

Assessment for the Social Science Major

Mission Statement

The overall mission of the Social Science major is to provide students with an interdisciplinary understanding of social, cultural, and psychological phenomena and issues. This major allows students to form an integrated knowledge base of the individual, society, the similarities and differences of individuals, societies, and cultures, and how the individual shapes society and vice versa. In addition, the program allows students both direct and indirect experience with the various approaches to research and data interpretation in the social sciences. Finally, students are taught to critically examine and analyze the significance of beliefs, attitudes, thoughts, and behavior from multiple perspectives of anthropology, sociology, and psychology.

Objectives of the Social Science Major

1. Students will develop critical thinking, communication, and analytical skills in order to understand and make decisions regarding social and political issues.
2. Students will understand the use of interdisciplinary approaches to study, research, and analysis of social phenomena, and how those various approaches contribute to the various perspectives of social reality and methods of addressing social issues.
3. Students will demonstrate effective written and verbal communication of social science concepts, terminology, research analyses, and conclusions.
4. Students will be able to formulate an integrated analysis of social issues and/or social reality by synthesizing concepts and research methods from the different social science disciplines that relate to the particular social reality or social issue under investigation.

Assessment Measures

Direct:

Each student will create a portfolio including four elements (e.g., papers, presentations, or poster) from various courses. The three main disciplines (i.e., sociology, anthropology, and psychology) must be represented in the portfolio. The most important element is the final project completed in the Senior Seminar course. These portfolios will be examined by an assessment committee biannually. The portfolios will assess all objectives mentioned above.

Indirect:

Graduating students will complete a survey that will assess their experience of the major. Specifically, the survey will determine the students' perception of how well the program achieved the stated goals. The survey will serve as a supplemental assessment of the objectives discussed above.