

ASSESSMENT RESULTS FOR QCC EDUCATIONAL OUTCOME #6 – SS 310 SOCIOLOGY SPRING 2011

GEN ED#6 – DIFFERENTIATE AND MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT ISSUES BASED ON MULTIPLE VALUE SYSTEMS	
QCC Example Outcomes:	Common Core Outcomes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identify the key elements of issues and analyze them from the perspectives of multiple value systems b. Identify values and their origins in culture, religion, philosophy, political, social or economic theory c. Differentiate ethical and non-ethical elements in arguments and/or behavior d. Distinguish facts from values in issues e. Apply varying values or ethical principles and approaches to respond to questions, dilemmas, or problems and describe alternate outcomes 	<p>Flexible Core:</p> <p>II.D – Individual and Society <i>(1– 3 are in QCC 4 and 5 above)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring the relationship between the individual and society, including, but not limited to, anthropology, communications, cultural studies, history, journalism, philosophy, political science, psychology, public affairs, religion, and sociology. 2. Examine how an individual's place in society affects experiences, values, or choices. 3. Articulate and assess ethical views and their underlying premises. 4. Articulate ethical uses of data and other information resources to respond to problems and questions. 5. Identify and engage with local, national, or global trends or ideologies, and analyze their impact on individual or collective decision-making.
GEN ED OUTCOMES ADDRESSED IN ASSESSMENT:	<p>QCC 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identify the key elements of issues and analyze them from the perspectives of multiple value systems <p>Flexible Core:</p> <p>II.D – Individual and Society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.</i> 2. <i>Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.</i> 3. <i>Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.</i> 4. Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring the relationship between the individual and society, including, but not limited to, anthropology, communications, cultural studies, history, journalism, philosophy, political science, psychology, public affairs, religion, and sociology 5. Examine how an individual's place in society affects experiences, values, or choices.
<p>EVIDENCE/ MEASURABLE DATA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GROUP SIZE: No. of students <u> 1049 </u> No. of sections <u> 43 </u> 	<p>Students completed an Outcomes Survey in class for SS310 Sociology. The survey asked students if they agreed, were neutral, or disagreed with ten statements, each of which assessed a General Education Objective, a Course Objective, or both. In the results that follow, we collapse the categories indicating “disagree” and “neutral,” reporting only the percentages of students who agreed that they had achieved each objective.</p>
FINDINGS	<p>The following General Education Objectives were assessed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. use analytical reasoning to identify issues or problems and evaluate evidence in order to make informed decisions 6. differentiate and make informed decisions about issues based on multiple value systems 8. use historical or social sciences perspectives to examine formation of ideas, human behavior, social institutions, or social processes <p>The following course objectives were assessed:</p>

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of theories and concepts in contemporary sociology.
2. Students will assess contemporary sociological debates about the nature of modern and postmodern society.
3. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the methods used to conduct sociological research.

Eight items on the survey assessed the General Education Objectives of SS310 Introduction to Sociology. Overall, the percentage of students agreeing that they had achieved these objectives averaged 79%, indicating that most students had developed cognitive skills emphasized in the General Education Curriculum.

GEO #2 – use analytical reasoning to identify issues or problems and evaluate evidence in order to make informed decisions : SS310 develops students’ analytical reasoning skills by helping them to understand sociological theories and concepts. An average of 84% of students agreed that the class helped them to grasp core sociological ideas (survey questions 1 and 2). The ability to apply this knowledge to contemporary issues or problems overlaps with GEO #6–differentiate and make informed decisions about issues based on multiple value systems. More than two-thirds of students (70%) agreed that the class helped them to apply sociology to everyday life and to understand contemporary social issues (survey questions 3 and 4). GEO #8 – use historical or social sciences perspectives to examine formation of ideas, human behavior, social institutions, or social processes: SS310 emphasizes four dimensions of social life: social institutions, power, inequality, and the individual in society. An average of 79% of students agreed that the class enabled them to examine these social dynamics (survey questions 7-10).

