

Social Sciences CART – Assessment Report for Academic Year 2018-2019

TO: Jim Wallace, Ph.D., Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences
Neal Bukeavich, Ph.D., Associate VP for Academic Affairs & Dean of Arts and Sciences

FROM: Valerie Kepner, Ph.D., Social Sciences CART Coordinator

DATE: June 29, 2019

This report summarizes the results of the Fall Semester 2018 and Spring Semester 2019 assessment activities in the Social Sciences CART. This CART assesses CORE 150 – Human Behavior and Social Institutions and the discipline specific courses CORE 153 – Principles of Economics: Macro, CORE 154 – Introduction to Psychology, and CORE 157 – Introduction to Sociology.

The following are the Core Learning Outcomes to be routinely assessed within the Social Sciences CART:

1. Apply the methods of the social science(s) to the study of human social behavior;
2. Demonstrate knowledge of ethical principles within the social science(s);
3. Read and critically evaluate theoretical and empirical social science related material;
4. Apply social science concepts to one's self and others.

In addition to this report, please see the accompanying Social Sciences CART Assessment Plan with the rubric used to assess the Core Learning Outcomes summarized above. The Core Learning Outcome assessed in Fall 2018 was:

3. Read and critically evaluate theoretical and empirical social science related material.

This information was communicated to CART members via the following email sent August 16, 2018:

Dear Fellow Social Scientists,

In preparation for the fall 2018 semester, I'm including below for your consideration inclusion of the social science learning outcomes in your syllabi. Please note that while you are welcome to revise the actual wording, you **must** include the social science learning outcomes within your CORE 15X syllabi, as I

will eventually be asked by the Dean of Arts and Sciences to review all CORE 15X syllabi for inclusion of the learning outcomes. If the learning outcomes are missing, I will be asking you to include them in your syllabus or otherwise communicate the learning outcomes to your CORE 15X students.

Also, please note that, as a CART, we will be assessing the third Core learning outcome, i.e. read and critically evaluate theoretical and empirical social science related material, for Fall 2018. Please **use a short writing assignment/essay question** to assess a student's ability to read and critically evaluate theoretical and empirical social science related material.

I've attached the Social Sciences CART assessment plan, complete with the relevant rubric, to this email. You may also find information on assessment reports on the CART's Moodle site.

All best,
Valerie

Core Social Science Requirement: Since this course satisfies a Core Social Science requirement, this course is designed to provide a foundational knowledge of the social sciences by addressing the following learning outcomes:

By the end of this course, students are expected to be able to:

- Apply the methods of the social science(s) to the study of human social behavior
- Demonstrate knowledge of ethical principles within the social science(s)
- Read and critically evaluate theoretical and empirical social science related material
- Apply social science concepts to one's self and others.

Please note the similarity between the Core Social Science learning outcomes and the outcomes for this course so that you can appreciate why this course meets Core Social Science requirements.

The Core Learning Outcome assessed in Spring 2019 was:

1. Apply the methods of the social science(s) to the study of human social behavior.

This information was communicated to CART members via the following email sent December 30, 2018 (with a reminder email sent May 1, 2019):

Dear Fellow Social Scientists,

In preparation for the Spring 2019 semester, please note that, as a CART, we will be assessing the first Core learning outcome, i.e., apply the methods of the social science(s) to the study of human social behavior. All instructors teaching Social Sciences CART-related courses in Spring 2019 will use **a short writing assignment/essay question** to assess a student's ability to apply the methods of the social science(s) to the study of human social behavior.

Also, I'm including below for your consideration inclusion of the social science learning outcomes in your syllabi. While you are welcome to revise the actual wording, you **must** include the social science learning outcomes within your CORE 15X syllabi, as I will eventually be asked by the Dean of the Arts and

Sciences to review all CORE 15X syllabi for inclusion of the learning outcomes. If the learning outcomes are missing, I will be asking you to include them in your syllabus or otherwise communicate the learning outcomes to your students.

I've attached the Social Sciences CART assessment plan, complete with the relevant Spring 2019 rubric, to this email. You may also find information on assessment reports on the CART's Moodle site.

All best,
Valerie

Core Social Science Requirement: Since this course satisfies a Core Social Science requirement, this course is designed to provide a foundational knowledge of the social sciences by addressing the following learning outcomes:

By the end of this course, students are expected to be able to:

- Apply the methods of the social science(s) to the study of human social behavior
- Demonstrate knowledge of ethical principles within the social science(s)
- Read and critically evaluate theoretical and empirical social science related material
- Apply social science concepts to one's self and others.

Please note the similarity between the Core Social Science learning outcomes and the outcomes for this course so that you can appreciate why this course meets Core Social Science requirements.

