An Assessment Plan of the Sociology Program at Illinois Wesleyan University

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**Stage 1:** The Sociology faculty members met to develop ideas relevant for an assessment plan of the program. These ideas include:
- Writing
- Verbal communication skills
- Teamwork
- Leadership
- Initiative
- Using statistics to conduct qualitative research
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- Using library material
- Examining the relationships between social structure, culture, and social policy
- Understanding how individuals and society affect one another
- Examination of diverse societies and consequences of differences between different groups of people
- Using computer software for data analysis
- Understanding sociological theory
- Understanding of basic sociology concepts and applying them
- Interacting with diverse groups
- Off-campus experience

**Stage 2:** Development of student learning goals and objectives. Examples include:

Goal: The discipline of sociology
- Describe how sociology relates to a liberal arts understanding of social reality.
- Describe how sociology compares to other social sciences.
- Apply sociological principles to others’ experiences.

Goal: The dynamics of culture and social structure
- Understand how culture and social structure are constructed.
- Examine the interrelationships between social structure, culture, and policy.
- Understand how institutions simultaneously shape individuals in society.

Goal: The role of theory in sociology
- Define theory and describe its role in building sociological knowledge.
- Compare and contrast basic theoretical orientations.
- Show how theories reflect the historical context of times and cultures.
- Describe and apply some basic theories in multiple areas of social reality.

Goal: Qualitative and quantitative methods in sociology
- Identify basic methodological approaches and the general role of methods.
- Compare and contrast the basic methodological approaches for gathering data.
- Use computer software for data analysis.
- Complete a research paper from conceptualization to analysis and reporting.
- Critically assess the methods used in a sociological research report.
- Apply the principles of ethical practice as a sociologist.

Goal: U.S. and global diversity
- Examine the consequences of differences within and among diverse societies.
- Know how to appropriately generalize or resist generalizations across groups.

Goal: Critical thinking skills in sociology
- Identify underlying assumptions in particular theoretical orientations.
- Identify underlying assumptions in particular methodological approaches.
- Identify the relationship between patterns of thought and social structures.
- Present differing viewpoints and alternative hypotheses on various issues.

**Stage 3:** Surveys were sent to alum and current students. Examples of questions include:
Please indicate how well your Sociology courses have helped you develop the following skills and abilities.