

# **Social Science General Education Annual Assessment Report 2009-10**

## **I. Introduction**

The Social Science General Education Program serves all OIT degree students, who are each required to take twelve credits in this general education area. The program offers courses in anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, psychology, and sociology. The program also offers a number of online courses to serve degree completion students as well as on-campus students.

## **II. Program Purpose, Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes**

The Social Science faculty reviewed the program purpose, objectives, and learning outcomes during the fall faculty meeting in September 2009. The faculty reaffirmed the statements below:

### **Social Science General Education Program Purpose**

The Social Science general education program assists students in the acquiring empirical knowledge of those aspects of human experience that are social, political, economic, and psychological.

### **Program Educational Objectives**

1. Foster intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and logical reasoning.
2. Develop knowledge of quantitative and qualitative methods for understanding human behavior.
3. Provide an introductory understanding of the structures and processes of social institutions and individual behavior within cultures.

### **Expected Program Learning Outcomes**

Graduates from this program will be able to:

1. Structure, analyze, evaluate, and support an argument both orally and in writing in the social sciences.
2. Interpret, compare, and contrast ideas in the social sciences.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the methods, techniques, concepts, and vocabularies of the social sciences.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of historical and contemporary issues in the social sciences.

### III. Two-Year Cycle for Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

The faculty also confirmed the assessment cycle planned last year, as listed in Table 1 below.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>'07-08</b>	<b>'08-09</b>	<b>'09-10</b>	<b>'10-11</b>	<b>'11-12</b>	<b>'12-13</b>
1. Structure, analyze, evaluate, and support an argument both orally and in writing in the social sciences.	X		X		X	
2. Interpret, compare, and contrast ideas in the social sciences.	X		X		X	
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the methods, techniques, concepts, and vocabularies of the social sciences.		X		X		X
4. Demonstrate knowledge of historical and contemporary issues.		X		X		X

Table 1. Social Science General Education Assessment Cycle

### IV. Summary of 2009-10 Assessment Activities

Social sciences faculty conducted formal assessment of two student learning outcomes during fall term 2009 and winter term 2010.

#### **Student Learning Outcome #1: Structure, analyze, evaluate, and support an argument both orally and in writing in the social sciences.**

The Social Science faculty conducted an analysis of where this outcome is reflected in the curriculum. The mapping of this outcome to social science courses can be found in Appendix A, Student Learning Outcome-Course Matrix, table A1.

The faculty assessed student work from History 224, Technology and the Ancient World, and HIST 335 The Engineering Profession using pre-existing mid-term essay questions in the Fall. Ten students who ranged from Freshman to Junior in one section of HIST 224 were assessed. Ten upper-division students in one section of HIST 335 were assessed in the Winter. The faculty rated the proficiency of students using the performance criteria described in Tables 2 and 3 below.

Performance Criteria	Assessment Method	Measurement Scale	Minimum Acceptable Performance	Results
Uses appropriate organizational structure to present arguments	Essay questions	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	80% at 3 or 4	100%
Separates arguments into appropriate parts and shows their interrelations	Essay questions	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	80% at 3 or 4	100%
Evaluates the validity of evidence	Essay questions	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	80% at 3 or 4	80%
Selects appropriate evidence to support arguments	Essay questions	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	80% at 3 or 4	90%

Table 2 Assessment Results for SLO #1 in HIST 224 for Fall 2009

Performance Criteria	Assessment Method	Measurement Scale	Minimum Acceptable Performance	Results
Uses appropriate organizational structure to present arguments	Essay questions	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	80% at 3 or 4	100%
Separates arguments into appropriate parts and shows their interrelations	Essay questions	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	80% at 3 or 4	100%
Evaluates the validity of evidence	Essay questions	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	80% at 3 or 4	90%
Selects appropriate evidence to support arguments	Essay questions	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	80% at 3 or 4	90%

Table 3 Assessment Results for SLO #1 in HIST 335 for Winter 2010

Students met the assessment criteria for all areas in both classes. No further assessment was performed during 2009-10.

Detailed records of this assessment can be found in the department assessment coordinator's notebook.

