

SOCIOLOGY & ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT

PROGRAM REVIEW

SEVEN-YEAR REPORT

September 2024

James Clark Davidson, Visiting Assistant Professor, Sociology
Sarah L. Jirek, Associate Professor, Sociology, & Outgoing Department Chair
Blake Victor Kent, Associate Professor, Sociology
Felicia Wu Song, Professor, Sociology
Meredith Whitnah, Associate Professor, Sociology, & Incoming Department Chair

Report Section A: Introduction

A. Introduction - The Department of Sociology and Anthropology is grateful for the opportunity to reflect on our progress over the past seven years. We are a vibrant department that plays an important role in the ecosystem of Westmont College and its Christian liberal arts identity, reaching an important slice of the student body that may be out of reach for other departments. Feedback from our recent underscored the important role we play in the College's overall landscape. Our previous seven-year report offered insight for several areas of growth and we have seen significant changes in our department since then. We are proud of our accomplishments and the direction the department is headed.

A.1 Mission Statement - A central goal of the Sociology/Anthropology Department is to develop student capacity to think critically and comprehensively about human experience. The department offers students a rich array of theoretical, methodological, and applied coursework to examine linkages among culture, society, and human behavior and "practice" the discipline as a form of embodied grace and justice. In addition to courses focused on sociology and anthropology, students have the opportunity to take courses related to human services and social work. Our majors tailor their course of study around one of three major tracks: General Sociology, Human Services, and Cross-Cultural.

Along with a strong intellectual background in sociology, anthropology, social work, and action grounded in compassionate praxis, we frame our students' experience in the Christian faith tradition. We emphasize not only the acquisition of knowledge and skills but also the wisdom to use them in service to others and for the furthering of Christ's Kingdom.¹

A.2 Program Learning Outcomes²

- **Competence in Core Knowledge:** Students will learn core sociological / anthropological / social work knowledge.
- **Application of Core Knowledge:** Students will be able to apply sociological, anthropological, or social work concepts to social, cultural and global situations.
- **Research and Methods Competence:** Students will apply qualitative and quantitative methods according to the disciplinary standards of sociology, anthropology or social work.
- **Integration of Faith and Learning:** Students will be able to explain the integration of Biblical principles with sociological, anthropological, or social work issues.
- **Oral and Written Communication:** Students will be able to effectively communicate their ideas, research, and arguments in public presentations and reports.

¹ <https://www.westmont.edu/departmental-program-reviews/program-review-sociology-anthropology>

² Ibid. Please also note: these were the PLOs during this past last cycles; as discussed in more detail below, we have decided to re-combine the first two PLOs, reducing the number to a total of four PLOs.

A.3 Key Areas of Change - Since the 2016-2017 review, we have completed a significant, multi-year curriculum revision project for all three tracks of the Sociology major. The curriculum has been restructured to develop core competence in multiple methodological methods, which helps students to put their education into practice in their vocation beyond Westmont. These robust training requirements, which include required qualitative and quantitative research methods, along with a required course in race or gender, an internship, senior seminar, and senior research capstone, are beyond what is required from most similar institutions. These skills, building on a core set of more theoretically oriented courses, prepare our students well for life beyond Westmont.

These observations were confirmed in our Alumni Survey of recent graduates, with graduates from the past seven years reporting high levels of satisfaction with the program. Graduates observe that most of our program learning outcomes have served them well in current employment situations, and that they are equally or better prepared than their colleagues from other institutions. In addition to very strong employment numbers, our department has achieved a high level of success placing students in graduate programs at top universities throughout the United States in both terminal masters and PhD programs. In total we have graduated 122 majors and minors over this review period, and have had a total student class enrollment over 2,700 – accounting for almost 10,500 student credit hours. Beyond the instrumental results of higher education, students report an appreciation of how we integrate faith throughout the curriculum. We engage in topics of faith and vocation while also discussing issues that can be among the most difficult in our social lives. The recent development of the Justice, Reconciliation, and Diversity GE requirement plays right into these strengths, and we believe featuring several of our courses in this GE category is an opportunity to continue building on our strengths while leaning further into the biblical values of justice and reconciliation.

A.4 Future Directions - Our department experienced several years of stability during this review period, punctuated by the loss of our anthropologist, Serah Shani. Very recently, we lost Felicia Song, the longtime chair who hired all three of our current tenured/tenure-track faculty. Felicia took with her very valuable skills, leadership, and institutional knowledge. As such a loss is significant, we must find an adequate replacement for her this year. Our department has normally operated with 4.66 full-time tenured/tenure-track faculty lines. Given Felicia's departure, we are currently working with 2.66 full-time tenured/tenure-track lines, along with a full-time visiting faculty member on a one-year appointment. In order to maintain the high quality of our teaching, research, and service to both the institution and students, we need institutional support to fully staff our lines.

Since Dr. Shani's departure, our department has been without a full-time anthropologist for the past several years. While we were authorized to conduct a search to replace her in the 2022-23 academic year, we were unable to do so as the pool of suitable candidates turned out to be incredibly small. Due to this and other macro-issues, along with a slowing interest in the field of

Anthropology among our students, we believe the best path forward is to transition away from Anthropology to Criminology. Criminology is a growing field with excellent opportunities for our students that is also a natural fit with our current course offerings. Establishing Criminology as a field of study in our department will enliven our own teaching and course offerings and also benefit the institution. Data gathered by former staff member Rick Ostrander indicated this field could serve as an excellent recruitment tool for students who might otherwise pass on a Westmont education. The Westmont admissions department echoes Dr. Ostrander's data, reporting strong student interest in Criminology. We expect this will lead to growth for both the department and the College. Therefore, after extended discussions (within our department and with a member of the Provost's Office) this past year, our department has decided to retool as the Department of Sociology and Criminology, converting the existing Anthropology tenure-track line into a Criminology line. We look forward to the institutional support for this important transition.

A.5 Intro Summary - The material presented here comprises a brief introduction of the report that follows. The Sociology/Anthropology department operates in accord with the mission of Westmont College by providing an educational program within the liberal arts tradition. We explore an array of theoretical frames, varied analytical methods, and myriad vocational trajectories, while also cultivating a distinctly Christian posture to the world. Our active and applied curriculum helps equip students for life beyond the classroom while serving the needs of our diverse student body, the institution of Westmont, our greater community, and God's Kingdom.

Report Section B: Student Assessment and Program Review

B1. STUDENT LEARNING

Since our last 6-year report, the Department of Sociology & Anthropology revised its Program Learning Outcomes and created two separate PLOs out of the original PLO #1 (as recommended in previous assessment). All the other PLOs remained the same:

- 1) Competence in Core Knowledge: Students will learn core sociological / anthropological / social work knowledge*
- 2) Application of Core Knowledge: Students will be able to apply sociological, anthropological, or social work concepts to social, cultural and global situations.*
- 3) Research and Methods Competence: Students will apply qualitative and quantitative methods according to the disciplinary standards of sociology, anthropology or social work.*
- 4) Integration of Faith and Learning: Students will be able to explain the integration of Biblical principles with sociological, anthropological or social work issues.*
- 5) Oral and Written Communication: Students will be able to effectively communicate their ideas, research, and arguments in public presentations and reports.*

The following summary documents the schedule of PLOs that were assessed during this last cycle since 2017:

AY 2018-2019: Due to a number of unanticipated faculty leaves impacting the majority of the department, no PLO assessment was completed. In lieu of an annual assessment, the department did successfully revise the language of PLO #1 Core Knowledge, creating 2 new and clearer PLOs in the process. (NOTE: While this was completed, this report will address how the department will be returning to the original formulation of this PLO).

AY 2019-2020: Due to the disruptions caused by the COVID pandemic, the originally planned oral and written communication PLO assessment was postponed.

AY 2020-2021: Even though oral and written communication belong to one PLO, only the oral portion of the PLO was assessed. (In 2022, the department set a plan to alternate between oral and written assessments when that PLO is scheduled next to be assessed. According to this plan, written communication would be assessed AY2026-2027.)

AY 2021-2022: Integration of Faith and Learning PLO was assessed.

AY 2022-2023: Research and Methods Competence PLO was assessed.

Overall, our students performed satisfactorily, with the knowledge that there is always room for improvement on three Program Learning Outcomes: (1) Written Communication, (2) Integration of Faith and Learning, and (3) Research and Methods Competence. In addition to collating data from our annual assessments of each of these PLOs, a focus group with current seniors was conducted in order to get in-depth perspective on some of the questions and issues raised from our regular assessment work. Also, our alumni survey also shed light on how well we are executing these PLOs. Where relevant, data from these multiple sources are summarized below.

We are aware that specific Benchmarks were not established during this last cycle as previously planned. So, one of the steps we have sought to take in this seven-year report is to make time to discuss Benchmarks for these PLOs so that future evaluation can be more closely examined.

1.1 Oral and Written Communication: *“Students will be able to effectively communicate their ideas, research, and arguments in public presentations and reports”*

Given limited resources during the COVID-19 pandemic, the department decided to focus on assessing the *oral* communication component of the “Oral and Written Communication” PLO because two previous PLO assessments (for 2015 and 2016) involved scoring written communication (i.e., student papers) while evaluating our “Research and Methods Competence” and “Competence in Core Knowledge” PLOs, respectively.

Method. The SOC/AN 197 (Senior Research Capstone) seniors’ final research presentations were assessed with a newly developed scoring rubric which evaluated seven elements of oral

communication: argument, evidence, organization, components, delivery, Q&A, and visuals. Six student presentations over Zoom were assessed.

Findings. With each of the seven categories of presentation scored on a 5-point scale (excellent= 5 to unacceptable = 1), the category means ranged from 3.9 to 4.4, with the highest scores in Organization ($M = 4.4$) and Q&A ($M = 4.37$), and the lowest score in Visuals ($M = 3.9$). Overall the average “grade” for the whole presentation was 84% (i.e., 147 of 175 possible points), suggesting that student presentations were largely good, with room for improvement.

