



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Department Writing Plan (DWP)

Compiled by

Dr. Valerie Gunter, Associate Professor, Sociology

Dr. Beth Mabry, Associate Professor, Sociology

Dr. Bryna Siegel Finer, Director, Writing Across the Curriculum

Submitted to:

Dr. Dana Hysock Witham, Chair, Department of Sociology

The Faculty of the Department of Sociology

Dr. Sylvia Gaiko, Dean, College of Health and Human Services

Dr. Lara Luetkehans, Provost

Dr. Edel Reilly, Provost's Associate

Dr. Dawn Smith-Sherwood, Director of Liberal Studies

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Background

In summer 2015, the Department of Sociology (SOC) expressed interest in improving writing education for students in its undergraduate major programs or “tracks”: General Sociology, Human Services, and Disability Services. Department Chair, Dr. Alex Heckert, and Director of Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC), Dr. Bryna Siegel Finer, met to discuss implementing a writing-enriched curriculum in SOC courses.

In creating the department’s writing-enriched curriculum (WEC), two Sociology faculty, Drs. Valerie Gunter and Beth Mabry, served as liaisons between WAC and SOC. They used a template, borrowed from the University of Minnesota¹ and adapted by Dr. Siegel Finer, to thoroughly map how faculty already taught writing in the SOC curriculum, and consulted with departmental faculty about where and how in the curriculum writing could be added or adapted to enhance student learning and skills, in order to draft the following Departmental Writing Program (DWP). Eleven of the department’s instructional faculty received training in aspects of WAC: six department faculty (Drs. Gunter, Heckert, Hildebrandt, Mabry, Mullins, and Vaccaro) and one Teaching Associate (Onosu) participated in a two-day, end-of-the-year Liberal Studies writing workshop. Additional departmental faculty, including Drs. Shinberg, Molina, and Swauger, and Temporary Faculty, Frye, also participated in workshops with the WAC Director during various academic years.

Drs. Gunter, Mabry, and Siegel Finer met monthly or bi-monthly over two years to develop the DWP, seeking input from SOC faculty multiple times. First, they surveyed SOC faculty about what they believe constitutes discipline-specific writing characteristics and desired writing abilities for graduating SOC students. Second, Dr. Mabry developed and administered two surveys primarily to SOC seniors (see Appendices C and D for questionnaires and results): the first given in Fall 2015, adapting a template used by another IUP department to determine baseline student perspectives on their education as writers in their majors courses, the second administered in the Spring to gather data from SOC students related to the goals and objectives surrounding writing in the major that SOC faculty generated the prior Fall in a survey item asking, “With which writing abilities should students in this departments major’s graduate?” Third, Dr. Gunter collected syllabi and writing assignments from all SOC department teaching faculty and conducted a comprehensive survey of how faculty, across the major, use writing in approximately 25 undergraduate SOC courses (see Writing Outcomes Curriculum Map below). Fourth, in Spring 2016, faculty provided an inventory of non-academic genres of writing they have done in their applied work, as explained later in this report. Fifth, in Fall 2016, faculty members collectively engaged in extended discussion of the proposed plan and contributed to revisions. Sixth, in Spring 2017, Drs. Gunter, Mabry, & Siegel Finer comprehensively revised the draft DPW and added clarifying and resource elements.

SOC faculty reviewed and refined the DWP over several faculty meetings. On April 1, 2019, the department unanimously agreed to adopt and implement the plan in Fall 2019.

¹ University of Minnesota Writing Enriched Curriculum. 2013. <http://wec.umn.edu/Writingplans.html>

On the whole, the results of the process of developing the Sociology DWP reflect that both faculty and students perceive that students need to work on basic writing skills, diversify the types of writing that students are expected to do, and that Sociology faculty are committed to helping students develop their writing. Drs. Gunter and Mabry also developed a “Sociology Department Commitment to Writing” statement (page 10) to include in all syllabi for courses that will be part of the writing-enriched curriculum.

Key Recommendations

The Sociology Departmental Writing Plan (DWP) puts forward the following key recommendations (each of which is elaborated in more detail below) and supported by the Sociology Faculty WAC Liaisons and the IUP WAC Director:

1. Sociology faculty should distinguish (for themselves and their students) between writing-to-learn and writing-to-communicate activities in their courses, and employ both types of writing to achieve learning objectives as appropriate to the course and its location in the curriculum.
2. Sociology faculty should make a concerted effort to incorporate some non-academic, professional writing genres into undergraduate courses, particularly those that might enhance written communication skills in professional settings.
3. Sociology faculty should incorporate writing-related learning objectives into their course syllabi and, where appropriate, explicitly tie those to specific writing genres as outcomes and/or to Sociology content learning outcomes.
4. Sociology faculty should *cultivate* a departmental culture that encourages students to develop and demonstrate not only basic writing skills (e.g., the ability to write in a clear, concise, logical manner) but also ability to produce an array of professional writing genres.
5. Sociology faculty should use a holistic, comprehensive curricular plan to scaffold expectations for scholarly and professional writing skills that students should master as they move through the program, in order to prepare students to locate and/or generate, synthesize, and communicate credible and relevant sociological knowledge to diverse audiences in a variety of applications.
6. Sociology faculty should collectively commit and continuously challenge themselves individually to engage in pedagogical best-practices in Writing Across the Curriculum including (described below on page 5).
7. The Department of Sociology should *sustain* a departmental culture that values and develops student writing for learning and writing for communicating. The primary foci for this would be:
 - a. setting goals for SOC student writing and assessing outcomes accordingly;
 - b. highlighting WAC assessment results in documentation such as the department’s five-year review;
 - c. ongoing faculty development in WAC pedagogy that responds to assessment results;
 - d. continually communicating the value of writing to students via syllabus statement, writing-to-learn activities in courses, and transparent assessment practices.

The adoption of the DWP is a timely curricular strategy. Many SOC undergraduate students express enthusiasm for taking Sociology out of the classroom and into the world. Sociology Department faculty likewise demonstrate keen interest in various kinds of applied activity as reflected in their engagement in such endeavors as community education, service, and consulting; involvement in MAARTI and the Veterans Reintegration Project; service-learning both abroad and domestically; and a recent shift toward Public Sociology in the department's MA program.

Sociology undergraduate majors also increasingly seek explicit preparation for employment activities, and incorporating more professional writing genres into our undergraduate courses is one way we can harness the desires of both faculty and students for greater engagement while simultaneously improving marketable skills among students. Professionals need to be able to write and format several types of documents, such as a variety of kinds of reports, proposals, public education/outreach materials, letters, policies and procedures, and plans.

The IUP Department of Sociology is committed to helping students improve their writing skills toward the goal of being able to communicate as professionals. As a start, a new course, SOC 300, intended for students early in the major, has an extensive career and writing focus; it was approved by the University Senate in March, 2017, and may serve as a foundation for successfully implementing this Departmental Writing Plan across Sociology courses.

Implementation of the Departmental Writing Plan

1. Distinguishing Writing-to-Communication and Writing-to-Learn

The writing-enriched curriculum in SOC integrates writing instruction in two ways:

Writing-to-Communicate

Throughout the Sociology curriculum, students should be introduced to concepts, practice, and reinforcement of a variety of genres of writing that have different purposes, different audiences, and take different forms that professionals with a Sociology degree might use. Students will need the ability to write in a variety of genres in their careers that may be as far ranging as human service caseworker, community organizer, applied research consultant, program evaluator, professional in sales and marketing or human resources development, social data analyst, public outreach specialist, and many others. The genres of writing in which they engage might include research and grant proposals, a variety of types of reports, client assessments, policy analyses, organizational and employee evaluations, and public education and outreach materials like brochures, bulletins, and presentations. Additionally, core academic disciplinary projects, such as research papers, which include process assignments, like annotated bibliographies and reading responses that build up to the submission of a final paper, can be taught in sequenced steps that allow instructors to provide feedback and revision. Even non-professional academic genres intentionally designed to be brief, such as letters and brochures, require the compilation of relevant and

reliable information for inclusion in the final product, as well as more than one iteration, to ensure effective communication to target audiences. **Faculty in the department recognize that good writing is the product of a recursive process in which students receive opportunities to receive instructor (and sometimes peer) feedback, revise their work, and then submit polished drafts (sometimes with another opportunity to revise).**

Writing-to-Learn²

Writing-to-learn pedagogy is used to accomplish two simultaneous goals: increase writing abilities and improve critical thinking about course content through writing as a mode of learning. In the Sociology Department, current writing-to-learn techniques include five minute in-class “quick writes,” journaling, in-class and on-line reading reflections, discussion forum postings on D2L or Moodle, study guides, writing review questions, applied activities, and miscellaneous assignments. These activities already occur in many courses throughout each level of the curriculum (see Course Outcomes Map below) and could be included in most every course in order to emphasize to students that writing is a critical part of their education in SOC and in order to help them learn course content. **In all courses, faculty are encouraged to use writing-to-learn activities. That is, to incorporate some of the wide variety of “low stakes” writing activities wherein students are not assessed on content mastery or the formal elements of writing but instead writing is a tool for enhancing learning – it is exploratory, it is often meant to communicate only to the student as an audience of self, and its purpose is thinking.**

2. Incorporating Non-Academic Professional/Discipline-Specific Genres in Sociology

Professionals with degrees in Sociology (whether they work human services, counseling, administration and planning, probation and corrections, community organizing, teaching, and/or research) must have strong communication skills, particularly as they write to various audiences including academics, clients, supervisors, potential funders, staff, volunteers, activists, politicians, non-profit boards and managers, and publics interested in social problems, social justice, and other real-world issues. Graduate programs in sociology emphasize academic writing, with theses and dissertations following the general format of theory-informed empirical research published in peer-reviewed journals. Professional scholarship is evaluated for logic and content; sound use of theoretical concepts; appropriateness and rigor of research design, execution, and data analysis; and conclusions firmly grounded in (warranted by) the data. Undergraduates are provided with a preliminary introduction to conducting theory-informed empirical research, and writing up reports using conventional academic formats in an advanced undergraduate research two-class sequence (SOC 460 and 461). In other courses, faculty in the IUP Sociology Department have created some innovative assignments to help students develop skills needed for scholarly research and writing, including application of sociological concepts to popular culture, case studies, news/current events, other social phenomena thereby

² What is Writing to Learn? *Writing Across the Curriculum Clearinghouse*. Colorado State University. 2015. <http://wac.colostate.edu/intro/pop2d.cfm>

fostering critical thinking skills, ability to craft theoretical propositions and research hypotheses, and research design skills.

In contrast, there is a noticeable dearth of professional *non-academic* writing genres currently taught in undergraduate Sociology courses at IUP. Dr. Gunter examined some 30 undergraduate syllabi distributed across 21- 25 distinct courses in Sociology, and only in some of the more applied courses was there clear and explicit coverage of non-academic writing, such as case reports. When faculty were asked in Fall 2015 to respond to the question, "With which writing abilities should students in this department's major graduate?" no faculty listed "school" genres like research papers or essays. Faculty responses focused on basic writing skills (e.g., the ability to write in a clear, concise, logical fashion). Finally, few course syllabi incorporated writing-related objectives, and the few that did, though commendable, reflected objectives related to general communication skills rather than the production of particular types of writing genres or sociology knowledge learning objectives. In the Spring 2016 survey of SOC students, only a few non-academic genres of writing were reported as part of their coursework by students. Student survey comments reflected a desire for more experience with different genres of writing in their courses.

