

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Mission

The Department of Sociology creates, disseminates, and utilizes sociological knowledge through high quality teaching, research, and service to the state of Oklahoma.

Vision

The Department of Sociology will:

- Be recognized as one of the top undergraduate sociology departments in the Big 12 region;
- Be recognized as one of the top Ph.D.-granting departments in the Big 12 region;
- Achieve national stature in research and scholarly activities in several substantive areas;
- Increase the department's presence at OSU/Tulsa substantially;
- Continue to build in the core areas of environmental sociology, deviance and criminology, inequality, complex organizations, and social psychology; and
- Continue its commitment to anthropology.

Core Values

The Department of Sociology is committed to the values of:

Diversity – We respect others and value diversity of opinion, freedom of expression, and other ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Integrity – We are committed to the principles of truth and honesty, and we will be equitable, ethical, and professional.

Service – We believe that serving others is a noble and worthy endeavor.

Intellectual Freedom – We believe in ethical and scholarly questioning in an environment that respects the rights of all to freely pursue knowledge.

Excellence – We seek excellence in all our endeavors, and we are committed to continuous improvement.

Stewardship of Resources – We are dedicated to the efficient and effective use of resources. We accept the responsibility of the public's trust and are accountable for our actions.

Goals, Critical Success Factors, Objectives, and Strategies

Goal 1: Students: Recruit, retain and graduate a larger, more academically prepared, and more diverse student body at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Critical Success Factors:

- Increase the number of undergraduate majors by 42 to 220 over the next five years.
- Increase the number of departmental minors to 50 over the next five years.
- Increase enrollment in all undergraduate courses in proportion to the increase in the University's enrollment.
- Increase the number of graduate students to 40 and the number of T.A.s to 25 over the next five years.
- Increase the number of majors who graduate, consistent with academic quality.
- Improve the level of ethnic, racial, geographic and gender diversity in both the undergraduate and graduate programs.
- Improve the diversity of the faculty by adding at least one minority faculty member.
- Hire three new faculty members—one in criminology to restore the line presently frozen, and the others to replace faculty who are likely to retire over the next 3-5 years.

Objectives:

Objective 1.1: Increase the number of undergraduate and graduate majors and minors by 10% in the next 5 years especially those from under-represented groups.

Strategies:

- Promote sociology and its programs as majors in all courses, particularly lower-division courses.
- Promote our graduate programs in all upper-division courses, particularly those that are required.
- Promote sociology graduate programs through professional network contacts.
- Seek additional T.A. funds stipend levels to a minimum of \$15,000 per year. Increase the number of T.A.s to a minimum of 25.
- Update departmental brochures.
- Continue the development and expansion of the departmental website as a recruitment tool.
- Cooperate with College and University efforts to increase enrollments, particularly of students from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Develop, implement, and supervise a mentoring program for undergraduate students. Give special attention to those from under-represented groups.
- Expand the M.S. program in corrections.

Objective 1.2: Increase graduation and retention rates while maintaining a high quality student body.

Strategies (Undergraduate):

- Develop better methods for tracking the progress of undergraduate majors.
- Improve the departmental database to assist in such tracking.
- Plan an active mentoring program involving every segment of the department.
- Implement, and supervise a mentoring program.
- Encourage faculty to make referrals of students with low grades or excessive class absences to appropriate academic support services.
- Review curriculum and continue to offer a wide range of courses with maximum appeal to diverse groups of students.

Strategies (Graduate):

- Monitor graduate students to encourage completion of programs.
- Regularly poll graduate students on the strengths and weaknesses of their programs.
- Develop, implement, and supervise a formal mentoring program for graduate students.
- Capitalize on our status as the flagship department in the state, and one of the first departments in the nation, by publicizing this fact in all our publications and on our website.

Objective 1.3: Recruit and retain faculty from under-represented groups for all programs in the department.

Strategies:

- Seek administrative support for recruitment of faculty from under-represented groups at competitive salaries.
- Work closely with College and University offices to enhance the appeal of OSU to candidates from under-represented groups.
- Seek administrative support for increased maintenance budgets to cover increased expenses in properly supporting faculty.
- Continue to expand our efforts to advertise in appropriate venues for a greater pool of minority applicants.
- Develop strategies for supporting minority faculty.

Objective 1.4: Recruit more graduate students from under-represented racial and ethnic groups.

Strategies:

- Urge Graduate College to reinstate minority tuition waiver program.
- Seek College and University support for an increase in budget allocations that will allow us to improve TA stipends, enabling us to be competitive with other Big 12 institutions in recruiting minority applicants to our graduate programs.

- Encourage and reward faculty efforts to recruit graduate students from under-represented groups.
- Work with the College and University offices to enhance the university's appeal to graduate student applicants from under-represented groups.
- Cultivate undergraduates from under-represented groups at the junior/senior level. Urge them to enter our graduate program.
- Develop a mentoring program for graduate students. Target under-represented groups.
- Provide Departmental website links to the Office of Multi-Cultural Affairs and other websites helpful to minority students.

Objective 1.5: Expand our current emphasis in anthropology.