Interpretation. We are hesitant to draw strong conclusions from this particular assessment given the extenuating circumstances of the pandemic and Zoom, but these findings do suggest that our students developed skills in smoothly and logically transitioning from one section of the presentation to another (i.e., organization), and that they were adept at fielding audience questions in a professional manner. However, there is a need for more clear instruction on suitable expectations for visual presentation of their research.

Action. In the assessment discussion, the department recognized its own need to come to a working consensus regarding each of our own expectations for what good oral communication entails—especially with regard to delivery and visual aids—because there were substantially disparate scores evidenced among different faculty scorers. Also, one of the articulated goals from this assessment was to ensure that every student has the opportunity to give at least one oral presentation during their coursework that leads up to the Senior Research Capstone.

1.2 Integration of Faith and Learning: “*Students will be able to explain the integration of Biblical principles with sociological, anthropological or social work issues.*”

Method. The final Reflection Essays of Faith Integration from SOC/AN 195 (Senior Seminar) were assessed with a newly developed scoring rubric that evaluated: (1) Understanding of texts, (2) Analysis and explanation of texts, (3) Engagement of Christian perspective from personal faith position, (4) Self-awareness of personal faith position. This rubric was intentionally constructed with the understanding that students do not all self-identify as being a person of Christian faith, and would sufficiently evaluate the degree to which students had appropriately engaged the Christian perspectives that had been discussed during their time as Sociology majors at the college. Thirteen essays were collected and assessed.

Findings. With each of the four categories of presentation scored on a 5-point scale (excellent= 5 to unacceptable = 1), the highest average was in “Understanding of the Texts” ($M = 4.08$) and the lowest averages were in “Analysis & Explanation of the Texts” ($M = 3.72$) and “Engagement of Christian Perspective from Personal Position.” ($M = 3.72$)

The focus group interviews found that students appreciated the way in which faith was discussed during class time, especially in relation to events happening on campus or nationally, and found it helpful to have the relationship between Christian faith and sociology directly addressed. The alumni survey (see Section B below) revealed that our graduates highly valued discussion relating faith to areas of inquiry. The challenge for our department, however, is that integrating faith and *learning* is not coterminous with development of one's *personal faith*. That is, sometimes applying religious frames to challenging topics actually challenges personal faith and can lead to a process of deconstruction. The alumni survey indicated that we helped students deconstruct faith (and they almost universally appreciated this), but we could invest more resources in helping students know where to go from there. This is not unique to our department, of course, and is a common narrative in Christian higher ed more broadly.

Interpretation. One of the limitations to this assessment method was that the original assignment prompt and the rubric did not necessarily line up. Also, some department members were less familiar with the assigned texts that students discussed, so it was more difficult to gauge the degree of understanding, analysis, and explanation of those texts. With that said, a major point of discussion was oriented around the particular cultural moment our students have been inhabiting in recent years and how several students articulate experiencing their Christian faith to be in opposition to interest and care for sociological issues concerning social justice and the marginalized. As a result, the SOC/AN department becomes one of the few spaces where they feel they can work out how these two aspects of their identities and interests can not only be reconciled, but be regarded as a generative dynamic that motivates both rigorous sociological/anthropological analysis and further deepening in one's Christian faith journey.

Action. A proposal was made to reconsider the PLO language to (a) not only expect integration, but also application, and (b) to broaden the focus from "Biblical principles" to move towards an articulated understanding of the "faith" component of "faith and learning" as including not only Scriptural engagement, but also familiarity with historical Christian theology and traditions of spiritual formation and practice.

1.3 Research and Methods Competence: *"Students will apply qualitative and quantitative methods according to the disciplinary standards of sociology, anthropology or social work."*

Method. SOC 197 Senior Seminar Research Papers were assessed on research methods using a scoring rubric developed six years ago during the previous Research Methods PLO assessment (AY 2014-2015). This required each paper be scored on a scale from Excellent (score=4) to Missing (score=0) in five areas: method choice, data collection instrument, sampling technique, data collection process, and data analysis. An equal distribution of each research method employed by students in their projects (i.e., content analysis, survey and interview) was ensured among the twelve assessed papers.

Findings. Categories with highest scores were Data Collection Instrument (M = 3.20) and Data Analysis (M = 3.10). Categories with the lowest scores were Sampling Technique (M = 2.88) and Data Collection (M = 2.93). In general, it was observed that there was great variance between student papers that demonstrated excellent understanding and great thoughtfulness in conducting research, and other papers which contained significant holes and lacked basic research competence. Within a scale of 0-4 (4 being the highest), the scores ranged from a low of 1.5 to a high of 4.

In the focus group interviews, one student did note the desire to have content analysis covered more adequately in Research Methods courses in preparation for the Senior Research Capstone projects. The alumni survey also revealed that graduates widely desired the research project be spread out over a longer period of time. It is not feasible to make it a two-semester sequence, but it may be possible to meet with them in the Fall to help them begin brainstorming research questions and starting the IRB process.

Interpretation. It was noted that the highest scoring categories of data collection instrument and data analysis reflect the instructors' and department's priorities (over the other categories). Among the strongest papers, we were impressed by the degree of sophistication demonstrated in data analysis, and the capacity of students to conduct research on topics of profound social and even pragmatic institutional significance (i.e., some projects were shared with the Campus Pastor's Office and the Center for Academic Success staff).

Overall, the department was pleased to find that we had substantially improved in the total mean score when compared to the 2015 assessment of research methods. In 2015, the total mean was 13.08; this year, the total mean was 15.13. We believe this reflects the substantial curricular changes and hiring that likely contributed to this improvement in student learning: (1) In 2015, students were still taking the SOC106/107 sequence (formerly, Intro to Research Methods / Data Analysis). For several years now, students have been taking SOC108 and OSC 109 (Quantitative Methods and Qualitative Methods) (2) In 2015, students were still conducting their research capstone projects within SOC195 Senior Seminar— a 4-credit course that we have taken apart and re-set as two separate courses: current SOC195 Senior Seminar (which focuses on post-graduate life and faith/learning) and SOC197 Senior Research Capstone (solely focused on research). (3) Since 2015, we successfully hired a colleague who not only specializes in quantitative methods and analyses, but is invested in bringing students along in his own research projects and encouraging students to share their research with relevant parties and stakeholders.

Action. The persistent strain of having students attempt to complete an independent research project within one semester was discussed with the observation that other majors (e.g. Psychology) have their capstone projects approved by the fall. Would inquiring with other departments on their research capstone timetables be instructive?

Another related issue concerns the optimal timing of methods classes for students. While it seems appropriate for majors to become familiar with their discipline's research methods by their sophomore year, the frustrating lack of qualitative data analysis software available on campus computers creates a pragmatic incentive to wait to take Qualitative Methods until the fall before Research Capstone in order to keep using the year-long student license for NVivo. Also, students often have trouble retaining their knowledge of methodology from their sophomore to their senior year. To integrate some type of primary research project can be challenging because many upper-division courses are open to non-majors, however, some discussion on practical strategies or short assignments that ask students to identify the various rationales/method choices of reading they are assigned might be helpful.

Finally, it was noted that two areas that tend to get under taught in the existing methods classes due to a lack of time are content analysis and literature review. Intentional discussion of how to address these weaknesses will be helpful.

1.4 Application of Core Knowledge (PLO #2)

This PLO was not assessed on its own in this period (it was due for its own assessment in AY 2024-2025), so we are relying on data collected in the focus group and alumni survey. From the focus group interviews, students noted that they are always drawing on their core knowledge from the race, religion, and gender classes in their other courses. One senior noted that the academic rigor of the SOC department's courses (in its readings and papers) prepared them well for applying to graduate school.

1.5 Competence of Core Knowledge (PLO #1)

This PLO was not assessed on its own in this period (it was due for its own assessment in AY 2025-2026), so we are relying on data collected in the focus group and alumni survey.

1.6 Participation in ILO Assessments

During this last cycle, the SOC/AN department participated in the following ILO Assessments:

- Written/Oral Communication (2018)
- Critical Thinking (2020)
- Diversity (2021)

Written/Oral Communication (2018)

Attempts were made to access disaggregated data by department or majors (i.e., requests made to Tatiana Nazarenko and lead Sarah Skripsky). However, we learned that decisions were made in this assessment to not include disaggregated data in its report, so no department-relevant observations could be easily made.

Critical Thinking (2020)

Eleven SOC108 students (mostly juniors) participated in this assessment. Overall, students showed relative improvement in average total score (from 12 to almost 14). The following areas showed noticeable improvement in the post-test scores: capacity to explain the limitations of the correlation observed and the possibility of alternative explanations; capacity to provide alternative explanations for a pattern of results that has many possible causes; capacity to discern that provided evidence does not strongly support the hypothesis; capacity to correctly identify information relevant to solving a problem based on the descriptive titles of the available information.

No difference was found between pre-test and post-test scores in the following: capacity to identify types of information needed to evaluate the hypothesis or competing hypotheses; capacity to provide alternative interpretations of the findings; capacity to identify viable solutions or number of changes needed that could solve a real-world problem.

While these outcomes do appropriately reflect the topics and skills (e.g., aptitude in comprehending, and analyzing data, hypotheses and problems) that take up significant amounts of time and energy in SOC108, the results suggest that our coursework can improve by helping students build skills in critically imagining alternative interpretations and/or viable solutions to real-world problems.