We believe there could be a couple of reasons for the lack of attention to non-academic professional writing genres in SOC courses. First, unlike some applied disciplines with a more focused and narrow career path, Sociology majors pursue employment in a diverse array of fields and settings. Thus, there is no single, or even handful, of professional writing genres that we know will be required of our students in their future places of employment. Second, graduate programs in Sociology emphasize academic writing. We suspect that faculty bring into their own courses the kinds of writing assignments they themselves had as students, thereby reproducing the disciplinary focus on scholarship.

In keeping with best practices in Writing Across the Curriculum, the Sociology Department recognizes that we should do more to prepare students to write in non-academic, disciplinary genres. In the last faculty meeting of Spring 2016, Drs. Mabry and Gunter asked their Sociology colleagues, many of whom have extensive applied (non-academic) professional experience, to list types (genres) of writing they had done in their applied work. The resulting list included many types of reports (e.g., to Congress and federal department directors as well as financial, sales, case, annual, progress, and research); proposals (e.g., for grants, for new or revised programs); assessments and evaluations (e.g., quality assurance, organizational, program; employee, client); plans (e.g., care/treatment/therapeutic, marketing, strategic planning documents); staff/volunteer-related material (e.g., training and development materials; job descriptions; orientation materials); job-related documentation (e.g., charting and progress notes, meeting agendas and minutes, justifications and supporting evidence documentation); organizational documentations and procedures (e.g., policy statements, best practices papers); emails, memos, and letters (e.g., recommendation, fundraising, cover); public education and outreach (e.g., newsletters, speeches/ presentations, web pages, blog posts, social media postings/updates, travelogues, letters to the editor, short stories and poems); and miscellaneous ("ghost writing" for superiors, biographies, books, white papers, course

syllabi). As evident in the results of the Spring 2016 student survey, students asked for a greater variety of writing assignments, in addition to finding helpful sequenced assignments with feedback and opportunities to revise their work. Faculty are encouraged to meet student demands for diverse, and career relevant, writing assignments by incorporating these kinds of non-academic genres into their classes.

Researched Writing:

SOC majors are not required to take ENGL 202. Instead, students meet the objectives of ENGL 202 by learning the following skills in sociology courses:

- How to conduct social research and analyze social data. These activities require a range of writing activities, including informal memos to facilitate analytical thinking, surveys and interview guides, abstracts, literature reviews, and reports of empirical findings.
- How to correctly cite disciplinary literature (e.g., social scientific journals), including the production of bibliographies in an appropriate document style (most typically, ASA or APA).
- How to target their writing toward different audiences. Social scientific peers require technical and objective reports with thorough discussion of research methods. Less technical language is appropriate for public outreach and educational campaigns. Concise, accurate summaries are appropriate for communicating accomplishments to workplace superiors.
- How to edit and revise their writing to ensure their work is comprehensible and written in a style appropriate for different target audiences.
- How to orally communicate new knowledge that students have acquired through their research activities, whether that research involves delving into scholarly literature or conducting an original empirical study. Instructors meet this objective through a variety of options, including student-produced blogs or similar types of pre-recorded presentations, formal class presentations, informal class discussions, group work, and presentations of posters and papers at out-of-class scholarly venues.

3. Incorporating Writing-Related Learning Objectives into Syllabi

Students in Sociology need a variety of writing skills and abilities upon completion of their degree. **Sociology faculty commit to helping students develop writing skills and abilities by tying some course objectives** to development of them and using writing to do so:

- *Rhetorical knowledge*: students should understand the audience, the context, and the purpose (e.g., to inform, to persuade, to analyze, etc.) of each writing task and its part in the academic curriculum and professional field.
- *Critical thinking*: students should be able to evaluate research findings as well as the veracity of claims made by a wide-variety of non-academic claims makers; analyze the important social factors and processes involved in family, community, and organizational dynamics; and use sociological theories and concepts to explain the forces shaping observable social phenomena, such as inter-group conflict, persistent poverty, and interfaith cooperative endeavors.
- *Writing process knowledge*: students should develop writing processes that allow them to be successful in both academic and professional settings. Writing in Sociology Department courses will be used to help students understand writing processes in varied environments and for varied audiences, such as academic social scientists, community organizers, community residents, public and non-profit organization supervisors and staff, non-profit volunteers, human service agency clients, public agencies from the local to the federal level, social movements activists and supporters, and the general public.
- *Ability to compose in varied formats*: students need to be comfortable writing in a wide variety of formats including research proposals, research reports, web blogs, letters, bulletins, brochures, reports, plans, public announcements, and assessments.
- *Recognizing errors*: students need opportunities to draft and revise based on self-evaluation as well as feedback from course instructors and/or peers. Sociology faculty should provide such opportunities in all courses, and at minimum in the three courses required of all majors: SOC 320, SOC 460, and SOC 461. Further, Sociology faculty may provide students in upper division courses (300 and 400 level) with chances to write both academic and professional writing genres, as well as instructor and/or peer feedback and opportunities to revise when feasible. The department goal is that Sociology majors will have such writing opportunities in at least half their courses in the major.
- Given the current dearth of non-academic professional/discipline-specific writing genres currently taught in Sociology undergraduate courses, faculty should try to include at least *one* professional genre of writing in *all* undergraduate sociology electives, as feasible. Many of these genres are intentionally designed to be brief (e.g., emails, flyers, bulletins, brochures, public announcements, letters, op-ed pieces, web blog or social media posts, memos) and are targeted to non-academic audiences, thereby providing venues for peer review and revision opportunities.

4. Cultivate a Departmental Culture that Encourages Students to Develop Critical Writing Skills and Abilities

Sociology faculty commit to cultivating a departmental culture that emphasizes the value of strong writing skills. The department will communicate writing expectations to undergraduate students in a variety of ways.

In courses, Sociology faculty will communicate writing expectations in writing for the most part through syllabi, assignment sheets, feedback on assignments, and, ideally, discuss them verbally in class, as well.

Writing-to-Learn activities. Faculty should clearly identify these types of writing activities in course syllabi to inform students that these assignments can be written in a more informal style and also reinforce that writing is integral to critical thinking and the learning process. This type of writing can also be assigned impromptu during class; it does not need to be part of a course grade or can be part of participation, classwork, or attendance.

Writing-to-Communicate assignments. In classes with high-stakes writing and where core disciplinary genres are taught, as well as more technical writing courses for the profession, students should receive samples of writing. In academic genres of writing, Sociology faculty should require that students write in APA or ASA format, the formats most often used for citation in Sociology and related fields. Faculty introduce, reinforce, and emphasize citation and formatting at appropriate levels of the curriculum in class and assignments.

Writing-to-communicate assignments should always list a target audience, a clear purpose, as well as include a grading rubric or list of assessment criteria. The target audience might be the course instructor (relevant for essay exams) or, *preferably, other academic or non-academic audiences*. The purpose of a writing-to-communicate assignment may pertain to the information the student is expected to convey to a target audience (e.g., “The purpose of this blog-post is to convey to residents of a community in Western Pennsylvania the major concerns of a social action group like Black Lives Matter”) and/or the academic skills the assignment will help foster (e.g., “The purpose of this annotated bibliography is provide you with the research literacy skills you will need for informing your professional practice; grant proposals; community awareness and education; evidence-based practices, programs, or other interventions; research classes as an undergraduate or graduate student”).

When faculty teach a genre of writing that they expect students to practice through the semester, they give students flexibility to make mistakes and experiment without penalty. This is consistent with writing-to-learn pedagogy, which suggests that students learn both course content and writing skills through experimentation with writing.

The Sociology Department will also help student be aware of our culture that values the development of their writing skills through wide use of a “**Sociology Department Commitment to Writing Statement**” (below). We will use this statement in recruitment materials, information for students new to the major, on the SOC Department web site, and faculty are encouraged to include it in all course syllabi to signal to students from the first day of class that writing is an important component of the course and discipline as a whole.

Sociology Department Commitment to Writing Statement

The Department of Sociology is committed to developing student writing throughout our curriculum and to helping students build skills and knowledge in sociology content areas. In

Sociology courses, students engage in various writing activities and assignments intended to improve learning and communication skills, and to prepare students for professional careers and postgraduate education. Students also learn and practice either APA or ASA Style in their academic writing and learn how to critically use and properly attribute sources in non-academic genres of writing. In this way, students grow in the highly valued ability to effectively communicate ideas using credible information in different kinds of writing.

5. Using Holistic, Comprehensive Curricular Plan

Sociology faculty commit to introducing, emphasizing, and reinforcing writing skills and abilities throughout the curriculum. The Sociology Department will take a holistic approach by using curriculum mapping to scaffold, from lower to upper division courses, expectations for students' scholarly and professional writing skill development as they move through the program. The goal of this plan is preparing students to locate and/or generate, synthesize, and communicate credible and relevant sociological knowledge to diverse audiences in a variety of applications.

The Writing Curriculum Map demonstrates:

- Conscious effort on the part of department faculty to place core disciplinary genres at appropriate levels of the curriculum, scaffolding and reinforcing writing skills necessary for students to succeed in writing those genres.
- Thoughtful integration of writing-to-learn activities in courses in the curriculum, with a goal of at least 80% of Sociology courses “writing-enriched” in this way.
- Balanced measures for assessing writing as process and product; that is, writing is graded for demonstrating mastery of course content as well as improvement of writing skills over time.

Course	Expected Writing Outcomes <i>Writing outcomes should be explicit (though may currently be implicit) and refer to writing skills or genre knowledge that students should master. These should be (but may not currently be) stated in course objectives in the syllabus. Ideally, writing is explicitly tied to course learning outcomes.</i> This column contains objectives that are currently being taught toward and some that are offered as suggestions.	Writing-to-Learn Activities (W2L) <i>In and out of class activities meant to help students explore and experiment with course content (not mastery) through writing. Student writing-to-learn is not usually graded, or graded only for completeness. Audience is typically self.</i> This column contains activities that are currently being taught and some that are offered as suggestions.	Writing-to-Communicate (Academic or non-academic professional genres) <i>Students communicate understanding of course concepts to a specific audience, demonstrate writing proficiency in academic (e.g., annotated bibliographies, persuasive essays, research papers) or non-academic profession genres (preferably, courses will incorporate at least such writing assignment each semester).</i> This column contains activities that are currently being taught and some that are offered as suggestions.
In 100-level courses , students develop: a) the ability to distinguish between facts, opinions, and values; b) use of the sociological imagination, that is, the ability to situate one’s own, and others’, life stories within broader historical, social and cultural contexts; and c) the ability to apply some basic sociological concepts and theoretical insights to real-world phenomena.			
151	Practice and develop transferable skills such as information literacy and application, effective communication through writing and speaking, critical thinking and analysis, and research, synthesis, and presentation of reliable information using various formats while employing intellectual honesty. Effectively communicate sociological concepts in writing and speaking. Develop sociological understanding through critical thinking, research observations, writing and speaking.	Study Guides Chapter Review Questions Discussion Board Posts Video Worksheets In-Class Exercises In-Class Reading Quizzes Homework Assignments	Independent Analysis Report on applied sociology exercise, conducted in pairs. Response to on-campus event Application paper Short answer exam questions Journals (Application) Reflection Papers
In 200-level courses , scaffolded writing assignments are used to foster students’ critical thinking skills: a) ability to distinguish between facts, opinions, and values; b) use of the sociological imagination (situating one’s own and others’ life stories within broader historical, social, and cultural contexts); and c) ability to apply some basic sociological concepts and theoretical insights to real-world phenomena.			

