

**Agenda and Evaluation Report for  
Program Review Face-to-Face Meeting  
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater  
Sociology Majors and Minors, 2024-2025**

**Date:** 4/30/2025

**In Attendance:** Interim Provost Robin Fox; Dean Jason Janke (L&S); Department Chair Loren Wilbers; Coordinator Leda Kanellakou; Program Review Team Chair Corey Davis; Program Review team member Ashley Barnes-Gilbert; Assessment Representative Katy Casey

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Overview of review team evaluation, program comments
  - a) Thanks to the Sociology program for the work that went into preparing the self-study. The Department Chair acknowledged the program coordinator for her contributions.
- 3) Discussion of Review Team's evaluation:

**a) Tell us more about the Triads of Study campaign?**

- i) The Sociology program identified the need to support students in recognizing careers within their Sociology studies. The career pathway triads are described in a document designed as a resource for advisors to help guide conversations with students on potential career paths.

Sociology plans to start an email campaign that would include emailing promising first year students to share the potential pathways with the Sociology major. The triads are shared at preview and orientation meetings as well to help draw attention to the major. Barnes-Gilbert suggested a social media campaign could also be helpful to promote the triads. Fox suggested that it is important to have a good visual portrayal (e.g., table or diagram) to summarize the triads.

**b) Are there any issues impacting department morale?**

- i) Overall, the department representatives at the meeting feel the department morale is good. There are some feelings of being pulled in different directions- e.g., marketing and recruiting, and some frustrations with pay. They did not feel those issues were unique to this department.
- ii) Will have one open line after a retirement in spring 2025. That search will begin in fall 2025.

**c) Are the new hires in Anthropology and Criminology able to contribute to teaching in the Sociology core?**

- i) The program noted a lot of flexibility among faculty in terms of which courses they teach. However, there are plans to review course offerings and teaching assignments to ensure these align with program goals (e.g., having tenured faculty teach introduction courses).
- ii) The department has faculty and staff to teach the core course offerings, but not much outside of the core in the electives space. This has caused some frustration among students who were hoping to take elective courses seen in the catalog, and then were disappointed when those courses were not offered.

High credits to degree conversation due to students transferring to the institution or from a different program.

- 4) **Recommended Actions:** The evaluation report lists 3 recommended action (see page 13, point 4) related to faculty turnover, program planning and management, and assessment.

5) **Recommended Result:** *Continuation with minor concerns*

- **Please select all applicable boxes and fill in the appropriate year:**
  - ☒ **Next FULL self-study will be due to the Dean on May 1, 2031 and to the Assessment Office on August 1, 2031.**

*Review team report is attached below, including Recommended Actions and instructions for Progress Reports (if required).*

**University of Wisconsin-Whitewater  
Review of Program Review Self-Studies  
Undergraduate Programs, 2024-2025  
Majors/Minors and Standalone Minors**

Date of Evaluation: 12/9/2024 Short Self Study (SS\*)         

Program: Sociology Major ☒ Minor ☐

**Evaluations submitted by:** Dennis Kopf, John Ejnik, Corey Davis, Ashley Barnes-Gilbert, and Katy Casey

**Review meeting attended by:** Dennis Kopf, Corey Davis, Ashley Barnes-Gilbert, and Katy Casey

## **I. General Program Information**

### **1. The program's mission statement reflects the nature and scope**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

### **2. The program is aware and reflective of changes affecting improvement since the last review.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0
First self-study for the program	0

### **3. Characteristics of the program set it apart from others when compared regionally and nationally. The unique aspects of the program attract students.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

### **4. The program has been responsive to actions recommended from the previous Audit and Review Reports; Progress Reports have been submitted, if relevant.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0
First self-study for the program	0

**5. The program has achieved or maintained program-level accreditation or has considered seeking it, where appropriate (only select N/A if there is no accreditation available).**

Sufficient Evidence	0
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0
N/A	5

**General Comments related to Section I**

2. Program lost 10 faculty/staff and only gained back four. 4. Multiple initiatives have addressed request to make clearer links between assessment data and programmatic decisions. Impressive work in this matter. A new survey is being distributed regularly to get feedback from alumni.

Excellent response to previous Audit and Review evaluation.

3. The triads of study are very interesting and unique. I am curious as to how students become aware of the triads, how many students complete them, and student's perception of these offerings. 4. I appreciated the summary of actions since the last program review.

