A. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

A.1. Mission of the Department

It has been seven years since the Department of Sociology completed the first cycle of Georgia State University's Academic Program Review (APR), and now we have completed a second review. We are excited about the opportunity that APR affords, and dedicated to doing what is necessary to solidify the department's strengths and remedy its weaknesses. We are proud of what we have accomplished over the past seven years, and also eager to move forward. Our short-term objective is to be among the top 30 programs in at least one, if not two, of the substantive areas in which we specialize, and to be widely recognized as an intellectual enclave where superior research, teaching, and service are celebrated. Our long-term objective is to be among the top 50 Ph.D.-granting sociology departments in the nation. We owe nothing less to the school, the public, and the discipline.

When we embarked on our first Academic Program Review, we came together, discussed, and endorsed the following mission statement:

*The Department of Sociology at Georgia State University is committed to excellence in the advancement of knowledge about social forces, social behavior, and social change. Through dedicated research, teaching, and service, the department's work benefits students, colleagues, policy makers, and the public. The faculty's strengths lie in its theoretical and methodological diversity and its ongoing commitment to basic and applied research. Capitalizing on the unique opportunities of a multi-cultural and international metropolitan setting at the dawn of the 21st century, the department will continue to demonstrate sociology's value in addressing leading [social] scientific questions and pressing social problems.*

This mission statement is as relevant today as it was then. So, too, are the points, made in the first self-study report, about the department's role in the college, university, and larger community.

*As a social science department within the College of Arts and Sciences, the Sociology Department's primary goal is to contribute to the advancement of knowledge about the social world. What makes the department unique among the social sciences, however, is sociology's substantive scope and theoretical and methodological heritage. To offer a definition of the field: Sociology is the systematic observation and analysis of social interaction, social groups, societies, and factors that create social stability and change.*

*As a unit of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Sociology Department also is committed to the liberal arts. Thus, the department provides all students, majors and non-majors alike, with a well-rounded education and a*
strong appreciation for the sociological perspective. To be educated, in short, is to be able to think critically about social issues, and to understand how social realities shape people's lives and the world around them.

As an academic program under the Georgia State University umbrella, the Sociology Department is committed to carrying out the University's tri-fold mission of offering educational opportunities to both non-traditional and traditional students; engaging in high-quality research on important topics; and maintaining external linkages that coordinate the efforts of the university with those of the community.

Over the past 30 years, the Georgia State Sociology Department has gone through three phases. The first phase, beginning in the early 1970s, lasted a little over ten years and was devoted to instituting a Ph.D. program (an M.A. program was already in existence) and to recruiting faculty with the expertise to build a doctoral-level curricula. The second phase, which ran from the mid 1980s to the mid 1990s, was marked by steady growth in the number and quality of our graduate and undergraduate courses, but also by almost no expansion in the overall size of the faculty. During this second phase, we primarily served students who lived in Atlanta or in surrounding communities. Because most of our graduate students worked full-time, graduate courses were offered only in the evening. The third phase was initiated by the department's previous Academic Program Review self-study report (submitted February 28, 1995). The report identified two research/teaching specialties, "Family and Life Course" and "Social Conflict and Inequality," around which to construct a departmental identity. The department also recruited a number of new faculty members (and lost several as well to retirements and moves to other universities), but experienced a net increase overall. The infusion of personnel reinvigorated the department and also prompted a reexamination of the specialties in 1999. "Family and Life Course" remained intact, but "Social Conflict and Inequality" was split into "Gender and Sexuality" and "Race and Urban Studies." Today, "Family and Life Course," "Gender and Sexuality," and "Race and Urban Studies" comprise the department's programmatic backbone and are central to faculty recruitment, graduate admissions, class scheduling, and community internships.

A.2.  How the Department Advances the Overall Mission of Georgia State University

The Department of Sociology, through the teaching and research activities of its faculty, contributes to at least four facets of the overall mission of Georgia State University as identified in the Strategic Plan.

1. Georgia State is committed to the enhancement of interdisciplinary research programs and centers. Sociology faculty members are absolutely crucial to two institutes/centers. The Gerontology Institute, which has become a growing and vibrant center for the study of aging, is headed by a sociologist, and most of the Institute's affiliated faculty members are sociology faculty members. Also, the Institute’s research scientists and staff hold doctorates in sociology, and most of the Institute’s funded graduate assistants are sociology graduate students. The Center for Neighborhood and Metropolitan Studies has just been approved (2004) and more of its affiliated faculty are from the Sociology Department than from any other unit in the university. In addition, sociology faculty members are actively involved in six other interdisciplinary centers and institutes: (a) Asian Studies Center; (b) Fiscal Research Center; (c) Jewish Studies; (d) Middle East Center for Peace, Culture, and Development; (e) Public Health Institute; and (f) Women’s Studies.

2. Georgia State is dedicated to undergraduate programs based on a core curriculum that promotes interdisciplinary, intercultural, and international perspectives. Two sociology courses, Introductory Sociology (Soci 1101) and Introduction to Social Problems (Soci 1160), enable students to fulfill the social science foundation requirement in "Area E: Social Sciences in the Undergraduate Core Curriculum." The sociological perspective offered in these courses provides an intellectual foundation for achieving one of the key general education goals, namely to effectively analyze contemporary issues within the context of diverse disciplinary perspectives and to effectively analyze contemporary multicultural, global, and international questions.

3. Another facet of the mission of Georgia State is to contribute to the economic, educational, social, professional, and cultural vitality of the city, state, and region. As this report will show, the sociology faculty has contributed to the city, state, and region through cutting-edge, federally-funded research on health and aging policy and practices, drug and substantive abuse and HIV/AIDS patterns and trends, crime and delinquency, and family and mental health. Faculty members also have also been very active in professional associations, as evidenced by their
membership on key editorial boards and association committees, community organizations, and civic boards. Last but not least, the sociology faculty has contributed to the intellectual and scholarly vitality of the university, city, and profession through publications and presentations at regional, national, and international professional associations.

4. The university strategic plan states, “Through the basic and applied research of its social science and professional faculties, through the research and service of its students, and through problem solving in community outreach between these groups and community constituencies, the university addresses business and economic issues, social and human welfare issues, especially those of urban settings, and promotes continuing innovation.” Again, sociology faculty members have served on several community, civic, and non-profit neighborhood, community, regional, state, and national organizations located in Atlanta. In addition, the training of undergraduate and graduate students has directly contributed to the economic development and prosperity of the region, as well as addressing important social and human welfare issues.

B. CURRENT CONTEXT

The department is now at a critical point in its development. We have grown and made substantial strides toward the goals that we set in the previous self-study. This section describes where the department now stands and highlights some of our recent changes, accomplishments, and challenges.

B.1. Faculty Size and Composition

Most noticeably, we have grown in numbers since the previous self-study. As indicated in Tables B-1 and G-1, we have 21 full-time faculty members, of whom 19 are tenured or on tenure-track. The full-time faculty currently includes two lecturers (non-tenure track), seven Assistant Professors, eight Associate Professors, and four Professors. This count of Professors excludes Paula Dressel, who is based out of state and who devotes just 10% of her workload to Georgia State University activity. Dr. Dressel will be retiring from Georgia State University at the end of 2004. The count also excludes Frank Whittington, who heads the GSU Gerontology Institute and devotes about half of his work to it. We had 16 tenure-track faculty when we completed our last self-study, and thus have gained three tenure-track positions since 1995. However, in faculty size we are currently smaller than the peer sociology departments selected for comparison (22 faculty at Northeastern University, 23 at Florida State University, 27 at North Carolina State University, and 34 at Rutgers University).

We also note that a smaller percentage of our faculty holds the rank of Professor than in those departments (i.e., at GSU 19.0% of our 21 full-time faculty are Professors, compared to 29.4% at Rutgers, 36.4% at Northeastern, 43.5% at FSU, and 53.8% at NC State). The percentage of our faculty in the rank of Assistant Professor is comparable to our peer departments, except for North Carolina State (GSU 33.3%, FSU 39.1%, Northeastern 31.8%, Rutgers 23.5%, and NC State 3.8%). In addition, we have become a more diverse faculty in terms of gender, race/ethnicity, and age. Our full-time faculty has an even balance among men and women, though the gender distribution is uneven by rank. All four Professors are men, five of eight Associate Professors are women, three of seven Assistant Professors are women, and both Lecturers are women. The five faculty members designated "minority" in Table B-1 are Asian (3) and African American (2). However, one of the African American Assistant Professors has left to take a faculty position at another university, leaving us with only one African American on our faculty. In Fall 2004, a new Instructor joined the department; she is a white woman, which creates a department consisting of 11 women and 10 men.

