

Indiana State University

2004 - 2005 Academic Annual Report

Department of Sociology

Year in Review

Accomplishments

As you have heard, increasing public awareness of Indiana State University's accomplishments is crucial to building student enrollment, influencing policy makers, and developing a place of pre-eminence in the Midwest. What do you consider to be your department's 5-10 top accomplishments for the 2004-2005 year that will help contribute to this effort?

(1) SERVICE LEARNING AND LIBERAL LEARNING IN ACTION GRANTS: Successful application/implementation of Liberal Learning in Action Grants. Professors Norman and Alvarez each received Liberal Learning in Action grants in summer 2004, fall 2004, and spring 2005. Since the institution of Focus Indiana at Indiana State University, faculty in the Sociology Department have applied for and received approximately 30% of the Liberal Learning in Action Grants. (2) HUMAN RIGHTS DAY: Successful organization/implementation of Human Rights Day. The day included presenters from across the nation, featuring nationally renowned children rights activists. Dede I was filled completely for the introductory and plenary sessions. Students, faculty, and staff from Indiana State University and Vigo County high schools attended. Highlights of the day included the play "An American Lynching: The Emmett Till Story, a march against hate, and an art and essay award ceremony. (3) SOCIOLOGY RESEARCH LAB (SRL): Dr. Steiger with the assistance of Professor Cassell had a successful year. The SRL completed about 1800 interviews, including web-based and telephone surveys. The Presidential Preference Poll for the 2004 election correctly called the election preferences of Vigo voters in both the presidential and gubernatorial election. With the additional resources of an Associate Director (James Cassell), who was sent to a conference on rural economics in October, the SRL expanded the Quality of Life Survey to beyond Vigo County (the contiguous counties, including two in Illinois) and surveyed the Wabash Valley's rural residents about their strategies for surviving difficult economic times. The collection of this high quality data will result in several conference presentation and publications. Because of past success, the SRL was able to sponsor a survey of Terre Haute residents regarding their views on the Terre Haute House. This survey continues to be cited over and over in discussion about the future of the closed hotel and has a lasting presence on the Terre Haute Tribune-Star's website. The SRL expects to complete the work on a survey of Vigo County residents regarding the problem of meth for the Terre Haute Police Department soon. The SRL is completing its first policy analysis for the Indiana Department of Education. Lap-shoulder belts are possibly going to be mandated on Indiana school buses. The SRL was contracted to assess the impact of requiring lap shoulder belts on bus routes in Indiana. (4) COLLABORATION/INTERDISCIPLINARY VENTURES WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS: Vote the Haute (Professor Norman and Dr. Baker, Director of Student Academic Services Center, coordinated Vote the Haute which involved two student facilitators, Shawn Gregg and Lindsey Brown, and every section of University 101). Second Annual Hate Conference (the Sociology Department was one of several secondary sponsors of this event which is put on by the departments of Social Work and Theater, and the Women's Studies Program--October 2004). Take Back the Night (Dr. Alvarez supported the Women's Studies Program in this effort--October 2004) Annual Colloquium on Gender and Social Justice (the Sociology Department was one of several secondary sponsors of this event which is sponsored by Women's Studies Program. Dr. Alvarez presented at the conference and facilitated a Sycamore Safe Zone training session--March 2005)

