

**Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements
Department of Sociology
Undergraduate Program**

Assessment Measures

The Department of Sociology uses the following measures to assess departmental learning outcomes:

Please list measures used by your faculty to review student learning in your program(s). The table below is for your consideration of possible measures that you may use in this review process. Please delete the table itself. Your list suffices.

Direct Measures:

1. Since 2002, 31 seniors have completed Senior Theses in the department.
2. All of the senior taking the senior comprehensive exam have passed this exam except one since 2002. This student re-took the comprehensive and passed it successfully.
3. All students enrolled in our internship course have received high commendation from their employers for their work.

Indirect Measurements: (For grades and course evaluation see Assessment Findings).

1. The department has a 100% acceptance rate for senior who have applied to graduate schools within one year of graduation.
2. The majority of our seniors find employment right after graduation. In our 2008 class, students found employment in such diverse careers as publishing, research, commercial real state, and law enforcement.
3. Selected responses to alumni surveys:

“The Sociology Department has been crucial in my success at CUA. They have been available for all academic needs. The classes are interesting and informative, and each has some application that can be related to real life as well as other classes.”

“My experience as a sociology major has taught me many valuable skills that can be easily implemented in today's work world. Sociology has taught me to look at everyday situations from a global viewpoint. I have been able to critically analyze both research as well as day-to-day interactions amongst people and institutions. The sociology department was always warm and welcoming, providing any assistance I may have needed as well as guidance.”

“My experience here at Catholic University has been nothing but a positive one. As a freshman I did not know what direction I wanted to take my studies. I always wanted to study criminal justice, but Catholic University did not offer this as a major. The next closest major was sociology and it has been a great experience. The people within the Sociology Department have been nothing but helpful and pleasant to deal with. I have completed an internship with the Department of Justice, U.S. Parole Commission. I have received my certificate stating that I have completed the Crime, Justice, Pre-Law Concentration in Sociology.”

In addition to the above measurements, the Department of Sociology is unique in its requirement of a yearlong senior capstone experience. This two semesters course allows for a more consistent and reliable assessment of our seniors. In addition every senior has the option of completing a senior thesis under the supervision of a first and second reader. Finally, every graduating senior must pass our senior comprehensive examination that consists of questions from the major course work of the students and especially test the student's grasp of the core paradigms and methodologies in the sociology field.

Assessment Findings

Please report findings from data that you display in attachments in this section. Programs with specialized accreditation data should attach tables or figures with such data (e.g. pass rates on professional licensure exams) and provide create sections under Assessment Findings to discuss this data. For all undergraduate programs, CPIT will provide course data for a five year period (on enrollment, grades, course evaluation) for senior seminars and other key courses that programs requested. CPIT will also provide comps data if available for your program(s). Finally CPIT will provide data related to general education goals from the National Survey on Student Engagement (a student perception survey) for your majors from the responses of seniors in the most recently available year.

In your remarks under Assessment Findings, please identify the data source, refer to the appropriate attachment by number in the text and mark the number on the attachment itself. Describe the findings, i.e. what is the pattern of the results? What are significant findings from the NSSE data?

Senior Seminar Discussion (Attachment 1 and 2):

The Department of Sociology analyzed course grade, evaluation, and enrollment data in SOC 451/SOC 452 Senior Thesis Seminar for a five-year period (Fall 2003 through Fall 2007).

During this period, enrollment Fall 2003-Spring 2007 (describe the findings).

Enrollment:

Since the Fall 2003, there has been an overall increase in the numbers of graduating seniors in our program and this is reflected in the increase enrollment in our senior seminar. Whereas in the Fall of 2003 there were 9 seniors enrolled in the course, in 2007 the number reached 12.

Characterize the performance of students in the senior seminar. Comment as needed.