1 During the three years covered in this review we went from eleven to nine assistant professors, and four to six associate professors. These changes were due to faculty gaining promotion and tenure during the review period.
2 However, Professors Dressel and Whittington (along with all other full-time faculty) are on our department's graduate faculty list (see Appendix N).
3 Data for this and subsequent comparisons with our peer sociology departments come from the 2004 American Sociological Association Guide to Graduate Departments of Sociology. In some cases, data in this source for our department are for a different time period than ones used in the tables found in this self-study report, which causes small numerical discrepancies. But for comparison with peer departments we feel it is best to use data from the same source (see Appendix A).
B.2. Undergraduate and Graduate Student Enrollment

Growth in the number of students the Sociology Department serves is particularly dramatic. Over the past three years the number of sociology undergraduate majors has risen from 432 (Sp '02) to 508 (Sp '03) to 543 (Sp '04). In contrast, at the time of our last self-study we had 145 sociology majors. Clearly we have taken to heart that self-study's recommendation to "devote more attention to the undergraduate program and to strategies that will attract more majors" (p. 6) and we have been successful. Based on a count of undergraduate sociology majors in Fall of 2003, we exceed three out of four of our peer sociology departments (NC State 510; GSU 391; FSU 286; Rutgers 239; and Northeastern 210). Moreover, when you divide the Fall 2003 number of undergraduate majors by the number of tenure-track faculty, our student/faculty ratio is shown to be the highest in the group (GSU 391/19 = 20.6; NC State 510/27 = 18.9; FSU 286/23 = 12.4; Rutgers 239/34 = 7.0; Northeastern 210/22 = 9.5).

Every year we have increased our undergraduate credit hour production. We went from 19,025 credit hours in 2001-02, to 22,352 in 2002-03, to 23,445 credit hours in 2003-04. This is an increase of 23% and is larger than the general increase in credit hours in the College of Arts and Sciences as a whole.

Along with increasing undergraduate majors and overall credit hours, we continue to attract more students from other departments to our classes. In fact, most of the students whom we teach are not sociology majors. This is true for many departments in their lower division classes. But unlike those others, a large percentage of our upper division credit hours come from non-sociology majors who value our classes and our faculty.

Graduate student enrollment has also risen, particularly in the past year. As noted in Table B-3, we went from having 76 graduate students in FY 2002 to 89 graduate students in FY 2004. This growth is due to a higher percentage of the students we accept deciding to enroll in our graduate program, which may be related to our adoption of a joint M.A.-Ph.D. program and increased funding levels for graduate student support.

B.3. Faculty Research Productivity

The sociology faculty has published a substantial body of work. In the three-year period under review here, we have produced a total of 5 books, 58 articles in professional journals, 17 chapters in scholarly books, 14 book reviews, 10 encyclopedia entries, and 8 essays or other writings. In addition, our published research has been reprinted in other books a total of 15 times during this period. Collectively, this output amounts to an average of 3.3 journal articles or chapters per faculty member over the period under review, plus an additional one and a half book reviews, essays, or other scholarly works per faculty member. In addition, we frequently present our research at professional meetings, symposia, and other academic conferences. Our faculty has 196 presentations of papers during this review period, mainly at national and regional professional association meetings. Much of our research is supported by grants; the faculty has secured $183,512 in internally funded grants plus an additional $2,237,448 in externally funded grants. The latter comes mainly from the research support that Kirk Elifson has earned from the National Institute of Health.

B.4. Graduate and Undergraduate Programs

The graduate program in sociology at Georgia State University offers an M.A. degree (a 36 credit hour program) and a Ph.D. degree (a 72 credit hour program). In addition to a "core" curriculum, students in the Ph.D. program concentrate in one of the department's three areas of specialty: "Gender and Sexuality," "Family and Life Course," and "Race and Urban Studies." Fourteen faculty are affiliated with Family and Life Course, 12 are in Race and Urban Studies, and 7 are in Gender and Sexuality (see Table B-3d). Currently the "Race and Urban" specialty is attracting the most graduate students (34 are identified with it), followed by "Gender and Sexuality" (27 students), and "Family and the Life Course" (18 students). However, completed dissertations during the past three years show a more even distribution and often address and integrate issues from two or more specialty areas.
Over the past three years we have graduated 11 Ph.D. students (4 in FY 2002; 5 in FY 2003; and 2 in FY 2004) and 31 M.A. students (11 in FY 2002; 9 in FY 2003; and 11 in FY 2004). This represents an average of 4 Ph.D. graduates and 10 M.A. students per year. For comparison with our peer institutions we must rely on the data provided in recent editions of the ASA Guide to Graduate Programs. This source indicates that for 2002-2003 we graduated 10 M.A. and 5 Ph.D. students, which is equal to or more than most of our peer departments. For that same period, Florida State University graduated 3 M.A. and 4 Ph.D. students; North Carolina State produced 11 M.S. and 13 Ph.D. students; Northeastern University had 2 M.A. and 5 Ph.D. students; and Rutgers University graduated 7 M.A. and 7 Ph.D. students. Over the past several years, a majority of our Ph.D. students have taken research positions with universities, government agencies, or consulting firms, although a substantial number have obtained faculty positions at colleges or universities.

We have increased the number of graduate students studying in our department. Our number of graduate students is larger than our four peer sociology departments. The ASA Guide to Graduate Programs indicates we have 65 graduate students, Rutgers has 80, NC State has 73, Northeastern has 55, FSU has 48; but this count of our graduate students is out-dated. The Office of Institutional Research data show we are much larger. In FY 2002 we had 76 graduate students, in FY 2003 we had 73, and in FY 2004 we have 89. Our current number of graduate students coupled with our relatively small faculty size creates a challenging situation--our current (FY 2004) graduate student-to-faculty member ratio is 4.7 (based on total full-time faculty), whereas the graduate student-to-faculty ratio in our peer sociology departments is 2.7 at NC State; 2.5 at Northeastern; 2.3 at Rutgers; and 2.1 at FSU.

Undergraduate students who major in sociology graduate with a B.A. degree. In addition to offering undergraduates a general sociology major, the department provides its students the option of concentrating in one of several specialty areas. Our three main undergraduate concentrations parallel the specialty areas we offer at the graduate level. These are "Family," "Gender and Sexuality," and "Race and Urban Studies." In addition, we offer "Gerontology" (in collaboration with the Gerontology Institute) and "Social Studies Education" (for students interested in a career in high school teaching). Students in all concentrations take the same four core sociology classes that are required for the general sociology major, and they take more specialized courses in their area and do an internship.

Most of our undergraduate sociology majors graduate as "general sociology" majors, and over the past three years we have graduated 35 sociology students per semester (or 105 per year), on average. Of those choosing to concentrate, the most popular program is "Family." During this review period 32 students have been enrolled in the "Family" concentration, on average. The "Gender and Sexuality" and the "Race and Urban Studies" specialty programs each have a dozen students enrolled per semester. "Social Studies Education" is our newest program and averages six students per semester. Only about one student per semester takes the "Gerontology" concentration.

B.5 Credit Hour Generation

As noted above, undergraduate credit hours grew from 19,025 to 22,352 to 23,445 for fiscal years 2002, 2003, and 2004, respectively, while graduate level credit hours rose from 1545 to 1622 to 1944 over those same years (see Tables B-4a, B-4b, B-4c).