Strategies:

- Encourage anthropology faculty to increase course offerings and/or to partner with sociology faculty on new ways to integrate sociology and anthropology into the curriculum where it is appropriate to do so.
- Encourage faculty to recruit interested students to anthropology courses.
- Encourage anthropology faculty to continue contacts with anthropologists from other departments around the university.
- Reinstate the Anthropology option in the Sociology degree program.

Objective 1.6: Enhance the quality and geographical representation of graduate students accepted into our program.

Strategies:

- Widen applicant pool by at least 20%.
- Begin recruitment earlier in the year.
- Continue to expand contacts with a wider range of undergraduate programs.
- Encourage our best students to participate in developing recruiting networks.
- Seek better support for T.A. stipends from central administration.
- Partner with the Graduate College on recruiting trips.
- Encourage faculty opportunities for recruitment.

Objective 1.7: Improve the placement of our Ph.D. graduates.

Strategies:

- Greater involvement of students in research and professional networks.
- More faculty involvement in and commitment to assisting graduates in getting a wider array of positions.
- Greater participation and interest in the academic job market.
- More colloquia and pro-seminar emphasis on job placement.

- Increase student awareness of non-teaching positions in sociology.

Goal 2: Teaching Standards: Maintain and enhance high standards of teaching by strengthening and expanding regional, national, and international visibility and reputation of the Department's undergraduate and graduate programs.

Critical Success Factors:

- Continue to target and enhance the teaching of the introductory course.
- Expand and enhance the department's core areas of environmental sociology, deviance and criminology, inequality, complex organizations, and social psychology.
- Continue the department's commitment to Anthropology.
- Increase the number of faculty in these areas as new faculty lines become available.
- As retirements occur, replace in these areas.

Objectives:

Objective 2.1: Strengthen the teaching of the introductory course.

Strategies:

- Use more senior faculty to teach the introductory course and continue to provide better mentoring and preparation of graduate teaching assistants.
- If our resources do not improve, expand the use of mass sections taught by senior faculty and well-trained and mentored teaching assistants.
- Continue to assign a faculty member to coordinate T.A.s teaching in the introductory sequence.
- Reward faculty for teaching excellence, especially at the undergraduate level.
- Revisit the department's student evaluation of instruction instrument.

Objective 2.2: Improve the visibility and reputation of both our undergraduate and graduate programs.

Strategies:

- Develop a plan for gaining more visibility for our programs.
- Improve the reputation of our programs by encouraging faculty to promote our programs with colleagues and students while attending professional meetings.
- Have faculty participate in high school and scholar's day in order to assist the advisor in promoting the department's programs.
- Have the Undergraduate Committee work on a plan for improving the department's rankings in national rating surveys.
- Have the Graduate Committee work on a plan for enhancing the department's rankings in national rating surveys.
- Keep website up-to-date and place application materials on-line.

Objective 2.3: Improve the presence of sociology in the core curriculum of degree programs at OSU/Tulsa.

Strategies:

- Develop a 5-year schedule for courses to be offered at OSU/Tulsa.
- Develop a faculty rotation plan to assure the staffing of these courses.
- Encourage faculty to develop and sustain courses at OSU/Tulsa.
- Encourage faculty to alternate the teaching of courses between the Stillwater and Tulsa campuses.
- Develop colloquia that encourage faculty to partner with OSU/Tulsa.
- Occasionally hold faculty meetings at OSU/Tulsa.
- Develop new ways of integrating OSU/Tulsa faculty with the Stillwater faculty and vice-versa.
- As additional faculty lines become available at OSU/Tulsa, request that they be given to sociology to augment and enhance the presence we already have there.

Objective 2.4: Expand faculty involvement in cross-disciplinary programs such as Native American studies, environmental science, American studies, gender and women's studies, gerontology, and international studies as appropriate.

Strategies:

- Encourage faculty to attend and support cross-disciplinary programs.
- Encourage faculty to participate in dissertations and theses from graduate students in these areas.
- Invite faculty and students from these areas to our colloquium series.
- Increase placement of students in study abroad programs.
- Working with departmental advisers, encourage faculty to develop flyers and curricular materials to show how courses being offered also may serve students in these interdisciplinary areas.

Objective 2.5: Improve and expand the departments intern program.

Strategies:

- Increase both the number and quality of undergraduate and graduate intern placements.
- Encourage faculty to incorporate applied components in existing courses where appropriate.
- When new faculty members are recruited, assess their interest in strengthening applied programs where appropriate.

Goal 3: Research: Maintain and enhance high standards in faculty research and scholarly activities.

Critical Success Factors:

- Raise faculty salaries so that they are at or above the average of the Big 12.
- Increase University contributions to TIAA-CREF by 3%.
- Increase University contributions to employee health costs.
- Restore frozen line in criminology.
- Retain faculty size of 16 lines plus 1 frozen line and target increase of 2 new lines.
- Evaluate and strengthen on-going areas of research in deviance and criminology, environmental sociology, inequality, complex organizations, social psychology, and anthropology. Build significant research programs where we can in our core areas.
- Increase journal publications and professional meeting presentations by 10%.
- Increase the number of grant proposals submitted over the next five years by 10%.
- Increase the number of faculty in sociology over the next 5 years with proportionate increases in publications, professional presentations, grant writing, and editing scholarly publications.
- Involve more graduate students in research and publication.
- Increase the number of faculty and graduate student publications.
- Enhance the reputation and visibility of the department in the Big 12 and among other regional schools with whom we compete.