A total of 81% of the students enrolled in senior seminar between 2003 and 2007 completed the course with a grade of A or A-, 17% with B or B+ and only 2% with a grade of C+, C or C-. We attribute this grade distribution to the small size of this course and the closed supervision of the faculty teaching the course. In addition, students enrolled in senior seminar must have completed our theory, methods, and statistical requirements that prepare them well for the demands of senior seminar.

Course evaluation results for the past five years indicate (report findings re: instructor rating). Comment as needed.

During the past five years the instructor ratings have remained within a very high rate. The engaging nature of the course and the consistent interactions between faculty and students contributed to this high evaluation. The course evaluation has generally been lower by less than one percentage point. One reason for this discrepancy is that students might not be so enthusiastic about the readings selection for the course. Still, the course evaluation is also high.

Student judgment of the senior thesis seminar as a course was (report findings re: course rating).

Comment as needed.

Our senior seminar capstone course and our senior thesis constitute two separate assessments tools. Based on exit interviews conducted by the department, students who conduct a senior seminar find the experience of working one and one with a faculty member very rewarding.

Intermediary Course or Introductory Course Discussion (Attachment 3)

Provide similar information for other key courses after the senior seminar. Use a parallel format, referring to the attachments, describing enrollment, student performance, and course evaluations. For our gateway course Soc. 101, the data from 2003 through 2007 suggest the following:

- The enrollment for this course is higher in 2007 than in 2003 and in fact since the Spring of 2006, enrollments have actually increased.
- Student performance reflects the type of student who typically takes the course without any prerequisites. Half of the students fall into the B+, B, and B- categories and 35% obtain A and A-. On the other hand, just 1% gets Ds and another 1% fails the course while 2% withdraws.
- Both the course and instructor's evaluation have actually improved since 2003 from 7.32 and 6.55 to 8.39 and 8.29 respectively.
- Similar indicators for a typically intermediary course (Soc. 345) also show an overall improvement in each of the three categories aforementioned. The student enrollment went up by 11% during the four years. Grades improved by less than one percent (.77%). And, the instructor and course evaluations showed close to a 1% improvement.

Perceptions of General Education Outcomes by History Majors (Attachment 4):

Each spring, the Department of Sociology uses the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) to benchmark the general education outcomes of its senior students against senior students enrolled in: Catholic University, Carnegie Peers, and the entire NSSE participant group.

Seniors in the Department of Sociology view their proficiency in all general education areas ***Characterize the overall pattern of findings from NSSE data for seniors. Then in subsequent statements comment on particular areas that are significantly different***

from peer groups (noted by the asterisk on the attached NSSE results). Comment as needed.