231	Writing-related objectives not explicit	In-Class Journaling Peer feedback/response to observation papers On-Line Forum Discussion Posts In-Class Mini-Projects	Observation Papers Social Activism Paper Two reflective essays Alternative social change writing assignment (in lieu of presentation and video montage) Applications (via photos, news articles, and narratives. Six) Reflection and application
SOWK 238			Quizzes In-Class Writing Assignments Reaction Papers
251	One critical thinking objective seems pertinent to writing	Journals (weekly, 1-page reflections on course material)	Safer Sex Essay Multimedia project
269		D2L Assignments	2-page essays Short-answer essay exam questions "Watching Deviance" Essay
281			

In 300 level courses, writing assignments foster the following critical thinking skills in students: the abilities to a) discern what types of writings styles and genres resonate with different types of audiences; b) discern logic flaws in their own thinking process; c) recognize information gaps in both scholarly research and applied settings and to identify ways to address those gaps; d) synthesize empirical information from a variety of reputable sources in order to present a holistic picture of the current state of affairs of some social phenomena of interest (e.g., prescription drug abuse in Western Pennsylvania); and e) apply social theories and concepts in a selective or synthetic matter to guide research and/or deepen understanding of real-world phenomena.

314			Review of news reports Choice of reading reviews or Report on service learning
320		In-class writing assignments	Take home essay exam Two theoretical papers
333		Chapter Review Questions Quick Writes Rough draft of paper D2L Assignments	2-page essays Theory application essay Essays (on Exams) Biography and Application

335			
336	<p>Practice and develop transferable skills, such as information literacy and application</p> <p>Effective communication (through writing and speaking)</p> <p>Critical thinking and analysis</p> <p>Research, synthesis, and presentation of reliable information using various formats; employing intellectual honesty.</p>	Journals (weekly, 1-page reflections on course material)	<p>Family Tree Project with essay</p> <p>Multimedia Family Diversity Project</p> <p>3 article reviews OR experiential service assignments</p> <p>Marriage Contract paper</p>
337	Writing-related objectives not explicit		3 short papers applying class principles to real world (occupations, products, services, news, films, etc)
341	<p>Interpret and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view</p> <p>Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically</p> <p>Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.</p>	<p>Draft Outline</p> <p>Draft Proposal</p>	<p>Outline</p> <p>Abstract</p> <p>Literature Review</p>
345			
348		"Prep for class" homework assignments	<p>Reading reflection essays, critiques and applications (revision allowed)</p> <p>Essay questions on exams</p>
352			
357		In-Class Reflections	<p>Power points</p> <p>Independent Analyses</p>
361			

362	Interpret and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions	In-class reading reflections (minimal points)	Moodle Forum Postings Journals Testimonial Assignments Intergroup Collaboration Project Final Synthesis Paper
363	Practice and develop transferable skills, such as information literacy and application Effective communication (through writing and speaking) Critical thinking and analysis; and research, synthesis.	Journals - 1-page reflections on course material In-Class Discussion Starters	Gender Socialization Essay Gender Marketing Essay Three Article Reviews
387			
391		D2L Assignments	Interview Write-Up Reflection Workbook Short-answer essay exam questions
392	Learn and practice communication and listening skills, assessment and interviewing skills		Exams with in-class written proficiencies Case Analyses (Incorporates Critical Thinking) Autobiography Reaction papers In-Class written assignments

In 400-Level courses , writing assignments should reinforce and emphasize the following skills introduced in previous levels: the abilities to a) demonstrate critical thinking (i.e., is able to evaluate evidence, critique claims and analyze positions); b) discern what types of writing styles resonate with different types of audiences; c) synthesize information from a variety of reputable sources in order to present a well-rounded picture of some social problem or social phenomena; d) use reliable sources to take a sociological approach to a particular topic or social phenomenon; e) apply social theories and concepts in a selective or synthetic manner to guide research and/or deepen understanding of real-world phenomena ; and f) discern logic flaws in their thinking process and correct those flaws to produce a clear, coherent, and logical finished product			
410			
417			
421			
427			Essay Exams In-Class Reflective Essay

			Exams Reaction Paper "Social Marketing" Poster
428	The course is designed to facilitate the students' utilization of critical thinking and policy analysis in both verbal and written form. Assessment, reporting and intervention strategies will also be examined, as well as particular cases studies of child maltreatment.		Quizzes Case Analysis
442			Short answer and essay questions on exams Applications (Three) – possibilities for rewrites
448		On-Line Forum Discussion Posts	Policy Analysis Paper Quizzes
452		Homework assignments	Reflections and critiques (Three) Report
456			
458			Three film application papers
460	Improve their writing skills as they develop their own research design for implementation.	In-Class Activities Homework Assignments	Research Proposal, done in stages (with feedback and expected rewrites and improvements): Introduction, Review of the Literature, Research Plan
461	Demonstrate the ability to develop a coherent, quality research paper.	In-Class Activities Homework Assignments	Research Proposal, done in stages and building on SOC 460: Results, Discussions, and Conclusions (with feedback and expected rewrites and improvements)
481	Produce well-reasoned written and oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions	Movie paper outline Reflections on D2L	3 Observation Essays Military movie project Contrast, critique, and apply Application
493	To develop methods and skills commonly used among		Self-Evaluation and Intern Site Synopsis

<p>professionals in fields related to sociology such as: observing and identifying clients'/consumers' resources and concerns, collecting and interpreting data, interviewing, and developing and implementing plans and programs; and critically evaluating the successes and failures of initiatives.</p>		<p>Weekly Journals (including sociological analysis) Sociological Analysis of Community and Organizational Context of Internship Activities</p>
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6. Engaging in Pedagogical Best Practices in Writing Across the Curriculum

Sociology Faculty commit to their own development in WAC pedagogy to foster better student learning and stronger student writing skills by engaging in WAC best practices, including:

- a. designing courses and syllabi that help students learn and build their writing skills as appropriate to the course; if one does not exist, add an explicit writing-related course objective to the syllabus;
- b. providing written directions for writing assignments to foster skills in students that are transferrable to other kinds of writing in other settings and situations, such as workplace, community, or other coursework (as opposed to inadvertently leaving students with the impression that the writing they do for a course has no relevance beyond the completion of that assignment). For example, for any “writing-to-communicate” assignment, faculty can clearly identify the target audience to whom the students direct their writing (one’s audience should always be considered regardless of the genre);
- c. articulate the expectations and purpose of writing assignments in writing in a clear and accessible manner for students; for example, specifying an audience, task, and situation, and offering evaluation rubrics along with written directions for the assignment;
- d. providing timely, pedagogically responsive feedback to students on their writing. For example, offering a few focused comments on higher-order (content) writing issues; mostly refraining from line-editing; using margin comments for praise and to ask questions, among other WAC best practices for giving feedback on student writing.

Faculty are encouraged to implement WAC best-practices in their own courses. They are encouraged also to explore the wealth of resources available online at the IUP WAC web site, the WAC Clearinghouse, and in the book, *Engaging Ideas*, by John Bean. They may consult with the WAC Director as needed.

7. Sustaining a Department Culture that Values Writing

a. Faculty development in WAC pedagogy

- Elect at least one faculty member as the WAC/SOC liaison to continue collaborating in the guided development of writing-enriched curriculum and updating departmental WAC-related plans, procedures, and resources.
- Provide all newly hired faculty with a copy of the DWP and recommend attending at least two of the hour-long WAC workshops offered during the academic-year or the May 2-day writing workshop for Liberal Studies faculty.
- The department will invite the WAC Director to a department meeting bi-annually for an updated training on WAC pedagogy and to discuss assessment results and the professional development feedback cycle.
- Use the Sociology Department Commitment to Writing Statement widely: in course syllabi, departmental publicity and communications materials, etc.

b. Assessment of student writing

Faculty in the department will determine the best ways to approach improving assessment of students writing, in conjunction with the WAC Director if so desired. The creation of this Department Writing Plan has prompted faculty discussion and review of how writing is taught across courses and between faculty who teach the same courses in different ways, and how writing might better be assessed near the completion of the major for undergraduate students. Department faculty also might consider ways to gain a general sense of the students who seem to have a better handle on the different types of writing within the curriculum and profession in order to learn more about how to improve the delivery of writing instruction overall.

- As we've done with the baseline assessment (see Appendices A-C), undergraduate writing will be assessed by collecting a sample of assignments from seniors from various SOC courses in which they are enrolled. This collection will occur biennially.
- The Sociology Department should conduct a biennial survey of seniors in the major about their perceptions of the role of writing in their learning sociology, and their course assignments in developing their writing skills, and analyze results with WAC Director, if desired. A revised and refined Writing in the Sociology Major Student Survey (for administration next in Spring 2020) can be used to trace undergraduate student perceptions of their use of writing for learning and their writing skill development. Through faculty development seminars with the WAC Director, workshop attendance, and writing-enriched curriculum, Sociology faculty seek to attain students survey results at 80+% in desired outcomes on writing development items.
- The SOC Department should continue to update the writing outcomes curriculum map, to ensure its completeness, to capture faculty innovations and additions, and particularly as courses are added, removed, or revised in the SOC curriculum (and communicate these changes to the WAC Director).
- The SOC Department will add areas for the teaching and assessment of student writing in the undergraduate major in goals of the department's five-year review, and in other areas of outcomes assessment. The aim is to highlight and document

the efforts the department is making to contribute to positive student outcomes in the areas of writing and use of writing in learning.

- The SOC Department may consider adopting student portfolios to serve both for outcomes assessment and to help students market themselves to prospective employers and demonstrate their abilities when applying for graduate programs.

Appendix A: Writing Sampling and Assessment Protocol

In Spring 2017, Sociology faculty in conjunction with the WAC director collected 21 samples of writing from seniors in courses including SOC 251, 333, 335, 392, and 442, and rated them using the rubric found in Appendix B. Full results are indicated below in Appendix C.

Assessment will be repeated in Spring 2020.

Students in the sample responded to prompts such as:

General Instructions: The case analysis paper must be at least 5 full pages in length, excluding the separate reference page. The paper is required to have course content from your Summers textbook and the Sipe and Hall book (and other scholarly works as appropriate if you wish – this is not a requirement) integrated in your responses to the questions.

You may feel compelled to include personal beliefs and experiences in your answer; however, I am asking you to remain as objective as possible and provide an answer based on your understanding of the course material. **You will be graded on 1) how comprehensively you answer the questions, 2) how well you organize your answers, 3) your integration of course material, and 4) your demonstration of sociological thinking and analysis.**

Your case analysis paper must be typed (12-point font) and double-spaced. Please number the pages of your paper. You are required to reference (i.e. cite) any material that you use. For citations of sources in papers, I will accept any commonly used reference style (including APA and ASA). When referencing any sources, including the Summers textbook and the Sipe and Hall book, **you must cite them in the content of the paper and on your reference page.** *You are not required to include the citation for the ethical standards on your reference page.* Failure to properly cite sources will be penalized. Please refer to the APA or ASA “quick tips” that have been posted on D2L for help with citations. **Your essay must be written independently of others** (please refer to the section of your syllabus on Academic Integrity).

