

Introduction

The Sociology and Anthropology Department at New Jersey City University is at a critical juncture. With a heavy teaching and advisement load for full-time faculty, coupled with a reduction in FTE/student ratio due to retirements and anticipated retirements, it is unclear how the department will be able to maintain its effectiveness in the future. Unless further resources are provided to hire new faculty and to provide support for innovation in teaching and research, the department is at risk of stagnation or decline.

Importance of Sociology to the Mission of the University

The Sociology and Anthropology department contributes to the Mission of the University in myriad ways. The mission of the Sociology and Anthropology Department is to provide students with tools to critically analyze social phenomena so they can take action to address social problems both at the local and global levels. A key component of this program involves making cross-cultural comparisons that expose students to alternative ways of thought and behavior. Sociology is at the heart of a liberal arts education that seeks to produce informed and engaged citizens. Cultural understanding and civic engagement are two pillars of our program which are consonant with the University's mission of fostering responsible citizenship in a culturally complex world.

In addition to raising student's cultural awareness and capacity for civic engagement, the Sociology and Anthropology contributes to the University's Mission in other key ways. As a social science, sociology helps students develop information and technology literacy along with critical thinking skills. Our Research Methods and Statistics courses, which are required for all sociology majors, contribute to the University's mission of promoting quantitative literacy. Finally, there is a strong experiential learning component to our program. Students in our courses regularly take part in field exercises designed to connect theoretical concepts with observation in the real world. For example, through a partnership with the National Parks Service Ellis Island and Statue of Liberty National Monument, students make several visits to Ellis Island where they learn about the challenges facing immigrants and refugees in the past and present. Sociology courses make use of our unique urban location to help students examine issues of urban development and inequalities. Finally, there is a service learning component to our program. As students take our required Field Internship course, typically during their senior year, they learn to apply the skills and perspectives learned in the class room to real life situations and problem solving. It is clear that Sociology and Anthropology are essential to fulfilling the University's mission

Our Students

The Sociology and Anthropology Department currently serves 196 sociology majors and 107 student minors. The majority of these students (56%) intend to pursue careers in social services/social work, whereas approximately (10%) intend to pursue a career in counseling. Other prospective career paths include early childhood education/elementary education (8%), government service/public administration (5%), Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement (5%), substance abuse counseling (3%), health care (2%) and law/legal services (2%). Those students who continue their studies at the graduate level tend to pursue the Masters of Social Work (MSW) degree, with smaller numbers pursuing graduate degrees in Public Administration (MPA) and Public Health (MPH). At this time, there are only a handful of students who have expressed interest in pursuing the Ph.D. in Sociology.

Our students are racially/ethnically diverse, comprised largely of Hispanic and African/African-Americans, along with Filipinos, Egyptians and students of Middle Eastern descent. The vast majority of sociology majors are female, approximately 87%, whereas male students represent approximately 13% of our majors. Just over 40% of our sociology and anthropology majors are currently working full-time and approximately 25% are working part-time. 17% of those surveyed have been at NJCU for five or more years.

Most of our students are transfer students who began their academic careers as local community colleges. For transfer students, 4 year graduation rates are robust (approximately 50% for those who enrolled in the years 2010-2014). For incoming freshman, the picture is less sanguine, with a 4 year graduation rate of 11% (for the cohort that matriculated in 2011). Data is not available for subsequent years. The retention rates from freshman to sophomore year for 2015 cohort was 52.6%, which suggests that there is considerable room for improvement.

Curriculum Degree Map

At present, the department lacks a formal degree map for undergraduate students. Incoming freshmen are encouraged to take SOCI 111-Principles of Sociology and SOCI 113-Social Problems during their first year along with SOCI 115-Introduction to Anthropology or SOCI 241-Cultural Anthropology. These courses are foundational, exposing students to the central concepts of the discipline and how those concepts can be applied to understand some of the main challenges facing traditional and modern societies. After taking these foundational courses, students typically take SOCI 233-Introduction to Social Work, which provides them with an overview of the field of Social Work. This is usually the first course that transfer students take in the sociology curriculum. Students are then encouraged to take a series of six electives drawn from four concentrations: Crime and Social Behavior, Family Health and Youth Services, Human Service in Aging, Liberal Arts/Graduate School Preparation. Several of these elective courses overlap concentrations. During their Junior and Senior Year, students enroll in the three upper division classes: SOCI 360-Sociological Research Methods, SOCI 421-Development of Sociological Theory, and SOCI 442-Basic Statistics. In their Junior or Senior Year Students are required to do a field internship course-SOCI 443, in which they work with a social service agency to acquire new knowledge of the social work profession. Although students are advised to take courses in the aforementioned sequence, some students (particularly those changing their majors) do not take the foundational courses until their junior or senior year. Other students, despite the advice of faculty, take all three upper division courses (Research Methods, Statistics, and Theory) in one semester of their senior year.

