De Anza College

SLO Assessment Cycle for SOC 20
Social Problems SLO Modified: [04/21/2010]

Jennifer Myhre's Team Members:

Outcomes:

Outcome 1: Statement Modified: [04/08/2011]

The student will develop a sociological imagination, which is the ability to evaluate the effects of cultural, structural, historical, geographical, institutional and stratification processes on groups and individuals, including one's own experiences.

Assessment Cycle Records:

Outcome 1: Assessment Planning Modified: [04/08/2011]

Assessment Strategy Used:
Quarter: Fall 2010
Assessors: Jennifer Myhre, Jensen Jeung
Assessment Tools: *No tools assigned*.
Sections being assessed: 001

Outcome 1: Reflect & Enhance Modified: [04/08/2011]

Number of people involved in Phase III: 2

Changes:

Methods:
In the fall, we used a qualitative pre- and post-test measure. We gave students the following scenario: Maria , 33 years old, has worked on the factory floor in a Silicon Valley tech company for the last 5 years. She has a child with asthma and has had to miss work occasionally for doctor's visits. She has recently been terminated from her job. We then asked students to develop a set of questions to try to understand the reasons for Maria's firing. They filled out a survey answering the following questions:
1. What questions would you want to ask in order to understand why Maria has lost her job?
2. What questions do you think sociologists would ask in order to understand why Maria has lost her job?
Their answers were coded into several categories that would indicate whether the questions were sociological or individualistic and whether they were empathetic or blaming. This survey was given to students at the start of the quarter and then again at the end of the quarter.

Summary:
NOTE: A complete analysis of the findings is attached as an appendix to the 2011 Annual Program Review Update for Sociology.

Findings for Question 1: What Questions Students Would Ask

Students in SOC20.001 saw an increase in their individualistic questions from pre- to post-test of 12% and a decrease in their sociological questions of 7%. This is not the desired outcome; although the findings for Question 2 were in the desired direction. In this case, students did not meet the expectations for increased sociological thinking.

Enhancement (Part I):
The instructor for the course this quarter responds: In terms of what I could do better, I think providing clear goals and outcomes at the beginning of class is important. As a fairly new instructor, I find that returning to the course goals throughout the course not helps me stay focused but my students as well. I think we could also make sure we are creating a sense of cohesion across courses by paying close attention to social theory (classical and contemporary) and sociological methodologies (quantitative, qualitative, and mixed). I know for the first day or so in all 3 courses I'm teaching this quarter (SOC1, SOC20, & SOC28), I'm spending time discussing and presenting the major sociological theories as they pertain to the substance of each of the courses. Of course, introductory sociology is a broader discussion, but I address how functionalism, conflict, and symbolic interactionism pertain to social problems and gender for example. This is a foundation that I'm

able to build off of to present social constructionism and context as ways to further link substantive course material to the sociological imagination (also discussed during the first few classes).

Enhancement (Part II):
None.

Outcome 2: Statement Modified: [04/08/2011]

The student will distinguish the sociological perspective from other sciences, including its methods, theories and empathetic standpoint.

Outcome 2: Assessment Planning Modified: [04/08/2011]

Assessment Strategy Used:
Quarter: Fall 2010
Assessors: Jennifer Myhre, Jensen Jeung
Assessment Tools: *No tools assigned*.
Sections being assessed: 001

Outcome 2: Reflect & Enhance Modified: [04/08/2011]

Number of people involved in Phase III: 2

Changes:

Methods:
In the fall, we used a qualitative pre- and post-test measure. We gave students the following scenario: Maria , 33 years old, has worked on the factory floor in a Silicon Valley tech company for the last 5 years. She has a child with asthma and has had to miss work occasionally for doctor's visits. She has recently been terminated from her job. We then asked students to develop a set of questions to try to understand the reasons for Maria's firing. They filled out a survey answering the following questions:
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Their answers were coded into several categories that would indicate whether the questions were sociological or individualistic and whether they were empathetic or blaming. This survey was given to students at the start of the quarter and then again at the end of the quarter.

Summary:
NOTE: A complete analysis of the findings is attached as an appendix to the 2011 Annual Program Review Update for Sociology.

We measured the difference in the frequency of sociological versus individualistic questions between the Question 1 responses (what the student would ask) and the Question 2 responses (what a sociologist would ask). In general, at both pre- and post-test, students thought sociologists would ask more sociological questions than the students themselves, suggesting that the students were able to recognize a sociological perspective even when they did not internalize that perspective.

Findings for Question 2: What Would Sociologists Ask

Students in SOC20.001 saw an increase in their individualistic questions from pre- to post-test of 3% but they also demonstrated an increase in their sociological questions by 12%.

Finally, students did decrease the frequency of blaming questions from pre- to post-test, down to zero at post-test. There was a 3% increase in empathetic questions at post-test.

Overall, students met faculty expectations for ability to identify and volunteer a sociological perspective, and did show a slightly increased demonstration of empathy.

Enhancement (Part I):
The instructor of this course responded as follows: I think students are more apt to recognize a sociological perspective than to personally hold one. I think this finding is especially promising given the average background of an undergraduate taking sociology courses for the first time. After all, many new college students don't quite have as strong an understanding of sociology as they do of history, political science, or even psychology. The fact that they are able to recognize a sociological perspective (post-test) is extremely promising, especially from my brief time at De Anza and hearing student feedback regarding their new knowledge of sociology and what "it" is actually all about. I think

students have an idea of what sociology is starting out, but are being provided with a strong foundation of the discipline. The strong stratification responses you noted hint at this. How many undergrads are getting stratification in other places? Perhaps the other Social Science disciplines are providing that knowledge base, but at the very least sociology is reinforcing it. That's a good thing in my mind. I was happy to see consistent numbers in the "institutional" area for my class, as it was a focus for the social problems course.

In terms of what I could do better, I think providing clear goals and outcomes at the beginning of class is important. As a fairly new instructor, I find that returning to the course goals throughout the course not helps me stay focused but my students as well. I think we could also make sure we are creating a sense of cohesion across courses by paying close attention to social theory (classical and contemporary) and sociological methodologies (quantitative, qualitative, and mixed). I know for the first day or so in all 3 courses I'm teaching this quarter (SOC1, SOC20, & SOC28), I'm spending time discussing and presenting the major sociological theories as they pertain to the substance of each of the courses. Of course, introductory sociology is a broader discussion, but I address how functionalism, conflict, and symbolic interactionism pertain to social problems and gender for example. This is a foundation that I'm able to build off of to present social constructionism and context as ways to further link substantive course material to the sociological imagination (also discussed during the first few classes).

Enhancement (Part II):
None.

[Number of Outcomes for SOC 20: **2**]