

Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology Graduate Programs

Gerontology Mission Statement

The Gerontology program seeks to provide students with the knowledge of research and theory in the field of aging along with the skills necessary for continued success in academic and work place environments. The MA degree program provides a solid understanding of typical age-related changes and how these affect a person physiologically, psychologically, and socially. Successful completion of this interdisciplinary course sequence leads to applied competencies that provide the student with sensitivity to the aging process as well as the ability to understand cultural diversity of older adults and families. Majors also obtain skills for preparation and presentation of research, skills related to researching, understanding of ethical issues in aging, and practical work experience within the aging network.

Sociology Graduate Program Mission Statement

It is the purpose of the Sociology Graduate program to expose students to the distinctive ways in which sociologists and sociological traditions have examined human group behavior. Our aim is to help students examine diverse sociological perspectives and come to understand their historical traditions; to teach students unique methods of inquiry; and, to expose students to sub-fields in the discipline in an effort to provide for them an area of expertise. In the process, we strive to teach students general problem-solving skills and help them develop independent and critical thinking skills. Further, a broad range of public service activities that contribute to social life and an affirmation of the equal dignity of each person are promoted. All of this is done to enhance the lives of our students and to prepare them for success in academic and workplace environments.

Gerontology Graduate Program Assessment

Goal 1: Provide high quality curriculum in graduate programs based on principles of disciplinary rigor, independent and critical thinking, professionalism, and the use of technology, which prepares students to successfully enter the job market and graduate school.

Assessment:

1. Catalog changes indicate continual curriculum development and course design.
(See Appendix A).

2. <u>Number of Students enrolled in Practicum:</u>	98-99	<u> 0 </u>
	99-00	<u> 0 </u>
	00-01	<u> 1 </u>

3. Quantitative and/or qualitative research projects required in every course.

A review of the course outlines available in the department and on the departmental web sight (www.westga.edu~sociology) indicates that every graduate level course taught requires a quantitative or qualitative research project.

4. Number of students assigned an advisor

It is the policy of the Graduate Studies Program that all students enrolled in any graduate program within the Department be assigned an advisor at the beginning of their course of study. (See Appendix B).

5. Number of courses that include technology

Every course taught in the Graduate Studies Program requires that all students must learn, or have acquired, an understanding of the worldwide web and electronic databases for purposes of literature searches.

Refer to the course outlines available in the department and on the departmental web sight at (www.westga.edu~sociology).

Goal 2: To enhance instructional excellence, student-faculty interactions, and educational opportunities for students.

Assessment:

	#Students Included in Faculty Research	# Students Included in Faculty Publications	#Faculty Involved in Student Thesis And Position Papers	#Students Participating In Professional Meetings	#Students Receiving Research and Thesis Awards
1998-99	3	0	0	0	1
1999-00	3	1	7	1	2
2000-01	1	0	19	6	0

Goal 3: To enhance faculty research, scholarship, and creative endeavors which promote knowledge, enhance professional development, and contributes to quality instruction.

Assessment:

	#Faculty Publications	#Faculty Presentations	#Faculty Grants	#Faculty Reviewers & Referees	#Faculty Holding Office in Professional Associations
1998-99	23	21	10	0	4
1999-00	33	30	18	7	10
2000-01	33	32	8	8	13

Goal 4: To promote a broad range of public service activities and partnerships to promote more effective use of human and natural resources; to contribute to economic, social and technical development; and to enhance the quality of life within the University's scope of influence.

Assessment:

	#Faculty in Public Service	#Students in Public Service	#Faculty Consulting
1998-99	19	0	0
1999-00	38	0	5
2000-01	46	2	5

Goal 5: Affirmation of the equal dignity of each person by valuing cultural, ethnic, racial, and gender diversity.

Assessment:

	#Nonwhite Faculty	#Female Faculty
1998-99	1	5
1999-00	2	7
2000-01	3	6

Assessment:

	#Courses that enhance Understanding of Other Cultures	#Interdisciplinary Courses Within Program
1998-99	1	3
1999-00	1	4
2000-01	2	4

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1999-00	3	0	3	2	0
2000-01	5	0	14	9	0

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1999-00	1	4
2000-01	2	4

Gerontology/Sociology Graduate Program Assessment Summary

1. Program Highlights:

- We are the only institution in the state to offer a M.A. degree in Gerontology
- Both programs have not only increased enrollment, but have increased the number of students matriculating on a semester by semester basis
- The continual increase in the number of students presenting original research at state and regional conferences
- The increase in the number of faculty who mentor graduate students through the distribution of graduate research assistantships

2. S.W.O.T. can be found on the last page of the assessment document.

3. Contribution to Bread and Butter Goals:

- We maintain a commitment to Goal 2 through our recruitment and retention of graduate students
- We maintain a commitment to Goal 3 striving to maintain academic excellence in all graduate programs
- We maintain a commitment to Goals 4 and 7 through our public relations efforts on a local and state level
- We maintain a commitment to Goal 6 through our efforts to maintain student morale and sense of community

4. Mission Goals:

The Graduate Programs in the Department clearly contribute to Mission Goal 1: Faculty Directed Student Research and Professional Activities.

While the faculty have always included students in research, have been involved in the writing of student theses, and have prepared students for professional presentations, there has been a steady increase in these activities over the past three years.

As the faculty are investing in the professional careers of our graduate students, so too are they investing in their own careers. As a collective, the faculty have recorded an impressive number of publications, presentations, grants, and activities in professional organizations. Likewise, the faculty have also contributed to the larger community through service in the public sector.

Sociology/Gerontology Graduate Programs

	<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
	Faculty awards and involvement with students Strong Faculty publication and presentation record	Limited interdisciplinary course offerings in gerontology Limited community support Students included in faculty publications Students in public service
Opportunities	Increased student involvement in conferences Working with other departments to build gerontology offerings Increase student participation in publications Obtaining grant monies for research and student involvement Recruiting students to the programs	<u>Threats</u> Unfilled tenure positions Fewer courses for graduates Money not available to recruit new students to the program Monies not available for graduate assistants