Beautiful work! It is exciting to see the detailed alumni surveys. Well done.

**II. Alignment within the University**

**1. The program contributes to the fulfillment of UW-Whitewater's Mission and Strategic Plan.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

**2. The program supports general education and/or proficiency programs at the University.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

**3. The program is collaborative and supports other academic programs across the College and/or University.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

**General Comments related to Section II**

This is a very collaborative program and shows innovation in curriculum design and course offerings.

I especially appreciate Sociology's interdisciplinary collaborations!

Great work supporting institutional learning outcomes through instruction in the General Education core and a variety of other elective offerings.

2. Sociology contributes substantially to the delivery of CORE 130. The program also offers or contributes to 12 other gen ed courses.

### III. Program Goals & Accomplishments

#### 1. Program goals and objectives were identified and undertaken to improve/advance the program.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

#### 2. Goals currently in place will contribute to the program's advancement. Criteria for determining success were measurable and attainable.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

#### 3. The program has a process for setting and assessing goals and making decisions about changes to the program.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

#### General Comments related to Section III

2. The program did list a number of "goals," but they read more like how the program operates as a whole and not necessarily specific goals directed at program advancement. For example, the timelines are annual, which suggests this is work that is being done all the time. There do not seem to be unique goals each year that could help the program prioritize and focus efforts.

1. Nine different goals set/undertaken, many with additional related, more specific measurable objectives. 3. The department's assessment committee meets regularly and annually presents updates to and facilitates discussions with the full SCA department.

### IV. Curriculum

#### 1. The program has a clearly articulated, efficient, and purposeful curriculum.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

#### 2. The program prepares students in majors, minors, and related emphases tracks in post-graduation and other applicable experiences.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

**3. Changes to the program's curriculum were summarized and considered student needs/interests and/or internal and external stakeholders.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

**4. Students participate in high impact practices.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

**General Comments related to Section IV**

2. Capstone, internship, and research options all facilitate students connecting curriculum to the next step, whether it be a job or graduate school. 4. Over 10 different HIPs are available to students, and students are required to engage in several of these practices.

The HIP requirement of UG is great.

1. I like the three capstone options available to students- that is a great way to embed a practical and applied learning experience that meets the diverse needs and interests of students.

Great and detailed list of high impact practices - the department is clearly purposeful in incorporating HIPS into the classroom. Beautiful work.

**V. Assessment of Student Learning**

**1. The program uploaded an assessment plan that includes student learning outcomes.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

**2. Student learning outcomes are "mapped" to the curriculum.**

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0

**3. The program provided a timeline indicating when faculty and staff assess SLOs. The timeline is manageable and sustainable.**

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0

**4. The program described the measures/processes they use to assess SLOs, and the criterion for performance.**

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0

**5. The program described the results of the assessment data collected.**

Sufficient Evidence	1
Some/Partial Evidence	4
No/Limited Evidence	0

**6. Student learning outcomes are aligned with UWW's Essential Learning Outcomes in a way that is reasonable and meaningful.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

**7. The program described specific actions individuals in the program took, or will take, to make changes to the program based on assessment results.**

Sufficient Evidence	0
Some/Partial Evidence	3
No/Limited Evidence	2

**General Comments related to Section V**

2. Ethical reasoning is only assessed in one course across the curriculum? I assume it is addressed in many other courses?

The program uses Advising evals, exit surveys, internship surveys, and exams in various courses. Assessment is clear but there is no analysis of the results as far as what it means to student learning or the success of the program. I'm not sure the Sociology-Global Comparison emphasis has SLOs maps to the courses.

2. The map shows where the content of the SLOs are embedded, but not assessed, which makes it difficult to then interpret the data being shared. 3. The report stated that direct assessment data was collected each semester, but the timeline should include when each SLO is assessed (i.e., evaluated to determine student progress on learning outcome), not just when data is collected. Overall: The information provided demonstrated this department's commitment to multiple methods of evaluating student learning and attentiveness to the data collected. However, the results were provided in a way that made it difficult to understand the direct connection between SLO, measure, result, and action. The annual reports included a lot of information helpful to the department, but not necessarily informative of students' progress toward meeting the learning outcomes. 6. I could not find a description of specific actions based on assessment of SLOs.

The action plans based on assessment are less clear in the attached material. They indicated that these plans are discussed at the meetings. I would like to see more overt material incorporated on the action plans, however.

