

June 30, 2004

To: Elizabeth Feetham, Acting Dean, The Graduate School
David Hodge, Dean College of Arts and Science
George Bridges, Dean and Vice Provost, Office of Undergraduate Education
Cc: Gail Dubrow, The Graduate School, Academic Programs
Robert Stacey, Divisional Dean or Social Science, College of Arts and Science
Christine Ingebritsen, Associate Dean, Office of Undergraduate Education

From: Ad Hoc Review Committee for the Department of Sociology
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Re: Final Report on the Department of Sociology

Background

The Sociology Review Committee (denoted the Committee from this point forward) was formally constituted by Acting Dean of the Graduate School Elizabeth Feetham on February 26, 2004. Members of the Committee were provided copies of the department self-study and other materials relevant to the review. The internal members of the committee met with representatives of the University involved (Robert Stacey from the College of Arts and Sciences, Susan Jeffords from the Provost's Office, Elizabeth Feetham and Gail Dubrow from the Graduate School, and Christine Ingebritsen from the Office of Undergraduate Education). Following that meeting, on March 18, 2004, the Committee was given a detailed and specific charge by Gail Dubrow, Associate Dean of the Graduate School. Subsequently the internal members of the Committee met with Professor Stewart Tolnay, Chair of the Department of Sociology, on April 22, 2004. Given that Professor Tolnay is in his first year as department chair, the committee also wanted to talk with the prior chair, Robert Crutchfield and did so via a conference call on April 28, 2004. The site visit occurred on April 29-30 of 2004. The site visit schedule that includes information about whom the Committee met can be found in Appendix A. The Committee first met in a working dinner session on the evening of April 28th. The

committee met with faculty, graduate students, staff, and undergraduate students of the Department of Sociology from 8:30-5:15 on April 29th, had a working session dinner on the evening of the 29th and continued meetings on the 30th from 9-12:15. Following a lunch the Committee met in Executive session from 1:30-3 and formed its initial preliminary report. The Committee held its “exit interview” from 3-4 and then continued the exit interview without departmental representatives from 4-5. The report that follows represents the Committee’s collective assessment of the Department of Sociology and our recommendations to make what is a very strong research, learning, and service academic unit even better.

Overall Assessment

This is the second ten-year review of the Department of Sociology. In the summary the first ten-year review report (1994), that review committee stated,

“The Department of Sociology at the University of Washington is in a critical transition phase. It can either maintain its current enviable position at the national level or it could slip. Even to maintain its standing will require new support. ... For its part the College should recognize the high quality of the Department and proactively work to maintain its stature.”

As the recent department self-study acknowledges, the transition phase proved to be longer and more difficult than either the department or that review committee expected. With considerable support from the College, the department embarked on an effort to rebuild the faculty at both the junior and senior level. The Sociology department went through a massive transformation of faculty starting about 1997 and ending in 2002. By our count eighteen new faculty joined the department in that seven-year time frame. As it turned out most of the hires were at the senior level. The College made a very large investment in the Sociology Department and a principal concern of this review is to assess what the department has accomplished with this investment and what the prospects are for continued improvement in the research, learning, and service missions of the department.

The Committee came to the conclusion that the department, for the most part, knows itself and understands its strengths and weaknesses. Much of what we shall report below is consistent with and amplifies the department’s representation of itself in its self-study.

With the addition of a string of strong senior hires to a very solid core of faculty, the department now has all the ingredients for a high energy, active, and vibrant research environment. A junior faculty member used this phrase and it captures a key strength of the department. The faculty are engaged, highly productive, and successful in publishing and obtaining external funding. The department has a set of thriving research cultures within which cutting edge research occurs. In this sense, the College and department’s decision to invest in a significant number of senior hires has created the opportunity for maintaining an outstanding faculty that generates high quality research. After this major transformation, it is now time for the department to take stock and to gel or in the

language of the self-study to consolidate. By this we mean that it is now time to take all the parts together, see what parts fit and how they fit, see where bridges can be made, and where gaps and disconnections still remain. Only by doing so will the department and the college be able to get the most from the substantial investment that has been made. By consolidating and building bridges and developing a culture of inclusion, the department will make itself more attractive for junior faculty and graduate students and make retention of senior faculty more successful.