Sociology Minor for Social Work Students (Dr. Boyd, the Sociology department's academic adviser, and Robyn Lugar, the chairperson of Social Work developed a Sociology minor specifically for students in Social Work) MAPS program (throughout the academic year Professors Norman and Alvarez have served as a mentors to MAPS students) The Sociology Research Lab and the Political Science Department (The SRL is readying now for its first ever national sample survey. Working with Political Science's Bob Van Sickle, 1000 adults nationwide will be surveyed regarding their TV watching habits in regards to celebrity trials and their views of the criminal justice system as a result of those trials. The results will be published in the 2nd edition of "Tabloid Justice." The Sociology Research Lab will be participating in the Undergraduate Research Experience in Political Science this summer) (5)COLLABORATION WITH ENTITIES FROM THE TERRE HAUTE/VIGO COMMUNITY: Underground Railroad Re-enactment (Professors Norman and Alvarez supported the Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Coalition in this effort--September 2005) Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Coalition Luncheon (Professor Norman attended the luncheon and the Sociology department sponsored a table at the luncheon--January 2005) Terre Haute Youth NAACP (in summer 2004, Professors Norman and Alvarez helped the Youth NAACP to raise money so that the high school students could attend their national conference). Emmett Till Commemorative Coalition (in the fall 2004, Professors Norman and Alvarez helped to plan/implement events on campus and off of campus to commemorate the life and death of Emmett Till. Experiential Learning (taking students to conferences) (6)FACULTY DIRECTED RESEARCH: Drs. Alvarez and Steiger continued to give undergraduate students multiple opportunities to participate in both applied and traditional scholarship. (7) HIGH QUALITY ADVISING: The College of Arts and Sciences has recognized the department of Sociology as being one of the leaders in high-quality developmental advising. Dr. Boyd is the academic adviser for the department and advises all majors and minors. He also serves as a college-wide adviser for the CAS during Sycamore Advantage. This past year, Dr. Boyd worked with three other academic advisers (in CAS) to develop and facilitate training modules for academic advisers that were run in conjunction with CAS Council of Academic Advisers. Dr. Boyd also is participating in a CAS pilot to develop and test appropriate ways in which to utilize pin numbers in a developmental advising scheme. As a result of Dr. Boyd's skill as an academic adviser, students who enter into the Sociology department as late as their junior year are "retained" and "efficiently" matriculate. HETEROGENOUS STUDENT BODY AND GRADUATING CLASS (The university would be hard-pressed to find (proportionately) a more heterogeneous "senior class" in any other program on this campus. Within that group of 17 majors enrolled in SOC 499, The Senior Seminar, were 6 males; 4 African Americans; 2 students w/ physical limitations; ages from early 20's to mid-late 40's (or more??); single/married/partnered; with/without children and grandchildren; some cum and magna cum laude's, some who met the minimum requirements to graduate; some who have been w/ the department continuously for 4 years, others for only a year; some directly entering the workforce having now completed their formal education, and others for whom this is just the first rung of a taller ladder of higher educational pursuits; some staying locally, others headed far away and unlikely to return; some who are a pleasure to encounter anywhere/anytime, and others who present continuous challenges to our interaction skills. I would also assert that this group is not atypical for us).

Grants, Contracts & Off Campus Professional Service

What is your assessment of accomplishments in the area of grants, contracts, and off campus professional service? Are you satisfied overall? In which areas do you feel your department does particularly well? In which areas do you feel your department needs to improve?

Dr. Steiger with the assistance of Professor Cassell had a successful year. The SRL completed about 1800 interviews, including web-based and telephone surveys. While there have been years where more interviews were completed, the quality of the work done this year is what stands out. The Presidential Preference Poll for the 2004 election involved over 750 interviews and correctly called

the election preferences of Vigo voters in both the presidential and gubernatorial election. With the additional resources of an Associate Director (James Cassell), who was sent to a conference on rural economics in October, the SRL expanded the Quality of Life Survey to beyond Vigo County (the contiguous counties, including two in Illinois) and surveyed the Wabash Valley's rural residents about their strategies for surviving difficult economic times. This data is far beyond the quality of the other Quality of Life Surveys and will result in several conference presentation and publications. The data was collected by the students in SOC380/PSCI245 and SOC280. Because of past success, the SRL was able to sponsor a survey of Terre Haute residents regarding their views on the Terre Haute House. Most opinion polls completed by the SRL have little shelf life, but the Terre Haute House survey has been cited over and over in discussion about the future of the closed hotel and has a lasting presence on the Terre Haute Tribune-Star's website (as does the Quality of Life Survey). The SRL expects to complete the work on a survey of Vigo County residents regarding the problem of meth for the Terre Haute Police Department soon. The SRL is completing its first policy analysis for the Indiana Department of Education. Lap-shoulder belts are possibly going to be mandated on Indiana school buses. The SRL was contracted to assess the impact of requiring lap shoulder belts on bus routes in Indiana. By June 30th, the close of this fiscal year, the SRL's total income should reach \$8350 (\$7000 in external monies). The SRL paid out about \$2500 in wages to student callers this year.

Best Practices

Describe the progress your unit has made thus far. Were you able to take these steps? What steps or goals have been particularly difficult to achieve and why? What practices, actions, initiatives are you doing that could be considered eminent?