CO #1 – Students will demonstrate an understanding of theories and concepts in contemporary sociology. An average of 85% of students agreed that the class helped them to understand sociological theories (survey question 1), concepts (survey question 2), and the relationship of the individual and society (survey question 8).

CO#2 – Students will assess contemporary sociological debates about the nature of modern and postmodern society. An average of 84% of students indicated that the class helped them to understand dynamics of power (survey question 9) and inequalities of race, class and gender (survey question 10) in modern and postmodern society.

CO#3 – Students will demonstrate an understanding of the methods used to conduct sociological research. An average of 67% of students said the class helped them to read sociological texts effectively (survey question 5) and to understand sociological research methods (survey question 6).

ACTION PLAN*

1. The results of the assessment indicated that high percentages of students developed a general theoretical understanding of the discipline. Faculty will therefore continue to emphasize core concepts and theories in sociology.
2. Because some students failed to grasp the application of sociology to everyday life, faculty will develop strategies to help students better understand the relevance of sociology beyond the classroom. This will be accomplished by inviting faculty to disseminate through “best practices” workshops or texts successful techniques for achieving this objective. It is also possible that the wording of the survey question measuring this objective was misleading. The question asked students if the class helped them to apply sociology to everyday life. Faculty intended this item to assess if sociology helped students understand their lives; students, however, may have interpreted the word “apply” to mean that they developed some practical skill they could use in everyday life. On future assessments, the item will be re-phrased to convey more accurately the intended course objective.
3. A minority of students (30%) were either neutral or disagreed with the statement that the course helped them to understand sociological research methods. This result may be a consequence of the difficulties of teaching a topic requiring advanced quantitative skills – not a prerequisite for SS310 – to introductory-level students. Some professors, therefore, may have chosen not to integrate this objective in their classes. Full-time sociology faculty will meet to decide if teaching research methods should continue to be a course objective for SS310. Their decision will subsequently be clarified for all faculty.
4. The survey item receiving the lowest percentage of “agree” responses (63%) was question#5: This class helped me to understand how to read sociological texts. In fact, reading sociological texts is not a course objective for SS310. In light of the high price of textbooks and the generally low socioeconomic status of our students, this finding may reflect the choice of some faculty to recommend rather than to require course readings.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• TIMELINE for ACTION PLAN implementation*	Sociology faculty will implement the action plan in their courses beginning in the Fall 2011 semester.

*Include this information in the Department's Year-End Report.

GEN ED#6 – DIFFERENTIATE AND MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT ISSUES BASED ON MULTIPLE VALUE SYSTEMS**QCC Example Outcomes:**

- a. Identify the key elements of issues and analyze them from the perspectives of multiple value systems
- b. Identify values and their origins in culture, religion, philosophy, political, social or economic theory
- c. Differentiate ethical and non-ethical elements in arguments and/or behavior
- d. Distinguish facts from values in issues
- e. Apply varying values or ethical principles and approaches to respond to questions, dilemmas, or problems and describe alternate outcomes

Common Core Outcomes:**Flexible Core:****II.D – Individual and Society***(1– 3 are in QCC 4 and 5 above)*

4. Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring the relationship between the individual and society, including, but not limited to, anthropology, communications, cultural studies, history, journalism, philosophy, political science, psychology, public affairs, religion, and sociology.
5. Examine how an individual's place in society affects experiences, values, or choices.
6. Articulate and assess ethical views and their underlying premises.
7. Articulate ethical uses of data and other information resources to respond to problems and questions.
8. Identify and engage with local, national, or global trends or ideologies, and analyze their impact on individual or collective decision-making.