Objectives:

Objective 3.1: Increase the emphasis on graduate research activities.

Strategies:

- Discuss with the new dean the contribution to the College made by the department and argue for new positions as lines become available.
- Discuss and develop new ways of encouraging faculty research and publication of current research activities.
- Develop regular colloquia for presentation of ideas.
- Encourage graduate student participation in research.
- Develop grant-writing strategies keyed to faculty interests.
- Develop new ways of partnering among faculty, both within the department and without.
- Evaluate and reward faculty members who write grant proposals.
- Involve undergraduates in research.

Goal 4: Professional Development: Actively pursue the professional development of faculty and staff in the department.

Critical Success Factors:

- Seek additional funds for faculty member's professional travel to meet a target level of 80% of costs per year per faculty member from the current average of \$400.
- Increase grant and contract funding applications by 10%.
- Increase the number of faculty applying for sabbatical leaves consistent with the sabbatical leave policy.
- Begin a departmental speakers series that would include an invitation to give a paid lecture in sociology each year.
- Maintain a voluntary mentoring program for tenure-track faculty.

Objectives:

Objective 4.1: Encourage faculty efforts to obtain outside funding that will support professional travel.

Strategies:

- Increase the emphasis on efforts to obtain outside funding in annual evaluations.
- Seek ways to increase donations to the departmental foundation account.

Objective 4.2: Provide additional travel funds for faculty from University sources.

Strategies:

- Seek support from College administration to increase the operating budget to support faculty members' professional travel needs at a level of 80% of costs per faculty member per year for participation in professional conferences.

Goal 5: Image Enhancement: Maintain and strengthen the positive image of the Department's programs within OSU and regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Critical Success Factors:

- Promote increased faculty involvement in regional, national, and international professional associations, especially those that involve leadership positions, thereby enhancing the visibility and prestige of the department at every level.
- Increase the number of faculty who are involved in obtaining outside research funds.
- Improve our efforts to publicize the professional accomplishments of faculty and students.
- Maintain active honor societies in both undergraduate and graduate programs.
- Continue and increase the level of support for graduate student travel for participation in professional conferences.
- Increase faculty and student participation in local institutional activities that enhance the University's image and reputation, consistent with the department's primary mission.

Objectives:

Objective 5.1: Support faculty activities most likely to lead to national and international visibility and to leadership positions in professional associations.

Strategies:

- Seek support from the College for release time for faculty members who are selected for major leadership positions in national and international professional associations.
- Reassign faculty time for major professional service activities.
- Make available on a priority basis travel and clerical assistance for faculty members who have major leadership responsibilities in national and international associations.
- Recognize and reward faculty involvement in professional associations in annual evaluations.

Objective 5.2: Better publicize outstanding accomplishments by both faculty and students.

Strategies:

- Publicize faculty and student accomplishments on the departmental web page.
- Cooperate with College and University efforts to publicize outstanding achievements by faculty and students.
- Make better use of the departmental newsletter in publicizing faculty and student accomplishments. Focus each issue on a single faculty member until the entire faculty has been introduced to readers.

Objective 5.3: Maintain and strengthen honor societies for students and faculty in all departmental programs.

Strategies:

- Encourage and support faculty advisors of honor societies.
- Provide funds to faculty advisors and student members for travel to professional meetings.
- Publicize activities and accomplishments of honor society chapters.

Goal 6: Finances: Strengthening the Department's financial position through advancement and accountability.

Critical Success Factors:

- Cooperate with College and University fund-raising and development efforts.
- Develop improved strategies to maintain contact with graduates at both the undergraduate and graduate level.
- Develop an electronic database to communicate with graduates.
- Target these contacts for fund-raising efforts.
- Develop a fund-raising plan with a goal of \$10,000 over the next two years.

Objectives:

Objective 6.1: Develop and implement improved strategies for maintaining relationships with graduates to keep them informed regarding news of activities and accomplishments of the department, the faculty, and graduates and to solicit their support for the department.

Strategies:

- Begin a letter-writing campaign to establish a basis for continuing contact.
- Maintain up-to-date web page.
- Work with the College and/or the Foundation to increase our funds for newsletter mailing.

Objective 6.2: Develop strategies to increase departmental involvement in public relations and development activities.

Strategies:

- Encourage faculty to maintain contact with graduates.
- Solicit news items from graduates to be included in Departmental Newsletter.
- Communicate with graduates via an electronic database.
- Appoint a faculty member to work with the undergraduate advisor as a liaison to the College's public relations and development activities.
- Seek support from the College for the development of a staff person for the development, publicity and recruitment of students with interests in the social sciences.