As part of this consolidation process, it is now time for the department to move from a Target of Opportunity senior scholar hiring strategy to a planned set of junior hires. The department is now top heavy and is imbalanced in terms of its age structure. It is now time to begin to build a group of young scholars that will eventually replace the senior cohort. We urge the department to use the knowledge of its senior group of scholars in conjunction with the rest of the faculty, to develop a long term hiring plan that will maintain areas of strength, create bridges across those areas of strength, shore up weakened areas, and develop targeted new areas as the discipline evolves.

The Graduate Program is healthy. Morale among the graduate students appears to be good. The program could benefit from some minor revisions noted later. Importantly, the placement of graduate students in the past ten years is not as strong as would be expected from a top ten department. While there is no explicit evidence of improvement, the committee was convinced that with new faculty, far more numerous funding opportunities for graduate students, and the fact that there are numerous good students in the pipeline, that improvement in placement should occur soon.

The Undergraduate Program is in need of serious attention, as it appears to have been somewhat neglected. The effort underway to eliminate the pathways is appropriate. More investment in the honors program is warranted. More equity in teaching loads among faculty is desirable. Getting more undergraduates involved in internships and research would be very helpful. While the committee met with a limited group of undergraduates, they were very impressive. We have a sense that the faculty do not appreciate the potential quality of their undergraduates. To accomplish this the department should put more emphasis on the Undergraduate Program committee and put respected senior faculty in leadership positions of that committee.

The Sociology Department's current culture and governance practices have proved effective in various ways in the past. The highly democratic nature of governance has assured open faculty discussion and provided voice for all. However, the highly democratic nature of governance has led to stalemate and inaction on a host of initiatives and reforms and frustration among a wide range of faculty. Governance by the whole and felt need for unanimity creates strife, blocks innovation and the ability to get things done. The research culture of the department has revolved around a set of research shops both within and outside the department. The shops have created the structure to establish and maintain a set of thriving research cultures. The balkanized nature of the department culture has made it difficult to create a common department culture of intellectual exchange. In addition, the balkanized nature of the departmental culture has created a

tendency to not be sufficiently tolerant of intellectual approaches that are not in the mainstream of the department. Some faculty feel marginalized and under appreciated and in a few instances feel their work and value is dismissed. With a large infusion of new faculty, it is time to address these governance and culture issues. In so doing, the Department will have a much better opportunity to make the most of the major infusion of very talented faculty.

The Department has appropriately ambitious goals; “a leading department – and perhaps the top social science department at the University of Washington”, and “on the verge of returning to the top ten in the national rankings of sociology departments.” The ingredients are present. Success in achieving these goals rests on the ability of the department to “consolidate” its recent faculty recruitment successes, establish more attention to the commons, establish a graduate placement record that would be expected of a top ten department, and to align the quality of undergraduate instruction with the quality of the faculty.

Faculty

The Committee is very impressed with the overall quality and research productivity of the faculty of the Sociology department. The faculty have created a vibrant intellectual environment with strong interdisciplinary ties. The publication record is quite impressive (though more publications in major journals would be helpful) and the recent increases in external funding are a welcome and quite positive sign. The department has long been known for its strength in Demography, Methodology, and Deviance and social control. Perhaps, then it is not surprising that the series of recent senior and junior hires has either rebuilt or significantly strengthened each of these areas. The department has also built a very strong group in Institutional Analysis. The department has reaffirmed its fundamental identity: “identifying empirical regularities, developing a theoretical understanding of them, and testing that theoretical understanding.” There is no doubt that the recent string of senior hires has been a key feature in building the quality and research profile of the department. In that sense, the investment by the College certainly appears to be paying dividends.

