

# ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

## Fairmont State Board of Governors

Program with Special Accreditation  Program without Special Accreditation

Date Submitted \_\_\_\_\_

Degree Program: B.S. in Sociology

### INSTITUTIONAL RECOMMENDATION Approved by the Board of Governors (§ 5.2.8)

The institution is obligated to recommend continuance or discontinuance of a program and to provide a brief rationale for its recommendation:

- 1. Continuation of the program at the current level of activity;
- 2. Continuation of program with corrective action (for example, reducing the range of optional tracks or merging programs);
- 3. Identification of the program for further development (for example, providing additional institutional commitment);
- 4. Development of a cooperative program with another institution, or sharing courses, facilities, faculty, and the like;
- 5. Discontinuation of the Program

### Rationale for Recommendation:

*Michael R. Ransom*

Signature of person preparing report: \_\_\_\_\_

*Chris Kast*

Digitally signed by Chris Kast  
Date: 2024.06.14 06:48:14 -04'00'

6/18/24

Date

Signature of Dean \_\_\_\_\_

*Christina Phillips*  
Signature of Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs: \_\_\_\_\_

Date

6-13-24

Date

Signature of President: \_\_\_\_\_

*[Signature]*  
Signature of Chair, Board of Governors: \_\_\_\_\_

6/13/24

Date

6-13-24

Date

## Executive Summary for Program Review

(not to be more than 2-3 pages)

Degree Program:	B.S. in Sociology
College or School/Department:	College of Liberal Arts
Chair/Program Coordinator	Michael Ransom/Julia Miller
External Reviewer:	Margaret Campe, Ph.D.
Reviewer Email:	margaret.i.campe@gmail.com

A. Synopses of significant findings, including findings of external review (include the external reviewer(s) information).

This review of the Sociology program at Fairmont State provides evidence that the sociology program is a vital part of the University's offerings and serves its graduates well after graduation. The sociology major has served over 3,800 students over the last five years, and the number of declared Sociology majors grew during a period of overall FSU enrollment decline.

The curriculum aligns with the recommendations for best practices from our national academic society, the American Sociological Association, and we are excited to be further improving this curriculum with an upcoming revision. Annual assessment data shows that the program is meeting its established goals, and advanced major courses show especially high rates of student success. Our faculty regularly attend national and regional conferences, publish and present research, engage in pedagogical development and improvement on campus and beyond, and are generally considered by students surveyed to be excellent advisors and instructors.

Findings from the external review will be added here.

B. Plans for program improvement, including timeline

We have already started the process of improving the program by submitted a major revision to the program curriculum. The previous review revealed that our curriculum could be simplified and program goals and assessments realigned. While this was addressed in smaller curricular changes throughout this review period, our planned major revision will involve rewriting the program goals, remapping them to course outcomes, and aligning with a more applied sociological focus. By moving the curriculum in a more applied direction, graduates will leave with more career-ready skills. This plan will expand the methodological tools students will acquire, building upon what is already a strength of our program in comparison with peer programs around the state. The revisions will also make a Sociology Senior Practicum required, connecting students with career opportunities before graduation. Student experiences suggest that practicum experiences mark them for priority consideration on the job market and have even resulted in higher salary offers. Since our last review, we have expanded community connections with partner agencies and look forward to having more Sociology students in placements in the coming years.

These changes were made with best-practices in traditional Sociology pedagogy in mind, but they will also open the opportunity for Fairmont State to seek accreditation as an Applied and Clinical Sociology

program under the accrediting body Commission on Accreditation of Programs in Applied and Clinical Sociology (CAPACS). In the coming years, we plan to further investigate the benefits such an accreditation could bestow. Not only would Fairmont be the only thus-accredited program in the state, but it would be among only 6 such programs globally. Should this opportunity prove beneficial and feasible, it would set Fairmont State apart from similar programs and mark us as a top choice for people seeking work in applied sociology careers.

Our plan is as follows:

Fall 2023

1. Evaluate sociology planned changes and extra-curricular policies in light of accreditation standards
2. Complete curriculum revision proposal

Spring 2024

1. Complete curriculum revision process
2. Implement new service-learning course proposed in 2022-23: SOCY2222 Careers in Sociology
3. Expand student practicum placement in advance of the practicum becoming a requirement for graduation

Fall 2024

1. Draft or edit program extra-curricular policies in line with CAPACS accreditation guidelines and identify areas of misalignment
2. Contact representatives of the Commission on Accreditation of Programs in Applied and Clinical Sociology, an international body which evaluates and accredits applied sociology programs to evaluate alignment with accreditation guidelines

- C. Identify weaknesses or deficiencies from the previous review and describe how these have been addressed.