**Student Learning Outcome #2: Interpret, compare, and contrast ideas in the social sciences.**

The Social Science faculty conducted an analysis of where this outcome is reflected in the curriculum. The mapping of this outcome to social science courses can be found in Appendix A, Student Learning Outcome-Course Matrices, table A2.

The faculty assessed student work from SOC 204 Introduction to Sociology using pre-existing mid-term examination questions in Fall 2009. Sixty-one students who ranged from Freshman to Senior in two sections of SOC 204 were assessed. The faculty rated the proficiency of students using the performance criteria described in Tables 4 and 5 below.

Performance Criteria	Assessment Method	Measurement Scale	Minimum Acceptable Performance	Results
Defines key concepts in the social sciences	Five Exam questions	# of correct answers	70% at 3 or more correct	98.4%
Identifies similarities in different social science theories	Five Exam questions	# of correct answers	70% at 3 or more correct	88.5%
Identifies differences between different social science theories	Five Exam questions	# of correct answers	70% at 3 or more correct	95.1%

Table 4 Assessment Results for SLO #2 in SOC 204 for Fall 2009

Students in SOC 204 met the assessment criteria in all areas – no further assessment was performed.

Detailed records of this assessment can be found in the department assessment coordinator’s notebook.

## V. Summary of Student Learning

Student Learning Outcome #1: Structure, analyze, evaluate, and support an argument both orally and in writing in the social sciences.

Strengths: Students demonstrated satisfactory ability to use appropriate organizational structure to present arguments, separates arguments into appropriate parts and show their interrelations, evaluate the validity of evidence, and select appropriate evidence to support arguments.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Actions: None at this time.

Student Learning Outcome #2: Interpret, compare, and contrast ideas in the social sciences.

Strengths: Students demonstrated satisfactory ability to define key concepts in the social sciences, to identify similarities in different social science theories, and to identify differences between different social science theories.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Actions: None at this time.

## **VI. Changes Resulting From Assessment**

When the faculty assessed SLO #3, performance criteria “Uses appropriate social science vocabulary” for PSY 201 in Fall 2008 and Winter 2009, results were below the Minimum Acceptable Performance Level of 70% (54.5% in Fall 2008, 56.0% in Winter 2009, After changes were made to the class, this performance criteria was assessed again in PSY 201 in Fall 2009. Results improved to 63.9%, but this was still short of the Minimum Acceptable Performance Level of 70%. Faculty will review results, make changes, and continue to work on improvement in student performance.

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**Appendix A**  
**Student Learning Outcome-Course Matrices**

**Student Learning Outcome #1: Structure, analyze, evaluate, and support an argument both orally and in writing in the social sciences. Table A1 demonstrates the mapping of this outcome to social science courses.**

<b>Social Science Course</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Winter</b>	<b>Spring</b>
ANTH 335		X	
ANTH 452			X
GEOG 106	X		
GEOG 107		X	
HIST 101	X		
HIST 102		X	
HIST 103			X
HIST 201	X		
HIST 202		X	
HIST 203			X
HIST 224	X		
HIST 225		X	
HIST 226			X
HIST 335	X		
HIST 392	X		
PSCI 201			
PSY 311	X	X	X
PSY 312		X	X
PSY 347	X	X	X
PSY 410	X	X	X

**Table A1. Student Learning Outcome #1-Course Matrix**

**Student Learning Outcome #2: Interpret, compare, and contrast ideas in the social sciences. Table A2 demonstrates the mapping of this outcome to social science courses. The highlighted course was assessed fall 2007.**

<b>Social Science Course</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Winter</b>	<b>Spring</b>
ANTH 335		X	
ANTH 452			X
ECO 201N	X	X	X
ECO 202N	X	X	X
GEOG 106	X		
GEOG 107		X	
GEOG 108			X
HIST 335	X		
HIST 392		X	
PSCI 201			
PSY 311	X	X	X
PSY 312		X	X
PSY 347	X	X	X
PSY 410	X	X	X
SOC 204	X	X	X

**Table A2. Student Learning Outcome #2-Course Matrix**