The recent revitalization of the department has come with some costs. Social Psychology, a previous strength of the department, has suffered significant losses. Political sociology has as well. While the strengthening of Institutional Analysis is beneficial, the Department would benefit by broadening its view of social organization as a way to revitalize organizations, stratification, and political sociology. From the view of the Committee, the transformation of the faculty has added new strengths to the areas of gender, race and ethnicity, and stratification but there does not seem to either be coherence or an institutional structure in place to make the most of the talent available.

The mentoring and promotion and tenuring of junior faculty, significant problems in the past, have not been completely resolved. The Committee received mixed reports concerning mentoring, though on the whole, there does seem to be improvement. In part it depends on what research communities junior faculty are plugged into. The jury stills

appears to be out on the ability of the department to successfully promote and tenure junior faculty.

Recommendations

The department will need to hire junior faculty eventually to fill in behind a top-heavy senior faculty. The next series of hires needs to be driven by a plan; one beyond a string of Target of Opportunity hires. The department must make some serious decisions. Does it continue to build to areas of strength or does it seek to diversify and either rebuild areas that have languished such as social psychology and/or develop new areas of strength?

In our view, some of the areas that have been weakened or have not been developed are places of potential future growth as the discipline changes and also as good possible mechanisms to create bridges across department fault lines. Regardless of the mechanism, the department would benefit by creating more bridges across the main research areas or “shops.” Increasing the intellectual discourse across major areas, particularly across the qualitative/quantitative divide would benefit all. In addition, in order to have a strong and cohesive department research culture, a real effort is required to nurture those areas and faculty that are not connected to centers or main areas of the department. Also, for the research culture to be more inclusive, the value, intellectual merit and importance of other approaches should not be denigrated.

Graduate Education

We assess the graduate program on several dimensions: substantive content, graduate student recruitment, pace of progress toward degree, graduate student placement, and graduate student morale. Recommendations are made in selected areas.

Substantive Program Content

The graduate offerings reflect the strengths of the current faculty, as they should. Training and opportunities in quantitative research are stressed. Rational choice theoretical positions are privileged in theoretical course content. Again, given the faculty, these foci are expected and healthy. However, over specialization can lead to narrow training that disadvantages students on the job market (making them appear narrow and “disconnected” from significant proportions of the discipline). Some faculty and graduate students expressed concerns about the “narrowness” of current training. The review committee believes that greater breadth in course content and course offerings would strengthen a strong training program.

Recommendation

The Department should offer more survey courses of major areas, e.g., social stratification, social psychology, population studies, etc (in place of some narrow courses that focus on a current research interest of a faculty member). These survey courses should review a range of empirical and theoretical approaches and the course content

should be relatively stable across time and instructor. (These courses should overlap heavily with materials on preliminary reading lists. See Pace of Progress Toward Degree below)

Student Recruitment

UW-Sociology selects a large cohort of graduate students, a target of 15-18 per year. The faculty size, roughly 30 FTEs, is sufficient for this number of students, given that some are seeking Masters Degrees. GRE scores only roughly indicate the “quality” of graduate students. However, these scores are a bit on the low side for a premier sociology program. The department’s effort to diversify its graduate student cohorts (at the expense of maximizing GRE scores) is appropriate and (as claimed in the Self-study document) provides one explanation for the unimpressive mean scores of admits. The number of applications (150) in the most recent year is an appropriate number for an elite department of this size.

The Department recruitment efforts are substantial and appropriate. (As described on pp F1-F2 of Self-study document.)

Recommendation

Given the impressive faculty now at UW-Sociology and the recent arrival of many, advertisement of this faculty and their expertise should pay dividends. Specifically, advertising current faculty strength should enlarge the applicant pool, increase its quality, and improve the match of student-faculty interests. (Prior to the site visit, none of the three external reviewers were aware of the full set of senior hires over the last five years).

Pace of Progress Toward Degree

The current program and existing department norms allow students to spend much of the third year preparing for qualifying exams. This is a major factor in a long average ‘time to degree’. Very few students finish the MA and PhD in five years. Few students’ dissertations include collecting their own data or carrying out field research. This fact also suggests that the time to degree is unnecessarily long. Substantial work loads as teaching assistants is a second important factor lengthening time to degree. Both students and faculty that we interviewed stressed this explanation.