Although the department is relatively small (1 full professor, 1 associate professor, 2 tenured assistant professors, 2 pre-tenured assistant professors, and 1 full-time temporary faculty member) and soon to be smaller (both of the pre-tenured faculty members and the full-time temporary faculty member will not be returning for AY2006), it has managed to continue to do the following things more than well: (1) Faculty-directed research leading to student papers presented at regional, national, and international conferences and even acceptances into graduate school (Drs. Alvarez and Steiger). (2) Well-established internship program that includes a required course (SOC 329 Applied Sociology) that must be taken prior to enrollment in an internship (SOC 489 Sociological Internship and Fieldwork) (Professor Norman). Six students enrolled in internships in the AY2004-2005. Students placed in not-for-profit agencies (e.g., Hyte Center and Council on Domestic Abuse) and governmental agencies (e.g., Child Protective Services and the Human Rights Commission). (3) Highly successful experiential learning and social justice service learning initiatives (Professors Norman and Alvarez). SEE BELOW Fall 2004: THE HUNGER PROJECT: THINK GLOBALLY AND ACT LOCALLY (Norman) Spring 2005: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ADVOCACY (Norman and Alvarez) Spring 2005: NEIGHBORHOOD BUILDING THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (Hamm and Norman) Spring 2005: AN AMERICAN LYNCHING: THE EMMETT TILL STORY (Alvarez and Norman) (4) High quality developmental advising (Dr. Boyd); and, as a result, the retention and matriculation of a diverse group of students. 20 students graduated with majors in Sociology in the AY 2004-2005 May 05 grads (n=12) Christi Arnold, Alex Cisneros, Linda Everly, Dana Kadel, Christina Knight, Brooke Kinser, Karen Mason, Jeremy McClendon, Shellie McGuinness, Jessica Stefancik, Nathan Turner, Josh West. Kinser and Stefancik graduated w/ honors The average cumulative g.p.a. was approximately 3.2 for the twelve spring graduates. Three of the twelve have been accepted and plan to begin graduate school in fall 2005: B.Kinser, J.Stefancik, J.West. (Cisneros has applied pending for Ball St; Arnold has indefinite plans to continue in about 1 yr, same for Knight.) Stefancik and West will continue at Indiana State University; Kinser either Kansas State or University of Western Georgia (accepted at both). All others intend at this point to enter work force. Dec 04 grads (n=5) Nathan Cole, Lindsay Jacobs,

Brett Overbey, Andrew Sweitzer, Mark Wilson. Aug 04 3 (n=3): Amber Happe, Shuntika Robinson, Dawn Wimberly

Student Credit Hours

What did you learn? What steps will you take during 2004-05 to meet your department's student credit hour target by fall 2005?

The Sociology Department continues to meet its student credit hour (SCH) targets. However, this in large part is due to the fact that Dr. Steiger teaches a 200 seat section of SOC 100, which offsets under-enrolled courses. This year, the department has worked to ensure that each faculty member begins to carry their fair share of the SCH load. In fall 2005, each faculty member will be teaching either a SOC 100 (with an enrollment of at least 80) or several sections of SOC 110 (with an enrollment of 30--increased from 25 in AY 2004-2005). Moreover, Dr. Tryban spent this year creating an international cultures course that will be offered online (SOC 210, formally SOC 465 Comparative Societies) and she plans to transform her section of SOC 100 so that it too can be offered online. Together these initiatives should result with the Sociology Department's SCH load being more evenly distributed across faculty.

Budget

Identify and describe any collaborative efforts that have been undertaken by your department with other academic or administrative units to maximize resources to meet departmental goals. Please also consider collaborative opportunities with external partners.

Human Rights Day (Sociology + African American Studies, Social Work, Theater, Women's Studies) Sociology Research Lab (Sociology + Center for Public Service and Engagement, Criminology, First Year Programs, Social Studies Education, Political Science) Vote the Haute (Sociology + Student Academic Services Center)

Outreach

What are the outreach opportunities for your discipline? (non-traditional modes of delivery and timing, etc)

Dr. Tryban spent this year creating an international cultures course that when approved will be offered online (SOC 210, formally SOC 465 Comparative Societies) and she plans to transform her section of SOC 100 so that it too can be offered online to "true" distance education students.

Assessment

For each program in the department, provide one or two examples of how the program is using assessment and evaluation (student outcomes, program review, and/or accreditation) to enhance student learning and program strength this year.

