will not longer be permitted.

- The integration of faith and learning tends to more devotional or personal in orientation. Though our motivations, reasons, analysis may not necessarily be different from a secular approach, we want them to explore how to ground their work in the Christian tradition.
  
  o We recognized the need to direct students more regularly into the Christian, academic literature in our disciplines in all of our courses, but especially in the senior seminar. In 2008-2009 we will be discussing how we will accomplish this.

- We should encourage students in the fall of their senior year to begin developing ideas for their senior project before the seminar in the spring. The change in SOC 106 noted above should contribute to greater preparation as well.
  
  o At the application for the degree begin the discussion with students about the senior seminar
  
  o A letter in the fall to seniors graduating in spring regarding preparation for the senior seminar and expectations for SOC/AN 192—Extra-Curricular Departmental Activities.
  
  o Students may not change the topic of their senior paper once it has been approved.
  
  o If students are building on previous work, even if only using the research proposal from SOC 106, they must submit it along with the final paper. Moreover, they must have obtained prior clearance from the instructor of the seminar before they may use this work.
In general, our discussions this past year indicated the greater need to orient students more thoroughly to the major when they first declare. Of course, we already do this, but we want to be more systematic and intentional about this. For example, we plan to design a “Welcome to the Major” packet and to have more informational meetings.

**Incorporation of Learning Outcomes in to Syllabi:**

- Each department member has now incorporated the college-wide learning standards and the department’s learning outcomes into the syllabus of each class he or she teaches. This year we will consider if we need to be more uniform in how each of us accomplishes this. (See appendix C for examples.)

**Evaluation of Overall Curriculum Vis-à-vis Departmental Learning Outcomes:**

- Based on the task of incorporating the learning outcomes into our syllabi, we have completed a course map that plots which department learning outcomes are being addressed in each course. (See appendix D)

**Interpretation and Next Steps Regarding Evaluation of Curriculum:**

- Preliminary analysis indicates that methodological skills are receiving the least coverage in the overall curriculum. This is consistent with the previous results from the Senior Self-Evaluation Questionnaire, where the seniors self-report weaknesses in this area.
  
  - The 2008-2009 is the first academic years in many when SOC 107 Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis will be offered. We anticipate that students completing this course rather than a more general statistics course offered through the math department will have a better sociological and anthropologically context in which to ground their knowledge and skill in this area.
  
  - Related to the overall assessment of our curriculum in light of our learning outcomes, we will discuss this year how in each course as appropriate we can modify or offer assignments and readings to address the learning outcomes more thoroughly.

**Data for Program Review:**

- This year we will also begin administering the Intercultural Development Inventory to our students who participate in off-campus programs to determine which programs are achieving our related learning outcomes the best.
• In the 2007-2008, we did not administer the Senior Self-Evaluation Questionnaire as we had not yet implemented the curricular changes described in #3 and the responses in previous years had been consistent from one to another. We will administer it again at the end of the 2008-2009 academic year.

• We have yet to identify where in the curriculum we will undertake a formative assessment of our majors with regard to our learning outcomes. This will also be a focus of our assessment work for 2008-2009.

• We will pursue the idea of sending sample senior papers to colleagues at other institutions for external evaluation.

• We will prepare an alumni survey to be administered by Fall 2009

• We will begin analysis of supervisor reports for our students who complete a practicum.

• This fall (2008) data on faculty responsibilities will be collected for this and as many previous years as possible.

• The department will gather materials from the American Sociological Association regarding curricular guidelines.