

Comprehensive Program Review
Department of Sociology
Georgia State University
November 2021

The following programs are critical to the institutional mission and thus MEET the institution's criteria for retention.

BA in Sociology – This degree program introduces students to key processes and methods. The Sociology major prepares students for careers in human serving organizations in the non-profit and for-profit sectors. The program also prepares students for graduate work in sociology and related fields, such as law, public administration, and social work. Sociology students can follow the general program in sociology, or they can tailor their studies to focus on some of the most important subfields within sociology, including family, race and urban studies, gender and sexuality, or gerontology. During the review period, we supported an average of 548 majors annually, and many more undergraduate students from across the university through our extensive elective and general education courses.

BA/MA (4+1) in Sociology – this program is designed for the ambitious and talented Undergraduate to complete a Master's degree in one year beyond the B.A. In order to take advantage of the time savings, Undergraduates should be making sure all pre-requisites are completed by the end of their Junior year. The Dual Degree program is a 31 credit hour degree program beyond the bachelor's degree (25 credit hours of coursework and 6 credit hours of non-coursework) that is started in their Senior year. This program was launched only a few years ago and is growing in popularity.

Undergraduate Certificate in Social Justice – To provide the skills necessary for such work, the Department of Sociology also oversees a multi-disciplinary Certificate in Social Justice. This certificate provides specialized curricula to strengthen the students for post-graduate professional activities concerned with social justice, provides opportunities to apply course material via experience-based learning activities and forms a comprehensive and interdisciplinary field of social justice from relevant courses in various university departments. This program was formally launched in the fall of 2019; interest in the program is robust.

MA in Sociology – Our terminal MA program is designed to train students to become research leaders in applied sociology, or non-profit and governmental programs. It highlights methods and data analysis while offering theoretical training in one or more areas of choice. This program was launched approximately five years ago. Interest in this program is growing.

Joint Master of Arts (M.A.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) – These programs provide students with both a broad exposure to the discipline of sociology as well as in-depth study in special areas of expertise. Qualified students are accepted into the Joint M.A./Ph.D. Program after their completion of a baccalaureate degree. The broad knowledge of sociology comes through coursework in a variety of substantive areas, as well as through training in research methodology, statistics, and theory. The faculty's interests and expertise lie in six broad areas: (1) Health, (2) Life Course, (3) Gender, (4) Sexuality, (5) Race, and (6) Urban Studies. The department's approach is to enable students to apply sociological principles in a real-world environment and to foster a close working relationship between faculty and graduate students. During the review period, we supported an average of 90 graduate students (across all our graduate programs) annually.

Provost/VPAA Signature and Date _____

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Provost/VPAA's Designee Signature and Date Michael Galchinsky 11/10/2021 _____

**Appendix: 2021 APR Action Plan
Department of Sociology
Georgia State University**

Major Findings in Current Review

Overall, the department continues to maintain a high-level of research productivity as well as contribute significantly to the education of both undergraduate and graduate students, despite a significant loss of faculty since the prior review. The department also has identified a central theme of becoming an antiracist sociology department and enhancing our scholarly contributions to better understand social justice and social problems for students, local community and the public, as well as our academic discipline. The key findings and recommendations from the review can be summarized in the following goals:

1. Build, support and retain a more diverse BIPOC (Black, indigenous, and other people of color) sociology faculty
2. Maintain and enhance research productivity
3. Prepare undergraduates to be successful in a rapidly changing social world
4. Enhance the structure of the graduate program to better prepare both MA and PhD students for changing professional and academic job markets

Action Plan for the Coming Cycle

The action plans listed below will be reviewed annually by the faculty and an identified representative of the Sociology Graduate Student Association and used to plan the work of the subsequent academic year.

Goal 1. Build, support and retain a more diverse BIPOC (Black, indigenous, and other people of color) sociology faculty

As part of our commitment to become a more antiracist department, we have determined that we need to do more to influence structural changes that will enhance the number of BIPOC sociology faculty, when we are allowed to hire new faculty, and to improve the support we provide to them. Working at the structural level to effect broad change, we believe, will improve the lives and productivity of BIPOC faculty in the near-term but also indirectly benefit other faculty as well by creating a more inclusive scholarly community in the department in the long-term. Further, we believe these steps will contribute to the vitality of the college in that having a well-supported more racially and ethnically diverse faculty will complement the University's diversity goals. To this end, we have identified the following specific action steps to take

- 1.1. Annually, we will update the department 3 year hiring plan to meet the department's near and long-term instructional needs. Specifically, we will work to maintain a highly diverse faculty, engage in targeted recruiting to ensure highly diverse pools, and work with the Dean's Office to secure funding both to hire new faculty and retain faculty who receive external offers (Responsible Person or Group: Chair)

