

**Report on the Signature Assignment in Introduction to Sociology Courses**  
**Core Objective: Social Responsibility**  
**Sociology Program**  
**Spring 2016**

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During the Spring 2016 semester, students in all Introduction to Sociology courses were required to complete the Signature Assignment for the Core Objective in Social Responsibility, as mandated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). This included 904 undergraduates enrolled in nine courses taught by two full-time faculty members and five adjuncts. On average, the grade distribution across all sections (lecture and online) for the Core Objective in Social Responsibility was as follows: A's=51%, B's=29%, C's=13%, D's=4%, and F's=3%.

The Sociology Program has been administering the Signature Assignment across all four Core Objectives since Fall 2014. Full-time faculty selected the "individual" rather than "communal" option-meaning that we were responsible for (1) developing measures that map onto the four Core Objectives, (2) making them available to all students in all Introduction to Sociology courses, and (3) tracking student academic performances. Our measure for Social Responsibility is based on a handout that was provided to faculty during the Spring 2013 semester, which states that assessments in this area must "include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities" (Texas Core Curriculum 2014, Chapter 4 B§4.28-4.31). Consequently, demonstrating competence in "social responsibility" in Introduction to Sociology courses requires students to exhibit an understanding of complex social issues, as well as display knowledge on the role that various social forces play in shaping life experiences across individuals and groups.

Students were presented with 12 of the 21 items comprising the test bank for Social Responsibility. (In past semesters, faculty had the option to include more items.) To successfully complete the Signature Assignment, students had to correctly answer multiple choice questions related to newspaper articles, short films, graphs, and demonstrate an awareness of civic and cultural issues from a sociological perspective. They were required to complete the test in two hours, but were permitted to use their class notes and textbook. A copy of our measure for Social Responsibility is contained within the Appendix to this report.

The Sociology Program's threshold for student mastery is 70%. We arrived at this decision with input from Dr. Kim Van Noort-a former Associate Dean in the College of Liberal Arts-who initially led the implementation of Undergraduate Core Curriculum Revisions. During the Spring 2016 semester, 93% of our students either met or surpassed this baseline for performance. Section numbers for courses comprising the total list of courses administered the Signature Assignment in Social Responsibility include:1311-001, 1311-002, 1311-003, 1311-004,1311-005,1311-006,1311-007,1311-700, and 1311- 701.

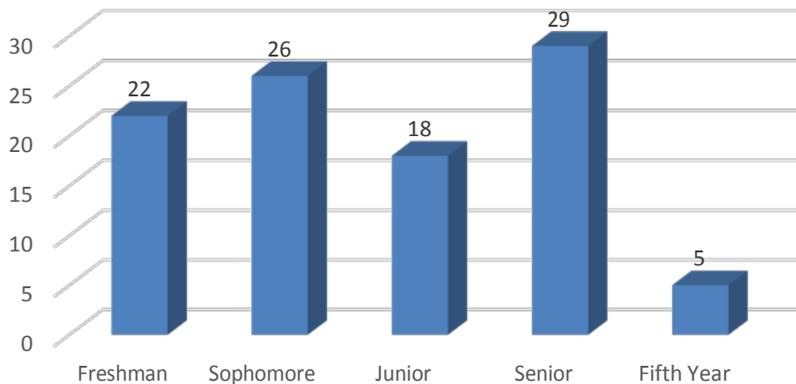
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**Student Demographics**

Those who completed the Signature Assignment in Intro to Sociology courses represented a range of student levels from freshmen to fifth year seniors (22% freshmen, 26% sophomore, 18% junior, 29% senior, 5% fifth-year). Because of the large transfer population at UT Arlington, there is an even split between undergraduates in their first two years of college and those classified as upper division (for example, having completed about half of the credit hours required for a baccalaureate degree).

**Percent of students by College Level**



Signature Assignments were completed by students across disciplines. Over half were from the College of Nursing and Health Innovation. This is not surprising, given the large number of students served by this "high-in-demand" program. The representation from each of the ten Schools and Colleges at UT Arlington provides an adequate sample from which to gather evidence of the attainment of Social Responsibility here at the university.

**Percent of students by School/College/Department**