Recommendations:

- Offer more evening, early morning, and weekend courses to accommodate student's work schedules.
- Establish clear prerequisites for middle level and upper division classes, so that all students take foundational courses before moving on to elective and upper division courses.
- Provide tutoring for upper division classes in Research Methods and Statistics.

- Develop a B.A. in Social Work, to help students attain the credential needed for employment in Social Work field.
- Eliminate concentrations within the Sociology major and require all Sociology Majors (distinct from Social Work majors) to declare a minor in a related area such as Urban Studies, Immigration/Ethnic Studies, Anthropology, or Family Studies

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

In conversation with the University Committee on Assessment and Learning (UCASL), the Sociology and Anthropology Department has identified three Student Learning Outcomes as follows in accordance with University Wide Student Learning Goals:

Students will:

- 1) Demonstrate knowledge of their disciplinary and interdisciplinary skills
- 2) Demonstrate effective writing skills
- 3) Demonstrate effective quantitative literacy skills & students will demonstrate the ability to think critically and solve problems

To assess Item #1, we have developed an exit survey for graduating seniors which will be incorporated into the graduation clearance process. Graduating seniors will be tested on their knowledge of the core concepts in the discipline of sociology including the three main sociological paradigms/perspective on society (structure-functionalism, conflict and symbolic interactionism, the major sociological thinkers (Marx, Weber and Durkheim), and Sociological Research Methods/Statistics.

We are currently developing instruments to assess items #2 and #3, involving written assignments in which students will be required to meet benchmark writing skills, and tests of students quantitative literacy skills.

Recommendations

- Administer exit survey to graduate seniors to assess their knowledge of sociological concepts
- Develop separate assessment instruments for Sociology and Social Work Majors.

Our faculty

The Sociology and Anthropology Department consists of 7 full-time faculty, 6 of who are tenured and one tenure-track. 4 of these faculty have a Ph.D in Sociology, 1 holds a Ph.D in Anthropology, 1 holds a Ph.D in Folklore, 1 holds a Ph.D. in Social Work and one holds a Masters of Social Work (MSW) degree.

In addition to these full time faculty, there are 12 part-time faculty who teach up to two courses per semester as needed. Of these 12 part time faculty, 9 taught classes during the Fall 2016

semester. Part-time faculty are not required to do advisement or hold office hours. Of these 12 adjunct faculty, 1 holds an M.A in Sociology and another holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy and currently completing his work toward the Doctorate in Sociology. Of the remaining Part-time faculty, 5 hold the M.S.W. degree, 1 holds the Masters of Public Administration (MPA) Degree and 1 holds an M.A in Public Policy. It should be noted that only 2 of the 9 part-time faculty in the department hold a graduate degree in Sociology, yet some of these part time faculty are teaching sociology courses.

Recommendations:

- Hire additional full-time tenure track faculty to teach upper division courses and raise the research profile of the department.
- Increase hiring of Hispanic and female faculty in full-time position to correspond with the ethnic and gender diversity of our student body.
- Part-time instructors teaching Social Work oriented classes should possess a Master of Social Work degree.
- Part-time instructors teaching foundational classes in Sociology and Anthropology should hold a Master's Degree specifically in the disciplines of Sociology or Anthropology
- Adjunct faculty should be recruited from Ph.D. granting programs in the local New York-New Jersey Metropolitan Area and should have proven teaching experience, with possible substitution of job experience for Social Work instructors.
- In addition to student evaluations, more effort should be made to observe part-time instructors in the classroom setting. Annual or bi-annual observations would be advisable.

