



**RE-DESIGNING OUR MAJORS:
THE SOCIOLOGICAL EXPERIENCE**
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August 19th 2017
Jack Adams Hall
10:45 – 12:00

PRESENTATION OBJECTIVES

- Provide a background/overview to the process of curriculum change in the Sociology undergraduate program
- Summarize the curriculum changes that came out of our Spring 2017 faculty retreat
- Describe our three main challenges to facilitating faculty ownership and shared governance

CURRENT STATE OF THE SOCIOLOGY MAJOR

- As of Spring 2017, we have 346 majors
- 12 TT faculty and three full time lecturers
- Sociology majors follow a structured pathway, which included a four-semester sequence of core classes
- 67% of graduates in Spring 2016 were transfer students

IMPETUS FOR CURRICULUM CHANGE

- Improve writing skills of Sociology majors
- Last major revisions to curriculum were 15 years ago
- New TT faculty with unrepresented interests (substantive and methodological)
- Changes in discipline

PROCESS OF CHANGE

We followed these steps over three semesters:

1. Revise department mission
2. Revise program learning objectives
3. Conduct syllabi alignment exercises
4. Generate ideas for curriculum change
5. Implement changes in stages

SPRING FACULTY RETREAT

Goal was to *interactively identify gaps* in the current curriculum using the revised Sociology program learning objectives

We used a facilitator to *engage* in activities and discussion about curriculum change

We sought to *agree* on two to three curriculum changes

RETREAT ACTIVITIES

Syllabi Alignment Exercise:

- Review own syllabi and pay close attention to your learning objectives and assignments
- Circulate around the room, visiting each PLO poster board
- On each poster board, indicate whether your course serves the PLO by writing the course number and your initials on that board
- Specifically, indicate whether your course centrally or secondarily addresses the content or skill described by that PLO
- Complete for each of your courses

PROGRAM LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Revision goals

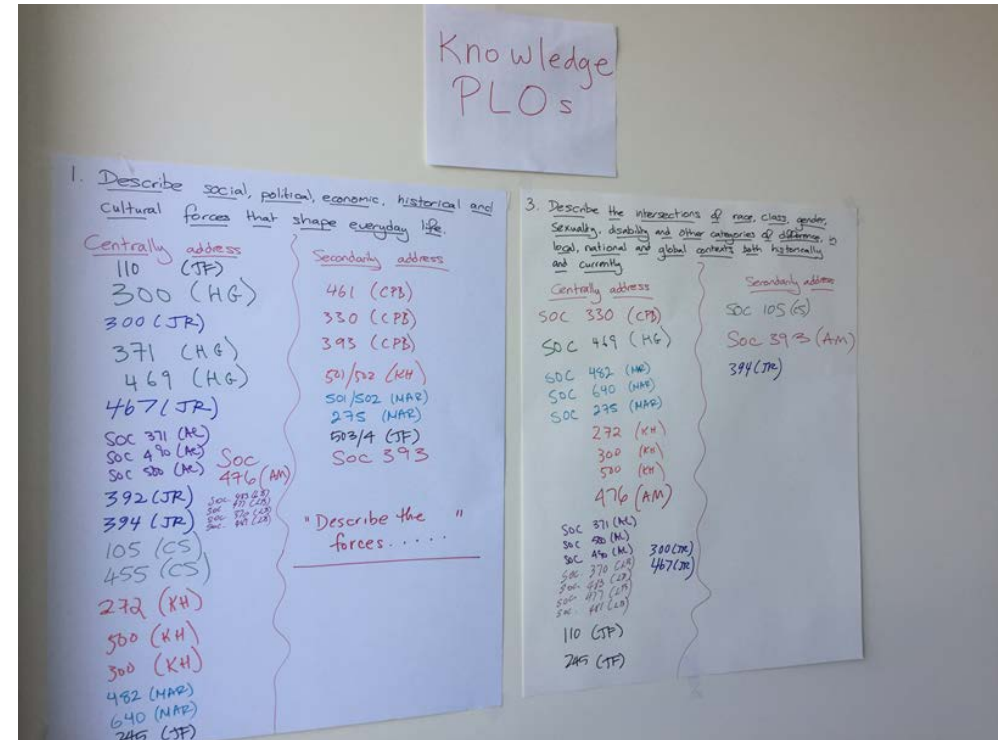
Short but comprehensive list

Covers most important knowledge, skills, and values students learn in the program

Real, not aspirational

Focused on high-priority learning

Consistent with our mission



INDIVIDUAL WRITING PROMPT

What are three important changes you would make to the curriculum?

1. Revising structured pathway or designing new pathways
2. Revising or designing new core courses
3. Revising or designing new electives areas and courses
4. Integrating additional high-impact practices
5. Designing signature capstone assignments like portfolios
6. Other?

POST-RETREAT CHANGES

Short-term (Fall 2017):

Change from four semester sequence to three

Revisit all syllabi to improve oral communication skills

New curriculum committee

Long-term (2018-2019)

Revise sociological analysis course to narrow its scope

Create new elective concentrations for students that match faculty interests

Create a professional development class for undergraduates



CHALLENGES

No written by-laws or written procedures for voting on program decisions

Our merged department includes faculty in Sociology and faculty in Sexuality Studies

Tensions with unengaged senior faculty

NEXT STEPS

Create more governance structure

Continue faculty meeting conversations about department culture, division of labor between programs, and goals for Sociology curriculum

Create high impact learning experience to assess student progress