Recommendation

Organize course content and qualifying exams in a way that reduces time required to prepare for preliminary exams. This change would stress the importance of research and research experience in the graduate setting (as opposed to exam preparation). Continue to explore ways to support graduate students that do not entail exclusive reliance on teaching assistantships (e.g. individual and institutional NSF and NIH training grants; research assistantships).

Graduate Student Placement

The 1994 Departmental Review Report (p.6 of the report of the “Ad Hoc committee for the Department of Sociology”) stated that the Department “has a reputation of graduating superb individuals at the doctoral level who compete well for jobs nationally and who are represented on the faculties of most prominent departments in the nation.” While this legacy remains, it has not been bolstered by recent PhD placements. The Departmental Self Study report (November 2003:Appendix E) shows placements for 1994-2003 cohorts. Using the 1994 NRC rankings (NRC, 1995, *Research-Doctorate Programs in the United States: Continuity and Change*¹), no placement was recorded in a top 20 graduate research program.² This record must be judged as disappointing for a program ranked 10th in the 1994 NRC report. Further, a continuation of this pattern should be judged as a significant failure for a top 10 sociology program.

There are reasons for both this poor record of placement and some evidence of improved (pending and anticipated) placements. This record of poor placements follows a series of faculty losses and predates the arrival of many of the stellar faculty recently hired at UW Sociology. The Self-study report (Introduction pp1-2) describes these faculty losses and the “rebuilding of the department”. The current faculty’s success in training and placing students will become evident in the next 5 years. Also, evidence of improved “expected placements” can be seen in recently placed post-docs and by outstanding students ‘in the pipeline.”

Finally, both graduate students and some faculty mentioned “cultural” or “life-style” obstacles to placements in major research universities. Specifically, some graduate students see an academic career as so demanding that it does not fit with family or leisure priorities. Some suggested that Seattle (due to its amenities) selects persons preferring a balanced lifestyle. Some students said ‘they did not want an academic job”. These jobs, they reported, are too stressful, incompatible with having a family, or ‘a life”. Students also reported “feeling pressure” from faculty to pursue academic jobs in research settings. These comments suggested incompatibility in faculty and student expectations. The review committee cannot judge the pervasiveness and strength of this “anti-academic career” bias among students. However, the issue arose frequently enough to be of some concern.

Recommendation

Regarding a culture that sees academic careers as unduly stressful and incompatible with families: These issues should be discussed in professionalization settings. Students reported that there were no resident role models with “balanced lives”. Some should be identified (from UW or elsewhere) and asked to talk with students. The case for and against these claims should be made; comparisons across professions might help students better assess the accuracy of these claims.

¹ <http://www.nap.edu/readingroom/books/researchdoc/>

² A 2002 graduate has a post-doc at Princeton and has accepted a tenure track job at UC-San Diego, a department ranked 22nd in the NRC report).

Graduate Student morale

The review committee was impressed with the 20 or so students that met with the committee. The students were individually impressive. But most important for our report is the clear evidence of a student organization and a voice in the department. Students had met prior to our visit and had discussed what issues they would raise with us. We found this level of organization impressive. The graduate students also worked with faculty recently to establish a fund to support graduate student professional travel (e.g. travel to professional meetings to present research). This level of organization among students and evidence of working with faculty to resolve resource issues are very positive signs of a collegial work environment.

Recommendation: None

Undergraduate Program

At the present time the undergraduate program in Sociology offers a B.A. degree, although the addition of a B.S. option is currently under consideration. Although there has been a substantial drop in the number of majors (from ~550 to 350) overall enrollment in Sociology courses has been stable. For many students Sociology is a second or third choice major. However, there appears to be a small, very talented and dedicated subset of majors; some of these students met with the committee and reported very positively on their experience in the department. Course enrollment has been maintained at around 7,500, in part, by offering several very popular courses with large capacity such as Murder, Sociology of Deviance and Sociology of Sexuality. As a result, a small group of faculty account for the vast majority of undergraduate student credit hours. There is a plan, yet to be fully implemented, for an undergraduate internship program that is to be well integrated with course work. There is also a re-emergence of an Honors program in the department that is presently rather small but will hopefully grow and flourish. There are some opportunities for involvement in research and the department is interested in expanding these opportunities.