Curricular Improvements

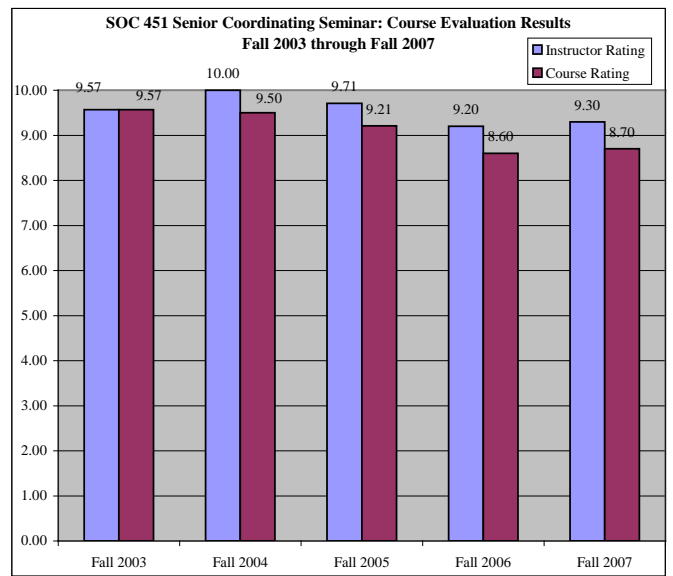
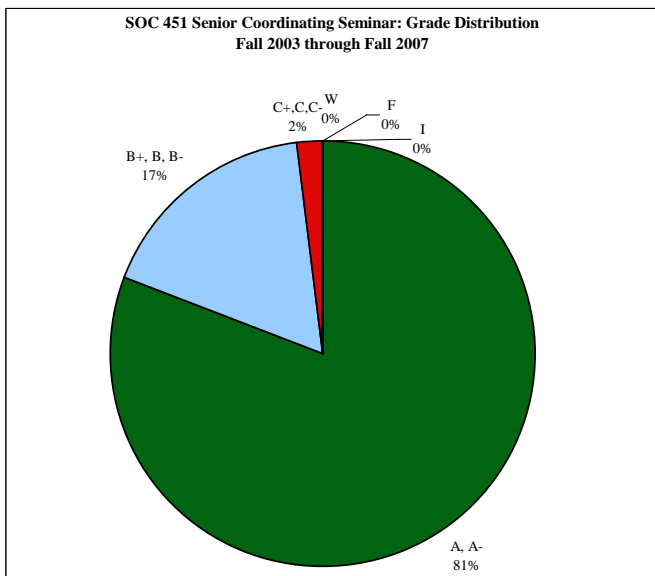
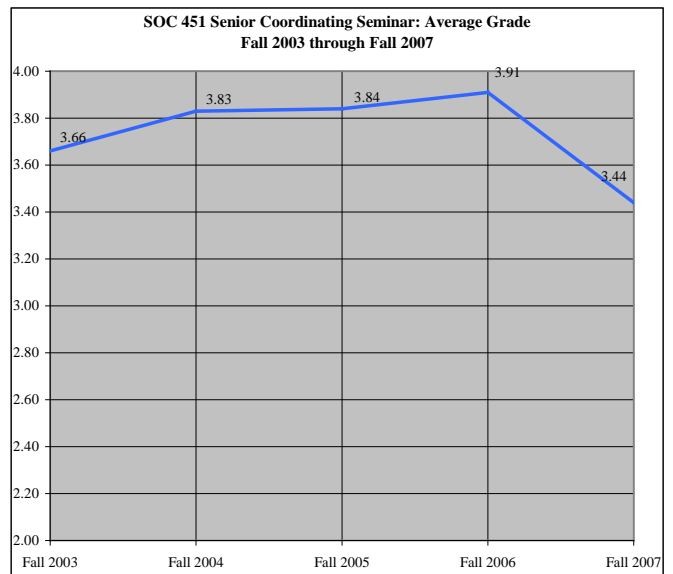
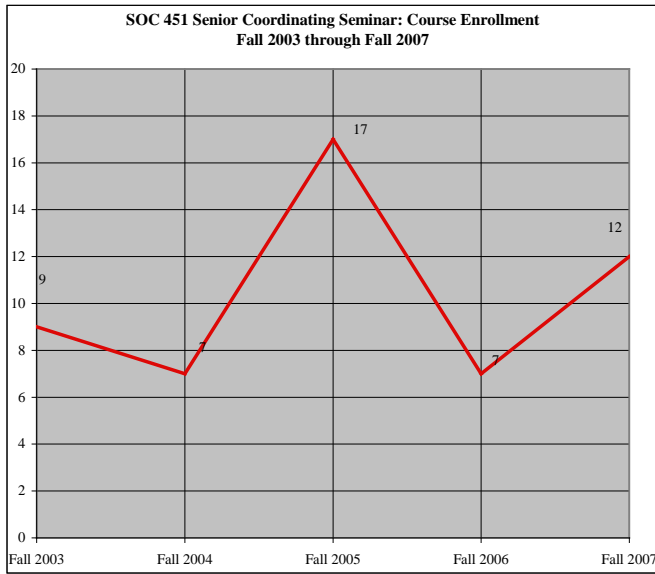
In this section, provide narrative describing the curricular improvements introduced, and if possible provide comments on the effects of these improvements if known. For example, the improvements may include changing the structure of particular courses, requiring prerequisite courses or skills, providing special advisement, introducing earlier experiences with parts of what become key projects or papers. In some instances, there will be extensive changes of requirements or course offerings (i.e. in Nursing or TRS). A brief overview of these major changes should be noted here.