Diversity (2021)

Similarly to the Written/Oral Communication ILO, no department disaggregated data were offered in the 2021 Diversity ILO. The ILO was cross-sectional examining Westmont seniors, with a total of 53 social science students (out of 174 total). In all four areas of evaluation (empathy, systems thinking, faith, and responsibility) social science students scored lower than humanities and natural/behavioral sciences. Other social science courses that participated (in addition to our senior seminar with approximately 10 students) were the Communication Studies and Economics and Business senior seminars (making up the other 43 students). We would like to believe our students were prepared to score highly on this ILO, but given the large number of students outside our major grouped together it is impossible to know. Both Dr. Kent and Dr. Whitnah served on this ILO, and we recall that one broad observation across all divisions was the difficulty students had establishing links between their faith and matters of diversity. We believe there is room to improve in this area and will strive to do so. The new Justice, Reconciliation, and Diversity GE category offers a concrete opportunity to do so.

b. ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY:

We have three main conclusions on the assessment process: First, we are pleased with how we worked effectively at developing new rubrics for evaluating Written Communication and Integration of Faith & Learning. The need to construct these rubrics provided us with the opportunity to have important conversations about what our expectations are for each of these PLOs and how to suitably evaluate student learning in these areas.

With that said, second, we are aware of some of the rubrics and their alignment with the assignments that are assessed need to be fine-tuned in order to sharpen our assessment. We are also aware of how establishing clear Benchmarks will improve our capacity to concretely move towards improved student learning.

Third, moving forward, we would like to be more strategic about the number of PLOs and language employed in each PLO. We recognize the ways in which contingent circumstances can delay our capacity to complete our assessments within a 6 or 7 year period. During the last six-year report, we appropriately recognized the multi-dimensional nature of the PLOs and thought that the solution was to separate them as PLOs. However, as our new department has grown and matured, we better understand the nature of PLOs and how the assessment process is to serve the department in improving student learning. We have thus decided to reduce the number of PLOs back to our original four (see Curriculum Map & PLO Alignment Chart in Appendices).

B.2. ALUMNI SURVEY AND REFLECTIONS

2.1. Procedures. We created an alumni survey with SurveyMonkey using two pieces of source material: a template provided by the Dean of Educational Effectiveness and our departmental alumni survey from the prior 7 year review (see Appendices for the survey instrument). Using email addresses provided by the Registrar's Office and the Director of Data Services, we emailed a survey link to 87 alumni who had graduated between May 2017 and August 2023. The invitation to participate was sent early March 2024 with an automated reminder email two weeks later. Five emails bounced back, while three were unopened. From the 78 opened invitations we received 51 total responses (36 complete, 15 partial). The survey was anonymous. We included a mix of quantitative and short answer questions seeking to understand life outcomes after graduation, along with honest feedback concerning our department and Westmont College more broadly.

2.2. Respondents. Fifty-one alumni completed the survey. Women comprised 82% of the sample. Sixty percent of the sample was non-Hispanic white (10% Asian, 16% multiracial, 8% non-white Hispanic). This represented a decrease of 19 percentage points of non-Hispanic whites completing the major from the prior 7-year report (which represented alumni from the 1950's to 2016). The distribution of graduation year was as follows: 2017 (14%), 2018 (8%), 2019 (6%), 2020 (19%), 2021 (12%), 2022 (18%), 2023 (22%). Forty-three percent of respondents completed the Sociology General track, 43% completed the Sociology Human Services track, 12% completed the Sociology Cross-Cultural track, and 2% completed an Anthropology major. This represented a 17 percentage point decrease on the General track, 22 percentage point increase on the Human Services track, 3 percentage point decrease on the Cross-Cultural track, and 3 percentage point decrease on Anthropology. Sixty-five percent of majors completed a minor in another discipline, while 16% completed a second major.

2.3. Findings. Overall, the alumni survey results were encouraging, but respondents did offer several helpful suggestions for areas of improvement. Below, we highlight some of the patterns we found particularly noteworthy in the dataset. Please refer to the Appendices for complete results, percentages for every item, and all responses to open-ended questions.

Fifty-nine percent completed an **internship** as a part of their sociology/anthropology degree. In an open-ended question, many of these alumni described important learning outcomes resulting from their internship, but a few reported disappointments such as the internship itself not being challenging enough or being unrelated to future career aspirations.

Sixty-one percent completed an **off-campus program**, with the largest critical mass participating in Westmont Downtown, followed by Westmont in San Francisco.

Ninety-six percent of alumni rated **teaching** in the department as *strong* or *outstanding*, a 20 point increase from the prior survey.

When reflecting on their post-Westmont years, alumni reported largely positive experiences with the Sociology and Anthropology Department. Sixty-six percent attended or were currently enrolled in an **advanced degree program** (44% Masters, 22% Doctorate), with 77% of them stating the department prepared them *well* or *very well* for their advanced degree program (an additional 22% said *adequately*). Seventy-seven percent were **professionally employed** or enrolled in graduate school within 9 months of graduation (69% were engaged thusly within five months). Compared to their current peers or colleagues, 47% reported feeling *better* prepared due to their Westmont education (another 44% felt being *about equally* prepared). Notably, 63% reported they would *definitely* be a **sociology/anthropology major** if they had to do it all again (with another 20% reporting *probably*).

Regarding **current employment** status, 61% of alumni were working full-time outside of the home, 11% were working part-time outside of the home, 11% were students, and 3% were doing unpaid employment (e.g. child rearing, volunteering); another 11% fell into an “other” category (usually because they fit into multiple categories). When asked to reflect upon their sociology or anthropology degree and current (or most recent) employment, alumni indicated their learning from the degree was used in the workplace *a lot* (23%) or *a great deal* (35%); 19% said *a little* while 6% said *none at all*.

Regarding our departmental **Program Learning Outcomes** (PLOs), we asked alumni to evaluate how important these PLOs were to their current (or most recent) work. We note below the percentage that said each PLO was *very* or *extremely* important for their current work (see Appendices for full results):

- Ability to apply core sociological, anthropological, or social work concepts to social, cultural, and/or global situations (48%)
- Ability to use or understand quantitative research methods (26%)
- Ability to use or understand qualitative research methods (42%)
- Ability to explain or understand the integration of biblical principles with sociological, anthropological, or social work issues (23%)
- Ability to communicate orally (90%)
- Ability to communicate in writing (84%)

To assess other departmental values and goals, we asked alumni how important three key emphases within our curriculum have been in their **personal formation**, as well as in their **professional career or vocation**. We report below the percentage that said each of these emphases has been *extremely* important (see Appendices for full results):

- Understanding the significance of social inequality and stratification (personal formation, 65%; career or vocation, 54%)
- Understanding the significance of global and cross-cultural perspectives (personal formation, 50%; career or vocation, 37%)
- Understanding society in terms of institutions, structures, and systems (personal formation, 74%; career or vocation, 48%)

Evaluating their overall experience, we asked alumni how satisfied they were with the education they received at Westmont. Fourteen percent said *somewhat satisfied*, 51% said *satisfied*, and 34% said *very satisfied* (none selected any of the three “dissatisfied” options).

Regarding **identity as a Christian or follower of Christ**, 53% identified this way, 31% did not identify this way, and 17% were not sure. This is a change from our previous departmental report in which 92% of the alumni self-identified as a Christian or follower of Christ. However, the prior cycle’s Alumni Survey was sent to all 684 alumni and the current data is only for 2017-2024 graduates. Several follow-up questions helped elucidate alumni’s faith experiences. We asked both “How important was religion and/or spirituality to you while a Westmont student?” and “How important is religion and/or spirituality to you today?” The same number – 11% – answered *not at all* to these questions. There was a general drift downwards in religious salience among the other three response options from the previous report to this report (*extremely important* 25% to 19%, *quite important* 42% to 25%, *sort of important* 22% to 44%). In open-ended responses, alumni described narratives around faith deconstruction, many of which were sparked by the sociology/anthropology curriculum. Notably, the vast majority of responses spoke of this in a positive way, discussing a needed disentangling of Christianity and culture, white nationalism, etc. A number of alumni mentioned specific faculty or readings that were encouraging in rebuilding their faith. Interestingly, one respondent said “I was not a Christian entering Westmont and leaving Westmont, but I would say I think studying sociology does make people more aligned with the ways of Jesus.”

When identifying the **best aspects** of the sociology/anthropology program, alumni discussed several prominent themes. The most frequent response revolved around sociology/anthropology **professors** (n=13). Alumni described faculty as transformational, smart, empathetic, challenging, and available. Several discussed faculty helping them preserve their faith. For example:

“Definitely the authenticity and genuine nature of the professors in the department. The respect I had for my professors greatly impacted the lessons they were teaching and helped me understand the gravity and importance of what I was learning.”

The second most frequently mentioned aspect was quality of classroom discussion (n=10). Alumni were very positive about the conversation-based teaching style of faculty and the perceived weight and importance of course content. In a similar vein, the third and fourth most mentioned topics were small class size (n=5) and sense of community among classmates (n=5). For example:

“Sociology is a difficult and very heavy topic. At times it made me question everything I thought I knew. But I never felt alone in processing those things.

That was partially due to the professors, but also due to how my graduating class felt like a small and safe community...I truly got to know my class in the best of times and the worst. And that I believe is a true reflection of sociology and the importance of human connection.”

Beyond that, a number of alumni mentioned how the sociology/anthropology major helped them live in and understand “the real world” (n=5), integrate their faith into the subject matter (n=4), and gain valuable skills during internships and major research projects (n=3).

When identifying what improvements they would suggest for the sociology/anthropology program, the alumni discussed several themes, some curricular and some extra-curricular. Regarding curricular improvements, respondents recommended studying more female and non-white sociologists, expanding the global perspective, creating stronger links between coursework and future career/vocation, encouraging faith reconstruction, lengthening the senior research project to a full year, and being more sensitive to students when exposing them to difficult content (often associated with courses in the human services track). In the previous 7-year review, many comments revolved around improved teaching, mentoring, and advising along with greater stability within the department. Happily, these were not significant themes in the present review, indicating that a corner has been turned. Many respondents in the previous review also recommended making the internship required, which we have done.