Looking at undergraduate enrollment in sociology classes, two-thirds or more of our credit hours come from our upper division classes (courses with numbers 3000 or higher). This is partly due to the fact that compared to some departments (e.g., English, History, Political Science) our courses play a relatively small role in the undergraduate "core" (lower division) requirements that all GSU students take. Our presence in the "core" curriculum primarily is with our Introductory Sociology and Social Problems courses, both of which are options in core curriculum areas. Our enrollment pattern is also due to the fact that we offer a strong set of valuable and well-taught upper division courses that attract many students from other programs in addition to our own majors. Most of these upper division undergraduate courses are taught by tenure track-faculty and the two full-time lecturers. However, due to rising numbers of undergraduate and graduate students (which increases the number of courses the department must offer) the percentage of upper division credit hours taught by tenure track faculty and full-time lecturers has declined from 74% to 71% to 65% in fiscal years 2002, 2003, and 2004, respectively.
Another noteworthy point regarding teaching and credit hour production is that our credit hour production has increased more rapidly than our tenure-track faculty has expanded. Thus, the percentage of undergraduate credit hours taught by tenure-track faculty has declined, from 44.9% in fiscal year 2002, to 42.3% in 2003, to 39.2% in 2004. This decline is not due to an absolute decline in teaching by tenure-track faculty. On the contrary, each year the actual number of credit hours taught by tenure-track faculty has increased (10,079 in FY2002, 11,017 in FY2003, and 11,070 in FY2004). However, in order to meet the growing demand for sociology courses we have had to staff more of these classes with our full-time Lecturers, PTIs and GTAs.

C. PROGRESS TOWARD GOALS AND OBJECTIVES SINCE LAST ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

The last Academic Program Review yielded a number of valuable recommendations (see Appendix F), which in turn helped the department establish a set of goals and objectives. These recommendations can be divided into four categories: (1) scholarship and creative activity; (2) instruction, (3) service; and (4) general.

C.1 Scholarship and Creative Activity

As we indicated, one major recommendation that emerged during the last APR cycle was that the department should focus its energies on a limited number of specialties in order to create a stronger identity, sharpen the department's focus, and provide an intellectual framework for scholarly activity. We especially wanted to encourage the creation of specialty-related study groups or "shops" that would inspire partnerships among the faculty and between faculty and students. The department has been made notable progress toward this end. Four members of the "Family and Life Course" specialty (Reitzes, Elifson, LaRossa, and Whittington) co-wrote a GSU Research Enhancement Grant proposal to help subsidize FLC-targeted graduate student stipends. The proposal was funded and later renewed. (Total = $288,000, July 2000 to June 2006.) Five members of the "Gender and Sexuality" specialty (Stombler, Baunach, Burgess, Donnelly, Simonds) co-edited an innovative textbook titled, Sex Matters: The Sexuality and Society Reader. The text is being used in classrooms throughout the country. Three members of the "Race and Urban Studies" specialty (Adelman, Jaret, Reid) have collaborated on several research projects focusing on racial inequality and immigration. These are but three examples of the joint efforts of the faculty.

Another recommendation to emerge from the last APR was that the department should increase the number of women and minority faculty members. We did so (see Section B), but we continue to strive for diversity among the faculty. The department had hoped to recruit a senior-level faculty member, either an Associate Professor or Professor, because we felt that the department would benefit from additional experienced leadership. (Some of the senior faculty members held administrative posts.) In the past seven years, however, recruitment has been restricted to the Assistant Professor or Lecturer level. The department should decide whether recruiting senior-level faculty is as important now as it was before.

A related recommendation was that the department should make a concerted effort to create a cultural climate where diversity is valued. The department has embraced this recommendation, but it also recognizes the need to be ever vigilant in this regard. In the graduate student survey, for example, one respondent said, "I think the department would benefit greatly by creating diversity in multiple ways, so that the diverse body of students attracted to and accepted into the program feel connected to and involved in the department." Sociology is a discipline that promotes a deep appreciation of how and why social inequalities by race, class, age, gender, and sexual identity are produced, and we want the department to be a model of how a sociological understanding of social inequality can positively change everyday practices. We are especially proud of the fact that the department was recently awarded a Sociologists for Women in Society "Seal of Excellence," which recognizes programs "that excel in both the proportion of faculty who are women and in the representation of scholarship on gender inequality." Only 12 doctoral-granting departments in the country met these criteria and we were ranked fifth.

The value of extramural funding also was highlighted in the last APR. The department recognizes the advantage of encouraging the faculty to seek grant support and the amount of funding that the department has received in recent years is considerable. Although many of the tenure-track faculty members are Assistant Professors (a year ago, 10 of the 19 full-time tenure-track faculty members were at this rank), grant submissions among the junior faculty
was high. As the faculty matures, we expect that more faculty members will seek and obtain funding from major government agencies and private foundations.

The department instituted its own intramural funding program, one that allows faculty members to receive small grants during the academic year. This, along with the Summer Research funds provided by the College of Arts and Sciences, has helped facilitate faculty research and, in some instances, extramural grant writing. A junior faculty mentoring program, where new faculty are paired with senior faculty (Associate Professors and Professors), was also created. Up to now, much of the mentoring has centered on publishing and teaching. Much would be gained if grant writing were included as well.

A recommendation from the last APR was that the faculty travel stipend should be increased. The current stipend from the College of Arts and Sciences is $1,300 per faculty member per year. This is not as high as it should be (given the high costs of attending professional meetings), but the department has been able to increase the allotment to $1,500 by drawing on contributions from extramural grants.

Finally, the department sought to forge collaborative links with Georgia State's Applied Research Center, Women's Studies Institute, African-American Studies Department, Gerontology Center (now Institute), as well as with area institutions, such as the Centers for Disease Control. A number of faculty members are affiliated with the Women's Studies Institute and their courses are regularly cross-listed with WSI. The Director of the Gerontology Institute is a sociologist and all of the Institute's in-house research associates are Ph.D. graduates of the Sociology Department. Sociology faculty members are an integral part of the Asian Study Center; the Institute of Public Health; the Middle East Center for Peace, Culture, and Development; and the Center for Neighborhood and Metropolitan Studies. Faculty and graduates have ties to the Centers for Disease Control and the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University. Greater contact across departments and with the community continues to be a priority.

C.2 Instruction

In the last APR, the point was made that it was imperative that the department increase graduate student stipends if it hoped to attract and retain high-quality graduate students. Since 1997, graduate student stipends have increased, though not enough to be competitive (see Section D). Graduate student admissions also now are targeted to three specialties, with the Graduate Committee making every effort not to allow severe imbalances in enrollment across the specialties. Also, in response to a recommendation from the last APR, the department offers required courses more regularly. (The same applies to undergraduate required courses.)

Graduate Teaching Assistants now teach most of the courses that Part-Time Instructors used to teach. This affords the graduate students opportunities to hone their teaching skills and ensures that undergraduate students will have instructors who are available. (Part-time instructors do not spend as much time on campus.) To prepare graduate students for their classroom assignments, the department introduced a pair of courses, "Teaching Sociology" and "Teaching Internship" that are now taught yearly. Students take "Teaching Sociology" in the Spring semester and then teach their first courses under supervision during the summer term (enrolling in "Teaching Internship" at the same time). Guidance is provided by both a faculty member and a graduate student "Teaching Associate." (The latter is a position that was created in the past two years.)

The department continues to move toward the "professional training model" that the external review team recommended for our graduate students. Greater numbers of students are co-authoring articles with the faculty, and students are encouraged to present and publish their work. By virtue of their appointment to important committees, graduate students have a greater voice in departmental affairs. The students themselves also have organized a graduate-student group.

Adequate space remains a problem, but the renovation of the graduate student carrel room has helped to alleviate some of the crunch. Three faculty offices also were added since the last APR, freeing offices for students. If the faculty expands more, the department will have to gain additional space—or move to another location.
The department prides itself on the quality of its teaching. Each year, the Executive Committee reviews not just the faculty's student evaluations (which the committee had always done) but the faculty's teaching portfolios, too. The department's commitment to undergraduate instruction, coupled with the earnest efforts of the Undergraduate Director and Undergraduate Advisor, has resulted in a phenomenal increase in the number of undergraduate majors (see Section B).

C.3 Service

During the last APR, it was recommended that a Program Committee be created to help the department coordinate both curriculum changes and class scheduling. This was immediately done and the result has been very positive. The Program Committee includes the Department Chair, Graduate and Undergraduate Directors, three Specialty Chairs, a representative from the Gerontology Institute, along with the Department Business Manager and Administrative Specialist.