The Department of Sociology last year dedicated considerable amount of effort to re-organize the curriculum to capitalize on existing department expertise and resources while providing a more current learning experience to our students. The essence of this re-organization consisted of maintaining the same number of credits required for graduation and the same number of core requirements while specifying fields of interests within the sociology major. Sociology students can complete the major and specialize in Public Policy, Global and Comparative Studies, and Crime, Justice and Pre-Law. In conjunction with this effort, several courses were dropped from the curriculum and few new ones were instituted. Thus far, students have reacted positively to these curriculum changes judging from the recent increase in the number of declared majors and in the positive feedbacks we have received from graduating seniors about the availability and number of courses offered. Finally, we have revitalized our internship course to provide students with meaningful experiential learning opportunities in our field.

Attachment 1
THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Institutional Assessment

**COURSE SUMMARY DATA: DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
SOC 451 Senior Coordinating Seminar**

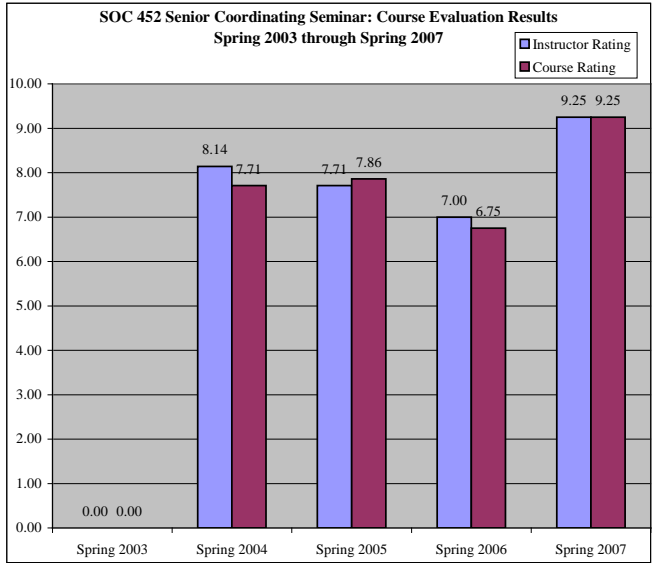
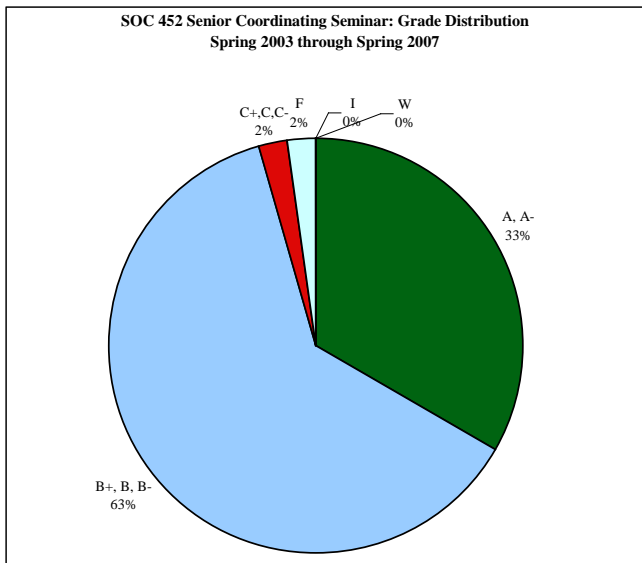
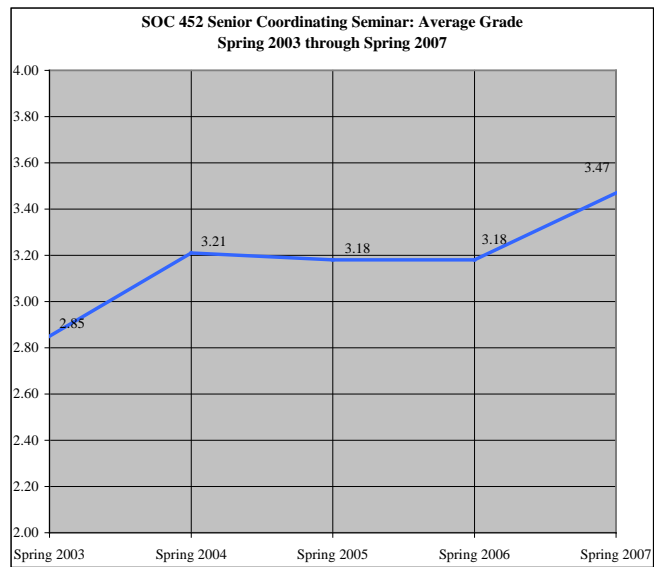
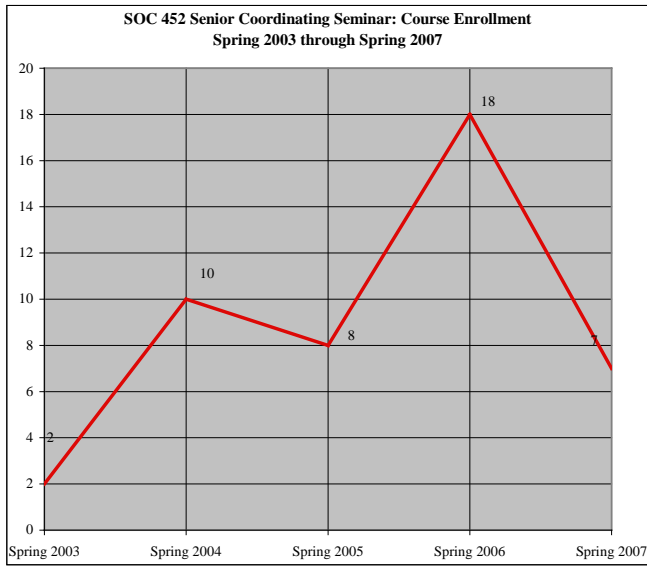
Term	Course Enrollment	Course Grade		Course Grades						Course Evaluation Results					
		Avg.	StDev.	A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	F	W	I	Course Eval. #	Course Eval. %	Instructor Rating Avg.	Instructor Rating StDev.	Course Rating Avg.	Course Rating StDev.
Fall 2003	9	3.66	0.35	5	4					7	77.78%	9.57	1.13	9.57	1.13
Fall 2004	7	3.83	0.16	7						6	85.71%	10.00	0.00	9.50	0.55
Fall 2005	17	3.84	0.15	17						14	82.35%	9.71	0.47	9.21	0.80
Fall 2006	7	3.91	0.15	7						5	71.43%	9.20	0.84	8.60	1.34
Fall 2007	12	3.44	0.66	6	5	1				10	83.33%	9.30	1.06	8.70	1.16



Attachment 2
THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Institutional Assessment