2.4. Interpretations. Overall, we were affirmed by the many positive responses from our alumni. 63% they would “definitely” be SOC/AN majors again if they had the chance, with another 20% saying “probably.” As one respondent wrote:

“It completely shaped who I am and how I engage in the world. It made me thoughtful, empathetic, insightful and focused on justice. It helps me think deeply about life, myself, work and the world around me. I am also equipped for my job and am able to think about the communities many people forget about.”

The majority of our alumni are satisfied with their sociology or anthropology degree. There is always room for improvement, of course, and we can learn from recommendations of a more critical nature (some of which came from graduates who stated they were probably better suited for a different major). It is clear that the SOC/AN department serves a particular slice of the Westmont student community, and often students “find” us along the way and are grateful for the strengths of our department. Faculty members are very well regarded in their teaching and research, in fostering a supportive learning community, and in preparing students for success in graduate school and their careers/vocations. We can improve in playing a role in not only the deconstruction, but reconstruction, of faith, and while curricular emphases on structure/inequality are strongly validated as relevant to alumni’s personal formation and professional careers, our PLOs are not quite as relevant to career experiences (with the exception of communicating orally and in writing, which were seen as extremely relevant). While we have work to do in terms of hiring and continued program development, we are in a much better place as a department than seven years ago.

2.5. Action Steps.

The alumni survey offers several insights that provide potential action items. First, we need to continue to have discussions as a department about the Senior Research Capstone project. We could potentially meet with students in the Fall of their senior year to begin developing their research projects. A handful of sessions could be offered to students in order to help them develop a research question and begin the IRB process. Currently, students submit IRB by mid-February, which condenses the data collection and writing period into a very short time frame. If we could get students started on IRB, with the aim of submission by the first week or two of the semester, it would make a significant difference. But we also need to consider what is sustainable and reasonable for the faculty member teaching this course, which is always a very intensive commitment.

Second, as faculty we can be more intentional in offering resources for building students in their faith. The challenge with this is that our students do not engage in courses in a predictable timeline, so it's difficult to focus on the early years as "deconstruction years" and the later years as "reconstruction years," for example. The only predictable space in which we have all our students in the same "educational timeline" is the senior seminar, which occurs in the Spring of senior year. For this reason, intentional reconstruction efforts have often been concentrated here. We know that faculty have made efforts to do this work in their other courses, but given the significant amount of personal and spiritual upheaval that tends to occur in college, isolated efforts provided by faculty in their elective courses may or may not be "heard." Still, we believe it is in students' best interest to be increasingly mindful of these dynamics and will seek to continue to offer tools and resources throughout our students' full programs.

Third, several alumni commented on a desire to see the Sociology/Anthropology department more connected to the campus and the broader Santa Barbara community. We believe establishing a Sociology/Anthropology Club would help with this concern in several ways, as would our department's investment in the Westmont Downtown program (should it continue to exist). For example, student leaders of the club could act as liaisons between department faculty and other entities on campus to help our department take a more active role in panels and other student events. Or, student club leaders could organize an annual volunteer event for members of our department.

Fourth, we can use one or more of our open tenure-track hires to build connections with the local community. This could, for example, entail seeking a community-engaged scholar who does community-based research. Or it might mean hiring a scholar whose research translates effectively into supporting non-profits or religious communities in the area (i.e., through consulting, training, etc.).

Finally, we believe it would be ideal to establish a regular global education opportunity for our students. We have traditionally encouraged off-campus opportunities, but students have tended to disproportionately attend Westmont in San Francisco and Westmont Downtown. While we wish to continue encouraging students to attend these U.S.-based programs, it is also important to prepare students for engagement in non-U.S. contexts. We have already made steps toward this goal by offering a Mayterm course this coming spring (May '25) traveling to Ecuador. If successful, this program could run every two or three years.

B.3. CURRICULUM REVIEW

As the culmination of an intensive, multi-year curriculum revision project, our department substantially revised all three tracks of the Sociology major; the revisions were approved and became effective in Fall 2022. We are very pleased with the ways in which our curriculum revisions have restructured the Sociology major and are better equipping our students for both graduate school and the job market!

The core courses of the major have expanded to include: an introductory course (to sociology or cultural anthropology), sociological or culture theory, quantitative research methods, qualitative research methods, a course on either race or gender, an internship, a senior seminar, and a senior research capstone course. By restructuring our Sociology major and its three tracks, we have built a core group of courses that ensures that every sociology graduate has a solid foundation with regard to theory, research methods, social stratification, and the integration of Christian faith and sociological learning, as well as firsthand experience producing original research, completing various activities (e.g., conducting informational interviews, creating a resume) that help to launch them into the next phase of their lives, and the work experience and professional networking provided by an internship. The three tracks of our major (i.e., general track, human services, and cross-cultural) also have increased flexibility with regard to the electives; these changes addressed issues that the general and cross-cultural track students previously encountered regarding insufficient course offerings in certain once-required categories (these insufficient course offerings were usually due to the instability within our Anthropology line or adjunct hiring, as well as sabbaticals).

We are also pleased with the ways our 2022 curriculum revisions include more scaffolding of courses. Specifically, we have divided up our electives into two categories. Although they are not labeled “lower division” and “upper division” due to institutional rules regarding course numbers (e.g., all course numbers over 100 are considered upper division; changing the course numbers would also negatively impact transfer students who must take at least a specific percentage of their upper-division major courses at Westmont), the two groupings essentially denote this and we advise students accordingly. This helps both faculty and students to have consistent expectations regarding the required level of preparation and workload in each course.

Engaging in a comparison of peer institutions affirmed our belief that we have structured our Sociology major well. The core of most peer institutions includes an introductory course, theory, one methods course (or statistics plus another combined methods course), and a senior seminar. We believe that our core—with its inclusion of both quantitative and qualitative research methods as separate courses, a course on race or gender, an internship, and a research capstone—is far more robust and rigorous than that of most peer institutions. Our major is distinctive in ways that will benefit our graduates, and we are proud of how we have structured our major and its three tracks! The peer institution comparison did raise two questions for us to consider: 1) Should we divide the senior research capstone course into two semesters, similar to Wheaton College? And 2) Should we expand our social stratification course offerings, perhaps through our next hire, to include a course on social class inequality, which several peer institutions do?

Our review of peer institutions also affirmed that our curriculum—at least until the departure of Felicia Song, at the end of AY 2023-24—adequately reflects the discipline of Sociology today and pragmatically prepares students for their next steps of work or graduate school. We

definitely believe that our major helps students to learn the broad contours of the discipline of sociology, how to think sociologically, and how to conduct sociological research. The focus group that we conducted with our seniors confirmed that they view our core courses positively. One senior stated that they “appreciate[d] the academic rigor of the SOC department; readings and papers prepared me well for applying to grad school. Although we sometimes had a hefty workload, I would not have changed our courses to make them any easier.” A handful of seniors, however, also requested additional variety in electives—requesting more options, wider variety, “more social work courses,” and “more electives...that are connect[ed] with [professors’] specialty.” Results from the Alumni Survey echo similar themes while raising a few others. Several respondents, for example, stated they would like to see classes more effectively include community connections, career applications, and global perspectives. One respondent wrote, “many courses made it feel easy to get stuck in a ‘think bubble.’” Recent departmental actions, including making the internship required for all SOC majors and establishing a global off-campus program (Ecuador Mayterm 2025) are steps toward addressing these concerns. One additional concern expressed by several graduates was the difficulty of fitting the full senior research project into a single semester, recommending it be started in the Fall. This is a helpful suggestion, and one that affirms the strength of our research curriculum; our seniors are invested in their independent projects and want more time to conduct them.

We can also confirm that our curriculum is effectively preparing students for their next phase of life based upon the significant success of our graduates in getting accepted to the graduate programs they apply to—including top programs in those fields of study. Since our last 7-year review, our graduates have been accepted into the Master of Social Work (MSW) programs of the University of Michigan (ranked #1 in the nation), the University of Southern California, and Baylor University. In addition, recent graduates have been accepted into UC-Berkeley’s Master of Public Health (MPH) program, Cardiff University’s Masters in Sociology program, Baylor University’s PhD in Sociology program, Pepperdine University’s MS in Management and Leadership program, Westmont College’s nursing program, a Cal-State Marriage and Family Therapy program, Fielding University’s Clinical Psychology PhD program, Colorado State’s MA in Sociology program, a teaching credential program at CSU Long Beach, an MA program in Sports Psychology at Cal Baptist, and a Master’s level program in Environmental Justice and Political Ecology (affiliation unknown).

Overall, for a small department with 4.66 SOC/SW/AN faculty, we offer a good range of course offerings—especially considering that our courses support three sociology tracks that represent both Sociology and Social Work. With the departure of Felicia Song, we strongly believe that we need to hire a full-time, tenure-track replacement for her position soon! Her elective courses on technology (*Internet and Society*) and on the family (*SOC of the Family*) were popular with students and played an important role in providing both upper- and lower-division elective options for all three tracks. Moreover, Felicia Song taught several of our core courses—either annually or on a rotation with other department members. Our department needs to hire a full-time, general Sociology faculty member who can teach two sections annually of *Intro to Sociology* (especially now that this course fills the highly in-demand Justice, Reconciliation, and Diversity GE), as well as to join in the rotation for at least two other core courses; this rotation system is crucial in allowing existing faculty in our department to teach the elective or core courses in our specialty areas. Our students would also greatly benefit from a new hire that can

teach one or two courses within their specialty areas, to round out our elective offerings. We would be especially interested in a new hire who specializes in technology, the family, disability, global inequality, globalization, immigration, urban studies, popular culture, social problems, or social movements.