The importance of the department's internship program was recognized during the last APR cycle. Indeed, the Sociology internship program was then, and still is, one of the most successful in the university. The internship has been expanded and organized according to the three specialties. In the past three years alone, 121 students have completed internships.

C.4 General

The format for submitting faculty annual reports is standardized, making it easier to tabulate aggregate statistics on the accomplishments of the faculty. To help publicize the department's activities, the Sociology newsletter, Sociopath (formerly Sociogram), is now published yearly and mailed to students, alumnae/i, and offices throughout the university.

Technological support has increased. Every faculty member is now linked to a server. A computer lab was installed and continues to be maintained. A grant of $14,060 recently was received from GSU's Information Systems and Technology to upgrade the lab.

Establishing measurable criteria to assess the department's national standing is something that the faculty is currently examining.

D. QUALITY OF THE CURRICULUM

D.1. The Ph.D. Program in Sociology

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree program prepares students for careers in teaching, research, community service, or management. Students may enter the doctoral program with either an M.A. or, in the case of the Joint M.A./Ph.D. Program, with a B.A. The addition of the Joint M.A./Ph.D. Program several years ago made it easier for the department to compete for top quality graduate students by increasing stipends for entering graduate students, although stipends remain comparatively low. In 1997 we provided a $7500 stipend for Ph.D. students and a $3600 stipend for M.A. students. Currently, our stipends range between $9,000 and $13,000 for Ph.D. or Joint M.A./Ph.D. students, depending on year in program. In comparison, FSU awards $12,000 for incoming PhD program students, with a university-funded 2% increase each year so that fifth-year students receive approximately $13,000. NCSU awards $11,200 for a 9-month GTA position at the Master's level, $13,700 for a 9-month GRA position at the Master's level, $12,300 for a 9-month GTA position at the doctoral level, and $15,900 for a 9-month GRA position at the doctoral level. Northeastern and Rutgers declined to comment on their stipends.

While continuing to offer the M.A.-only Program for Atlanta-area professionals and the Ph.D.-only Program for students who come to Georgia State University from other colleges and universities, the graduate program is increasingly focused on the Joint M.A./Ph.D. Program. This change in the graduate program is more typical of higher-ranked sociology departments and provides students and faculty with greater opportunities for research, teaching, and collaboration.
The increased visibility of the department has led to increases in the number of applicants to the graduate program, which has lead to larger graduate student cohorts (see Table E-2). The number of new graduate students has strained resources and has made it difficult for the department to keep up with graduate students' needs and demands. In order to prevent future recurrences, the Graduate Committee will be changing the way it evaluates applicants. The new, more centralized method, which will go into effect for the Spring 2005 evaluation period, will allow the department more selectivity in accepting students into the graduate program and will permit tighter control of the size of graduate student cohorts. However, until stipends are increased, top students will continue to choose to attend other schools.

Reflective of the department's goal of providing students with a sound methodological and theoretical background, doctoral students are required to take Soci 8000: Proseminar in Sociology, Soci 8201: Social Inequality, Soci 8342: Qualitative Methods in Sociology, Soci 9010: Multivariate Data Analysis, Soci 9020: Advanced Research Methodology, and Soci 9030: Sociological Theory II. Joint M.A./Ph.D. students also take Soci 8010: Intermediate Social Statistics, Soci 8020: Research Methodology, and Soci 8030: Sociological Theory I. All four peer institutions require core courses in theory, statistics, and methods; however, they also require less coursework. FSU requires a total of 20 courses for the M.A. and Ph.D.; NCSU requires a total of 14 courses, Rutgers requires a total of 16 courses, and Northeastern requires a total of 17 courses. Until recently GSU required a total of 25 courses; as of August 2004, we now require 20 courses for Joint M.A./Ph.D. Program students. This change will make it easier for graduate students to complete their degree requirements in a more timely fashion.

Upon the completion of these requirements, students must take and pass two Ph.D. qualifying exams, one in theory and the other in methodology. Northeastern also requires students to pass two Ph.D. qualifying examinations in theory and methodology. NCSU requires its Ph.D. students to take and pass two specialty area examinations. FSU requires Ph.D. students to take and pass one major specialty area preliminary examination and to write a doctoral review paper. Rutgers requires its Ph.D. students to take and pass a qualifying examination in theory, methodology, and a substantive area. In recognition of the trend of specialization in graduate education, the department slightly modified the qualifying exam format in August 2004. Both the theory examination and the methodology examination will now include a specialty-area component.

Doctoral students (Ph.D.-only students and Joint M.A./Ph.D. students) in the Department of Sociology are required to specialize in one of three specialty areas: Family and Life Course (FLC), Gender and Sexuality (GS), and Race and Urban Studies (RUS). Doctoral students take two specialty area requirements: Soci 8101: Family Sociology and Soci 8102: Life Course Sociology for FLC, Soci 8156: Sociology of Gender and Soci 8156: Sexuality and Society for GS, and Soci 8212: Race and Ethnic Relations and Soci 8226: Urban Sociology for RUS. Prior to August 2004, students also took four specialty area electives, selecting from a list of at least eleven courses for each specialty area and completed either a project or an examination in their specialty area. Instead of four specialty area electives and four general electives (the requirements prior to August 2004), the faculty voted to require five general electives. This change will permit students to better tailor their graduate course work to their substantive interests. It will also permit faculty more freedom to offer special topics courses and will allow faculty to teach a wider range of elective courses. The faculty also voted to eliminate the specialty project/examination requirement. Previously, the specialty project/exam was required to be on a separate topic from the student's dissertation research. This requirement delayed many students' progress through the graduate program. Instead, the faculty voted to create a new elective course, Soci 9002: "Writing for Publication," that would focus on turning a student's Master's thesis or course paper into a publication. Soci 9002 will be offered for the first time during the 2005-2006 academic year.

Outcomes assessment for doctoral students is determined by the Ph.D. qualifying examination, the dissertation, and the dissertation defense. See Appendices G-1 and G-2 for additional details. Formal assessments of learning outcomes for all degree programs are set to be implemented with the Fall 2004 semester.

D.2. The M.A. Program in Sociology

The Master of Arts (M.A.) degree program prepares students for positions in research, middle-level management, community service, or continued education toward a doctoral degree. Master's students take four
required courses: Soci 8000: Proseminar, Soci 8010: Intermediate Social Statistics, Soci 8020: Research Methodology, and Soci 8030: Sociological Theory I. Upon the completion of 12 hours of elective courses (18 hours of electives were required prior to August 2004), all M.A. students are required to write a thesis. The Master's program provides a solid general sociological education for students and Atlanta-area professionals. The reduction in the number of electives will facilitate student degree progress and brings GSU's M.A. degree requirements closer to those of other doctoral-granting institutions.

The department's requirements for the master's degree correspond closely to the requirements at the peer institutions, when those institutions offer a separate master's degree from the doctoral degree. All peer institutions require core courses in theory, statistics, and methods. North Carolina State University and Florida State University require a proseminar. North Carolina offers a thesis option and a non-thesis/applied option. Florida State University requires a research paper instead of a thesis.

Outcomes assessment for master's students is determined by the thesis and the thesis defense. See Appendices G-1 and G-2 for additional details.

D.3. The Undergraduate Program in Sociology

Undergraduate students majoring in sociology receive a B.A. degree when they graduate. The program requires students to take Soci 1101: Introductory Sociology and Soci 1160: Introduction to Social Problems, and then take 27 credit hours at the upper division level (i.e., our four required core courses, including Soci 3010: Social Statistics, Soci 3020: Social Research Methods, Soci 3030: Sociological Theory, and Soci 3201: Wealth, Power, and Inequality, plus five elective courses). Students can complete the General Program in Sociology or specialize in one of five concentrations: Family, Race and Urban Studies, Gender and Sexuality, Gerontology, and Social Studies Education. Students in all concentrations take the same four core sociology courses that are required for the general sociology major, and then they take more specialized courses in their area and complete an internship. Students are awarded a certificate in their area of concentration from either the Department of Sociology or the Gerontology Institute. All concentrations are appropriate for students preparing for admission to graduate or professional programs in a variety of fields.

