

Strategic Planning (Department of Sociology)

Goal # 1

Provide a quality program grounded in liberal arts that cultivate active learning, critical thinking and encourage communication among the student and faculty members.

Measurable Objective # 1

Continue to refine the department's mission statement and goals on yearly basis.

Strategies:

- / Organize once in each academic year, a department retreat for the purpose of updating mission statement goals and measurable objectives.
- / Present, on a yearly basis, an updated Strategic Action Plan to the Dean, CSBS for approval.

Measurable Objective # 2

Encourage the integration of instructional technology in departmental courses by a certain amount each year.

Strategies:

- / Continue to promote the recognition of college faculty for their efforts to integrate instructional technology especially in general education courses.
- / Secure and maintain modern teaching technology equipment for all of our classrooms
- / Reward those faculty members who integrate instructional technology in their courses through tenure, promotion, and merit review processes.

Measurable Objective # 3

Encourage the department's curriculum committee to conduct a needs assessment to identify current and future trends, in an effort to identify the desirability and feasibility of offering additional courses in undergraduate and graduate programs.

Strategies:

- / Develop proposals for undergraduate and graduate programs for presentation to the university administration.

- / Identify regional relevant interdisciplinary degree programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Measurable Objective # 4

To incorporate additional writing skills and additional critical thinking skills into lower-level courses in the next five (5) years.

Strategies:

- / Utilize and involve the University Writing Center and the Faculty Development Council in faculty teaching.
- / Promote the participation of our faculty in recitation sessions and other forms of enrichment instruction for developing student skills in writing and critical thinking, and reward faculty in merit, tenure, and promotion reviews for these efforts.

Measurable Objective # 5

Continue to maintain and Increase College enrollment in the Honors Studies Program during the next five (5) years.

Strategies:

- / Promote the Honors Studies Program through the Orientation Programs.
- / Collaborate with Honors Council to develop recruitment strategies for the Honors Studies Program.

Measurable Objective # 6

Develop and implement appropriate teacher preparation programs.

Strategies:

- / Co-ordinate with Teacher Education Committee and the University Curriculum committee in implementing appropriate social and behavioral sciences teacher certification degrees and promote Sociology courses.

Measurable Objectives # 7

Increase graduate course offerings from four courses per semester to five courses per semester in five years.

Strategies

- / Encourage graduate faculty members who are not currently teaching

- / graduate courses to begin or resume teaching in their areas of expertise.
- / Seek approval from the University for a released time policy that encourages graduate teaching.
- / Seek approval from the University to hire a tenure-track or tenured professor who can fill the current teaching gaps in our graduate program.

Goal # 2

To recruit, retain, and develop highly qualified faculty by providing an environment that promotes excellence in teaching, research, service, and student success.

Currently, the department is not anticipating any faculty position in the near future but if that situation arises, we will have the following measurable objectives and strategies.

Measurable Objective # 1

Invite the number of applicants from doctoral/research-extensive universities.

Strategies:

- / Continue to develop networking arrangements with Sociology departments at research universities.

Measurable Objective # 2

Continue to increase the number of qualified faculty applicants per academic vacancy.

Strategies:

- / Work with administration to increase funds for position advertising and for interviewing expenses.
- / Promote competitive salaries and salary scales.
- / Continue to request and support 25% workload adjustments for new faculty in support of scholarship/research during their first academic year and also request additional faculty manpower to support these incentives
- / Continue to request and support start-up funds for new faculty with an approved grant or with an approved research plan.
- / Work with departments and search committees to ensure that searches are conducted in a timely manner.

Measurable Objective # 3

Maintain and increase the retention of new faculty in five (5) years.

Strategies:

- / Provide orientation/consultation time for new tenure-track faculty.
- / Continue to work with administration in maintaining equitable and competitive salaries.
- / Work with administration to continue to provide opportunities for faculty members to develop professionally throughout their careers.
- / Allocate undergraduate and graduate student assistantships to support faculty research efforts
- / Work with administration to continue current efforts of providing research incentives and other research/scholarship enhancement seed money.
- / Continue to work with the Office of Sponsored Research to support faculty research/scholarship efforts.
- / Continue to encourage Sociology faculty to interact with the Faculty Development Council.
- / Promote the faculty's use of the Center for Distance Learning and Teaching Excellence to promote technology-based delivery of instruction.
- / Continue to recognize and reward, at the College level, outstanding faculty for their contributions to teaching effectiveness, professional achievement/scholarship, and professional service.
- / Continue efforts to provide needed physical resources to support faculty instruction and ongoing research.
- / Continue to promote access to essential learning resources to support the educational, research, and public service programs of the university.
- / Expand the current efforts of working with other colleges to provide instructional support for science and engineering curriculum.
- / Work with Administration to adopt the Regents Rules of a 9-hr workload to promote the faculty enhancement professional workload

Goal # 3

Facilitate excellence in scholarship, research and /or creative activities for the enhancement of knowledge that can be shared with the public through presentations, publications and performance

Measurable Objective # 1

Increase the number of faculty members who have developed a 3-year plan/proposal for scholarship by 100% in five (5) years, using the merit document of 2000-2001 as the base line.