**VI. Student Recruitment, Enrollment, Retention, and Graduation:****A. Trend Data****1. Five-year enrollment and graduation trends reflect program vitality and sustainability.**

Sufficient Evidence	2
Some/Partial Evidence	3
No/Limited Evidence	0

**2. The program described the College and/or University recruitment activities the program engages in to help maintain enrollment.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

**3. Credits-to-degree show that students can complete the degree in four years, or reasonably efficiently.**

Sufficient Evidence	1
Some/Partial Evidence	4
No/Limited Evidence	0

**4. Students can enroll in appropriate courses and proceed without delaying graduation.**

Sufficient Evidence	3
Some/Partial Evidence	2
No/Limited Evidence	0

**5. The program described retention issues, if any, impacting enrollment.**

Sufficient Evidence	1
Some/Partial Evidence	2
No/Limited Evidence	2

**6. Claim that the program is oversubscribed, undersubscribed, or at optimum level is justified or supported by examples or data.**

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0

**General Comments related to Section VI.A**

1. There has been a steady decline in enrollment, but that decline parallels declines in other programs across the university. 2. Program is responsive to enrollment downturn. The program has developed an Applied Research Certificate to encourage students to make connections between coursework and career opportunities. 3-4. Intro to Sociology isn't always properly credited when transferred in from other institutions. The program is working to remedy that. Students have trouble enrolling in core courses that they share with other programs like criminology. The program mentioned saving seats for Sociology majors/minors; perhaps they need to receive resources to offer



more sections? 5. The program mentioned some actions they're taking/considering to address retention, but I'd like to see some actual data on retention.

Enrollments are down. But, enrollments across the university are down currently.

Credits to degree is high and the report explains why students may be delayed to reach graduation but not why students end up with 140-150 credits to graduate. The question I have is: are the major groups too specialized for an undergraduate degree? Can the major's course requirements be made boarder and simpler for students to get to graduation? How does the DFWI rates compare with underrepresented groups?

1. Enrollment is steadily declining and all the information referenced suggests this trend will continue. 3. Credits to degree significantly exceed 120, which is the requirement for an UG degree. 4. Considering the explanation, and high credits to degree, it does not seem students have access to all courses when they need to enroll

The limitations in ability to offer courses and have enough seats for majors/minors seems related to staffing concerns. Hopefully with additional staffing, these issues will stabilize. In general, the department is responsive to enrollment decline, although their analysis could provide more analysis of the department itself rather than national trends.

## **VI. Student Recruitment, Enrollment, Retention, and Graduation:**

### **B. Demand for Graduates**

#### **1. Placement information indicates that program graduates find employment or continue their education.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

#### **2. Data suggests that employment opportunities for graduates of this program will remain strong.**

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0

### **General Comments for VI.B**

1. 87.5% of surveyed alumni were employed full-time. 2. I like the Triads of Study Campaign idea. I would suggest finding additional minor programs to pair with the major (e.g., PR, Health & Corporate COMM, political science).

I was impressed by the variety of jobs, advanced degrees and opportunities afforded to the students by the program. Academic preparation particularly in writing appears to be strong.

Employment trends from a source like O'Net or Bureau of Labor Statistics would be nice.

It does not appear that the program provided data regarding projections in employment opportunities.

## **VII. Resource Availability & Development: Faculty and Staff Resources**

### **1. Information on the numbers of full and part-time faculty and staff is provided.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

**2. The program has identified staffing changes since the last review.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

**3. Expertise of teaching staff are aligned with the needs and future vision for the program.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

**4. The program has identified anticipated staffing changes or areas of need, and how these may impact the program.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

**5. The program described factors that may be impacting their ability to recruit faculty and staff.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

**General Comments related to section VII.A**

4. The department is conducting two searches, but it seems the Sociology major needs some dedicated faculty/academic staff to support core course demands.

The biggest strain on the department seems to be a lack of dedicated resources to the sociology program- because there are other programs in the department in which resources are dedicated, or the author indicates receives priority.

This section seems key for the program's assessment. Sociology has lost many faculty and staff and needs to hire to ensure the efficiency of the program. In addition, as the program has indicated, the overworking of faculty and staff leads to faculty and staff leaving UWW. If the program cannot hire more in Sociology, I am concerned that additional tenure-track and tenured faculty might leave. Finally, the reviewers indicate that belonging is a key concern in the college and university level. This report and the department's losses could be used at the dean and university level to encourage programs addressing BIPOC faculty/staff/student inclusion and belonging at UWW.