Faculty Research

Over the past 7 years, the faculty of the Sociology and Anthropology Department has been focused primarily on teaching. At present, all full-time faculty are teaching a full load of 12 credits per semester. Nonetheless, some of the full-time faculty maintain an active research agenda-publishing articles and/or books and presenting at academic conferences.

It is the junior faculty at the rank of assistant and associate professor who are most actively engaged in research. Assistant Professor William Westerman currently has a manuscript under contract with Illinois University Press along with several papers submitted to peer reviewed journals. Associate Professor Max Herman published his second book *Summer of Rage: An Oral History of the 1967 Newark and Detroit Riots* with Peter Lang Publishers in September 2013. He has presented research papers on the redevelopment of public space at the annual meetings of the American Sociological Association in 2015 and 2016 and will be presenting recent research on gentrification and evictions at the 2017ASA Annual Meeting in Montreal. Dr. Herman's paper was co-authored with one of his students in the Honor's Program along with Dr. William Montgomery of the NJCU Geosciences Department.

Professor John Debrizzi has authored two full length novels, *America* and *Beatrice and Pythagoras* which are used storytelling to illustrate sociological themes of labor unrest and mixed race relationships respectively. Professor Ohiwerei continues to attend conferences on

African society and politics and recently authored an article about the 2016 presidential election for NJCU's Academic Forum journal. Dr. Fred Andes has conducted numerous evaluation research of social programs including the following landmark programs: *Hudson County Superior Court's Juvenile Drug Court Program* (the first juvenile drug court in New Jersey). Professor Andes is co-author for the following peer-reviewed treatment manuals published and distributed by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services: *Substance Abuse Treatment and Family Therapy*; and *Intensive Outpatient Treatment for Substance Abuse*.

With respect to grants, few of our department faculty are actively pursuing external grant funding opportunities. Given the heavy teaching and advising load borne by the full-time faculty it is difficult to find additional time to engage in such activities. The focus of the Grants Office seems to be more geared to STEM than to the Social Sciences, but social scientists can participate as valued members of interdisciplinary research efforts, including those of STEM faculty.

Unlike the physical sciences, we do not have dedicated lab spaces. We do offer an optional course titled "Research Lab", an extension of the Sociological Research Methods class in which students learn to do applied social science research-gathering and analyzing data. However, few students have signed up for this course, and the class is often cancelled due to low enrollment.

Recommendations:

- Offer more incentives for both senior and junior faculty to engage in research activities, e.g. course release, sabbaticals, funding to attend domestic and international conferences.
- Work more closely with the University Grant's Office to identify potential grant funding opportunities for social sciences
- Develop a research track for sociology and anthropology majors who are interested in learning about how to do applied sociological and anthropological research.
- Develop undergraduate capstone courses that enable students and faculty to work more closely doing collaborative research
- Establish a research center on Immigration and Urban Studies that would facilitate donations and grant funding opportunities, connecting the Sociology and Anthropology department with other academic disciplines such as Latin American Studies, African-American Studies, Earth and Environmental Studies, Political Science, and History.

Departmental Strengths

- Administrative Assistant-Esther Gibson
- Strong faculty focused on Social Work
- Strong focus on the Urban Experience and Urban Communities
- Certificate Program in Substance Abuse Counseling
 - -Dr. Fred Andes developed the Concentration in Alcohol & Drug Studies (which satisfies the academic requirement of New Jersey's Certified Alcohol & Drug Counselor credential), the only such program offered at 4-year colleges in New Jersey.

Weaknesses

- Lack of full-time faculty to cover courses and advisement
- Lack of gender and ethnic diversity among full-time faculty
- Only 1 full-time tenured Anthropologist
- No dedicated conference room, lack of office space

Opportunities for Growth

- Bachelors of Social Work Degree (B.S.W)
- Masters of Social Work Degree (M.S.W)
- Interdisciplinary Minors
- --Urban Studies
- -Ethnic and Immigration Studies
- Anthropology-applied anthropology, e.g. medical and forensic anthropology, museum studies
- Participation in university-wide internationalization efforts through courses in Global Social Problems, Global Cities, and through a center for Urban and Immigration Studies