Measurable Objective # 2

Achieve at least 80% of the tenured and tenure track faculty designated as graduate faculty during the next five years.

Measurable Objective # 3

Increase the number of applications for sponsored grants to five (5) by one application per year, using the base line data from the 2000-2001 merit document for the next five (5) years.

Measurable Objective # 4

Achieve 2 funded sponsored grants obtained by Sociology faculty out of 5 for the next five (5) years.

Measurable Objective # 5

Provide adequate release time for the faculty members who are teaching courses on a regular basis in the Master's program.

Strategies:

- / Promote the concept of a research culture.
- / Solidify the research agendas of the faculty members and continue to explore expansion into new areas of research.
- / Continue to seek funding to acquire larger numbers of student assistants for research.
- / Work with the administration to seek higher funding for the Faculty Research Council.
- / Support faculty efforts to publish their research findings and to present their work at conferences and symposia.
- / Participate in faculty colloquium series events.
- / Continue to reward faculty members for scholarship/research efforts.
- / Continue to work with the Office of Sponsored Projects to increase research proposal solicitation.
- / Increase efforts of Outreach Committee to work with External Affairs personnel so as to increase community, private sector, and foundation support of research.
- / Work with administration to bring a lecture series featuring nationally recognized scholars/researchers.
- / Continue to seek adjustments to the workload policy that promote the research efforts of the faculty members.
- / Acquire additional monies for advancing the research agenda of the faculty members.

Measurable Objectives # 6

Increase faculty academic presentations and publications.

Strategies

- / Promote the concept of a research culture through encouraging departmental, interdepartmental, and University colloquia featuring scholars from both the University and outside the University and occasionally bringing in Visiting Faculty who would be interested in teaching and living on the US-Mexico border for an academic year.
- / Recognize and reward faculty members for their scholarship, creativity, and research within at the department, college, and University level.
- / Seek adequate travel funding from the University in order to allow faculty to travel to at least one national and one regional academic meeting or conference per year. At the same time, develop department guidelines for travel funding that reward publication and presentation.
- / Support a faculty workload policy that encourages scholarly research.

Measurable Objectives # 7

Increase faculty scholarly presentations and writing for the public.

Strategies

- / Recognize and reward faculty for their presentations (both oral and written) of their academic work to the community.

Goal # 4

To encourage and support ongoing professional, university, and community service activities by faculty and students that enhance the quality of life of a multicultural diverse learning community.

Measurable Objective # 1

Create and increase opportunities for Sociology faculty and students to be involved in professional development activities in the next five (5) years.

Strategies:

- / Provide funding for Sociology faculty members to attend professional conferences and workshops.

- / Provide funding for Sociology majors to attend student academic competitions, conferences and leadership activities.

Measurable Objective # 2

Enhance community services by Sociology faculty and Sociology majors during the next five years.

Strategies:

- / Re-activate sociology club to participate in community Service projects.
- / Develop course credit for structured student activities

Measurable Objectives # 3

Further develop faculty service to the students and the community.

Strategies

- / Revive the now dormant Sociology Club to include both graduate and undergraduate students with strong faculty sponsorship.
- / Make the Sociology Club a departmental vehicle for community service.
- / Recognize and reward faculty sponsorship and contribution to the Sociology Club.

Goal # 5

To provide effective student recruitment, development, retention, and placement programs designed to promote and serve a diverse student population.

Measurable Objective # 1

Meet enrollment targets as set by the department chair in accordance within the framework of the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan.

Strategies:

- / Finalize articulation agreements with community and technical colleges.
- / Use concurrent enrollment and other college preparation programs as a recruitment tool.
- / Continue to expand the role of the University Retention Advisement Program (URAP) in the departmental recruitment activities.
- / Create and maintain updated departmental website with enrollment information

- / Departmental Enrollment Committee will be set up that is continue to work with the Division of Enrollment and Student Services, Office of Outreach and Recruitment Services.

Measurable Objective # 2

Increase departmental efforts to engage in ongoing recruiting activities during the next five (5) years

Strategies:

- / Reward the Sociology faculty involved in student recruitment activities through merit, tenure, and promotion considerations.

Measurable Objective # 3

Increase departmental faculty involvement in student development activities in the next five(5) years

Strategies:

- / Coordinate with other departmental development programs and activities designed to promote and serve a diverse student population.
- / Reward faculty who participate in student development activities.
- / Involve counseling office
- / Introduce speaker series
- / Set up workshops and fairs
- / Provide more opportunities for coops, internships, and volunteer activities for Sociology majors.

Measurable Objective # 4

Maintain and increase the six-year graduation rate for Sociology majors during the next five (5) years.

Strategies:

- / Continue to expand the role of URAP in various retention activities, such the Early Warning System.
- / Improve the orientation and advisement efforts of Sociology faculty
- / Develop and expand the departmental recruitment programs to community level.