**COURSE SUMMARY DATA: DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
SOC 452 Senior Coordinating Seminar**

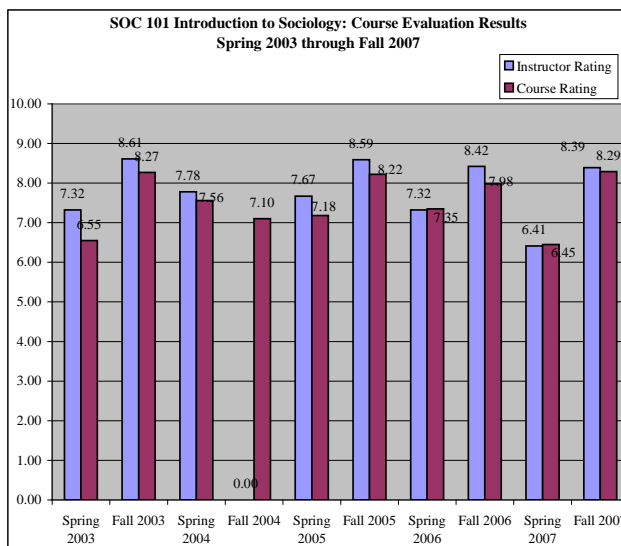
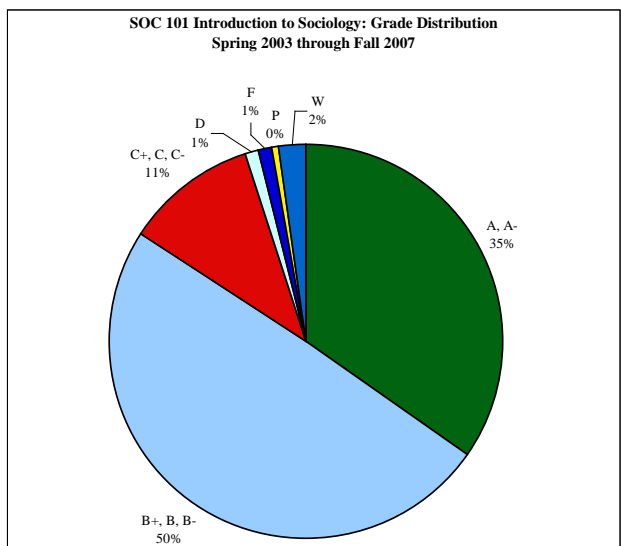
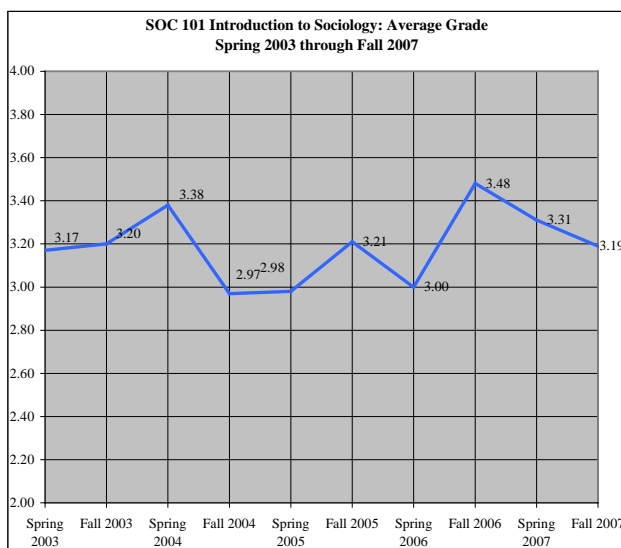
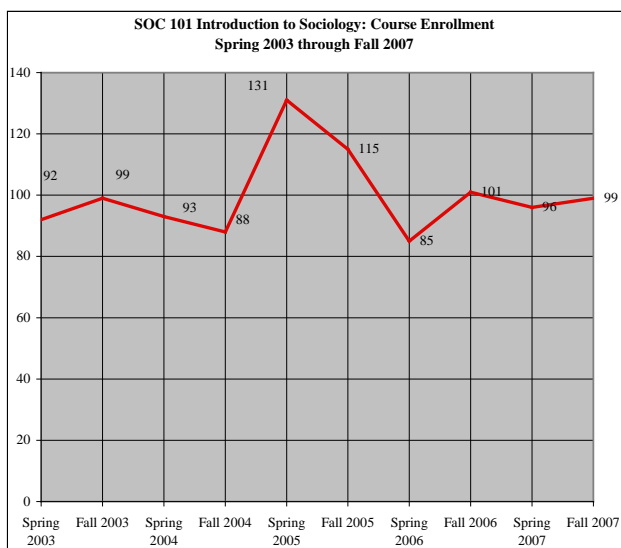
Term	Course Enrollment	Course Grade		Course Grades						Course Evaluation Results						
		Avg.	StDev.	A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	F	W	I	Course Eval. #	%	Instructor Rating Avg.	StDev.	Course Rating Avg.	StDev.	
Spring 2003	2	2.85	0.21			2										
Spring 2004	10	3.21	0.60	4	5	1					7	70.00%	8.14	1.07	7.71	1.11
Spring 2005	8	3.18	0.55	2	6						7	87.50%	7.71	2.29	7.86	1.77
Spring 2006	18	3.18	0.91	6	11			1			12	66.67%	7.00	2.34	6.75	2.26
Spring 2007	7	3.47	0.51	3	4						4	57.14%	9.25	1.50	9.25	1.50