The Family concentration provides students with a comprehensive educational and training curriculum in the study of family and is appropriate for students who plan to pursue careers in public and private agencies concerned with the family and family problems. The Race and Urban Studies concentration is designed to provide students with an understanding of the various social forces that shape race relations, urban politics, social inequality, and the ever-changing relationship between city and suburb. This concentration is appropriate for students seeking training in careers or activism in non-profit organizations, city or state government, housing and urban advocacy organizations, social justice institutes, or any private organization that focuses on social or racial inequality. The Gender and Sexuality concentration provides students with a comprehensive educational and training curriculum in the study of gender and sexuality and is appropriate for students who wish to pursue careers in public and private agencies dealing with issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, legal equity and equal access issues, sexual health and education, procreative issues, and gender inequality.

All concentrations make use of the same set of assessment outcomes and methods. The Department of Sociology has identified five sets of learning outcomes that reflect the core set of skills that students are expected to master. First, sociology majors should possess analytical skills, including data collection skills, appropriate computer skills, and the ability to read and understand sociological research reports and articles. Second, sociology majors should possess critical thinking skills, including the ability to formulate research questions and testable hypotheses, to analyze and interpret data, and to use results of analysis to formulate new research questions. Third, sociology majors should possess communication skills, including effective written communication and editing skills and the usage of appropriate writing conventions and formats. Fourth, sociology majors should possess acquisition of knowledge skills, including the ability to articulate key sociological concepts and theories, to apply the most up-to-date facts and information about social conditions and problems, and to utilize key data sources that provide sociological information and research. Last, sociology majors should possess analysis of contemporary questions skills, including the ability to
identify, analyze, and suggest solutions to pressing social problems and the ability to analyze contemporary multicultural, global, or international questions.


The department's requirements for the bachelor degree correspond closely to the requirements at the peer institutions. All peer institutions require core courses in theory, statistics, and methods.

D.4. Reports of Student Satisfaction

Approximately 41% of undergraduate majors responded to the academic program review survey. A majority of undergraduate majors agree or strongly agree that the program is academically challenging (68.6%, 80.4%), that the program is preparing students for their professional careers and/or further study (66%, 70.9%), and that class size is suitable for effective learning (73.4%, 74.7%). With regard to departmental faculty, a majority of undergraduate majors find that faculty are interested in their academic development (72.5%, 73.1%), that the faculty are appropriately prepared for their courses (83.5%, 81.7%), and that there is open communication between faculty and undergraduate students about student concerns (72.3%, 64.9%). On a five-point scale from poor (1) to excellent (5), students highly rate the academic advisement available in the department (4.24, 3.53), the clarity of degree requirements (4.06, 3.73), the availability of faculty to students outside the classroom (4.04, 3.78), the effectiveness of teaching methods used by faculty (4.23, 3.95), and the procedures used to evaluate student performance (3.98, 3.80). Students are slightly less positive on the career advisement available in the department (3.76, 3.25), the frequency of undergraduate major course offerings (3.21, 2.96), and the variety of undergraduate major course offerings (3.66, 3.39), although each of these departmental means exceeds those for the university as a whole. In contrast, the faculty express greater satisfaction with the frequency of required course offerings (95% of Sociology faculty rate the frequency "very good" or "excellent," for the University 79.5%) than with their variety (70% of Sociology faculty rate the variety "very good" or "excellent," for the University 74.4%).

In their written comments, undergraduate majors speak highly of the department and the advising process, as was evidenced by one student's comment: "Honestly I love the Dept of Sociology[,] it's helped me out a lot. I started out as a Bus. Major and I switched to Sociology. It's a great department. [The Undergraduate Advisor] has helped me tremendously with my courses...." Other students offered positive comments about the faculty: "I have always been impressed by the passion and dedication that the sociology professors demonstrated in each of the courses I've taken at GSU."

Students also made suggestions for improving the program. Many such comments focused on increasing the availability of required courses, the variety of courses offered, and the number of evening courses. The recent increase in the number of undergraduate majors, without a corresponding increase in faculty, has produced some growing pains. The department has increased the number of sections of required courses (see Table D-1) and makes efforts to provide at least one day and one evening section of most required courses in both the Fall and Spring semesters. (Soci 3020: Social Research Methods is an exception with five day courses and one evening course each academic year.) The department has also had to close several of the required courses to non-majors in order to better serve majors. But the department will not be able to completely satisfy student concerns over course availability with its current faculty and staff resources, especially given student concerns over class size.

One student said that the department should consider offering a Bachelor of Science degree along with the Bachelor of Arts degree currently offered. This is an option that the department already has begun seriously to consider. The Bachelor of Science degree would replace the foreign language requirement with additional courses in social statistics and methods. While the value of taking a foreign language is no doubt real, more research-oriented courses would benefit majors seeking employment in the public service sector or in other applied settings as well as majors pursuing graduate or professional degrees.

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4 Throughout this section the departmental figure appears first and the university figure appears second.
Roughly 36% of sociology undergraduate alumnae/i (from the past three years) responded to the academic program review survey. In general, undergraduate alumnae/i are as satisfied with the department as are current undergraduate majors. However, there is one major exception, career advisement and preparation. Fewer than 60% of undergraduate alumnae/i agree or strongly agree with the statement "I feel the undergraduate program prepared me for my professional career and/or further study" (for the university 62.8% agreed or strongly agreed). Moreover, a dismal 7.3% of undergraduate alumnae/i rated the career advisement available in the department as "excellent" (compared to 13.3% for the University). The departmental mean on this item (3.12) exceeds that for the university as a whole (2.95). The low evaluation of departmental career advisement may also reflect some student dissatisfaction with the University Career Services office. Similar sentiments can be seen in the written comments. One student wrote:  "One suggestion that comes to mind would be to improve upon the career/networking side of the department. Although internships are available, it would be nice if job leads were made available." Another student put it more plainly, "I CANNOT FIND A JOB." Other written comments repeat many of the concerns of current undergraduate majors, namely the scheduling of required courses, the variety of courses offered, and the foreign language requirement.

Over 61% of current graduate students responded to the academic program review survey. Again, the pattern is one of general satisfaction with the department. A majority of students agree or strongly agree that the graduate program is academically challenging (71.4%, 76.0%), the graduate program is preparing them for their professional career and/or further study (70%, 76.2%), class size is suitable for effective learning (66.7%, 79.3%), faculty members are interested in their academic development (78%, 78.6%), and faculty are appropriately prepared for their courses (88.1%, 83.2%). However, only 57.1% (66.7% for the university) of current graduate students agree or strongly agree that "[t]here is open communication between faculty and graduate students about student concerns. Yet, on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is "poor" and 5 is "excellent," current graduate students rate the "availability of faculty to students outside the classroom" a 4.23 (3.91 for the University).

Current graduate students find the academic advising in the department acceptable (3.73, 3.52), but are less satisfied with the availability of career advisement (2.97, 3.18). Students are also less satisfied with the frequency of graduate course offerings (3.30, 3.36) and the variety of graduate course offerings (3.28, 3.54). Current graduate students are generally satisfied with the effectiveness of faculty teaching methods (3.95, 3.96), procedures used to evaluate student performance (3.85, 3.93), and slightly less satisfied with the clarity of degree requirements (3.57, 3.97). This latter issue most likely refers to confusion over the requirements for the Joint M.A./Ph.D. Program. Attempts are being made by the Graduate Committee and the Director of Graduate Studies to clearly delineate the requirements for the joint program and to increase and improve communication between the committee and graduate students on this and other issues.

The written comments of current graduate students focus on several issues: the qualifying exams, faculty-student communication and interaction, the availability of funding, and limited resources. The Graduate Committee considered changes to the qualifying examinations and recently presented a proposal for modification to the faculty (see previous discussion). Graduate student comments may be particularly influenced by the unusually large size of the Fall 2003 cohort. Because of the size of the cohort, resources were spread thin and many students entered the program without funding. The Graduate Committee has already taken steps to prevent this situation from recurring. The Graduate Committee is also re-establishing a process to monitor graduate student progress and to keep students better informed of their progress.