At the CART level, I, as the Social Sciences CART coordinator, continue to maintain a Moodle page so that all CART members may share their assessment-related information with fellow faculty members. All CART-level assessment reports are available for all CART members to review, and a drop box for assessment-related ideas is available for use on the CART's Moodle page. A continued commitment to using a writing assignment across the CORE 15X courses has led to greater uniformity of assessment activities across courses as well as across sections of the same course within the Social Sciences CART.

For those Fall 2018 courses for which assessment reports were submitted, the target levels/benchmarks were met in all cases.

For those Spring 2019 courses for which assessment reports were submitted, the target levels/benchmarks were met in all cases.

Examples of student work at the levels of "outstanding," "acceptable," and "deficient" for both semesters are available upon request.

Fall 2018
SOCIAL SCIENCES CART

Learning Outcome 3: Read and critically evaluate theoretical and empirical social science related material

Assessment Measures / Methods	Target / Benchmark	Results	Action Taken
<p>Writing assignments evaluating theoretical and empirical social science related material:</p> <p>CORE 150 (Rose): oral presentation and 5-7 page paper</p> <p>CORE 153 (Zaka): two-page essay</p> <p>CORE 153 (Rose): two-page essay</p> <p>CORE 153 (Wolfe):</p>	<p>At least 70% of students earn a rating of acceptable or outstanding in two categories: (1) demonstrates acceptable level of analytical and critical thinking skills and (2) displays an effective argument and analysis of relevant course material</p>	<p>Target met in all reported classes:</p> <p>CORE 150 (Rose): 80.0% rated acceptable or better; target met</p> <p>CORE 153 (Zaka): 81.0% rated acceptable or better; target met</p> <p>CORE 153 (Rose): 100.0% rated acceptable or better; target met</p> <p>CORE 153 (Wolfe): No results reported</p>	<p>Actions to be taken include:</p> <p>Though CORE 150 will not be offered again in the same format, elements of it will be incorporated into the Global Connections courses; critical evaluation of texts will remain a component (Rose's CORE 150)</p> <p>Trend graphs would have been helpful and very few students made use of them; next time in the guidelines it will be suggested to use charts and graphs (Zaka's CORE 153)</p> <p>To move more students from the acceptable and deficient categories, should try to focus on another method of measuring objective, e.g., a longer writing assignment, not a short essay prompt (Aults's CORE 154)</p>

Fall 2018
SOCIAL SCIENCES CART

Learning Outcome 3: Read and critically evaluate theoretical and empirical social science related material contd.

Assessment Measures / Methods	Target / Benchmark	Results	Action Taken
CORE 154 (Aults): short essay question		CORE 154 (Aults): 94.5% rated acceptable or better; target met	
CORE 154 (Church):		CORE 154 (Church): No results reported	
CORE 154 (McDonald):		CORE 154 (McDonald): No results reported	
CORE 154 (Cook):		CORE 154 (Cook): No results reported	
CORE 157 (Costello & Lindenmuth):		CORE 157 (Costello & Lindenmuth): No results reported	
CORE 157 (Marinello & Lindenmuth):		CORE 157 (Marinello & Lindenmuth): No results reported	

**Spring 2019
SOCIAL SCIENCES CART**

Learning Outcome 1: Apply the methods of the social science(s) to the study of human social behavior

Assessment Measures / Methods	Target / Benchmark	Results	Action Taken
<p>Writing assignments asking students to apply the methods of the social science(s) to the study of human social behavior:</p> <p>CORE 153 (Kepner): reflection question</p> <p>CORE 153 (Zaka): essay question</p>	<p>At least 70% of students earn a rating of acceptable or outstanding in two categories: (1) demonstrates an understanding of theoretical frameworks, concepts, and descriptive terms and how they relate to each other and (2) demonstrates an understanding of individuals as members of a particular culture and/or community</p>	<p>Target met in all reported classes:</p> <p>CORE 153 (Kepner): 100% rated acceptable or better; target met</p> <p>CORE 153 (Zaka): 95.3% rated acceptable or better; target met</p>	<p>Actions to be taken include:</p> <p>Even though many students were interested in the topic, including follow-up studies or possibly mixed findings could really emphasize the complex nature in understanding human behavior (Aults's CORE 154)</p>

**Spring 2019
SOCIAL SCIENCES CART**

**Learning Outcome 1: Apply the methods of the social science(s) to the study of
human social behavior contd.**

Assessment Measures / Methods	Target / Benchmark	Results	Action Taken
<p>CORE 153 (Wolfe):</p> <p>CORE 154 (Church): paper/project</p> <p>CORE 154 (Cook):</p> <p>CORE 154 (Mangan): two- to three-page paper</p> <p>CORE 154 (Aults): short essay question</p>		<p>CORE 153 (Wolfe): No results reported</p> <p>CORE 154 (Church): 88.0% rated acceptable or better; target met</p> <p>CORE 154 (Cook): No results reported</p> <p>CORE 154 (Mangan): 91.7% rated acceptable or better; target met</p> <p>CORE 154 (Aults): 96% rated acceptable or better; target met</p>	