Part I (75 points): Consider the “is addiction a disease” debate. Find 3-5 scholarly resources that support the disease concept and 3-5 scholarly resources that oppose the disease concept. These resources should be separate from the articles that were included in *The New York Times* debate that we did as a D2L assignment (you can refer to these later in the assignment). Organize and synthesize these resources into a cohesive argument, giving equal support to both sides of the debate. End this section with a discussion about which

“side” (based on the resources you used) makes a better/more convincing argument – should addiction be considered a disease or should it be viewed as a choice (i.e. voluntary/free will)? **(Approximately 2-3 pages)**

Part II (15 points each/75 points): For 30 days, beginning March 1, 2017 and ending March 30, 2017, collect a total of 5 newspaper or magazine articles that pertain to some aspect of drug and alcohol use, abuse, or addiction. Some topics might include a celebrity (or regular “Joe”) death from a drug overdose, a personal account of addiction and/or recovery, a drug or alcohol related accident or injury or other devastating effects of a particular type of drug use, stories about kids being present in crack houses, meth labs, etc., a “new” drug on the market (like bath salts), drug cartels/trafficking, etc. Write a 1-2 paragraph summary of each article. Following the summary, provide a 2-3 paragraph discussion on how the topic in the article is presented. Is the information presented matter-of-factly or persuasively? Is the article anchored on either side of the “disease” debate? Does the article challenge or reinforce any stereotypes about drug use? Are there any statistics presented within the article? What source are the data from (if the source is not one that was discussed in class, find out more about it)? Do “experts” provide any commentary in the article? Do they strengthen the argument or are they presented as opposition to the main points of or key persons addressed in the article? Is treatment, prevention, punishment, or drug policy discussed in the article? **(Approximately 5-7 pages – 1-1.5 pages per article)**

- You do not have to address all of the above questions – just use them simply as a guide for thinking about the articles that you find.

Papers will be graded on the following: 1) how organized your “disease” debate is, 2) how well your articles represent a variety of drug issues (or social issues related to drug use/abuse)(all of your articles should NOT be about celebrity drug overdoses), 3) whether you are thinking sociologically in analyzing your articles, 4) whether you creatively and thoughtfully integrate class materials into your analysis, and 5) whether you are able to apply sociological concepts to explain drug issues.

You should refer to the “disease” debate resources that you find as well as assigned class readings, and should cite these correctly in the text and in a formal bibliography at the end of the paper. For citations of sources in papers, I will accept any commonly used reference style (including APA and ASA). The paper should be 7-10 pages in length total (typed, double-spaced, 12-point font).

For this project, you will be making observations about the process of purchasing safer sex products and writing an essay in the form of a blog post that connects your observations with class concepts and readings.

Go to a brick and mortar store and purchase an item designed for safer sex. This could be a product designed to prevent the spread of STIs, pregnancy, or both (e.g. condoms, dental

dams, contraceptive films, Plan B, etc). If you have a religious objection to purchasing a contraceptive product, please let me know by Friday, April 14 and I will give you an alternative assignment.

Reflect on the experience of purchasing this product. Consider both external factors, such as the store layout and product selection and availability (for example, was there a wide selection of products designed for various types of sex or was the selection limited to products for certain types of sex? Did you notice assumptions or stereotypes in the marketing or store location of the product?) and internal factors, such as how you felt selecting and purchasing your product.

Identify 2-3 concepts or themes from this course that are relevant to your observations and reflections. Write an essay in the style of a blog post in which you describe your experience and observations and connect your observations to 2-3 class concepts.

Your essay should be in the style of a blog post. This means

- Your essay should be between 500-700 words (2-3 pages double spaced).
- Your tone may be informal
- You should write in the first person (e.g., "I think that...")
- Your audience is college students of your own age. Although your tone may be informal, you should use sociological concepts accurately.
- Because this is a class assignment, you must cite your sources using APA or ASA style and include a list of works cited at the bottom of your post (this does not count against your word limit).
- Your essay/blog post should have a catchy title.
- You may include images if you want (this is optional and does not count against your page limit).
- Remember, your classmates will be able to read your blog. Keep this in mind when deciding how much personal information to share.

Appendix B: Assessment Rubric

	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Meets Expectations (3)	Developing/Emerging (2)	Below Expectations (1)
Demonstrates critical thinking (i.e., is able to evaluate evidence, critique claims and analyze positions)	Strong and evident	Evident	Attempts some evaluation, critique, or analysis	Missing or simplistic
Discerns what types of writing styles resonate with different types of audiences	Highly adept at conveying messages in a writing style appropriate to one or more target audience(s)	Does a reasonable job of adapting writing style to target audience	Makes a stab at matching a writing style to a target audience but the appropriate style is inconsistently applied OR the style is consistently applied but is not appropriate for the target audience	Displays no awareness of writing for a particular audience
Synthesizes information from a variety of reputable sources in order to present a well-rounded picture of some social problem or social phenomena	Uses a number of reputable sources; provides information on the social problem or phenomena from a number of different facets, dimensions or angles	Uses several reputable sources; provides information on the social problem or phenomena from a few different facets, dimensions or angles	Uses only a few sources, including some of which are not reputable; reports information in a way which presents an inconsistent, contradictory, or confusing picture	Uses only sources which are not reputable or provides no sources at all; random bits of information are presented without any attempt to synthesize or present a coherent picture
Uses reliable sources to take a sociological approach to a particular topic or social phenomenon	Exemplary ability to interpret some topic or social phenomenon through a sociological lens using reliable sources	Basic ability to interpret some topic or social phenomenon through a sociological lens using reliable sources	Developing ability to interpret some topic of social phenomenon through a sociological lens but not always using reliable sources	No to severely limited ability to interpret some topic of social phenomenon through a sociological lens; no clear understanding of what constitutes a "reliable source"
Applies social theories and concepts in a selective or synthetic manner to guide research and/or deepen understanding of real-world phenomena	Displays highly proficient knowledge and understanding of one or more social theories; if more than one theory is used, these are integrated or related to each other in complex and nuanced ways; demonstrates advanced understanding of why one or more theories is a good fit with the empirical phenomena being researched or analyzed	Chooses a theory which is a good fit with the empirical phenomenon being researched or analyzed; if more than one theory is used the theories are integrated in a clear, logical and defensible manner; displays competent knowledge and understanding of one or more social theories and thorough and well-grounded application of the theory (theories) to real-world phenomena	Chooses a theory which is not a good fit with the empirical phenomenon to be researched or analyzed (e.g., applies a macro-theory to a micro-research project); if uses more than one theory, displays limited ability to integrate theories or relate them to each other in a meaningful way; connections between theory (theories) and real-world are vague and poorly delineated	Does not use social theory; displays no ability to integrate or relate two or more theories or to connect theory in any clear and meaningful way to real-world phenomena
Discerns logic flaws in their thinking process and corrects those flaws to produce a clear, coherent, and logical finished product	Tight argument, smooth transitions, coherent flow across different sections, especially when these occur in conjunction with an advanced execution challenge (e.g., the student chooses to tackle an especially challenging theoretical perspective, research technique, or substantive topic)	Central theme developed and adhered to throughout; argument is clear, sensible, and easy to follow; theoretical explanations of how some facet of the social world works are clear and correct; different sections of the paper clearly relate to each other and are relevant; temporal order is correct (e.g., effects do not precede causes); conclusions warranted by the evidence	Clear and logical in places but lack of coherency across sections and lack of clarity within some sections results in a disjointed end product	Rambling and disjointed; leaps between topics without any discernible reason or connection; uses circular or flawed reasoning; draws unsubstantiated or unwarranted conclusions
Holistic	Exemplary or outstanding job overall	Solid job overall, with a few minor problems or issues	Overall, student's work on the assignment is disappointing; falls short in several areas	Overall, student's work on the assignment falls woefully short of expectations in numerous areas

Appendix C: Writing Assessment Baseline Results

Below is a summary of results from writing sample assessment:

Areas in which student writing is ABOVE expectations: 77+

None

Areas in which student writing is MEETING expectations: 68-77

Criterion 3: Synthesis

year(s)	exceeds/meets	emerging/below
2019	76% (24% / 52%)	24% (24% / 0)

Areas in which student writing is BELOW expectations below 67 and below

Holistic

year(s)	exceeds/meets	emerging/below
2019	62% (52% / 10%)	38% (38% / 0)

Criterion 1: Critical Thinking

year(s)	exceeds/meets	emerging/below
2019	62% (38% / 24%)	38% (33% / 5%)

Criterion 2: Style for Audience

year(s)	exceeds/meets	emerging/below
2019	62% (5% / 57%)	39% (29% / 10%)

Criterion 4: Sociological Approach

year(s)	exceeds/meets	emerging/below
2019	62% (19% / 43%)	39% (29% / 10%)

Criterion 5: Theory Application

year(s)	exceeds/meets	emerging/below
2019	62% (19% / 43%)	39% (29% / 10%)

Criterion 6: Discerns Logic

year(s)	exceeds/meets	emerging/below
2019	62% (19% / 43%)	38% (38% / 0)

WAC Director’s Recommendations Based on Assessment Results

Because the holistic scores match up quite congruently with the other criteria, the rubric appears to be reliable, and the raters appear to have been sufficiently normed. We can assume the results above to be accurate as a baseline assessment and pilot.

While the majority of students in this sample are meeting or exceeding expectations for desired and necessary writing skills according to this plan, this majority is rather slim (12%) in all but one of the criteria, meaning that overall, not enough met the expectations for writing of graduating seniors. However, it is important to notice that in those same four criteria, total exceeding/meeting scores were only 5% below the cutoff for meeting expectations. Writers in the Sociology Department are getting there! – and the faculty should be commended.

Very few of the samples were rated “below expectations” in any of the criterion, which is an excellent sign for this department; while many students may need some more support in writing, even at the senior level, very few (in this sample) appear to be truly struggling or beyond help. When looking at the writing of seniors, the goal in any writing plan is always to analyze the statistics in the middle (meeting/emerging) and determine pedagogical strategies to support their growth toward better meeting criteria; the hope is that any students below expectations benefit from those strategies.

Recommendations to support “meeting” and “emerging” writers include:

- Complete more of the outcomes chart, particularly in the Writing-to-Learn column. Knowing more about these kinds of activities – what they are and how they are used – could provide some clues about where students are(not) getting the practice they need.
- Consider professional development within the department regarding aspects of the rubric that are content-specific (e.g., application of theory, sociological approach). Make sure all faculty members know this is a weak area for students and are thinking of ways to infuse their own courses (all the way up and down the curriculum) with more instruction and attention to these areas. Perhaps choose one to focus on in AY 19-20 and one for AY 20-21.
- Consider professional development with the WAC director on writing-to-learn and rhetorical features of the rubric (e.g., critical thinking, audience awareness). Make sure all faculty members know this is a weak area for students and are thinking of ways to infuse their own courses (all the way up and down the curriculum) with more instruction and attention to these areas.
- Although scoring is consistent, consider if the assignments may be too disparate to rate using one rubric. Obtain as many samples of seniors from one class as possible and gather any stragglers from only one or two classes.

Appendix D: Biennial Assessment Results, Fall 2023

This report covers the period disrupted by the COVID pandemic. During the 2020-2021 academic year, classes were taught on-line. A request to faculty to submit papers written by senior sociology majors in Spring, 2021 yielded 9 papers, all from SOC 448 (Social Policy). To increase diversity, a second call went out to sociology faculty to submit papers by sociology majors from Fall, 2021. This call produced 3 more papers, all from SOC 300 Using Sociology in Your Career and Community. The analysis included in this report is based on these 12 papers.