Over 62% of graduate alumnae/i (from the past three years) responded to the academic program review survey. Graduate alumnae/i are overwhelmingly positive in their evaluation of the department. A strong majority of graduate alumnae/i agree or strongly agree that the graduate program was academically challenging (100%, 71.7%), the graduate program prepared them for their professional careers (77.8%, 73.9%), class size was suitable (94.4%, 87.8%), faculty were interested in their academic development (94.4%, 80.3%), faculty were prepared for their courses (100%, 82.8%), and there was open communication between faculty and graduate students about student concerns (82.4%, 72.0%). On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is "poor" and 5 is "excellent," graduate alumnae/i gave high marks to the frequency of graduate course offerings (4.22, 3.61), the variety of graduate course offerings (4.11, 3.63), the clarity of degree requirements (4.50, 4.20), the effectiveness of faculty teaching methods (4.17, 4.05), the availability of faculty to students outside the classroom (4.28, 3.97), the academic advisement available in the department (3.94,
3.55), and the procedures used to evaluate student performance (3.83, 4.04). Graduate alumnae/i were less satisfied with the career advisement available in the department (3.19, 3.19), a concern repeated throughout all student and alumnae/i surveys.

**E. QUALITY OF STUDENTS IN ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

**E.1. Undergraduate Program**

The undergraduate program has grown tremendously in the last decade (as described in Section B). No numerical data (such as SAT scores or GPA) are available on sociology majors in particular. In terms of postgraduate success, approximately 40% of the students who do internships as part of their program of study find full- or part-time jobs as a result. Sociology undergraduates have done internships in numerous local and national social services agencies (see Table E-3 for a list of recent sites).

Many undergraduate sociology majors have gone on to pursue graduate degrees in sociology, criminal justice or criminology, business, social work, and education at institutions including: Florida State University, Georgia State University, Mississippi State University, North Carolina State, University of California-Berkeley, University of California–Santa Cruz, University of Florida, University of Georgia, University of New Hampshire, University of Texas, and University of West Georgia.

**E.2. Graduate Program**

The department offers an M.A. and a Ph.D. program (as described in Section D). Students with a bachelor's degree may apply for either the M.A. or Ph.D. program. Students with a master's degree in sociology may receive credit for required MA-level courses successfully completed elsewhere. Applicants must submit GRE scores (verbal, quantitative, and analytical); transcripts; three letters of recommendation; a sample of written work; and a completed departmental application form. An undergraduate degree in sociology is not required, but students must have completed courses in research methods and social statistics. (If they have not, they should complete them at another school or at GSU in post-baccalaureate status.)

There are currently (taking into account Fall 2004 admissions) 89 students in the graduate program. Our peer institutions report fewer students: FSU (37); Northeastern (60); North Carolina State University (57); and Rutgers (67). In 2003, 10 entering graduate students were funded by the department, which compares favorably with reports from our peer institutions: FSU (7); North Carolina State University (12); and Rutgers (9). (Northeastern did not provide this information.) Since the department started offering the Ph.D. degree in 1977, 48 students have earned doctoral degrees.

Average GRE scores of enrolled students in FY04 were 504 (verbal), 561 (quantitative) and 565 (analytical) (see Table E-1). These scores are similar to those of graduate students scores at Northeastern (550 quantitative and 550 verbal), and slightly lower than at Rutgers (where score averages were in the low 600s for each section). (FSU and NC State declined to provide information.) Students in the graduate program have presented their research at many national and regional conferences (see Table E-4 for a list). In the past four years, students have won best graduate student paper competitions at the Georgia Sociological Association annual meeting and the Georgia Gerontology Association annual meeting. Graduate students have been awarded research and scholarship funding from numerous sources, including: the Anne M. Eaton Scholarship; the Fulton County Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly Authority Scholarship Program; the Center for Pan Asian Community Service; the GSU Dissertation Grant Program; the Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy; the International Foundation for Gender Education, Transgender Scholarship and Education Legacy Fund; the JBS Foundation; the Open Society Institute; the Patrick Stewart Human Rights Scholarship Program of Amnesty International; the PEO International Peace Scholarship; the PEO International Fund; and the Stanton Scholarship Program. Every year the department gives cash awards to an outstanding graduate student and an outstanding graduate student instructor.
We also have a number of international students. In the past three years, we have enrolled 16 students from 12 foreign countries: China, Columbia, England, India, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Nepal, Romania, Russia, and Sierra Leone.

Many students who enter the M.A.-only program decide to remain in sociology at Georgia State University for their doctoral studies. Other students are in or have graduated from doctoral programs at other universities, including City University of New York, Georgia Tech, Ohio State University, State University of New York in Albany, Syracuse University, Temple University, University of California-Berkeley, University of Florida, University of Missouri-St. Louis, University of New Hampshire, and Vanderbilt University.

Graduate students are encouraged to publish their research, and many do (both as single authors and as co-authors with faculty members). Journals in which students have published papers and book reviews in the past four years include: AIDS and Behavior; Journal of Applied Gerontology; Journal of Community Health Nursing; Journal of Geriatric Physical Therapy; Journal of Marriage and Family; Journal of Rehabilitation, Research and Development; Journal of Sex Research; Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness; Radical History Review; Sex Roles; Sexuality and Culture; Sociological Inquiry; Sociological Spectrum; Southwest Journal of Aging; and Violence Against Women.

Recent graduates from the M.A. and Ph.D. program have obtained tenure-track teaching positions or research positions at a variety of colleges, universities, governmental agencies, and organizations (for a list of employers, see Table E-5).

F. QUALITY OF THE FACULTY

The quality of the faculty is high and shows continual improvement. This excellence is demonstrated by the scholarly publications, external funding, and superb classroom instruction.

From January 2001 through December 2003, the sociology faculty published five books, with several others in press. The department also consistently increased the number of refereed articles and book chapters over this period with 13 in 2001, 23 in 2002, and 39 in 2003. A few of these articles were published in the most prestigious sociology journals such as the American Sociological Review and Social Forces. The faculty also has recently published in many top specialty journals (City and Community, Criminology, Critical Sociology, Deviant Behavior, Gender and Society, International Journal of Aging and Human Development, International Migration, International Sociology, Journal of Aging Studies, Journal of Applied Gerontology, Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Journal of Drug Issues, Journal of Family History, Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences, Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, Journal of Sex Research, Journal of Urban Affairs, Justice Quarterly, Qualitative Health Research, Race and Society, Research on Aging, Sex Roles, Social Science & Medicine, The Gerontologist) and many other general sociological journals (Social Science Research, Sociological Focus, Sociological Forum, Sociological Inquiry, Sociological Perspectives, Sociological Quarterly, Sociological Spectrum). In addition to this impressive array of scholarly publications, the department attracted commitments of over 2.2 million dollars in external funds from sources such as the National Institute of Health, the National Institute on Drug Abuse, and the National Institute on Aging. Finally, several faculty are highly involved in professional service. Five professors served on editorial boards or as associate editors for sociological journals, and several others were involved in committees in national sociological associations.

Our department values and expects outstanding teaching. The overall quality of teaching among the faculty is superb. This is demonstrated by the fact that over two thirds of all classes taught by the faculty are evaluated at, or above, 4.6 on a five point scale (see Table F). Moreover, almost 37% of these courses are evaluated above 4.8. What is striking about these patterns is that the excellence in teaching is spread across the entire faculty (with no individual faculty member teaching poorly), and all types of classes are evaluated well. The strong student evaluations of faculty teaching are evident in undergraduate core and required classes, and graduate required courses as well. While the department is filled with excellent teachers, one stands out in particular: Charles Gallagher. In 2001, Dr. Gallagher won the College of Arts and Science's Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award, and followed that up with the prestigious 2002 Michael Harrington Distinguished Teaching Award (given by the Society for the Study of Social Problems). He also is the editor of a widely used textbook, Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity, which is now in its second edition.
G. ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

G.1. Faculty Resources.

In our last academic program review, we set a goal of increasing our number of tenure-track faculty to 19. We have achieved this goal. Over the past three years our faculty size has remained constant at 19 full-time tenure-track members. While we are losing one faculty member this year, a new faculty member joined the department in Fall 2004.