GEN ED OUTCOMES ADDRESSED IN ASSESSMENT:**QCC 6**

- a. Identify the key elements of issues and analyze them from the perspectives of multiple value systems

Flexible Core:**II.D – Individual and Society**

1. *Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.*
2. *Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.*
3. *Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.*
4. Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring the relationship between the individual and society, including, but not limited to, anthropology, communications, cultural studies, history, journalism, philosophy, political science, psychology, public affairs, religion, and sociology.

EVIDENCE/ MEASURABLE DATA

Objectives were assessed by use of a self-report survey completed by students

• **GROUP SIZE:****No. of students** __16__**No. of sections** __1__**FINDINGS**

The following General Education Objectives were assessed:

- GEO#1 Students use analytical reasoning skills and apply logic to solve problems
- GEO#2 Students differentiate and make informed decisions about issues based on value systems
- GEO#3 Students identify concepts and methods of the social sciences to examine human behavior, social institutions and multi-cultural awareness

The following course objectives were assessed:

- ICO#1 Students will analyze theories, concepts, and debates concerning the mass media.
- ICO#2 Students will assess contemporary political debates about the mass media.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">ICO#3 Students will demonstrate an understanding of the methods used to research the mass media <p>A significant majority of students agreed that the course helped them to achieve the General Education Objectives. Students did not agree that the course had helped them to understand the political debates that concern the media (Question #5)</p> <p>Students agreed that the class had helped them achieve the Individual Course Objectives, but there was significant variation in their responses to the questions. While a majority of students agreed with Survey question #2, many did not register firm agreement. Only a minority of students agreed that the course had helped them to understand the political debates that concern the media (Question #5)</p>
ACTION PLAN*	The professor will develop materials to address the unmet methodological objectives.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">TIMELINE for ACTION PLAN implementation*	<i>Timetable for action plan implementation:</i> 2013-14 academic year

*Include this information in the Department’s Year-End Report.

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<p>EVIDENCE/ MEASURABLE DATA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GROUP SIZE: No. of students <u>48</u> No. of sections <u> </u> 	<p>Rubric scores from 48 graded papers from six assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students write a 3-4 page paper by identifying a difficult aspect of a short story they've selected, assessing at least two hypotheses and incorporating at least one classmate's opinion either in support or as a way to challenge any one of their hypotheses. 2. Students will write a 1600-2000 word essay comparing two plays and incorporating evidence from at least three library research sources. 3. Students will write a 3-4 page paper synthesizing two plays and a critical essay. 4. Students will write a 3-4-page essay defining and applying specific literary concepts to the close reading of a poem. 5. Students will write a 3-4 page paper arguing for how a work of their choice should be incorporated into the course based on the theme “Death, Disease, and Disorder.” They will incorporate evidence from the new text and at least two texts discussed in class. 6. Students will write a 3-4 page essay interpreting one text (story or poem which we read in class) with reference to two secondary sources written about the chosen text.
FINDINGS	<p>We modified the rubric as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We rewrote aspects of the “outstanding” column of our original rubric to make it consistent with the kinds of writing that would appropriately qualify for the category.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We realized that the rubric does not provide a way to account for the quality of evidence marshaled to support a writer’s claims. So we adjusted the first row to reflect this.• We removed “multiple sources” from the rubric.• We combined rows 4 and 5 as they were more accurately evaluated together. <p>We determined that to accurately assess student proficiency with this outcome, we would need to collect batches of papers in individual classes next year rather than a completely randomized collection of samples. The assignment itself is not necessary for evaluation whereas student proficiency can only be determined within the context of peer performance on the same assignment.</p> <p>We concluded that the department needs a way to measure a student’s rhetorical savviness within the context of specific genres. Not all genres require students to manipulate evidence in the same way nor do all genres define evidence in the same way.</p>
ACTION PLAN*	Revise the rubric to prepare for a more comprehensive assessment in Fall 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• TIMELINE for ACTION PLAN implementation*	In the fall of 2013, ten faculty members will use the revised rubric to evaluate a statistically significant and representative sample size of roughly 600 student essays in both EN 101 and EN102.

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