One question that our department is still grappling with is whether we should hire a sociologist with a cross-cultural focus, in order to better support our cross-cultural track—especially since we are unlikely to hire a full-time anthropologist again? Or do we need to change our cross-cultural track in light of the (current) reality that our department is rarely able to offer a full complement of cross-cultural courses? The focus group with our graduating seniors reflected some level of dissatisfaction with the number of courses that we offer that are truly cross-cultural or international in focus. We are continuing to have departmental conversations regarding how to best serve the needs of our students, especially in light of our need to hire a replacement for Felicia Song.

Returning to the comparison with peer institutions, no other department offers programs of study that straddle Anthropology, Social Work, and Sociology, as our department has done for decades. And no other department offers programs of study that encompasses Criminology, Social Work, and Sociology, as our department envisions doing in the future. Typically, departments with more than one discipline pair SOC/AN, SOC/SW, or SOC/Crim. However, we have chosen to affirm our multi-disciplinary status—although we plan to shift from Anthropology to Criminology—believing that the combination of three disciplines offers a unique and relevant curriculum to students living in today’s complex and multifaceted world. Our graduates have unique opportunities!

Our department has engaged in over four years of occasional discussion and one full year of deliberate exploration and consideration regarding what we envision our department to look like in the coming years. We have explored remaining a SOC/AN department, becoming a SOC/SW department, or becoming a SOC/Criminology department. We had a failed faculty search in AY 2022-23 for a medical anthropologist (a 2/3s Anthro, 1/3 medical humanities position), in which we simply did not find any candidates who seemed like a good fit for the department and College; moreover, the medical humanities component of that proposed position remained problematically vague. We lament the reality that we are not able to sustain the Anthropology component of our department. We have struggled to maintain adequate enrollment in Anthro courses beyond the intro level, to hire or retain a Christian anthropologist in a department that does not offer a BA in Anthro, or to bring in enough students to the department via Anthropology. Given the current fiscal realities, we sadly acknowledge that trying to hire an Anthropologist is not the best use of one of our department’s 4.66 tenure-track lines.

We decided against the SOC/SW option for several reasons: 1) We believe having a human services track embedded within a sociology major is genuinely better preparation for future social workers than a BSW program; 2) A BSW program is a shift to a pre-professional program and we do not want to move away from our department’s firm grounding in the liberal arts; 3) We think that a BSW program might end up “gutting” the Sociology major and do long-term harm to our department’s sustainability; and 4) We do not think that the time, energy, and

additional College resources required to engage in the multi-year process of starting a BSW program and getting it accredited through the CSWE is worth it.

Instead, we have decided that we would like to shift to become a SOC/Criminology department for several reasons: 1) We believe that the Criminology major may recruit some students who would otherwise not choose to attend Westmont College (and the Admissions office has some data that supports this); 2) A Criminology major with a strong sociology core is a liberal arts degree that we would be able to offer with one additional tenure-track line (i.e., our Anthropology line would convert to a Criminology line); 3) We believe that this is a major that would be of interest to many students and would likely draw more students to our department; 4) We believe that SOC majors would also benefit from being able to take a Criminology elective course; and 5) We believe that we can construct an excellent Criminology major that would serve the needs of students interested in a range of career paths (e.g., pre-law, corrections, advocacy, social work, law enforcement, forensic science). We also anticipate that our Criminology hire would be able to participate in the rotation of a methods course (qualitative or quantitative), as well as offer a course approved for Justice, Reconciliation, and Diversity GE credit.

In summary, we are proud of the work we have accomplished in revising our Sociology major curriculum. Although saddened by the loss of Anthropology, we are excited by the potential opportunities that a shift towards being a Sociology/Criminology department might bring! The questions that we continue to grapple with include:

- Is our Cross-Cultural track sustainable? Is it fully accomplishing what we say it will? Do we need to further restructure this track? Do we need to eliminate this track and perhaps urge interested students to pursue a Global Studies minor instead? Or can a new hire help us to retain it?
- Should we break-up our Senior Research Capstone course into two semesters, to provide students with more time in which to conduct a high-quality research project? If not, are there steps we can take to at least have students choose their topic in the Fall and submit an IRB application if needed?
- As we look towards hiring new faculty members for our department, should we look for a candidate who can offer a course on socioeconomic inequality?
- How can our Sociology (and, eventually, Criminology) course offerings serve other majors, minors, or departments? What new collaborations could we establish to help ensure adequate course enrollments? Are there other GE requirements that our courses could address?

B4. Program Sustainability and Adaptability

The Sociology and Anthropology Department has faced a number of significant changes over the years, and we look forward to our promising future. Will the program thrive? Nationwide trends in the labor market, along with demographic changes, present a unique opportunity for the department and the college if we capitalize on our strengths.

B4.1 Serving our Students and Society - Graduates of the Sociology and Anthropology Department at Westmont are well equipped to serve their neighbors, our society, and the Kingdom. Unlike many Sociology and Anthropology programs, Westmont’s emphasis on a Christian liberal arts education allows us to connect the science of studying groups, institutions, and societies with bigger, more meaningful questions about life, faith, vocation, and much more. The rigorous, active, and applied curriculum that we offer exceeds many of our peer institutions (see section B.3) and helps equip students for life far beyond the classroom.

Graduates of our program have high rates of employment and acceptance to advanced degree programs. Two-thirds of respondents of the 2017-2024 alumni survey were currently enrolled in, or had completed, graduate-level education (see Section 3.3). On the employment side of things, 77% of respondents had full-time employment. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that sociology jobs will increase by 7% from 2023-2024, much faster than the national average for all other fields³. According to the Census Bureau, year-over-year estimated increases for the sociology job code from 2021 to 2022 and 2022 to 2023 were 3.1% and 2.4%, respectively⁴.

The social service and internship opportunities we provide for students connect them with future employers, activate learned skills, and serve their communities. Internship opportunities provided by the department connect Westmont and its students to local non-profit organizations and community leaders.

Many of our major and minor students come from diverse backgrounds (see section B.5). The department has also played a significant role in the development of the Justice, Reconciliation, and Diversity G.E. requirement. In our department, we provide not only advanced sociological data and historical analysis of our society, but also Biblical and theological analysis and reflection on the nature of God and Justice. We are always looking for ways to improve our service to students, such as the proposed sociology club to help them connect more with each other and practice the skills and community-building which is so vital to their personal development (see section B.2).

B4.2 Serving Westmont - Westmont intends to be “an undergraduate, residential, Christian, liberal arts community serving God’s kingdom by cultivating thoughtful scholars, grateful servants and faithful leaders for global engagement with the academy, church, and world.” The Department of Sociology and Anthropology plays a critical role in a Christian liberal arts education. Through our G.E. and Major courses, our students find not only a lens to understand the challenges and obstacles that they may personally face, but are also equipped to tackle much larger issues in our families, churches, neighborhoods, cities, and nation. A major component of our vision and mission as a department is to help our students examine our world and community

³ <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/sociologists.htm>

⁴ <https://datausa.io/profile/cip/sociology-451101>

and to develop a sense of how they fit into the Kingdom and what their responsibilities may be as image-bearers of God.

Faculty members regularly serve on high-impact committees (e.g.; Faculty Council, Faculty Senate), and participate in campus-wide curriculum, student experience, and mission discussions. We also regularly host guest speakers for the Westmont community and participate in campus forums. Our faculty are excellent, devoted members of the Westmont community who are eager to teach and engage with our students, faculty, staff, and administration. This is reflected in our enrollment patterns, some of which is discussed in regard to faculty loads (see Appendices). Since 2017, we have graduated 122 majors and minors (see Table B4.1 below). The department has taught a total enrollment of 2,724 and over 10,000 total student credit hours. These are incredible numbers for the small size of our department and compares favorably to many of the departments of similar size on campus.

Table B4.1

Academic Year	Soc/An Major Grads	Soc/An Minor Grads	Ethnic Studies Minor Grads	Students Taught	Student Credit Hours
2017-2018	11	4	-	359	1378
2018-2019	14	5	-	341	1344
2019-2020	18	4	-	450	1756
2020-2021	7	5	2	439	1734
2021-2022	14	4	-	347	1302
2022-2023	19	-	3	447	1659
2023-2024	14	1	-	341	1285
Total	97	20	5	2724	10,458

B4.3 Challenges We Face - Although the nationwide trend for the field is promising, we face many challenges here at Westmont. Hiring, retention, campus climate, and changing areas of emphasis are all highlighted below.

1. Hiring - Our department has struggled to recruit faculty. There are many reasons for this reality; many of these challenges are at the institutional and county levels, rather than

departmental. Finding social scientists of faith that adhere to our religious policies creates an initial barrier to recruitment. Add in the regional concerns about high cost of living and salary scale, and many find the cost of being a Westmont employee just too high. Housing benefits for tenure-track faculty can mitigate some of the heavy burden of living in the area. Collectively, these issues make it very hard to find suitable adjuncts or otherwise non-tenure track department members.

The department, when fully staffed, has had 4.66 full-time faculty members - 1 Anthropology, 2.66 Sociology, 1 Human Services. We currently have 1.66 full-time TT Sociology, 1 Human Services, and 1 Visiting Sociology (1-year appointment). Hiring two faculty—one in Sociology and one in Criminology—to get back to baseline staffing levels is vital.

2. Mission and Identity - We are in the middle stages of a renewal. Just as Sociology and the Social Sciences are growing in size and employment opportunity, Anthropology has largely been contracting.⁵ Since the departure of Serah Shani in 2021, our department has been without a full-time Anthropologist. Given the macro trends in the field of Anthropology, we have made the decision to discontinue this subject emphasis in our department. Hiring searches have been unsuccessful, and we now believe that hiring an Anthropologist is not the best use of our tenure-track line or the resources provided to us by the college.
3. A New Vision - With Anthropology winding down, we have an excellent opportunity to retool into a Sociology and Criminology department. Criminology is a rapidly growing field with many employment opportunities in the public and private sectors⁶. Our own admissions department collected data that supports the in-demand nature of the field among applicants to Westmont. This can directly help address the college's enrollment gap.