These papers were written by 12 distinct senior sociology majors. Excluding cover pages, reference pages, and job ads, the papers ranged in length from 3 to 14 pages, with an average length of eight pages. The SOC 448 papers were policy analyses that were produced through a scaffolding technique where students developed the paper over time with feedback from the instructor as well as one peer review. The written contributions from SOC 300 were career portfolios which consisted of a compilation of application letters, resumes, short sociology papers, and similar types of material.

Dr. Valerie Gunter scored these papers using the departmental writing goals/evaluation criteria identified in the department's WAC report. Dr. Gunter worked with Dr. Mabry in developing the original WAC report and scoring criteria and has scored sociology papers twice before for WAC evaluations. Possible scores on criteria range from a high of four (excellent) to a low of 1 (poor). A table is included at the bottom of this report that shows the range, mean, median and mode for each individual criterion. For the mean, scores are rounded up or down to the nearest half-point.

As seen in the "range" column, no paper had an evaluation criterion ranked as 1, the lowest score. None of the measures of central tendencies (mean, median, mode) fell below a 3. The mean, median and mode for the holistic assessment for all twelve papers was 3, or "good."

Students performed best on the following criteria/writing goals: 1) critical thinking; 2) synthesizes information; and 3) applies theories and concepts. By their senior year, most sociology majors seem to have mastered the ability to think sociologically about their world. Sociology faculty should continue their present practices in these areas. Students did less well (though still good, or above average) on the following criteria/writing goals: 1) style matches target audience; 2) identifies way to contribute to knowledge; and 3) discerns and corrects flaws in logic. With respect to target audience, some students' writing was not up to the standards of professional settings. One common problem was paragraphs that ran on for a page or more. Sociology faculty are encouraged to include an explicit statement in writing assignments identifying the target audience, and impress on students the quality of writing expected in professional settings.

The slightly lower scores on the criterion/writing goal of "identifies ways to contribute to knowledge" is not surprising, given that this was not a focus or goal of the original writing assignments. This criterion is most relevant to papers that propose or report empirical research. It is also not surprising that the criterion/writing goal "discerns and corrects logic flaws" ended up with slightly lower scores, as it is the most advanced and difficult one. This criterion assesses the overall coherence of a paper, including the way in which different components fit together without excessive repetition or contradictory

claims. Scaffolding techniques like the ones used in the SOC 448 are an especially useful technique for improving student performance on this challenging goal.

Table 1. Score Ranges and Measures of Central Tendency for Twelve Papers Written by Senior Sociology Majors in 2021.

CRITERA/WRITING GOAL	SCORE RANGE	MEAN	MEDIAN	MODE
Critical thinking	2 to 4	3.5	4	4
Style Matches Target Audience	2 to 4	3	3	3
Synthesizes Information	2 to 4	3.5	3.5	4
Identifies Ways to Contribute to Knowledge	2 to 4	3	3	3
Applies Theories and Concepts	2 to 4	3.5	3.5	4
Discerns and corrects logic flaws	2 to 4	3	3	3
Holistic	2 to 4	3	3	3

Appendix E: Surveys of Sociology Students

In Fall 2015 and Spring 2016, Dr. Mabry performed a survey of seniors in order to determine a baseline understanding of students' perceptions of writing in their SOC curriculum (see Appendix E for full results of the two surveys). Results indicated that students see writing as an integral and extensive part of the Sociology curriculum and believe that writing helps them learn. They also reflect that faculty are supportive of their writing development, but that they need to develop technical skills and experience a wider variety of genres.

(Survey 1 administered to students of SOC 460, Social Research Methods I, Fall 2015, a class predominantly of seniors)

NOTE: This initial survey was adapted from one used by the Department of Food and Nutrition (FDN) in their development of a DWP. We used it as a way of obtaining some baseline data. It does not necessarily reflect the priorities of Sociology faculty in regard to student writing. After polling Sociology faculty of what our majors should be able to do as graduates in terms of writing, we administered a follow up survey that reflects those responses. Taken together, the results, presented in Appendix B, represent our baseline data.

Survey 1 Questionnaire

How many Sociology (SOC) courses have you taken?

When will you graduate with your B.A. in Sociology?

- May 2016 (1)
- August 2016 (2)
- Fall 2016 (3)
- Other (please indicate when): (4) _____

What is your track in the Sociology major?

- General (1)
- Human Services (2)
- Disability Services (3)
- Social Science Education (4)
- Other (please explain): (5) _____

In how many of the following basic writing areas would you say that your Sociology (SOC) courses have helped: - aim/purpose - audience - sentence structure - grammar overall

- they have helped in 1 of the areas (1)
- they have helped in 2 of the areas (2)
- they have made significant improvement in my writing (3)
- have made very little improvement in my writing. (4)

I received either faculty and/or peer feedback on ___ number of writing assignments in SOC courses:

- 1-2 papers (1)
- 3-4 papers (2)
- 5-6 papers (3)
- 7-8 papers (4)
- 9-10 papers (5)
- More than 10 papers (6)

How much do you agree with the following statements about your experiences learning to write in the Sociology Department (your SOC courses)?

	Disagree (1)	Agree somewhat (2)	Agree a lot (3)	N/A (4)
My writing skills are stronger because of my SOC major. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My professors in SOC encouraged me to use writing as a learning tool (like journaling, free writing, notes, or case studies). (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SOC seems committed to teaching students to write effectively. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
While majoring in Sociology, I learned to develop my own writing process (which might include brainstorming, drafting, peer review, revision, and other steps). (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SOC has prepared me to go out and write in the career field or grad program I've chosen. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

These questions relate to writing assignments in SOC classes. Think about the assignment sheets you received that detailed writing tasks, requirements, and guidelines for major papers.

	Disagree (1)	Agree somewhat (2)	Agree a lot (3)	N/A (4)
Most writing assignments I received in SOC courses were clear and understandable. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Most writing assignments I received in SOC courses were detailed on a handout that included a description of the content I was supposed to write, as well as guidelines on length, format, and other requirements. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In SOC courses, I received a rubric with most writing assignments that explained how the assignment would be graded. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Much of the feedback I received on writing assignments in SOC courses was related to my ideas and content. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Much of the feedback I received on writing assignments in SOC courses was related to grammar (punctuation, spelling, sentence-structure, etc). (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Most writing assignments in SOC courses required that I use sources as evidence and cite those sources. (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Most writing assignments in SOC courses asked me to choose a side of an argument and defend it. (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Has writing (any kind) in SOC courses aided you in learning/reinforcing class information? (Example: Does writing a response to a scientific article help you learn how to translate that article for a non-scholarly audience?)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I don't know (3)

My ability to analyze and create arguments, explain, and persuade in the field of Sociology has...

- Decreased (1)
- Stayed about the same (2)
- Improved (3)
- Significantly Improved (4)

My knowledge and understanding of styles of writing in the field of Sociology has...

- Decreased (1)
- Stayed about the same (2)
- Improved (3)
- Significantly Improved (4)

My ability to read and interpret professional Sociology articles and literature has...

- Decreased (1)
- Stayed about the same (2)
- Improved (3)
- Significantly Improved (4)

My ability to find, evaluate, and incorporate appropriate resources to support the thesis/premise/points of view within a paper has...

- Decreased (1)
- Stayed about the same (2)
- Improved (3)
- Significantly Improved (4)

My ability to write a good first draft of a paper has...

- Decreased (1)
- Stayed about the same (2)
- Improved (3)
- Significantly Improved (4)

My ability to write for various audiences like social scientists, human service providers, or clients...

- Decreased (1)
- Stayed about the same (2)
- Improved (3)
- Significantly improved (4)

My ability to write clearly and concisely in the field of Sociology has...

- Decreased (1)
- Stayed about the same (2)
- Improved (3)
- Significantly improved (4)

The following helped me become a better writer while I was at IUP and enrolled in the Sociology major (check all that apply):

	Not at all (1)	Somewhat (2)	A lot (3)	N/A (4)
SOC 320 Sociological Theory (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SOC 151, Principles of Sociology (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Writing Intensive Courses in my major (SOC 460 &/or 461, Research Methods I &/or II) (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other Writing Intensive Courses in other departments (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Minor courses (if you had a minor) (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IUP Writing Center (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feedback from SOC faculty (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Help from family and friends (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Private tutor (not from the Writing Center) (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other SOC course(s) (please list them) (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Check the SOC course(s) you feel helped increase your knowledge of writing and writing specific to Sociology (check all that apply).

- SOC 151, Principles of Sociology (1)
- SOC 231, Social Problems (2)
- SOC 251, Human Sexuality (3)
- SOC 361, Social Stratification (4)
- SOC 362, Racial and Ethnic Minorities (5)
- SOC 363, Sociology of Gender (6)
- SOC 336, Sociology of Family (8)
- SOC 345, Interpersonal Dynamics (9)
- SOC 391, Foundations of Sociological Practice (10)
- SOC 392, Clinical Sociological Practice (11)
- SOC 357, Sociology of Aging (12)
- SOC 442, Medical Sociology (13)
- SOC 452, Disability and Society (14)
- SOC 493, Internship in Sociology (15)
- SOC 460, Research Methods I (16)
- SOC 461, Research Methods II (17)
- SOC 269, Sociology of Deviance (18)
- SOC 333, Delinquency & Youth (19)
- SOC 335, Alcohol & Drug Abuse (20)
- SOC 387, Social & Cultural Change (21)
- SOC 428, Child Abuse (22)
- SOWK 238, Introduction to Social Work (23)
- SOC 448, Social Welfare Policy (24)
- SOC 427, Intimate Partner Violence (25)
- SOC 442, Medical Sociology (26)
- SOC 452, Disability & Society (27)
- Other SOC courses (please list) (28) _____

Please add anything you'd like us to know about what the SOC Department does or could have done to help you improve your skills as a writer.

Survey 2 Questionnaire

(Administered to students of SOC 461, Social Research Methods II, Spring 2016, classes predominantly of seniors.)

When will you graduate with your B.A. in Sociology (semester and year)?

What is your track in the Sociology major?

- General (1)
- Human Services (2)
- Disability Services (3)
- Social Science Education (4)
- Other (please explain): (5) _____

To what extent have your Sociology courses helped you to do the following:

	Not at all (1)	A little (2)	Somewhat (3)	A great deal (4)
Apply social theories to real world issues? (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Generate examples of sociological concepts? (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use scholarly sources to support a claim/argument? (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conduct and write a review of the scholarly literature? (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicate sociological information (concepts, research) to a general or public audience? (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use critical thinking in your writing? (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Distinguish opinion from evidence-based arguments? (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Synthesize information from several sources? (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Write a persuasive essay: Take a position on an issue and construct a logical argument supported by scholarly information? (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Rate yourself on the following types of writing abilities:

	Not very good (1)	Fair (2)	Pretty good (3)	Great (4)
Clear writing (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Citing sources properly (not plagiarizing) (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Formating citations correctly (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Writing grammatically correct sentences (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Producing organized paragraphs (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Connecting ideas throughout a paper (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proofreading and editing your writing (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Defining concepts accurately (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Applying concepts to concrete examples (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Concise (to the point) writing (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What are some of the various types of writing you have done in Sociology courses? (Check all that apply.)