**VII. Resource Availability & Development:**  
**B. Student Resources**

**1. The program has adequate personnel, student help, and service and supplies to serve its undergraduate students.**

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0

**2. The program has adequate facilities, equipment, technological, and library resources to effectively serve its students.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

**General Comments for VII.B**

1. Need more consistent offerings of core courses for the major.

**VIII. Conclusions and Recommendations from the Department or Program**

**1. Areas of strength are discussed.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

**2. Areas of improvement and continued progress are discussed.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

**3. Recommendations and resources are discussed.**

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

## General Comments for VIII

The program is well described and managed. The challenges seem to be course planning for the various major sub groups and triads.

I concur with the department's assessment that they need to stabilize their faculty/staff and continue hiring to ensure the success of the program.

## IX. Reviewer Conclusions 1. Strengths of the Program

1. Strong assessment. 2. Numerous HIP opportunities for students. 3. Good academic and career advising 4. Broad array of expertise across the faculty.

Strong academic preparation of students for advanced degrees and good skills-based curriculum seems to prepare students well for a variety of employment opportunities.

The program supports General Education and Undergraduate Research

This program provides great service to campus in supporting a number of general education courses. Additionally, there is a consistent theme aligned with campus learning outcomes throughout the curriculum. The program engages students through HIPs, student organizations, and various capstone options. I think the triads are a good idea for making connections between this field of study and potential career options.

Sociology employs several high impact practices in their teaching. The department is strongly committed to diversity and inclusion, viewing this as a curricular and structural concern at UWW. The program is working hard on demonstrating the "employability" of their graduates and has a strong approach to alumni assessment.

## 2. Areas for Work or Improvement

1. Need more dedicated faculty to address delay in students enrolling in major core courses. 2. Continue to address declining major/minor enrollment.

Department head and administration should work to create a more favorable work environment for the employee stakeholders (faculty). Faculty turnover is an issue and it seems long work hours and low pay are now adversely affecting the program. The program cannot distinguish itself if it continually loses good faculty to other schools offering better work conditions.

Course planning assessment data being used to changes or direction of program.

There seems to be a lot of work going on for the number of faculty dedicated to this program. It seems a good analysis of the work of the department as a whole in light of the needs in sociology is warranted. Similarly, the program should look at the annual work being conducted- as listed in the goals section, and parse that down to make it manageable each year. For example, can't the long-term goal on 2025-26 be promoting the triads? It seems there are too many goals and the work associated is overwhelming for the program. I think the program is doing a lot of assessment work, but was not presented in a way that allowed us to understand if students were meeting the program's learning outcomes. In some instances, the program may be focusing too much on time consuming methods that do not yield useful information in terms of students learning throughout the program.

The department needs to stabilize their faculty and staff and if possible, continue hiring in Sociology. Notably, these concerns are largely external to the department.

## 3. Other comments/questions

Good, effective assessment plan.

**4. Recommended Actions (please specify):**

1. Create a plan with administration to deal with faculty turnover preventing Sociology majors from enrolling in core courses when needed so they can graduate on time. It seems necessary for the department to a) hire in Sociology, and b) create a pipeline towards tenure and leadership in the department.
2. Discuss and identify as a department the program priorities each year that are measurable and manageable based on resources (e.g., enrollment and staffing). For example, in 2025-2026 the program will 1) promote the triads and report out on the number of students committed to each pathway and 2) review program workload to reduce redundancies or inefficiencies.
3. Close the loop on assessment by clearly reporting out the data on student learning outcomes. Use the assessment plan template and organize findings in this way: -SLOs, -measure and criteria for performance, -findings, -analysis and actions related to findings.

**5. Recommended Result**

Continuation without qualification. Next self-study will be a shortened one focusing on the Recommended Actions from the current report.	0
Continuation with minor concerns. Progress report may be required, at the discretion of the review team.	5
Continuation with major concerns in one or more of the four areas; submit annual progress report to the College Dean & Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs on progress addressing the major concerns	0
Insufficient Information in the self-study to make a determination; revise self-study & resubmit.	0
Refer to Provost for action. This option is selected if the report is not completed by the date due.	0