Our already excellent training in research methods, course offerings in deviance and interpersonal violence, and internship opportunities will all provide an excellent foundation for the shift. A Criminology major will be a marketable addition to our department and the College, while also adding elective options for Sociology majors. We believe that there is a much greater chance of hiring an excellent candidate, as there is a much larger and diverse employment pool that will help us to overcome some of our institutional hiring challenges. This change will take our already excellent department to the next level. We need to use the former Anthropology line to hire a criminologist.

⁵ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6135356/>

⁶ <https://datausa.io/profile/cip/criminology>

4. Retention - Over the past few years, there have been significant losses of faculty-disproportionately faculty of color. All of the recent departures from our department have been of BIPOC faculty. The loss of Felicia Song at the end of the 23-24 academic year is especially challenging, as she took with her incredible wisdom, patience, and institutional knowledge that is difficult to replace.

As discussed in B.5., below, the Ethnic Studies Minor, which is housed in our department and was re-launched only a few years ago, has been comprised of 7 staff and faculty members. Only 2 currently remain at Westmont. Campus climate investigations suggest that the Faculty of Color and white allies may especially feel friction with the culture of the broader institution. We look forward to results from the recently completed campus-wide climate survey. This is a discussion we resolve to be a part of, as we together try to find a solution to this glaring institutional problem.

B4.4 Conclusion

Overall, the Department of Sociology and Anthropology is a high-quality and high-impact department at Westmont College. We have robust enrollment, a rigorous curriculum, proud and satisfied alumni, and excellent placement of our graduates. We are proud of the ways we serve our students, campus, and community. We look forward to an exciting and promising future as we transition to a department that includes Criminology. We need institutional support for this change, but we believe this change will benefit our existing students, faculty, future enrollments, and our community.

B5. Contribution to Diversity

Our department maintains a strong commitment to diversity. In this section, we highlight some of the work achieved thus far in this area, and identify areas of instability and uncertainty that make the road ahead challenging for us.

Student Diversity Data

We begin by looking at the reports on our students' performance in our introduction courses (SOC 001 and AN 001). In 2021 and 2022, we note that our department's grades did not significantly vary amongst students with respect to race/ethnicity, gender, and first-generation statuses. This "non-finding" is good news. Indeed, we were pleased to note that the Summer 2022 report states, "Of note, of all the departments, the GPA for first generation and non-first generation students was closest in these courses" (p.4).

We did notice a change between these first two years and 2023. In 2023, statistical differences emerged with respect to race/ethnicity and first-generation status (though still not for gender). In 2024, statistical differences emerged with respect to race/ethnicity only, but not for either first-generation status or gender. We note that in the overall reports (i.e., for introductory courses in the College as a whole), statistically significant differences are found across all three

statuses for each of these years. So, our department does seem, overall, to do well in most of these areas. Nonetheless, we do acknowledge the differences related to race/ethnicity in 2023 and 2024. We will continue to monitor this in future years and have ongoing conversations about how we can ensure that our classes are spaces in which students of all statuses and backgrounds can thrive.

Course Content and Structure

We make every effort to ensure our courses are designed in such a way as to promote students' access, and we assign content that directly relates to issues of race, gender, socio-economic status, and other features of diversity. Indeed, content on these topics is assigned and discussed in the majority of our classes.

Core Courses. SOC 001, Introduction to Sociology was recently revised to satisfy the new GE requirement in Justice, Reconciliation, and Diversity. SOC/AN 135, Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective, focuses on gender, itself, as well as how it intersects with other social statuses and identities. SOC 189, Sociology of Race & Ethnicity, deals with both the historical and contemporary construction of racial groups and the inequalities that result. As part of our curricular revision, we require students to now take either SOC/AN 135 or SOC 189, signaling our commitment to diversity in the structure of our major. For us, this comes from a commitment to ensuring that our increasingly diverse student body finds a home with us, a place where they can recognize their own experiences in the content they are encountering, and equips students of all backgrounds to navigate our diverse world with substantive and conceptual tools related to these topics. Another core course, SOC 171 (Sociological Theory) was revised in the context of the unrest in 2020 to center voices of marginalized theorists. The course now begins with W.E.B. DuBois, highlights women sociologists such as Marianne Weber, Harriet Martineu, and Patricia Hill Collins. In addition, paper assignments in this writing-intensive GE course were revised to ask students to consider how dense theories can apply to the realities of their lives with respect to race, gender, class, or their intersections.

In addition to these efforts to address diversity through core courses in our curriculum, our elective offerings also frequently include attention to various dimensions of diversity. This includes, but is not limited to, discussions of environmental racism in SOC 161 (Environmental Sociology), first-hand accounts of experiences of poverty in SOC 180 (Human Services & Social Policy), attention to sexual minorities in SOC 182 (Sociology of Deviance), and SOC 177 (Interpersonal Violence) analyzes race, gender, and urban violence, and also considers disparities in the criminal justice system. In these classes and more, our content reflects a range of authors' voices and experiences.

In terms of the structure of our courses, faculty have made multiple efforts recently to enhance students' access and success. For instance, after participating in a workshop on Transparent Assignment Design, paper prompts were revised to more clearly articulate the goals, purpose, and criteria for evaluation in assignments. Multiple faculty have developed and used rubrics for assessing student work in order to be more transparent in our assessment, and have incorporated much more explicit direction concerning the purpose of assignments, and our availability in office hours. In these ways we are working to meet the needs of our first-

generation students, in particular, as well as those who may simply not be familiar with the cultural landscape of a white evangelical institution. We try to name norms and practices, rather than presume common knowledge of them.

Faculty Participation and Initiative

Faculty have participated in and led initiatives related to diversity in many ways. For a few examples of our efforts: two faculty participated in the Mosaix training workshops; three have served on the Diversity Committee; two have taught in the Gender Studies Minor and one has served on the Gender Studies Advisory Committee; two facilitated a Faculty Forum discussion on the Diversity ILO assessment; one spearheaded efforts to revitalize the Ethnic Studies Minor (see below for more on this initiative, in particular).

We have given public lectures or offered trainings on these topics (e.g., Whitnah on the #MeToo Movement, Jirek on Trauma-Informed Care, Kent on the JRD requirement). And we have partnered with other departments or programs to host public lectures on issues related to gender and race (including Kristin DuMez, Robert Chao Romero, Malcom Foley, and Tricia Bruce). We have engaged in multiple co-curricular efforts, from advising an Intercultural Organization and speaking at Intercultural Programs events, to attending a NETVUE conference focused on enhancing student experiences on campus, to presenting at Feminist Society events.

Our participation in and leadership of these efforts has been important in building connections across other departments. As we have shared our expertise with our colleagues (both faculty and staff) and learned alongside them, we have valued the heartfelt commitment of our colleagues to the wellbeing of our students and peers. We have some questions about the effectiveness of some of these initiatives in the long-term, and find ourselves in a position of being stretched a bit thin through our participation in so many spaces. We will be looking to steward our energies wisely in the coming years so that we can be involved in spaces that are most likely to yield the greatest impact and be sustainable for us.

Demographics: Students

Our majors have been disproportionately female:

	M	F
2016-17	3	10
2017-18	1	10
2018-19	3	11
2019-20	3	15
2020-21	2	5
2021-22	3	11
2022-23	4	15

We are having ongoing conversations about this pattern. Some of this may be the appeal and popularity of our Human Services track; we know that helping professions tend to be disproportionately female, so perhaps female students are more likely to be drawn to our major. We have also tended to have more women faculty members than men. We are strategizing about

ways we might reach out to men in our introductory students about their interest in the major, and will continue to monitor this moving forward.

Here are the number of students by different racial groups over these years:

	White	Hispanic/Latino	Asian	Black	Multi-Racial	Not Indicated
2016-17	5	2	2	0	2	2
2017-18	6	3	1	0	1	0
2018-19	8	5	0	0	0	1
2019-20	8	5	3	1	1	0
2020-21	4	0	1	0	0	2
2021-22*		3				
2022-23	10	7	0	0	1	1

*Data was reported differently this particular year (with the designation of “Hispanic/Latino” or “not Hispanic/Latino” as the only institutional data provided), so we are not including the data for this year.

We are also having ongoing conversations about these patterns regarding race. As the College continues in its efforts to diversify, we’re grateful to have many students of color join our department and hope we will continue to serve them well.

Demographics: Faculty

At the time of the submission of this report, we have two full-time faculty (one white woman; one woman who is white and Native American), one 2/3 faculty (white man), and one visiting assistant professor (white man). In the past, we had two additional full-time faculty members, both of whom were BIPOC women. And our current 2/3 faculty position is a replacement for a full-time faculty member who retired (a BIPOC man).

Challenges/Needs

We celebrate the important contributions we make in the important work of diversity. Indeed, we recognize that our disciplinary expertise equips us particularly well to not just contribute to the College’s efforts around diversity, but actually to serve a vital leadership role in this area. That said, we have also identified a few ongoing challenges and needs in this area for the future:

1) Of the faculty who departed from us over this past 7-year cycle, all 3 were people of color. While they left for various reasons, we feel this as the loss that it is. And we recognize the challenges of not only recruiting, but also retaining faculty of color. We also recognize the value for students in being taught by people in whom they can see their own stories reflected. We want to maintain our commitment to diversity, and to be a department in which all members can thrive. We recognize the challenge of recruiting diverse faculty to a predominately white institution that does not have a strong track record of retaining them.

