To: Department of Sociology
From: COAS Assessment Committee
Subject: 2019-2020 Assessment Report Feedback
Date: March 7, 2020

The COAS Assessment Committee has received and reviewed the assessment report submitted by the Department of Sociology. Our comments below follow a rubric derived from the revised Senate Document 15-6 Appendix D.

Section I: Clearly Stated Programmatic Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

The committee agreed that seeing the full text of the learning outcomes would be helpful, but otherwise you have them listed in the document and labeled clearly.

Section II: Alignment of SLOs with IPFW Baccalaureate Framework

The Committee commends the work on the Alignment with the PFW Baccalaureate Framework in the rubric. A ranking of 3 was given for this section.

Section III: Student Learning Outcomes Mapped to Planned Learning Experiences in the Academic Program (Curricular Map)

While SLOs are mapped in the current report, there remain some discrepancies in when a skill is introduced, emphasized, and reinforced. The reviewers noted that in some cases the skills are not marked as having been introduced in any course, while others are emphasized in lower-level classes than when they are introduced. One of the concerns here is if students take courses in numerical sequence, they may be expected to have knowledge they haven't been yet learned. The committee recommends re-evaluating the SLO table.

Section IV: Systematic Method for Measuring Progress Toward Accomplishment of SLO

The committee recommends reevaluating the means of assessment. We are unsure that reporting the number of students who pass the core courses with 75% or higher is demonstrable evidence for meeting the learning outcomes of the program writ large. In this way, as suggested in previous years, we encourage you to select items from courses that could be assessed externally to the pass/fail rate of courses. In this way, too, specific rubrics and assessment tools would need developed.

We appreciate that with multiple sections of your courses, coordinating the assessment of specific SLOs with shared assignments across those sections presents some extra labor. We believe, though, that effort is useful for the college and for your department. That data may better demonstrate the specific SLOs that students are excelling at and those that are falling short of ideal outcomes. For future assessment efforts we suggest developing shared assignments that measure specific SLOs.

We echo the recommendations from last year's assessment committee that they use of alumni surveys "provides feedback on student satisfaction" but is not articulated in relation to the SLOs of the program itself.

Section V. Reporting Results - Communication

Results are provided with clear expectations for successful thresholds. The results in the current report present some difficulty in truly assessing how well students are meeting the SLOs of the program.

Section VI: Reporting Results – Stakeholder Involvement

This year's report suggests that faculty were given the opportunity to edit or comment on the document, but does not indicate how faculty are involved in the process of assessment or how the faculty reflect on the results of the assessment process. The committee has also suggested revisiting the assessment plan to provide external stakeholders data that will help them advise the program.

Section VII: Use of Results for Programmatic Change to Improve Student Learning, Achievement and Success

The current report suggests the assessment committee along with others will review the process and suggest any necessary improvements. The committee agreed that more specific steps would be helpful here—we are wondering about how you might specifically improve data collection and then how the department might use the data itself to understand the work of the program better.