- Reflection papers/journal (1)
- Persuasive essays (take a stand, make an argument, and support it with evidence) (2)
- Case notes (3)
- Technical report (4)
- Research report (5)
- Policy analysis (6)
- Executive Summary of research or analysis (7)
- Popular article translating sociological knowledge for a general audience (8)
- Please list other types of writing you have done in your Sociology courses (there may be many different kinds!): (9) _____

To what extent have your Sociology courses helped you strengthen your skills in the following areas:

	Not at all (1)	A little (2)	Somewhat (3)	A great deal (4)
Expressing ideas in writing clearly (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organizing information in a logical, connected way (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Polished writing (grammar, spelling, citations, for example) (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Writing for different kinds of audiences (academic, general public, professionals in the applied areas of the field) (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicating sociological concepts in writing (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using reliable evidence to make a case in writing (not just opinion writing) (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having confidence in my ability to write at the college graduate level (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using my critical thinking to produce a written analysis of a topic or issue (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In regard to your writing, what are things you would like to improve or wish you could work on more?

What types of writing assignments were most helpful to you in learning about Sociology?

What types of writing assignments were most helpful to you in improving your writing skills?

What did professors do that was helpful in supporting your development as a writer?

What can the Department of Sociology do to help students improve their writing?

Appendix F – Full Results of Two SOC Student Surveys

Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 (administered to the same students)

These two sets of survey results, together, are considered “baseline” survey results: perceptions of students before the writing-enriched curriculum was rolled out in Fall 2019.

Fall 2015, Initial Survey Results

Response Rate = 93% N=62/67 students enrolled in 2 sections of SOC 460

1. How many Sociology (SOC) courses have you taken?

Mean = 9.4 courses

2. When will you graduate with your B.A. in Sociology?

Answer	%	Count
May 2016	51.61%	32
August 2016	19.35%	12
Fall 2016	14.52%	9
Other (please indicate when):	14.52%	9
Total	100%	62

3. What is your track in the Sociology major?

Answer	%	Count
General	56.45%	35
Human Services	37.10%	23
Disability Services	3.23%	2
Social Science Education	0.00%	0
Other (please explain):	3.23%	2
Total	100%	62

4. In how many of the following basic writing areas would you say that your Sociology (SOC) courses have helped: - aim/purpose - audience - sentence structure - grammar overall

Answer	%	Count
they have helped in 1 of the areas	8.06%	5
they have helped in 2 of the areas	37.10%	23
they have made significant improvement in my writing	53.23%	33
have made very little improvement in my writing.	1.61%	1
Total	100%	62

5. I received either faculty and/or peer feedback on ___ number of writing assignments in SOC courses:

Answer	%	Count
1-2 papers	3.23%	2
3-4 papers	16.13%	10
5-6 papers	25.81%	16
7-8 papers	9.68%	6
9-10 papers	9.68%	6
More than 10 papers	35.48%	22
Total	100%	62

6. How much do you agree with the following statements about your experiences learning to write in the Sociology Department (your SOC courses)?

Question	Disagree		Agree somewhat		Agree a lot		Total
My writing skills are stronger because of my SOC major.	3.23%	2	40.32%	25	56.45%	35	62
My professors in SOC encouraged me to use writing as a learning tool (like journaling, free writing, notes, or case studies).	6.45%	4	22.58%	14	70.97%	44	62
SOC seems committed to teaching students to write effectively.	3.23%	2	27.42%	17	69.35%	43	62
While majoring in Sociology, I learned to develop my own writing process (which might include brainstorming, drafting, peer review, revision, and other steps).	6.45%	4	30.65%	19	62.90%	39	62

SOC has prepared me to go out and write in the career field or grad program I've chosen.	3.45%	2	32.76%	19	63.79%	37	58
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7. These questions relate to writing assignments in SOC classes. Think about the assignment sheets you received that detailed writing tasks, requirements, and guidelines for major papers.

Question	Disagree		Agree somewhat		Agree a lot		Not applicable		Total
Most writing assignments I received in SOC courses were clear and understandable.	1.61%	1	27.42%	17	70.97%	44	0.00%	0	62
Most writing assignments I received in SOC courses were detailed on a handout that included a description of the content I was supposed to write, as well as guidelines on length, format, and other requirements.	3.23%	2	16.13%	10	80.65%	50	0.00%	0	62
In SOC courses, I received a rubric with most writing assignments that explained how the assignment would be graded.	3.23%	2	24.19%	15	70.97%	44	1.61%	1	62
Much of the feedback I received on writing assignments in SOC courses was related to my ideas and content.	1.61%	1	30.65%	19	66.13%	41	1.61%	1	62
Much of the feedback I received on writing assignments in SOC courses was related to grammar (punctuation, spelling, sentence-structure, etc).	22.58%	14	35.48%	22	37.10%	23	4.84%	3	62
Most writing assignments in SOC courses required that I use sources as evidence and cite those sources.	0.00%	0	11.29%	7	83.87%	52	4.84%	3	62
Most writing assignments in SOC courses asked me to choose a side of an argument and defend it.	16.13%	10	33.87%	21	46.77%	29	3.23%	2	62

8. Has writing (any kind) in SOC courses aided you in learning/reinforcing class information? (Example: Does writing a response to a scientific article help you learn how to translate that article for a non-scholarly audience?)

Answer	%	Count
Yes	92.86%	52

No	7.14%	4
Total	100%	56

	Significantly Improved	Improved	Stayed About the Same	Decreased
9. My ability to analyze and create arguments, explain, and persuade in the field of Sociology has...	25.8%	62.9%	11.3%	0%
10. My knowledge and understanding of styles of writing in the field of Sociology has...	24.2%	66.1%	9.7%	0%
11. My ability to read and interpret professional Sociology articles and literature has...	38.7%	51.6%	9.7%	0%
12. My ability to find, evaluate, and incorporate appropriate resources to support the thesis/premise/points of view within a paper has...	29.0%	54.8%	16.1%	0%
13. My ability to write a good first draft of a paper has...	26.2%	54.1%	19.7%	0%
14. My ability to write for various audiences like social scientists, human service providers, or clients...	21.0%	56.5%	22.6%	0%
15. My ability to write clearly and concisely in the field of Sociology has...	29.0%	64.5%	6.5%	0%

16. The following helped me become a better writer while I was at IUP and enrolled in the Sociology major:

Question	Not at all		Somewhat		A lot		Total
SOC 320 Sociological Theory	8.20%	5	37.70%	23	54.10%	33	61
SOC 151, Principles of Sociology	31.58%	18	40.35%	23	28.07%	16	57
Writing Intensive Courses in my major (SOC 460 &/or 461, Research Methods I &/or II)	1.64%	1	11.48%	7	86.89%	53	61
Other Writing Intensive Courses in other departments	4.17%	2	35.42%	17	60.42%	29	48
Minor courses (if you had a minor)	17.95%	7	58.97%	23	23.08%	9	39

IUP Writing Center	19.57%	9	43.48%	20	36.96%	17	46
Feedback from SOC faculty	3.28%	2	42.62%	26	54.10%	33	61
Help from family and friends	23.64%	13	43.64%	24	32.73%	18	55
Private tutor (not from the Writing Center)	75.00%	21	3.57%	1	21.43%	6	28
Other SOC course(s) (please list them): 231 (Social Problems) 251 (Sexuality), 333 (Delinquency), 362 (Race & Ethnicity), 387 (Social Change), 391 (Foundations), 428 (Child Abuse), 452 (Disability & Society), 481 (Armed Forces; Masculinities)	36.84%	7	10.53%	2	52.63%	10	19

17. Check the SOC course(s) you feel helped increase your knowledge of writing and writing specific to Sociology

Answer	%	Count
SOC 151, Principles of Sociology	46.77%	29
SOC 231, Social Problems	14.52%	9
SOC 251, Human Sexuality	32.26%	20
SOC 361, Social Stratification	19.35%	12
SOC 362, Racial and Ethnic Minorities	20.97%	13
SOC 363, Sociology of Gender	30.65%	19
SOC 336, Sociology of Family	53.23%	33
SOC 345, Interpersonal Dynamics	12.90%	8
SOC 391, Foundations of Sociological Practice	37.10%	23
SOC 392, Clinical Sociological Practice	17.74%	11
SOC 357, Sociology of Aging	9.68%	6
SOC 442, Medical Sociology	4.84%	3
SOC 452, Disability and Society	6.45%	4
SOC 493, Internship in Sociology	4.84%	3
SOC 460, Research Methods I	87.10%	54
SOC 461, Research Methods II	8.06%	5
SOC 269, Sociology of Deviance	6.45%	4

SOC 333, Delinquency & Youth	19.35%	12
SOC 335, Alcohol & Drug Abuse	29.03%	18
SOC 387, Social & Cultural Change	8.06%	5
SOC 428, Child Abuse	30.65%	19
SOWK 238, Introduction to Social Work	14.52%	9
SOC 448, Social Welfare Policy	1.61%	1
SOC 427, Intimate Partner Violence	8.06%	5
SOC 442, Medical Sociology	1.61%	1
SOC 452, Disability & Society	3.23%	2
Other SOC courses (please list): Social Theory, Armed Forces & Society, Intro to LGBTQ Studies	8.06%	5
Total	100%	62

18. Please add anything you'd like us to know about what the SOC Department does or could have done to help you improve your skills as a writer.

This department has encouraged me to think outside the box and rather than using only factual information, I use personal events and data collection.

Make students go to the Writing Center.

most of the professors are helpful

Nothing. I enjoy all the help the SOC department of IUP has to offer.

I feel that one major writing project that's broken into pieces is much better and more effective with helping students to improve their writing than one or two big assignments due at the end of the year.

Learning more about practical implementations of social theories.

Give more feedback.

Give me freedom to express ideas and thoughts more freely without question of intellectual competence.

They always give good feedback and tell us to use a bunch of resources to help with our writing

Nothing, this is a great department!!

I feel that the Soc department is willing to help anyone who puts in the effort.

Instead of throwing us into Soc 460 and 461 we should have a class that prepared us to write

The writing intensive courses contributed in a great manner for improving my skills as a writer

I think the Soc department have been helpful with my skills as a writer, nothing should change

My Psy class and Philosophy class have also helped

Their feedback and constant support has been helpful. The sociology department is friendly, approachable and willing to be a constant support system. It has helped tremendously.

Offer more courses more often

Such a great department, Dr. Mabry does a great job with research writing

The subject of sociology is an extremely underrated field and I believe the SOC department is doing what they can to provide all the assistance they can and make Soc a more appreciated field.

One teacher in particular counted so many points against minor formatting errors that writing became intimidating and cumbersome. Other professors seem to be biased in whether or not the information is in line with their thinking instead of really reading the article as a whole before making comments. I do appreciate feedback though and most writing assignments have been beneficial.

I think that the Sociology department has allowed me to look into a certain topic from many different views. It has opened my eyes to my surroundings!

More free writes in class followed by discussion or weekly small journals, I have done this in Dr. Sandhoff's class and it is very helpful!

I feel all but one of my professors have done an amazing job of improving my writing

More clarification on what certain professors are looking for in my writing

Although, it can be annoying to have to write so many papers as a SOC major, I can clearly see a major difference in my writing from freshman year to senior year. The SOC department has helped me become better at critical thinking, putting my thoughts into words, and applying what I'm learning in courses to the real world.

Having many papers in Sociology has given me much practice with this style of writing and APA formatting. Maybe teach students more about APA (I always used to use MLA, didn't know much about any other style)

Give more detailed feedback. I think the Soc department may have improved the writing of other students who barely liked it or knew how to before. But I learned all of my writing skills here at IUP from my English Research Writing Course. That was the most effective, not any IUP SOC course. Dr. Hildebrandt gave a lot of good feedback on her handouts. Soc 460 possibly improved but in an area I never see myself writing in again.