The number of faculty in the department has grown since our last self-study, but has not grown sufficiently to keep pace with the dramatic increases in undergraduate enrollment that we have experienced. As documented in Section B, over the past ten years, our faculty size has increased by 31%. However, our number of majors has increased by 274%. In just the past three fiscal years, our number of majors has increased by 26%, while our number of tenure-track faculty has remained constant. Clearly, the increases in both the number of students and number of credit hours have far outpaced the increases in the size of our tenure-track faculty (see Table G-1 and Appendix P).

We have managed to cope with this increase by having tenure-track faculty teach a smaller proportion of undergraduate students. Three years ago, tenure-track faculty were responsible for 45% of the undergraduate credit hour generation. This year tenure-track faculty generated only 39% of undergraduate credit hours. Since the number of GTAs teaching undergraduate classes has remained stable over this period, part-time instructors have absorbed much of the increase in undergraduate majors. Over the past three years, we have almost doubled the number of part-time instructors in the department and their undergraduate credit hour generation has grown from 10% to 17% of the total number of undergraduate credit hours. While the department has been attempting to shift this burden away from part-time instructors and to well-trained advanced graduate students, our ability to do so has been tempered by the level of graduate student funding available. The number of graduate students increased dramatically this past year, but the number of funded students did not. While more funding for graduate students may alleviate some reliance on part-time instructors, it will only exacerbate the shortage of tenure-track faculty, as more graduate students will require more graduate faculty to teach classes and serve as advisors.

Beyond an over-reliance on part-time instructors, the dramatic increase in the number of sociology majors has led to difficulty in offering a sufficient number of sections of required classes (Social Statistics; Social Theory; Social Research Methods; and Wealth, Power, and Inequality). It is an informal policy of the department that GTAs not teach required undergraduate courses. In recent years, the department has offered approximately nine sections of the required classes per semester. This means that in an average semester, about half of the faculty will be teaching a required undergraduate course. Even with this many faculty assigned to these courses, we are not meeting the demand from our undergraduate majors. Both the quantitative and qualitative results of our survey of majors indicate student dissatisfaction with the "frequency of undergraduate major course offerings." Our mean score on this measure was the lowest of any of the survey questions. In addition, the open-ended responses included numerous comments along the lines of "the required courses should have more offerings" and "Soc 3010 & 3020 are not offered enough."

The commitment of faculty resources to required undergraduate courses lessens the degree to which the department can offer a broad range of upper-level electives. While we have advanced GTAs who teach some upper-level courses, the graduate faculty are better equipped to teach less-commonly offered undergraduate electives. The second lowest quantitative score on our survey of majors was to the question evaluating our "frequency of undergraduate major course offerings." In their open-ended comments, many students reported that "the availability of courses is probably the biggest problem in the department" or that "it would be wonderful if more course offerings were available."

G.2. Administrative Resources.

We have three full-time administrative support personnel in the department: a Business Manager III, an Administrative Coordinator, and an Academic Administrative Specialist. This equates to eight full-time employees
(FTE) per full-time administrative staff member. In addition we have 20 hours per week of clerical support from a student assistant and another 20 hours per week of work-study student support.

All three full-time administrative staff members are particularly effective. The Business Manager III (Selma Poage) administers the department's finances, budget, grants and scheduling. She has been an instrumental member of the department for over 15 years, and was a recipient of Sparks Award in 1994 for her exemplary contribution to the department and the university. The Administrative Coordinator (Quanda Miller) supervises all other departmental administrative needs and has proven to be invaluable as well. She received a Sparks Award in 2004. The Academic Administrative Specialist (Dracy Blackwell) advises the undergraduate majors and administers the department's internship program. The many students who mention her by name in our survey of majors is evidence of her skill and dedication in undergraduate advising.

The quantitative component of the faculty survey also speaks to the strength of the department staff. Eighty percent of the faculty rank the level of clerical support as excellent.

G.3. Technological and Laboratory Resources.

Currently, all faculty members have up-to-date office computers. Our faculty equipment is on par with other departments in the social sciences. Changes in university computing policies and the switch to Windows 2000 have meant a greater need for software purchases. In the past faculty have often informally shared software. The university is implementing procedures to prevent this practice. However, the department has not received increased funds to purchase multiple copies of necessary software that in the past have been shared by some faculty. Despite this emerging problem, 50% of faculty report the availability of software to be excellent.

In terms of the technological resources available to our students, we currently have a lab with nine computers for graduate and undergraduate majors. We received an allotment of student technology fee funds that allowed us to upgrade the lab with new Dell machines. In addition, we will be adding one new Dell to the graduate student cubicle office space. Despite these upgrades, the lab support for students is insufficient. The ratio of majors (undergraduate and graduate) to computers is 70 to 1. In addition, the computers in the PTI/GTA offices are outdated and prone to problems.

Another major addition since the last APR was the Sociology Department website. The website has increased our visibility and provides a forum for research (e.g., the web-access "Involuntary Celibacy Study").

G.4. Space Resources.

Office space is at a premium. The faculty currently occupy 21 offices on the 10th floor of the General Classroom Building. We also have two offices occupied by visiting lecturers, two offices dedicated to a federally funded project, and three offices occupied by part-time instructors and graduate students teaching their own classes. Next year we anticipate hiring one new faculty member in collaboration with the Institute of Public Health. As we add tenure-track faculty to our department, we will be forced to "evict" other types of instructors if we do not find some way to increase the physical space our department occupies.

Beyond not having office space for new faculty members, the GTAs currently teaching classes occupy severely overcrowded offices. We have six to seven GTAs assigned to each of the three graduate student offices. These offices are designed to be one-person offices and are the same size as those occupied singly by faculty. With four desks in each office, space is cramped and GTAs must stagger their office hours in order to meet with students. Beyond these three offices assigned to GTAs currently teaching courses, we have only eight cubicles assigned to the remaining GTA/GRAs who are working with faculty as teaching or research assistants. Without question, the department is in need of more office space.
G.5. GSU Foundation Resources.

The department currently has two business accounts through the GSU Research Foundation. Donations to these accounts provide funds for expenses not otherwise covered by our budget such as plaques, awards, and refreshments at departmental functions.


As Appendix Q indicates, library resources are currently adequate to support departmental needs. We have good coverage of possible holdings in key areas in the discipline. The library subscribes to the majority of periodicals available in sociology. There are a few relatively new ASA sponsored journals that the library has yet to acquire. However the library staff is aware of these few deficiencies as outlined in their report. In addition to physical library resources available to the department, we also benefit from a skilled liaison librarian who is well versed in the research needs of the discipline.

H. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE PROGRAM

Weighing both the information outlined in this report (including all tables and appendices) and the confidential responses that we received from the faculty, we have concluded that the department has a number of strengths on which to build and a number of weaknesses that need to be addressed.

H.1. Strengths

1. Quality of instruction
2. High credit hour production
3. Popularity of upper-division courses
4. Collegiality among the faculty and between faculty and students
5. Collaboration among the faculty and between faculty and students
6. Codified training for graduate teaching assistants
7. Diversity of methodological and theoretical approaches among faculty and students
8. Gender diversity of faculty
9. Helpful mentoring system for junior faculty
10. Well defined specialties
11. Quality of research
12. Amount of extramural grant support
13. Because of extramural support, we can augment the financial support we receive from the college and university
14. Leadership in professional associations
15. Faculty visibility in the university (through faculty service on college and university committees)
16. Collaboration with other units in the university, to include the Gerontology Institute; the Women's Studies Institute; the Middle East Center for Peace, Culture, and Development; the Center for Neighborhood and Metropolitan Studies; and the Asian Study Center
17. Service to the community
18. Quality of office staff.

H.2. Weaknesses

1. Graduate program needs to be improved
2. Graduate student funding is not competitive
3. Graduate student mentoring is not as encompassing as it should be, and does not reach all students equally
4. Space for faculty and especially for graduate students is severely limited
5. Class sizes in required graduate courses and required undergraduate statistics and methods courses are too large
6. Insufficient racial and ethnic diversity among the faculty
7. Because of the new workload policy, competition among faculty for students appears to have increased
8. Salaries are not competitive, especially for Assistant and Associate Professors
9. Increased reliance on staffing courses with GTAs and PTIs rather than full-time faculty
10. Lack of clarity and agreement on the standards for promotion and tenure
11. Need for better communication and better access to valued departmental roles.

I. PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
FOR THE NEXT APR CYCLE

I.1. Teaching

A. Goal One: To enhance our level of excellence in instruction and meet the growing needs of our students.

1. Objective 1: Increase the size of tenure-track faculty to 26.

   Rationale: The data presented above showing our current high credit hour production, large and growing numbers of majors and graduate students, and comparisons with peer institutions indicate that the Department of Sociology is understaffed. In order to teach the necessary mix of required and elective courses we need additional faculty. This is especially important in order for us to have the needed flexibility to staff courses when our faculty “buy out” courses with research grants or go on professional leave to pursue research projects.

   Resources Required: We need to become a department with 26 tenure-track faculty, which means adding an additional 7 new hires (plus replacing any current faculty who might retire or leave). One of these hires would be at the Professor level. Of the new hires, 6 would replace our 2 Visiting Instructors and 1 Visiting Lecturer, while 1 would reduce, in part, our reliance on Part-time Instructors.

   Plan for Implementation: We are currently recruiting for a new faculty member to start in Fall 2005. This is a position that grew out of the health policy initiative that the Provost funded. Depending upon the university’s budgetary constraints, we propose hiring two new additional faculty members by Fall 2006, two more in Fall 2007, two more in Fall 2008, and one more in Fall 2009.

2. Objective 2: Retain a commitment to nontraditional graduate and undergraduate students by continuing to schedule required classes in the evening.

   Rationale: Although we increasingly have full-time students, we recognize that non-traditional students (e.g., those with work or family responsibilities that limit their daytime attendance) are an important constituency that should not be neglected.

   Resources Required: Continued classroom space is essential, as is the added new faculty mentioned in Objective 1.

   Plan for Implementation: The department’s Program Committee will continue to schedule sections of required courses and a mix of electives during evening hours.

3. Objective 3: To identify and obtain contiguous space to accommodate current and growing needs of faculty and students.

   Rationale: As noted in this report, our GTAs are crammed five or more to an office, which makes it extremely difficult for them to use these offices for class preparation and for their students to consult with them. Moreover, we do not have office space in our current area for the new faculty we are proposing to hire. We think it is essential for graduate students and faculty to be in close proximity rather than separated.

   Resources Required: Simply stated, we need more space.
Plan for Implementation: A committee representing the Sociology Department, the Dean's Office, and other relevant interests should be appointed to consider the department’s space needs and to identify possible new locations or other options.

B. **Goal Two:** To gain greater recognition for our high quality instruction and contribute to pedagogical advancement in our discipline.

1. **Objective 1:** To publicize our teaching achievements and innovations more widely.

   **Rationale:** Our reputation can be enhanced by making others more aware of the excellent instruction we provide.

   **Resources Required:** Existing outlets can be used, such as teaching workshops, *Sociopath* (the departmental newsletter), the department’s website, the ASA’s Teaching Resource Center, and newsletters of our professional associations.

   **Plan for Implementation:** Revive departmental teaching workshops and participate in university’s improvement of instruction projects, participate in teaching sessions at professional conferences, and submit instructional material to ASA Teaching Resource Center, publish articles in *Teaching Sociology*, nominate outstanding teachers for awards given by Georgia State University and by professional associations.

I.2. **Creative and Scholarly Activity**

A. **Goal One:** To become one of the best Ph.D.-granting sociology departments in our areas of specialization.

1. **Objective 1:** To raise the department’s work in professional development to the rating level of "excellent to outstanding."

   **Rationale:** The quality of a department rests on the strength of its research and its scholarly production; in order to become one of the “best” departments we must, as a group, continue to improve.

   **Resources Required:** Institutional support for grant writing and scholarly writing necessary for high quality publications.

   **Plan for Implementation:** Review institutional supports for grant writing and publication as well as evaluate the department’s promotion and tenure manual. Commitment to recruiting one senior-level person and advertising one or more “area open” positions where we seek the strongest candidate regardless of specialty or sub-specialty area.

2. **Objective 2:** To continue improving the department’s three areas of specialization by ensuring that they address important issues of our day, are relevant from local through global levels, and are informed by an understanding of diversities across time, space, and culture.

   **Rationale:** Our areas of specialization must remain fresh and incorporate important new issues, perspectives, and methods if we want to improve our program’s quality.

   **Resources Required:** Support for faculty to obtain training in new research areas or to develop new skills, as well as new faculty already fully prepared in this regard.

   **Plan for Implementation:** The department should continually review the specialty areas to identify where growth or innovation is needed. Current faculty would be encouraged and given the resources, if necessary, to further develop and refine the areas. Also, new faculty whose expertise can contribute to an area's growth or innovation may be hired.
3. **Objective 3:** Encourage specialty areas to incorporate global perspectives in addressing topics related to their respective areas of specialization.

**Rationale:** As an urban university in one of the fastest growing global cities, and in response to the interconnectedness of the 21st century societies, it is imperative to reflect and incorporate global perspectives in the department's research, teaching, and service activities.

**Resources Required:** Funding to invite distinguished scholars in the field. Support for faculty to obtain training in the relevance of globalization to ongoing research projects, and to draw specific plans for interdisciplinary university-wide initiatives.

**Plan for Implementation:** In addition to supporting the faculty to broaden the scope of their research and teaching, the department will seek to hire new faculty whose research and teaching interests reflect the department's commitment to enhance the global perspectives of the three areas of specialization.

4. **Objective 4:** Encourage specialty areas to incorporate issues of health and health policy.

**Rationale:** We recognize that our department must be willing and able to involve itself in important university multi-disciplinary initiatives in areas related to sociology, especially if these areas offer potentially viable opportunities for research grants. The urban public health initiative is one such opportunity and several of our faculty could both contribute to and benefit from it.

**Resources Required:** Support for grant writing, plus the faculty position we are currently recruiting for.

**Plan for Implementation:** Current Recruitment Committee will seek top candidates for the open position in the sociology of health, and the department will select the person to hire; specialty areas will ascertain whether or how health and health policy issues may be incorporated into their research and/or teaching.

5. **Objective 5:** Continue to be committed to hiring and retaining a diverse faculty.

**Rationale:** A diversity of intellectual perspectives, interests, life experiences, and cultural backgrounds can create a stimulating and positive environment.

**Resources Required:** Support for identifying and proactively recruiting minority candidates; target of opportunity funds or other resources to make positions in our department competitive with others.

**Plan for Implementation:** Recruitment Committee, Diversity Committee, and whole department will continue our commitment to hire candidates who will enhance departmental diversity and we will provide a supportive environment that assists in retention of a diverse faculty.

6. **Objective 6:** Continue to increase the caliber of graduate students.

**Rationale:** Top quality graduate students are an essential component in developing a superior academic program.

**Resources Required:** Increased level of financial support for graduate students.

**Plan for Implementation:** Graduate Committee will increase standards for admission into our program and will work to improve graduate student mentoring; Chair and Graduate Committee will work with the Dean and other administrators to seek higher GRA/GTA stipends, provide comprehensive health insurance for GRAs and GTAs.
I.3. Service

A. Goal One: Further increase our visibility in regional, national, and international professional organizations.

1. Objective 1: Encourage faculty to serve as officers, committee chairs, and committee members of professional organizations and to serve on editorial boards of journals and other publications.

   **Rationale:** Professional service is an important part of what it means to be a scholar and a stronger presence in national and regional organizations will help to bring attention to the department.

   **Resources Required:** No additional resources are required.

   **Plan for Implementation:** Following the college's workload policy, significant professional service may mean a recalculation of an individual faculty member's workload units.

B. Goal Two: Further increase our service to the community.

1. Objective 1: Encourage faculty and students to volunteer both their sociological expertise and their labor as board members, officers, consultants, grant writers and reviewers, speakers, and workers for public agencies, community organizations, and special activities aimed at improving the quality of life of people in Atlanta.

   **Rationale:** Applying our specialized knowledge of social issues and community organization to the solution and improvement of problems in Atlanta is an important contribution our department can make to our community and will raise the department's profile within Atlanta and within the university.

   **Resources Required:** No additional resources are required.

   **Plan for Implementation:** The department already has an active Community Outreach Committee and will work to increase the number of service opportunities and the level of participation among faculty and students.