The 2019 review was approved with “continuation of the program at the current level of activity”. No major deficiencies were identified. However, the prior review did identify areas we could improve, such as with the realignment of our program goals, mission, and assessment tools. The revision of the curriculum already underway is a major improvement in this area.

- D. Five-year trend data on graduates and majors enrolled (Data will be provided by the Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness).

			HEPC Series 10											
AY	*Enrollment	**Degree Awarded	Productivity Standards Programs are required to meet at least one of the indicators listed below.											
2022-23	25	9	<b>Average of Five Most Recent Years</b> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Degree Level</th> <th>*Enrollment</th> <th>**Degree Awarded</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Baccalaureate</td> <td>23</td> <td>6.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Masters</td> <td>n/a</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Degree Level	*Enrollment	**Degree Awarded	Baccalaureate	23	6.8	Masters	n/a	n/a
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Baccalaureate	23	6.8												
Masters	n/a	n/a												
2021-22	30	9												
2020-21	22	4												
2019-20	18	2												
2018-19	18	10												
5-YR AVG	23	7												
* Official fall end of term headcount														
** IPEDS Graduation data (July 1 - June 30)														

- E. Summary of assessment model and how results are used for program improvement (A full Assessment Report is in TaskStream and can be downloaded or viewed by academic year for summation).

The Department of Behavioral Sciences engages in the collection of assessment data each semester in the program courses. This information is discussed during department meetings at the end of each semester. An overall report is currently being drafted based upon last year's assessment data (academic year 2022-2023). The report will be used to highlight progress toward program goals by identifying areas in student learning outcomes that are failing to reach the target threshold.

This assessment information will then be used to generate improvements in measures or realignment of student learning outcomes in preparation for the next cycle. In prior years, for example, we identified that students were struggling with SOCY2240 Behavioral Statistics, a version of the cross-listed SOCY/PSYC2240. This is common across Behavioral Science programs, but the SOCY section was regularly offered online. We reduced the number of sections offered fully online over the course of the review period and are currently discussing changes to the delivery mode of the course. It may be necessary, based on our assessment, to move this course to synchronous online delivery to preserve the flexibility while improving student outcomes.

All student assessment tools and their associated outcomes are kept current and tracked in the Task-Stream Program. These tracking and assessments systems are used by all Sociology faculty. A copy of the most recent TaskStream report will be provided in addition to this program review.

- F. Data on student placement (e.g., number of students employed in positions related to the field of study or pursuing advanced degrees).

Our program saw 34 graduates over the period of study, and the typical number of graduates has recovered to pre-pandemic norms. These graduates have gone on to careers in social and community services, mental health, human resources, and education, with several going on to professional and graduate education programs. Further, the careers in which graduates most often land are expected to grow faster than average based on Bureau of Labor Statistics predictions.

## V. FINANCIAL HEALTH

The **financial health** of a program refers to the cost and revenue portion of the program. This analysis reveals the extent to which the program is contributing to the institution's financial health and if additional resources are necessary to sustain the program.

The metrics below represent required program financial data to be collected in reviewing the financial health of the program [IEO supplied for the report].

<b>Category</b>	<b>Metric</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>Change</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	General Tuition and Fee Revenue	\$1,031,441	\$886,791	\$640,470	\$556,355	-46%
	Program Fee Revenue	\$6,957	\$6,765	\$6,693	\$9,440	36%
	Course Fee Revenue	\$92,165	\$111,819	\$91,710	\$78,573	-15%
<b>Expenses</b>	Direct Costs	\$230,089	\$127,652	\$205,666	\$228,106	-1%
	Indirect Departmental Costs	\$90,129	\$73,389	\$73,618	\$103,660	15%
	Indirect College Costs	\$22,856	\$9,251	\$2,132	\$8,067	-65%
	Indirect Institutional Costs	\$257,492	\$322,495	\$371,649	\$160,005	-38%
Net Position without Indirect Institutional Costs		\$787,490	\$795,084	\$457,457	\$304,535	-61%
Net Position Per Credit Hour Delivered with Indirect Institutional Costs		\$146.53	\$149.74	\$38.34	\$77.08	-47%