- 1.2. Annually in the early spring update comparison salary data on salaries by rank and use the data to work with the Dean's Office to inform decision-making and identify institutional opportunities for improving faculty salaries, particularly during the Midyear Budget and Budget Build Processes, to bring faculty salaries in line with national averages and assist us in retaining faculty, particularly our BIPOC faculty. (Responsible Person or Group: Chair)
- 1.3. During each academic year through AY2026-27, conduct at least one department pedagogical workshop or research seminar that addresses an antiracism and/or another social justice-related topic for faculty, students, and staff. (Responsible Person or Group: Committee on Equity and Accountability)
- 1.4. By the end of AY 2022-23, complete a review of and recommend any needed changes to the department promotion and tenure guidelines to make them more inclusive and encourage more scholarship and teaching that is consistent with the departmental commitment to antiracism and social justice. (Responsible Person or Group: Promotion and Tenure Committee)

Goal 2. Maintain and enhance research productivity

The Sociology faculty are a productive group of scholars who have managed to maintain a level of productivity comparable to our peer departments. While scholarly productivity was not mentioned as a significant concern, we are committed to contributing sociological scholarship. We do need to do a better job going forward of sharing our productivity and involving our students, particularly our doctor level graduate students, in research. To this end, we will:

- 2.1. Compile a report of the faculty and graduate students' research productivity and the nature and extent of research collaborations at the end of each academic year and share it with the Sociology Community online and at the annual Celebration of Scholarship at the end of each academic year. (Responsible Person or Group: Research and Technology Committee; Chair and Department Specialist)
- 2.2. To facilitate faculty and graduate students sharing of their ongoing research, institutionalize at least one research workshop or colloquium in the fall and spring semesters during each academic year. (Responsible Person or Group: Research and Technology Committee)

Goal 3: Prepare undergraduates to be successful in a rapidly changing social world.

Like many people, sociologists understand that the pace and nature of social change is accelerating, driven, in large part, by the digital technological revolution. Many sociologists believe that the recent pandemic has only accelerated the social change process; most anticipate that people's daily social lives will look very different in the future. Not only will students require more knowledge and be able to think critically, they also will need new skills ranging from digital information literacy, systems-thinking, greater global awareness, and a capacity to learn and learn quickly to keep up with evolving social conditions.

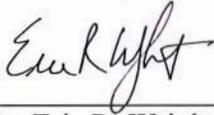
- 3.1. By the end of AY2021-22, formalize and expand our undergraduate internship program (Responsible Person or Group: Undergraduate Committee)
- 3.2. Increase the number of undergraduate students enrolled in the Social Justice Certificate Program to 15 by the end of AY 2022-23 and maintain this minimum level of enrollment for the subsequent three academic years. (Responsible Person or Group: Undergraduate Committee)
- 3.3. Beginning AY2022-23, offer at least one signature learning experience (i.e., domestic field school) each academic year for undergraduates to get experience in research and/or community service. (Responsible Person or Group: Director of Undergraduate Studies)

Goal 4: Enhance the structure of the graduate program to better prepare both MA and PhD students for changing professional and academic job markets.

Over the last several years and after much study and discussion, the faculty feel strongly that the structure of our graduate program must be improved to better serve our students. Because we have fewer faculty to mentor and guide doctoral students to become independent researchers, the most prudent course of action is to reshape the overall graduate student population and decrease the number of MA/PhD and PhD only students and increase the MA only students interested in more professional sociology-oriented careers (e.g., data managers, data analysts, program directors) while maintaining the current size of the graduate program. While rebalancing the graduate student population in this way will take time and important changes, we believe this can be accomplished gradually and without the infusion of new resources. In the long-run, our aim is to fully fund a smaller group PhD only and MA/PhD students in order to improve their training in research by providing more in-depth faculty mentorship. This could be accomplished by increasing the number of tuition-paying MA only (and BA/MA) students, whose educational needs can be met primarily through course work and more internship/applied-research opportunities in the community, and by freeing up faculty time and capacity to secure external funding to provide support for PhD students. To this end, we outline the following long-term actions, which together, will get us closer to this overall program structure:

- 4.1. Create and implement a more comprehensive mentoring program for all graduate students to reduce their time to degree and improve their job placements after graduation by the end of 2022-23. (Responsible Person or Group: Director of Graduate Studies)
- 4.2. By the end of 2023-24, examine the feasibility of developing and implementing a coherent training track for MA only students and PhD students interested in applied research training as well as a Graduate-Level Certificate in Social Justice Studies. (Responsible Person or Group: Graduate Committee)
- 4.3. By the end of AY 2024-25, develop and implement a plan in collaboration with the Dean's Office and Graduate Office to increase PhD and MA/PhD student stipends to ensure they can devote more time to their research and to be more competitive with our peers and no less than \$20,000 per academic year by AY2025-2026 by increasing the number of unfunded MA only students. (Responsible Person or Group: Director of Graduate Studies)
- 4.4. Decrease the number of unfunded MA/PhD and PhD-only students to 0 by AY2025-26. (Responsible Person or Group: Graduate Committee)

Signatures:



August 24, 2021

Dr. Eric R. Wright
Chair, Department of Sociology

Date



8/24/21

Dr. Sara T. Rosen
College of Arts & Sciences

Date Dean,



26 August 2021

Dr. Wendy F. Hensel
Provost

Date