Results of Survey Two
Administered in Spring 2016 to students in SOC 461, mostly seniors,
and the same cohort who responded to Survey 1.

Response Rate: 87% (N = 55/63 of students registered in two sections of SOC 461)

1. When will you graduate with your B.A. in Sociology (semester and year)?

May 16 n=28
 August 16 n=13
 December 16 n= 8
 2017 n=7

2. What is your track in the Sociology major?

Answer	%	Count
General	61.81%	34
Human Services	34.54%	19
Disability Services	3.63%	2
Social Science Education	0.00%	0
Other (please explain):	0.00%	0
Total	100%	55

3. To what extent have your Sociology courses helped you to do the following:

Question	Not at all		A little		Somewhat		A great deal		Total
Apply social theories to real world issues?	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	25.45%	14	74.55%	41	55
Generate examples of sociological concepts?	0.00%	0	1.82%	1	20.00%	11	78.18%	43	55
Use scholarly sources to support a claim/argument?	0.00%	0	9.09%	5	30.91%	17	60.00%	33	55
Conduct and write a review of the scholarly literature?	1.82%	1	12.73%	7	34.55%	19	50.91%	28	55
Communicate sociological information (concepts, research) to a general or public audience?	0.00%	0	7.27%	4	23.64%	13	69.09%	38	55
Use critical thinking in your writing?	0.00%	0	1.82%	1	16.36%	9	81.82%	45	55
Distinguish opinion from evidence-based arguments?	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	21.82%	12	78.18%	43	55
Synthesize information from several sources?	0.00%	0	7.27%	4	34.55%	19	58.18%	32	55

Write a persuasive essay: Take a position on an issue and construct a logical argument supported by scholarly information?	1.82%	1	10.91%	6	23.64%	13	63.64%	35	55
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4. Rate yourself on the following types of writing abilities:

Question	Not very good		Fair		Pretty good		Great		Total
Clear writing	0.00%	0	10.91%	6	52.73%	29	36.36%	20	55
Citing sources properly (not plagiarizing)	1.82%	1	23.64%	13	43.64%	24	30.91%	17	55
Formating citations correctly	3.64%	2	34.55%	19	40.00%	22	21.82%	12	55
Writing grammatically correct sentences	0.00%	0	9.09%	5	47.27%	26	43.64%	24	55
Producing organized paragraphs	0.00%	0	1.82%	1	41.82%	23	56.36%	31	55
Connecting ideas throughout a paper	0.00%	0	3.64%	2	30.91%	17	65.45%	36	55
Proofreading and editing your writing	3.64%	2	21.82%	12	36.36%	20	38.18%	21	55
Defining concepts accurately	0.00%	0	9.09%	5	41.82%	23	49.09%	27	55
Applying concepts to concrete examples	0.00%	0	7.27%	4	34.55%	19	58.18%	32	55
Concise (to the point) writing	0.00%	0	10.91%	6	41.82%	23	47.27%	26	55

5. What are some of the various types of writing you have done in Sociology courses?

Answer	%	Count
Reflection papers/journal	98.18%	54
Persuasive essays (take a stand, make an argument, and support it with evidence)	78.18%	43
Case notes	40.00%	22
Technical report	0.00%	0
Research report	98.18%	54
Policy analysis	23.64%	13
Executive Summary of research or analysis	45.45%	25
Popular article translating sociological knowledge for a general audience	56.36%	31

Please list other types of writing you have done in your Sociology courses (there may be many different kinds!): field research, ethnography, Essay, Synthesis papers	7.27%	4
Total	100%	55

6. To what extent have your Sociology courses helped you strengthen your skills in the following areas:

Question	Not at all		A little		Somewhat		A great deal		Total
Expressing ideas in writing clearly	0.00%	0	5.45%	3	32.73%	18	61.82%	34	55
Organizing information in a logical, connected way	0.00%	0	5.45%	3	30.91%	17	63.64%	35	55
Polished writing (grammar, spelling, citations, for example)	0.00%	0	18.18%	10	41.82%	23	40.00%	22	55
Writing for different kinds of audiences (academic, general public, professionals in the applied areas of the field)	0.00%	0	7.27%	4	32.73%	18	60.00%	33	55
Communicating sociological concepts in writing	0.00%	0	5.45%	3	21.82%	12	72.73%	40	55
Using reliable evidence to make a case in writing (not just opinion writing)	0.00%	0	5.45%	3	27.27%	15	67.27%	37	55
Having confidence in my ability to write at the college graduate level	0.00%	0	7.27%	4	32.73%	18	60.00%	33	55
Using my critical thinking to produce a written analysis of a topic or issue	0.00%	0	7.27%	4	29.09%	16	63.64%	35	55

7. In regard to your writing, what are things you would like to improve or wish you could work on more?

I wish I was better at creating in-text citations, grammar, and using a more complicated vocabulary.

My ability to quantify my knowledge. I'm no statistician, I struggled in Research Methods, and I understand the value to charts and frequency tables, and I can even understand them in a way I definitely hadn't been able to before. Dr. Mabry's dedication and enthusiasm to the course had a positive effect on my ability to learn how to interpret the information in class in a way that I hope will be beneficial in my future.

brainstorming or outlining first.

I still have problems with grammar and i'm not the best at citations.

Citations are my weak point

Persuasive writing

I wish I could work on dragging my points out because I seem to always write papers short of what is expected of me.

Citing correctly

Scholarly sourcing and punctuation

Be more creative and have more motivation to start.

Citing sources and making sure my conclusion supports my argument in a clear manner.

Proof Reading

I really just wish I enjoyed writing a little more or enjoyed writing sociological research more.

Help with critical thinking

I wish I could work on writing without over thinking. just simply writing out my ideas as go.

I feel like I am a great writer already but I still need improvement with grammar selection and organization.

Nothing

I need to work on in text citations and how to properly write a citation for the resource section.

Grammar and citations.

Improve on grammar and citations. What type of citations to use and when. In high school I had MLA drilled in my head, once I got to college I was expected to know APA

I wish I could work on Citations more.

I wish I could improve on being able to tie journal articles to papers using too many citations and being able to put more in my own words.

I wish to improve my critical thinking skills, and to be able to proof read my papers better.

I would like to work on the flow of my paragraphs. I would also like to work on not using sentence fragments. It is sometimes hard for me to tell when a sentence is a fragment if it sounds good when I read it out loud, but technically is a fragment.

I regret not doing a meta-analysis for my senior sociological project, so that is something I wish I could've spent more time learning about.

Citations, Idea connecting

I would like to work on my critical analysis and my grammar

Clear, concise and to the point writing as well as grammatical errors.

In terms of writing, the area I need the most help in would be proofreading and editing. I have improved since i have began sociology but it still needs improvement. The writingcnetar has also helped me improve my writing in this area.

I really would like to get better at proof reading my work, and polishing my final report. Also, I would like to get better at citing my sources.

Explain theory more in my own words.

Referencing my sources, along with finding these sources from all of the different databases offered.

Citing sources, I can cite sources and do bibliographys but I am unsure if it is done 100% right.

Word choice, time management

Using more scholarly sources in my papers along with better citing of those sources.

Conducting research through surveys

I need to improve my citations within my papers. I also need some improvement on my grammar.

Citations

I wish I had more skills toward writing larger papers. I feel like my whole college career has been towards writing papers under 8 pages and anything above that I may have written one or two papers. I feel like that requires different construction than the typical 3 point paper with a thesis and a structure. I know that people don't want to write large papers but I would rather complain and have the knowledge than be more content but go without.

Organization, planning out what I'm going to write, professional writing skills, keeping it concise

I wish I could have worked more on proofreading and editing more.

I wish I was better at proofreading and editing my papers.

I would like to improve on my research conducting skills. Be more efficient and concise when collecting data and how to present it accurately.

Before becoming a sociology major, I never wrote in APA format. Proper formatting in general in something I know I need to improve on. I had to teach myself the right techniques, citing, cover page, etc.

I'd like to improve my field note writing skills.

Proper citation techniques

I need to perfect my apa writing style as well as citations.

Grammatical and citing in papers.

Citing and referencing

the research writing, as far as conducting my own scholarly article, I may need to brush up on. 461 helped with that but I will need additional help.

Research writing

I would like to improve my writing by making my writing more technical and understanding APA style more.

Would like to improve more on incorporating articles and journals into my own writing while making sense

I wish there was more prep before going into the research class. Maybe the 121 class could be a class made for soc majors to prepare them

I would like to improve on proper citations.

8. What types of writing assignments were most helpful to you in learning about Sociology?

Writing assignments where I reflected on my own personal experiences and related them to what we were learning were most helpful to me. When I can relate something to personal experiences I remember it better.

The assignments that required me to stop and just breathe for a second and realize the only way to successfully right it is to think through the perspective of the topic at hand, usually a client or victim, the society.

essays that you have to apply to your readings because it made me read and understand the material better.

Assignments that had us use social theories to explain topic.

Persuasive papers and research

Reflection writing focused on critical thinking

Writing assignments that allowed me to form my own ideas off of presented concepts.

Research papers even and analysis of other scholarly works

Scholar articles research and sociology research

Having to do research wasn't my favorite but it did help me learn.

Papers on sociological theory are relating it to real world examples.

Policy analysis papers allowed me to think critically

I would say the reflective writing was the most helpful to me.

Applying research for my argument /opinion and comparing it against my own opinion /argument

reflections because it gave you a chance to voice your opinion

Case studies easily

Theoretical research Transcribing Case studies

The research paper for 460 and 461

Reading reviews.

ones connecting theories to social problems. It encouraged critical thinking and looking at the situation in different angles.

Research paper assignments were the most helpful.

all of them

The most helpful was this whole research study project and I really enjoyed presenting at the Scholars Forum.

Writing assignments that used journal articles helped me learn about Sociology. I got to read many different aspects of Sociology in tons of journal articles.

Reflective journal assignments with Dr. Mullins, as well as challenging papers from Dr. Bonach and Dr. Mullins

Research Analysis

Research writings

As long and tedious as it was, the research project from Research Methods as well as the theory papers and a variety of reflection papers in my elective courses.

I believe research reports and synthesis papers have helped me the most. They both require you to take several theories and concepts and create one solid hypothesis. I believe this did the most in improve my comfort with uses various theories as well as understanding how complex social systems can be.

The writing assignments that were most helpful were the opinionated persuasive essays that we got to right. I felt they were most interesting because you got the opportunity to express your own views on an issue.

Ethnography, research reports, some theory papers.

Assignments that we chose, and related to a topic that we were interested in.

Final research paper, and how we had to turn in parts of it as the semester went on.

Research Project, writing intensive course

Research assignments that involved using abstract concepts along with deep class discussion from the professor

Research meta analysis report

Application papers - taking an individual or a concept and deconstructing it along with applying sociological terms and concepts to the idea.

Journal articles

I remember my Gender in the Media paper pretty vividly because I got to apply my concepts to things I found in real life. Anything that had that structure helped solidify concepts for me.

Explaining social theories, using sources to support a theory and self reflection in regards to sociological practice

Writing assignments where sociological theory was applied.

Defining concepts and theories.

Learning about the theories and how to apply these theories and concepts to the world around us. I find this very interesting.

Case Analysis reports

Reflective writing.

Case analyses

Discussion questions that summarize the paragraph and make us relate it to another concept we experience in everyday life.

Sociological theory course made me think critically and connect concepts from class to real life.