Attachment 3
THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Institutional Assessment

COURSE SUMMARY DATA: DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
SOC 101 Introduction to Sociology

Term	Course Enrollment	Course Grade		Course Grades Grade Distribution							Course Evaluation Results					
		Avg.	StDev.	A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	D	F	P	W	Course Eval. #	Course Eval. %	Instructor Rating Avg.	Instructor Rating StDev.	Course Rating Avg.	Course Rating StDev.
Spring 2003	92	3.17	0.71	29	44	15	1	1	2		102	110.87%	7.32	1.77	6.55	1.95
Summer 2003	7	3.53	0.53	4	3							0.00%				
Fall 2003	99	3.20	0.60	30	55	10				4	75	75.76%	8.61	1.58	8.27	1.56
Spring 2004	93	3.38	0.58	41	44	7	1				18	19.35%	7.78	1.56	7.56	1.50
Summer 2004	4	3.83	0.35	3	1							0.00%				
Fall 2004	88	2.97	0.72	19	47	16	2	1	1	2	42	47.73%	7.36	1.96	7.10	1.91
Spring 2005	131	2.98	0.73	31	74	21	1	2		2	39	29.77%	7.67	1.78	7.18	2.08
Summer 2005	7	3.78	0.28	5	1					1		0.00%				
Fall 2005	115	3.21	0.68	36	61	11	1	1			63	54.78%	8.59	1.43	8.22	1.44
Spring 2006	85	3.00	0.74	20	50	8	1	2	1	3	34	40.00%	7.32	2.21	7.35	1.97
Summer 2006	7	3.49	0.70	5	1	1						0.00%				
Fall 2006	101	3.48	0.74	62	28	5	2	1		3	60	59.41%	8.42	1.51	7.98	1.53
Spring 2007	96	3.31	0.66	44	39	10	1			2	71	73.96%	6.41	2.78	6.45	2.51
Fall 2007	99	3.19	0.85	36	51	5	2	3		2	59	59.60%	8.39	1.20	8.29	1.40



Attachment 4
THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Institutional Assessment

COURSE SUMMARY DATA: DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
SOC 345 Sociology of Sports

Term	Course Enrollment	Course Grade		Course Grades					Course Evaluation Results						
		Avg.	StDev.	Grade Distribution					Course Eval.		Instructor Rating		Course Rating		
				A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	F	W	I	#	%	Avg.	StDev.	Avg.	StDev.
Fall 2003	20	3.13	0.38	2	18					20	100.00%	8.80	1.01	8.44	1.10
Fall 2004	24	3.71	0.59	19	3	2				23	95.83%	8.09	1.86	7.83	1.90
Spring 2006	34	3.77	0.28	30	4					21	61.76%	8.95	1.75	8.60	1.70
Spring 2007	31	3.90	0.17	30	1					9	29.03%	9.78	0.67	9.22	1.09