Measurable Objective # 5

Faculty involvement should be encouraged in the placement of graduates entering graduate and professional school or employment related to their degree in the next five (5) years.

Strategies:

- / Coordinate with the office of Career Placement Services to develop or expand placement programs designed to promote and serve a diverse student population
- / Develop strategies for tracking the number of students in each discipline who are successfully placed in jobs or accepted in graduate or doctoral programs after graduation.

Measurable Objectives # 6

Increase faculty contact with graduate students.

Strategies

- / Encourage graduate faculty members who are not currently teaching graduate courses to begin or resume teaching in their areas of expertise.
- / Encourage graduate faculty to have students participate in regional academic meetings.
- / Seek funding for students to attend regional academic meetings.
- / Develop a departmental or college-level colloquium where faculty can share their scholarship with graduate students as well as undergraduate students and other faculty.
- / Use faculty participation in the Sociology Club as a means of sharing research with graduate students as well as undergraduate students.

Measurable Objectives # 7

Increase graduate admissions.

Strategies

- / Use the Sociology Club and its activities to recruit undergraduates into our graduate program.
- / Encourage graduate faculty members to use their social networks to recruit graduate students from the community.
- / Evaluate admissions requirements on a yearly basis to keep them in congruence with UTPA Graduate School admission requirements.

Measurable Objectives # 8

Increase graduate student retention.

Strategies

- / Create a Sociology Graduate Program Policy Manual that clearly states graduation requirements.
- / Regularly evaluate graduation requirements.
- / Encourage the graduate faculty to actively mentor graduate students.
- / Evaluate graduate advising on a regular basis.
- / Increase graduate course availability.
- / Encourage the University to increase its funding for graduate research assistantships in the Department of Sociology.

Measurable Objectives # 9

Increase the number of research assistantships for graduate students in the Department of Sociology from zero to three in five years.

Strategies

- / Seek funding for the assistantships from the University.

Measurable Objectives # 10

Assess student learning.

Strategies

- / Create a Sociology Graduate Program Policy Manual that addresses assessment procedures for student learning.
- / Regularly evaluate the assessment process.

Measurable Objectives # 11

Create a student lounge/work area for sociology graduate students with a small library reading tables and chairs, and computer equipment.

Strategies

- / Reallocate existing departmental space or secure additional space from the College.
- / Reallocate existing or surplus furniture and equipment.
- / Solicit contributions of books and periodicals from graduate faculty members.
- / Seek external funding for library material, furniture, and, computer equipment.

Goal # 6

To develop and coordinate an ongoing planning, evaluation, and dissemination process designed to ensure academic excellence.

Measurable Objective # 1

Review and enhance the systematic planning and evaluation process of the department during the next five years.

Strategies:

- / Establish learning outcomes for the department
- / Review and enhance, on a yearly basis, the planning and evaluation process for the department.
- / Review the current methods of assessing teaching effectiveness.
- / Design and produce a comprehensive planning and evaluation document for the department.

Measurable Objective # 2

Review the assessment of the program to complete the cycle of continued improvement during the next five years.

Strategies:

- / Identify audiences.
- / Develop reporting mechanisms and formats.

Measurable Objective # 3

Implement a systematic cycle of reporting results of academic assessment during the next five (5) years.

Strategies:

- / Produce progress reports for various audiences.
- / Post information on the department Website.
- / Involve the department of Art and graphics

Goal # 7

To identify, increase availability of, and ensure appropriate utilization of resources that support faculty and students.

Measurable Objective # 1

Increase the number of proposal applications for external funding.

Strategies:

- / Actively seek and disseminate information about sources of funding that will benefit our faculty and students.
- / Encourage the faculty to apply for external funding to support our program, research efforts, creative activities, and student involvement.

Measurable Objective # 2

Increase the number of contacts between the Sociology Departments and community businesses/organizations during the next five years

Strategy:

- / Collaborate with the Division of External Affairs to identify community resources.

Measurable Objective # 3

Develop a formula for the allocation of travel funds to departments.

Strategy:

- / Continue to use the present formula.

Measurable Objective # 4

Increase the amount of external funding received from successful grant in the next five years

Strategy:

- / Request the appropriate departments to provide assistance to the faculty in developing applications for external funding.

Measurable Objective # 5

Increase available student and faculty research space.

Strategies:

- / Work with the appropriate University committees to add a computer laboratory.
- / Work with the appropriate University committees for faculty and student research laboratory space.

Measurable Objectives # 6

Increase library spending for books and journals in the field of sociology.

Strategies

- / Encourage more communication between the University Library staff and the Department of Sociology faculty.
- / Seek appropriate funding from the University.

Goal # 8

To provide academic leadership for the Sociology Department

Measurable Objective # 1

Maintain the level of involvement of the department chair in the departmental issues in the next five years

Strategies:

- / Document planning efforts by the department chair and academic committees of the department.

Measurable Objective # 2

Maintain the level of communication among the faculty members in the next five years.

Strategies:

- / Maintain the department Web site as a resource
- / Design, produce, and disseminate a state-of-the-department report annually.