Maybe the writing assignments from Dr Hysock's sociology of Deviance and Dr. Swauger's Sociology of gender.

Our research project

Reflective writing has helped me self-evaluate myself then put it into more of a sociological perspective.

Writing article summaries

Case studies and analysis them was helpful.

I think writing my research paper for 460 and 461 was very beneficial, along with reading reflections

9. What types of writing assignments were most helpful to you in improving your writing skills?

The final paper we wrote in 461 really helped me improve my writing skills overall and assignments where professors required students to go to the writing center helped me so much. I wish I would have known how helpful the writing center actually is earlier in my college career.

To tell you the assignment wouldn't be helpful. It was the professor, Dr. Heasley, and it was in the way that he taught me how to address individuals in writing. "The textbook can't talk," he would say. "Say Wang, Mascato, and Blake refer to the intimacy of young boys as the beauty of masculinity and I thought that was lovely" or "in lecture Heasley refereed to" I learned to source, and the various ways to do so, and how to make an annotated bibliography for the first time.

basic essays that were on the easier level about a topic because i can focus on my writing instead of reading more info and adding a lot of concepts.

Research papers, and article summaries.

Research writing

Research papers

Assignments that asked for specific questions where there was only one right answer.

Research papers as well. You need to be clear and incorporate other works of scholars which helps you to analyze and portray your findings.

Analysis papers

Self reflection writing made me focus on my own strengths and weaknesses.

Research papers

The research writing skills because our paper was very long and we did a lot of research to write it

All

assignments that encouraged you to apply some of your personal experiences

Research analysis

They all helped.

Research.

Research writing , even though I hated them they helped me

Research paper assignments

All of them honestly, they all helped in their own way. They allowed me to explore different skills and learn from them.

I really enjoy day to day activities that force us to connect the concepts and theories we learn in lecture to our own experiences and writing about them.

Writing assignments that required using multiple sources helped me improve my writing skills. I had to evaluate several articles, newspaper articles, etc. and relate them to my topic. This helped me focus my writing on what information was important to include and information was valid.

Definitely the senior sociological research paper

Essays

Research papers, summaries

Research project in Research Methods, journals and the theory papers.

Any writing assignment that gave at least 2 weeks or more to work on, I believe, did the most for my improvement in writing. The more time the better. I say this because with this time gives the opportunity to actually go through the writing process. When a paper has a short deadline the writer's only worry is completing the paper. However, with more time I was able to spend adequate time on every step of the writing process as well as repeating as necessary.

Research papers in which we used literature and studies helped me most with my writing skills all around.

Theory papers.

Final paper, and all of the side assignments that went along to forming that paper.

The big research paper for SOC 460/461

Research Project

Research assignments that involved citing academic sources

Case studies, research report

The research proposal I wrote for research methods was the most helpful because it forced me to constantly edit the document.

I'm not sure I had anything like that in our program.

Having to explain theories in sociological theory and proofreading and working through the research article in social research methods

Assignments where theory needed applied to real life situations or current events.

Personal essays and persuasive essays.

Writing the research project in 460-461. Also, research papers in general forced me to use my critical thinking skills.

all assignments were helpful just because of the practice I obtained through that

Research writing.

Research papers

Research essays

Sociological theory was helpful with citing and grammatical errors.

Research writing

Research writing and using theory and concepts to understand it the sociological perspective.

Smaller writing assignment as to not get overwhelmed and be able to focus on the quality vs quantity

English 202 helped a lot since it taught me how to research before 460

Reading reflections

10. What did professors do that was helpful in supporting your development as a writer?

Some required or highly stressed visiting the writing center and some gave corrections on papers instead of just the grade which was very helpful.

Break large assignments up into parts and allow for peer review.

paper after paper

They gave feedback on grammar mistakes and had us write many papers in various courses.

Broke down the larger papers throughout the year or semester and helped along the way

Proof reading, and helping facilitate new ideas/cultivate different views on the same topic

Gave me good feedback on assignments.

Provide feedback on papers and go over in class how to structure certain writing assignments correctly

Write comments on my papers to let me know what need to be improved

Always encouraged me to keep trying and express myself.

Give fast feedback, meet in office hours

Dr. Boser Dr. DiMatteo Dr. Mabry Dr. Hysock

Set up office hours times for students to come in and work on writing.

Feedback

give good feedback on their mistakes, while pointing out some of their good parts as well

Push me to greatness because they seen potential

Class discussion Feedback from papers

They left notes on my papers telling me how I can improve my writing.

Writing reading reviews.

Gave feed back on papers, were willing to answer questions, went over APA briefly when needed.

They gave lots of feedback and had reviews on the many steps of writing a good paper.

They gave feedback and give us space for creativity. They also helped us enhance our skills by giving us information to help us.

Most Professors were very helpful in obtaining a clear guideline of what is expected and how to help the writer every step of the way.

Professors were diligent on making sure we knew how to cite properly and use in-text citations. These are really important for scholarly writing and professors made sure we knew how to do them to make our papers better.

Dr. Mullins had us write a lot, one to two papers every week, that was extremely helpful. Dr. Mabry gave quick and helpful feedback. Dr. Hysock allowed us to think outside the box and help us to find interest in the topics we are writing about, which helped me to actually care about the paper I was writing.

Different types of writing assignments, use of APA format

Guided me through various steps on writing a research paper.

Always critiqued and made comments on my papers to help my writing, allowed for me to expand my knowledge and do better each time.

I believe the largest contribution made to my writing by professor's was simply understanding that not all students come in at the same writing level. Professor's who encouraged me to grow as a writer and understood that prior schooling may not have developed me at the level necessary helped me immensely. I felt that it was OK to not be the perfect writer and made me feel comfortable in continuing to develop my writing skills.

All professors were always available when writing became tough. There were many questions and obstacles which were easily assisted in getting through with the help of our professors.

Many of my professors let you turn in a first draft, or send them a first draft, then give yo a chance to revise it before the final grade. Also, provided extremely detailed rubrics with examples, or providing previous papers from students for reference.

encouraged and were always willing to help if we asked, however they never Taught writing. I understand it's not their job to teach us how to write, but some of us come from a different educational background where writing is not our strong arm, and we would struggle through the process.

Giving critical feedback

Feedback when needed

Gave constructive criticism and directed me towards new ideas and ways to express those ideas.

Encouraged our own opinions and ideas of what to write about so I could take interest in what I wrote

They left feedback, both positive and negative, were available during office hours or after class, and they provided clear guidelines on both the syllabus and in class.

Feedback whenever needed, sending us to the writing center and acknowledging that we did it, etc. You guys are so accessible and it helps with all facets of our learning not just sociological concepts.

Grading harshly, offering suggestions, giving very clear directions

proofreading and providing great feedback at what improvements were needed.

Provide good feedback and criticism.

The professors Gave me helpful guidance such as various rubrics and structure guidelines.

clear and to the point directs really helped focus my paper and keep it flowing

Give back feedback, and challenge us to write more.

Some have extensive feedback on order to help me notice my mistakes

My professors write good and bad reviews on my essays which makes me feel as though it's not completely a terrible essay but could possibly need work.

Doctor Mabry

Feedback & editing

Dr. Mabry, Dr. Hildebrandt, Dr. Swauger, Dr. Hysock

Give me good feedback

Helped with feed back and edits. It was also helpful that professors let students always revise work.

Gave feedback and suggestions; showed examples of what they were looking for

It was helpful that the teacher was there when I reached out for help. Also there was plenty of days that the teachers had to write

Provide a lot of feed back along with letting us revise our work

11. What can the Department of Sociology do to help students improve their writing?

Require students to visit the writing center for at least one assignment in their syllabus.

One thing that sets the Sociology Department apart is how proactive and progressive we are. Our dedication to advising our students is phenomenal. An advising place for writing help in sociology would really set us apart and be incredibly helpful, perhaps a graduate project?

WRITING CENTER, best thing ever and they help you learn how to write better not just editing your paper

I think they could focus more on the in-text citations and how to do them properly. Suggest that students go to the writing center to get help with papers.

Work with the students through their writing process more

Have students write an individual research paper versus a group paper

Help students cite sources better (reintroduce this in every class maybe)

Have their own writing center since it's usually crowded in the original writing center and include a grad student to help with papers.

Keep providing students with a positive learning environment.

Give fast feedback, meet in office hours

Hold workshops on different types of writing

continue to enforce going to the writing center and being more strict when it comes to our writing.

Focus on giving help on how to expand critical thinking and not just expecting a student to know how

I think the sociology department is great and it does not need to change a thing

Make all sociology majors and minors take the writing intensive courses

Host writing seminars.

I think the department does a very good job of helping improve writing skills. I have written so much more in sociology then I ever did in Criminology.

Have previous classes that teach research writing before so 460. Its a hard class, and you are teaching yourself research writing at the same time.

Maybe spend more time teaching about citations

Teach more skills on writing and not assume that everyone knows the skills.

I believe the Department can provide a clear and understand of what is expected and a stronger rubric to the students to improve their writing. possibly more writing projects?

I think the Department of Sociology can maybe focus more on how to structure paragraphs in students' writing. That was something we did not focus on and I think students can get lost in what forms a good paragraph. This can help students put the good content in a paragraph and leave out the unimportant information.

The sociological research project is the worst, I think may be allowing us to do our own projects, because when we got paired up, we didn't really get to focus on one thing that we had particular interest in.

Use different types of writing assignments

Have several tutors available in helping in finding research and guiding them in the right direction

I think helping them to learn how to write more effectively (clear, concise, to the point) as well as grammar tips would be helpful. Especially, for me, I will be going to graduate school, and I needed to be able to do those things, especially for what I want to go into.

I have no complaints with the way the Department of Sociology works to help students develop their writing skills. Therefore, it is hard for me to suggest an improvement.

Be more aware of assigning group members to similar issues and topics.

Prove detailed rubrics. Go over the weekly readings for class and explain the key points to us.

help more with how to write, and not expecting us to form a perfect written sociological paper. There are so many steps in how to write, and rather than learning math for a sociology class, we should be learning how to form a paper from a sociological eye.

Follow up, more writing resources

Make more suggestions about the Writing Center when giving out an assignment

Teach us to cite better

Encourage students to go to the writing center and maybe include some writing tips on D2L or Moodle for quick reference.

More varied writing requirements. I feel like every class requires you to write 2 page reflections and 5-7 page papers. And then there's research writing and that's it. What about writing like a magazine article? What about writing towards high school students that we could use as a learning tool later? What about longer papers? What about writing anything about policy?

Less opinion, more fact and allow drafts to be submitted and graded before the final paper. It helps to do one really well instead of rushing through 5

continue to provide good feedback and communication

Provide feedback and offer help when students ask.

I think they are doing fine, maybe more structure on how students write can improve the quality of their writing.

possibly offer an APA workshop or training. I could have really used help throughout these past few years

Have more about what we will we doing in our field.

Consistently give feedback on writing pieces

Let classes do more partner revisions so that when they know what you're looking for and do it to another student's paper, they'll see the flaws more clearly in theirs.

Make a writing intensive course on research and how to write out research done.

Peer editing

Make 461 a little easier maybe teach a further break down of each section.

Maybe give more opportunities to write papers

Give students more examples of writing.

Have more smaller writing assignments instead of a few large ones. Personally, I focus more on meeting page length requirements than the quality of my writing on long assignments

Instead of making students take a language there should be a research class

Make sure professors give graded papers back in appropriate amount of time so we can see what we need to improve on