2) By way of illustrating this point further, the story of the revitalization of the Ethnic Studies Minor may be particularly instructive. In 2019, a student approached one of us to ask

whether it would be possible to complete this Minor. It was in the College Catalog, but many of the classes were no longer being offered, and the student was unsure of the path to completion. As a result of this student's initiative, an Advisory Group was formed that, over the course of the last five years, was comprised of the mostly BIPOC men and women across disciplines (6 out of 7 were BIPOC). In addition to updating the list of electives, this group also worked to create a new, co-taught, interdisciplinary course that satisfies the Understanding Society GE and would be a perfect fit for the new JRD GE requirement. This new course was at maximum capacity for 2 of its 3 offerings, drew students from various departments to declare the minor (we've had 5 students complete the minor since it was revitalized), and we currently have one student whose proposal for an Ethnic Studies Major was approved by the Academic Senate Review Committee as an interdisciplinary major.

Despite the initial energy and enthusiasm around this program, its viability is uncertain, at best. Of the original group who led the initiative, only two remain at the College. One of these is a BIPOC faculty member who has, understandably, needed to step away from involvement in the program. The Provost at the time the Minor was revitalized also encouraged us to "house" the Minor in the Sociology/Anthropology department. We have been happy to do this, but the advising and programming are now run by one faculty member with no resources. The new Introduction to Ethnic Studies course would be an ideal candidate for the College's new JRD requirement. But it cannot be currently taught due to the loss of the vast majority of faculty and staff who were crucial to the program, and the other needs of our department.

3) We are concerned about whether our ongoing efforts to bring our scholarly perspective as sociologists to bear on this important work will be supported by the administration. A faculty member who recently underwent the tenure process experienced particular scrutiny from a senior administrator because of both teaching and research on topics related to race and gender. Due to the ongoing sensitivity of this situation, further details are not documented here, but they may be provided upon request and confidentially. But suffice it to say, this faculty member learned from this experience that to engage in such work is to put oneself at risk. It is a risk all of us are willing to take, but we cannot do so at the expense of our own wellbeing, nor at the expense of our ability to teach and research freely in our discipline.

All this to say, we are happy to continue to do the important work of offering our scholarly expertise for the intellectual and holistic wellbeing of our students and our colleagues. We question whether there is sufficient institutional recognition of the cost of such efforts, and whether there is institutional willingness to support this work in a sustainable way. We are concerned about whether our efforts to recruit diverse candidates to fill vacancies will yield fruit, and, if so, about whether we will be able to retain these colleagues.

B6. Additional Analyses

B6.1 General Education

New JRD Course: In Fall 2023, the SOC/AN Department applied to have all of its sections of SOC001 Introduction of Sociology be certified for the Justice, Reconciliation and Diversity GE Requirement. With the GE Committee's approval, in the Spring 2024, two sections of SOC001

were taught with this new GE requirement. The required text to be used through all of future SOC001 sections is Christina Edmondson and Chad Brennan's *Faithful Antiracism*, an excellent and accessible resource that provides not only sociological data and historical analysis, but also Biblical and theological instruction and reflection on the nature of God and Justice. SOC001 is currently one of the dominant ways for students to complete the JRD GE requirement because there are only a handful of courses that are currently certified as such. In addition to already being an Understanding Society GE course, SOC001 and the SOC/AN Department are serving the college's GE curriculum in a critically significant way.

SOC200, the required sociology of health and medicine course for the nursing program, was also approved for JRD credit in Fall 2023.

Additionally, SOC161 Environmental Sociology was added to our catalog during this time frame and approved for Understanding Society GE Credit.

SOC108 Quantitative Methods was also approved for Reasoning Abstractly GE credit.

See Additional Appendices for syllabi.

B6.3 Faculty: Quality, Load, the Desired Expertise of our Future Hire(s)

It feels boastful to assert this, but our four-person Sociology department has impressively high-quality faculty members! Our collective academic pedigrees include degrees from prestigious colleges and universities, including: Westmont College, Wheaton College, Yale University, and Gordon College (for undergraduate studies), as well as the University of Michigan, University of Virginia, Northwestern University, Baylor University, and University of Notre Dame (for graduate studies); one member has also been a research affiliate with Harvard University's Medical School. Every department member has a Ph.D. in at least one discipline (Sociology), and one member has completed a doctoral degree in two disciplines (Sociology and Social Work). We have among our ranks two of Westmont College's recent Teachers of the Year (2017, 2023) and one of the College's Researchers of the Year (2022). Our faculty members have published two books and have two more forthcoming next year. Combined, we have published literally dozens of journal articles, including many in the top tiers of journals in our various fields and specialty areas. We all have active research agendas, we have given dozens of conference presentations, we are active in our respective professional guilds, we have obtained various internal and external grants and fellowships, and we are regularly invited to share our expertise via panels, media interviews / podcasts, or invited lectures. We also all serve (or recently completed service) on the most consequential College standing committees: Faculty Council (including one member serving two terms as Vice Chair), Academic Senate (two current members), and Faculty Personnel (one current member). For additional details regarding the impressive accomplishments of members of the Sociology and Anthropology Department, please refer to our Curriculum Vitas in the Appendices.

Regarding faculty teaching and advising loads, we do our best as a department to share the load as equitably as possible (see Appendices for details). For example, we strive to have every department member teach at least one *Intro to Sociology* section annually, as this course has the highest student enrollments. However, it is not typically possible for Dr. Jirek to teach *Intro to SOC* when serving as department chair because, as our social work faculty member (and a sociologist), she is the only person who can teach the courses specific to the Human Services track. Dr. Whitnah is also not teaching *Intro to SOC* as department chair, given the need to teach both gender and race, and to take on *Sociological Theory* (which was rotated with Dr. Song) and *Senior Research Capstone* (which was also rotated with Dr. Song, as well as Dr. Kent). We also rotate the department chair role every three to four years, to distribute the service work more equitably. Dr. Kent teaches a 3-credit course in the Nursing Program each semester, resulting in a 6-credit overload most years.

One inconvenient issue that our department faces with regard to the teaching load is that we have a 2-credit Senior Seminar (SOC 195) course as a required part of our core curriculum, but it is the only 2-credit course in our course offerings. The result is that teaching this course requires a department member to teach a 2-credit overload for a semester. During the past review cycle, three different department members have taught SOC 195. We have decided to rotate responsibility for this course so that it does not disproportionately impact any department member. But we have also considered if we might want to consider offering other 2-credit courses, to provide students and faculty with more scheduling options.

We need to make two tenure-track hires in the near future: one to replace Felicia Song (who resigned at the end of AY 2023-24), and one to replace Serah Shani (an anthropologist who left the College at the end of AY 2020-21, but whose position we would like to convert from Anthro to Criminology).

Regarding the Sociology tenure track position, this replacement is essential given our need to provide the essential range of core courses in our Sociology major, several of which also contribute to the broader needs of the College. Now that our department is the major contributor to the campus-wide JRD GE requirement (offering at least five sections of *Introduction to Sociology* each year), the need for a replacement hire is essential not only to the mission of our department, but also of the College. In addition, since our major supports three separate tracks (general track, cross-cultural track, and human services track) our existing faculty lend essential support to particular track(s). We are open to different areas of specialization than Felicia supported, and thus will frame this search as an “open” search with some selected preferred areas of expertise. We will be looking for candidates who are prepared to teach such core courses as: introduction to sociology, sociological theory, research methods, and social problems. While the area of specialization is open, teaching or research experience in the following areas are preferred: sociology of the family, global inequality and development, immigration, technology, medical sociology, or disability studies. Our new hire will be prepared to contribute to initiatives related to justice, reconciliation, and diversity, and to the College’s curricular requirement in these areas. We are particularly excited about how our new hire might contribute to ongoing institutional efforts in (1) environmental studies, (2) medical humanities, (3) ethnic studies, and/or (4) justice, reconciliation, and diversity. Thus, we see this replacement hire as not only contributing to the essential functioning of our department, but also in continuing the ongoing

contributions of our department to the College's work on diversity, our General Education curriculum, and initiatives in new programs.

Regarding the Criminology tenure track position, our vision for this position is still under development – as we hope to draw upon the expertise of our external reviewer, Dr. Elisha Marr, to help us design our Criminology major. We are most interested in a Criminology major that would build upon several of our Sociology core courses, as we believe that Criminology majors should be well-versed in the fundamentals of sociology. Thus, our Criminology new hire would likely teach such courses as Intro to Criminology, another core Crim course, either Qualitative or Quantitative Research Methods (on rotation with either Sarah Jirek or Blake Kent), both lower- and upper-division courses in criminology, and possibly participate in the departmental rotation of Senior Seminar and/or Senior Research Capstone. We anticipate that this new hire will offer at least one course approved for Justice, Reconciliation, and Diversity GE credit.

As discussed in the Curriculum Review section earlier, we are eager to shift to become a SOC/Criminology department for several reasons: 1) We believe that the Criminology major may recruit some students who would otherwise not choose to attend Westmont College (and the Admissions office has some data that supports this); 2) A Criminology major with a strong sociology core is a liberal arts degree that we would be able to offer with one additional tenure-track line (i.e., our Anthropology line would convert to a Criminology line); 3) We believe that this is a major that would be of interest to many students and would likely draw more students to our department; 4) We believe that SOC majors would also benefit from being able to take a Criminology elective course; and 5) We believe that we can construct an excellent Criminology major that would serve the needs of students interested in a range of career paths (e.g., pre-law, corrections, advocacy, social work, law enforcement, forensic science).

See Additional Appendices for faculty CV's and teaching load distribution.

B6.4

See Additional Appendices for advising load distribution.

B6.5 Employers

Please see the Tables in the Appendices regarding supervisors' final evaluations of the 28 student interns who completed their internship via our department's SOC 190 (Internship) course. Discussion and analysis of our department's internship program and curricular requirement may be found in our Internships Report. Beginning with the Fall 2022 incoming cohort, completing a 4-credit (or more) internship is now a requirement for all Sociology majors, not just for students completing the Human Services track.