The Sociology department has banked its MA/MS programs and therefore is not conducting student outcomes assessment in these areas. The Sociology department currently is working on fine tuning a formal student outcomes assessment plan that it will implement in fall 2005 and spring 2006. However, through ad hoc assessment and informal feed back from students and interested parties from other departments, the Sociology department decided to change the number of credit hours assigned to SOC 280 and SOC 499. Previously, SOC 280 was 4 credit hours and SOC 499 was 2 credit hours. In spring 2005, the department initiated a series of curriculum revisions that would change the credit hours for each course to 3.0. In addition, Dr. Steiger completed the following assessment of the impact of Sociology General Education offerings on enrollment in the Sociology Major. Below is an abbreviated version of the assessment: I've conducted a first level transcript

analysis of all soc majors/minors since 200201 including 200501. Of 155 majors/minors, 23 came in without any ISU soc courses; 18 declared after first soc course, (11 took 100/120, 5 took 220, 2 took 110). 15 declared after their second soc course, leaving at least 99, which took at least three SOC courses before declaring. Most common lower division third courses were, 110—2, 120—7, 220—20, 240—14, 260—9 Of 97 majors, 19 came to the major without taking any soc courses as a non-major The base year for this analysis was 200201. In that semester we had 96 majors and minors. As of 200501, we have 44 majors and minors. We added 19 majors/minors in 200205, 9 in 200301, 19 in 200305, 16 in 200401, 7 in 200405, and 5 in 200501. 7 of 30 students who have taken 100 in the auditorium setting have gone on to major/minor in soc. That accounts for 23% of our majors/minors. Since 200201, we have taught 2689 students in 100 on the ISU campus. 54% of those in classrooms of 80 seats or less, 40% in the big 200 seat auditorium, and 5% at night. Overall, just 1% of those students have gone on to major or minor in soc. But 1.5% of those in the 80 seat classrooms have gone on to major or minor, while only 0.6% have gone on to major/minor from the auditorium sections, and none from the night sections. If the auditorium sections yielded what the regular section classes do, we would have had 9 more major/minors and if the night section yielded what the regular sessions do, we would have 2 more majors/minor. Thus, one could conclude we have 11 fewer majors/minors because of the manner in which we offer our courses. Since 200201, 42% of the combined enrollments of 110, 220, 240, and 260 have been in 110. However, 110's yield of majors is very poor compared to the other lower division courses, only 2.4% of 110 students have had 100/120 and then go on to major or minor in sociology, compared to 16.8% for 220, 15.1% for 240, and 10.7% for 260. Of course, it is known that 110 fills up quickly with juniors and seniors who are much less likely to choose a different major/minor at that stage of their academic career. However, for the current yield to be the average of the other three courses, it would mean 85% of the 110 students are juniors or seniors. If 110 is not yielding any majors or minors, then it might be time to reconsider the large auditorium section of 100 given its lower yield as well or try to limit enrollment of 110 to freshmen and sophomores. Finally, what strikes me the most about this analysis is that our yield is so low from the initial course of 100. It would be interesting to know how many students who take 100 ever take another soc course. We might want to examine that. Given that there doesn't seem to be a well-worn path from 100 to declaring the major or minor, that means that variety is probably the key. We used to be able to offer a pretty good variety of courses at a variety of times for students (several sections of 220, 240, 260, 322, 324). I think we need the international cultures course to expand our variety.

Strategic Initiatives

Experiential Learning

Please provide examples of experiential learning in which your department was engaged in 2004-2005.

(1) The Hunger Project: Think Globally and Act Locally (Fall 2004) Professors Norman and Alvarez (Sociology) Several sections of SOC 110 (U.S. Diversity) and one section of WE 200 (Introduction to Women's Studies--Professor Schneider) (2) The Rights of the Child (Spring 2005) Professors Norman (Sociology) and Hamm (Criminology) Several sections of SOC 110 (3) An American Lynching the Emmett Till Story (Spring 2005) Professors Alvarez and Norman (Sociology) Several sections of SOC 100 and SOC 110 (4) Midwest Student Sociology Conference (Spring 2005) Professor Zajac Three students attended (Christi Arnold, Jamie Bennett, and Brooke Kinser) (5) Quality of Life Survey (Spring 2005) Professors Steiger and Cassell--Sociology Research Lab Quality of Life Survey expanded this year to include the counties contiguous to Vigo County. The data was collected by students in SOC 380/PSCI 245 and SOC 280. (6) Best Use of a Survey (Spring 2005) Professor Steiger The Sociology Research Lab introduced the "Best Use of a Survey" award for the first time this spring. The award is presented to participants in the annual West Central

Regional Science Fair (middle school and high school students compete). This year, two students received the award: one at the middle division (\$50.00) and one at the senior division (\$75.00). These awards were the only special awards in the Social and Behavioral Sciences Division.

(7) Undergraduate Research Experience in Political Science (Summer 2005) Professors Scott, Chambers, Perry, and Erisman (Political Science) and Professor Steiger (Sociology) The ten students participating in the Undergraduate Research Experience will have the opportunity to utilize the Sociology Research Lab.