Objectives, Goals, and Student Learning Outcomes
of the Degree Programs in Sociology and Criminology

Objectives of the Degree Program:

1. Provide instruction to enable students to understand human behavior within a social context.

2. Help students achieve competence in understanding, critically assessing, and using major sociological concepts.

3. Make students knowledgeable consumers and producers of research applicable to social problems or issues.

4. Introduce students to the varied theoretical perspectives of sociology.

5. Encourage in students an appreciation and respect for cultural diversity in societies.

Goals of the Degree Program:

Our objectives move us toward the goals of CHASS and CALS as they relate to social science knowledge, understanding, and application. In both colleges, effective service and engagement are seen as requiring the abilities to (a) examine the roles and responsibilities of individuals, groups, and institutions in larger society; (b) understand the complex relationships between human behavior and social context; and (c) extrapolate about the consequences of current patterns of social organization. We also believe that our students, as citizens, must be knowledgeable producers and consumers of social science information, no matter what career paths or educational directions they may take.

Outcomes of the Degree Program

Students should be able to demonstrate:

1. An understanding of human behavior within a social context. Specifically, students should be able to demonstrate that they can:
   
   a. examine the roles and responsibilities of individuals, groups, and institutions in larger society, displaying understanding of the complex relationships between human behavior and the social context; and
   
   b. analyze human behavior within a social context from different perspectives.

2. Competence in understanding, critically assessing, and using major sociological concepts. Specifically students should be able to demonstrate that they can:
   
   a. define major sociological concepts involved in understanding social behavior, interaction and organization; and
b. apply major sociological concepts to specific situations, showing that they are able to (i) use the concepts to organize and make sense of what they find in specific situations and (ii) use specific situations to exemplify, amplify, and critique major sociological concepts.

3. That they are knowledgeable consumers and producers of research findings applicable to sociological problems or issues. Specifically, students should be able to demonstrate that they can:
   a. critique sociological research reported in popular or scholarly publications by describing the research problem, methodology, and results and making persuasive cases for the strengths and weaknesses of each; and
   b. propose a plan of research for a sociological problem or issue, including conceptualization of the problem, review of pertinent literature, design of a research study, and identification of methods appropriate for exploring the problem or issue.

4. Familiarity with various theoretical perspectives of sociology. Specifically, students should be able to demonstrate that they can:
   a. recognize various theoretical perspectives of sociology;
   b. describe and critically analyze the assumptions that underlie particular theoretical perspectives; and
   c. apply various theoretical perspectives to issues in society, showing how a perspective frames each issue, i.e., how we understand the issue, the kinds of questions we can ask about it, and the kinds of research methods we can apply to answering the questions.

5. An appreciation and respect for cultural diversity in societies. Specifically, students should be able to demonstrate that they:
   a. are aware of and comprehend the views of various social groups; and
   b. understand social groups in various societies in terms of differences in socio-cultural resources and outcomes.