B6.6 Facilities

The lack of qualitative analysis software (e.g., NVivo) on any of the college computer labs continues to provide an undue burden on our students (who are required to purchase a one-year, \$100 NVivo student license in SOC 109) and on our department (which sometimes has to

provide financial support to students who cannot afford the software or need it again their senior year for their Senior Research Capstone projects).

B6.7 Interaction with other departments

As noted throughout the report, our department has been involved with interdisciplinary initiatives (e.g., the Ethnic Studies and Gender Studies) programs, and participated in a range of activities with colleagues related to diversity efforts. Please see our CVs and the section on Diversity for additional details.

B6.8 Faith-Learning

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology is deeply committed to the integration of faith and learning throughout our department, major, and curriculum. We make intentional efforts to do this in myriad ways and places! One of our department's five Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) is the Integration of Faith and Learning, and we regularly assess this outcome. Moreover, our departmental chapels provide a space annually where we gather together as a department to praise God and focus upon a particular topic as a SOC/AN community. In recent years, we have had a guest speaker from the Santa Barbara Rescue Mission, departmental sharing from seniors regarding their faith journeys, as well as a chapel focused upon lament; these three chapels offer a glimpse into how our department strives to interweave sociology and social work themes with faith, as well as spark important thought-processes and conversations among our students.

The Sociology courses themselves provide us with the greatest opportunities to regularly engage our students in critical thinking and reflection upon the relationship between their faith and sociological learning. The following includes just some of the many ways in which we, the Sociology faculty, intentionally foster the integration of faith and learning in our courses.

Our *Introduction to Sociology* course (SOC 001) fulfills the Justice, Reconciliation, and Diversity GE requirement, and, thus, includes a significant amount of content on the topics of faith, racism, and reconciliation. Students in all *Intro to SOC* sections read Edmondson and Brennan's book *Faithful Anti-Racism*, which strives to equip Christians to respond to U.S. society's deep-seated racism; it is a Scripture-filled text addressing faith, race, and social justice from a Christian perspective. Other common readings in our Intro sections include Tisby's *The Color of Compromise*, that examines the relationship between the Church and racism in U.S. history, chapters from Wink's *The Powers That Be* in order to develop a socio-theological view of powers and principalities, Loftus' "My Neighbor's Health is my Business" to discuss social and environmental links between health and faith, Katongole's text on hope and lament, and selections from Crouch's *Playing God: Redeeming the Gift of Power*. Students have many small group discussions, reflection papers, formal papers, and/or exam essays to demonstrate their understanding of these topics.

In *Human Services and Social Policy* (SOC 180), students read Corbett and Fikkert's Scripture-filled book *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty without Hurting the Poor and Yourself*. They discuss this text, read Scripture passages, discuss God's plan for social welfare in the Old Testament, and write a paper that includes a section on Christ-centered responses to poverty. In *Sociology of Deviance* (SOC 182), students read Scripture and other readings to

inform a class discussion on the topic of Jesus as a social deviant. Their Faith Integration Paper requires students to articulate their beliefs regarding such topics as social constructionism, relativism, absolutism, morality, deviance, and sin, as well as how their course learning on the sociology of deviance challenges, strengthens, alters, or reinforces their belief system.

In *Interpersonal Violence* (SOC 177), after multiple class discussions on the topic, students write an Analytical Paper that requires that they delineate concrete ways in which the Christian church, individual believers, and they themselves can work to reduce interpersonal violence. In *Internet and Society* (SOC 160), students read a chapter of Warren's *Liturgy of the Ordinary*, address the theology of time in relation to how we construct time in a digitally- and productivity-oriented society. Students also engage in an in-class exercise regarding how distraction, noise, and crowds pull us away from God's presence.

In *Environmental Sociology* (SOC 161), students read Veldman's book *The Gospel of Climate Skepticism* to help them think through the ways in which faith can be used to promote or deny climate action. They also read selections from Antal's *Climate Church, Climate World* that focus on discipleship and living hope-filled lives in the midst of the climate crisis. Students also write an "Environment and Ideology" reflection paper in which they examine their own faith / religious backgrounds and how this relates to environmental issues.

In *Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (SOC/AN 135), students read Oduyoye's text on gender, neighborliness, and the parable of the Good Samaritan, followed-up with an exam essay question in which they reflect upon her conception of gender and being a good neighbor, as well as how students may better embody neighborliness in their own lives. In *Sociological Theory* (SOC 171), students read Powery's text on race and incarnation. In *Religion and Society* (SOC/AN 120), the entire course content engages in topics related to faith, religion, the Church, and their interaction / integration with sociology; students read widely, have weekly reflection assignments, and numerous in-class discussions in which they connect the readings with their own faith. In *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* (SOC 189), students read Katongole's text on hope and lament, followed by in-class discussion.

In *Senior Seminar* (SOC 195), students read several chapters from, and have multiple class discussions on, Stearns' *The Hole in Our Gospel*, King Jr's *Strength to Love*, and Katongole and Rich's *Reconciling All Things: A Christian Vision for Justice, Peace, and Healing*. We facilitate numerous class discussions on various topics related to faith and sociology—including the topic of God, suffering, and injustice; observing the Sabbath in contemporary life; and dealing with disillusionment with some of the Church's past and current failings to truly emulate Jesus. The graduating seniors write a Faith and Sociology Integration Paper as the culmination of their *Senior Seminar* experience. Finally, in our *Internship* course (SOC 190), the students' final paper includes a section on how their faith and fieldwork have impacted one another.

B6.9 Collaboration with library liaison

Please see the Appendices for tables on the library listings, and our partnership with our library liaison. We are deeply grateful for Diane Ziliotto's support of us and our students.

Report Section C: Conclusions and Looking Forward

As we reflect on the work of our department over this past cycle, we are grateful to be able to highlight our key accomplishments and contributions. We successfully undertook a major curriculum revision, which included requiring students to take a course in either race or gender, courses in both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, senior seminar, senior research capstone, and an internship. We also opened up the elective structure to allow more flexibility. We celebrate this remarkable milestone, and are proud regarding all the ways in which we have contributed in substantial ways both to our own majors, as well as to the broader College community. Our graduates are placed in good jobs and advanced degree programs, and express high levels of satisfaction with their time with us. For all of this, we are deeply grateful.

As we move into the future, we can identify several avenues for our ongoing work in the next cycle that we anticipate will become our Key Questions and relate to our Action Plan:

- 1) ***From Anthropology to Criminology.*** We believe it is in everyone's best interest to release our longstanding Anthropology program. We recognize that this is a significant change for our department, and it is one that we grieve. But we are also excited to move in the direction of a Criminology program. We thus anticipate that our biggest work (and our primary Key Question) in the next program review cycle will center on this major curricular change, along with its accompanying faculty changes.
 - a) We will need to hire someone who can spearhead this new program.
 - b) This raises questions about what to do with our current Cross-Cultural track, which was always related to Anthropology, but we also have faculty who currently teach key classes in that track. Do we keep it? Do we cut it? Do we modify it? Our graduates expressed interest in *strengthening* our commitment to cross-cultural and global engagement. Is there a way that we can do so, while also making this significant curricular shift?
 - c) The relationship between our new Criminology program and other new and existing programs and initiatives at the College will need to be clarified and strengthened.
- 2) ***Senior Research Capstone Class.*** Our Senior Research Capstone class is very rigorous and demanding. While we aim for the two methodology courses prior to that Capstone course to prepare students well, we recognize the challenges for both the instructor of this course (essentially supervising as many as 20 independent studies in one class) and the students to accomplish an independent research project in just one semester. We need to have more departmental discussion about what is reasonable for our students and ourselves in this course.
 - a) This raises questions about what concrete steps we could/should take with this course: Continue to have only one faculty member teach it in a single semester? Share the teaching of the course amongst ourselves? Find ways to jump-start its work in the prior semester and/or more concretely in SOC 108 and SOC 109? Revision it around a culminating reflective project?
 - b) As we do this, we will also continue to discuss the structure and sustainability of SOC 195, the 2-credit course that is taught as a companion to this course.
 - c) We have had some preliminary conversations about whether to also add in a 2-credit orientation course to the major. We will have ongoing conversation about

this idea in the next assessment cycles. We will fold that initial conversation into this broader discussion of the best ways to ensure our students are well-equipped both for our major and for their future steps after graduation.

- 3) ***Contributions to Diversity.*** We are grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the new JRD GE requirement in substantial ways, and for the many ways our faculty play a crucial role in addressing issues of diversity on campus and in our guilds. We need to ensure that our work on diversity issues is supported, appreciated, and sustainable.
 - a) What practical and cultural resources are needed and will be channeled in our direction to support this work?
 - b) How will faculty's work be supported, such that they can continue to do their teaching and research with the protections of academic freedom?

The path ahead is certainly daunting, especially in the context of budget cuts, difficulties in recruiting and retaining excellent faculty, and existential threats to the perceived value of our discipline. But we have seen our major grow, our graduates thrive, and our faculty publish excellent research and win teaching awards. We contribute in key ways to the College and are vital members of the local ecosystem. We look forward to exploring these questions in our next cycle, and are hopeful about the future.

Report Section D: Collection and Organization of Required Appendices

Please see the PDF of Required Appendices for the following:

- D1. Previous PRC Recommendations
- D2. Link to department program review site
- D3. Summary of assessment results for every PLO
- D4. Rubrics and instruments for every PLO
- D5. Reports on closing the loop activities for every PLO
- D6 and D7 Curriculum Map and PLO Alignment
- D8. Alumni Survey Instrument & Responses
- D9. Peer Institution Comparison
- D10. Faculty race/ethnicity and gender breakdown
- D11. Student race/ethnicity and gender breakdown
- D12. Student Diversity Data reports
- D13. Library Holdings

D14. Internships

D15. N/A, not included

D16. Items for Action Plan & Key Questions