Strengths

Enrollments in undergraduate Sociology classes have remained high and evidence supports general satisfaction with the quality of these courses. In addition, a number of Sociology faculty members have been recent recipients of University Distinguished Teaching Awards.

Based on our meeting with a small but enthusiastic group of undergraduates we believe that there are some very talented and enthusiastic undergraduate majors. We encourage the efforts to revise and expand the Honors program. There was some support for the introduction of a B.S. degree but consideration needs to be given to the resources such an effort would entail and whether those resources could be put to better use elsewhere, such as the Honors program.

The dramatic reduction in the number of majors seems largely to be due to some changes in course sequencing, methodology course prerequisites, and tracks which are being revised, so it is likely that the number of majors will increase; the most recent data on majors (n=449) indicates that the trend is being reversed. While it is not clear what the appropriate number of majors is for the department, its ability to “compete” with other units in the college for majors likely will rest on how seriously it takes revisions in its undergraduate program.

Limitations

There seems to be an overall lack of concern, among most of the department faculty, about the state of the undergraduate program. Some of this seems to be due to a relatively low opinion of the quality and interest level of most of the majors. These students are generally viewed as lacking commitment and choosing Sociology by default. In contrast, a small group of students gets considerable guidance and appears destined for graduate school in sociology or related disciplines. The department clearly recognizes a problem and notes that their majors “lack any form of intellectual community, solidarity or strong identity as a sociology major”. They do not have Sociology clubs, such as Alpha Kappa Delta, or other activities to draw them together. Some attempts to remedy this situation (monthly film night) have been made but do not appear to have been successful.

The relatively low priority given to the undergraduate program is reflected in the lack of a strong undergraduate curriculum committee. We recommend the establishment of such a committee and that a highly respected senior faculty be appointed as its chair.

Sociology is a field, which is particularly amenable to experiential learning, and yet there doesn't seem to be widespread involvement of undergraduate students in research as part of their training. Efforts at involving undergraduates in research should be expanded considerably. Furthermore, we noted that even the best of their students seemed unaware of campus resources promoting undergraduate research involvement, such as the Mary Gates Research Fellowship program.

As the department already seems to have recognized, the “pathway” approach to the Sociology undergraduate curriculum does not seem to have been successful and we agree that it should be eliminated.

Distribution of teaching in the department appears to be uneven. And particularly where undergraduate student credit hours are concerned a few individuals carry the bulk of the load. Because of this the department needs to seriously consider how such courses will be covered in the future.

Recommendations

This is a very high quality department. It needs to make undergraduate teaching a priority. In this way they will align the quality of this aspect of their mission with the high quality of their faculty, their research and their graduate program. Choosing a high profile, respected senior faculty member to chair an undergraduate program committee would be a serious first step toward this goal.

The department should continue its efforts to create more community for their undergraduates, including the establishment of a chapter of the national honor society. In addition, as the Honors program is expanded a strong resource, honors undergraduates, can begin to carry this effort forward by their energy and enthusiasm; they are also a valuable source of peer counseling.

Department Culture and Governance

The task before the department at present is to create a vibrant, intellectually engaging collective culture that maximizes gains from recent strong hires, stimulates faculty to do their best work, and creates an atmosphere that makes it easier to hire and retain faculty, and successfully recruit the best graduate students. The department's current culture and governance practices have distinctive characteristics that served the department well in the past but now impede the department's ability to accomplish these important tasks. With a substantial number of new faculty coming on board in the last few years, the department has an unusual opportunity to critically scrutinize its traditional practices and make changes where needed.

Strengths

The department has a long established tradition of a few well-developed, semi-autonomous research programs or "shops" such as demography, methods, criminology and, more recently, institutional analysis. Within each there is a thriving culture of regular research seminars and intellectual exchange. Faculty and students whose research interests fall squarely within one of these established "shops" are generally satisfied with the intellectual resources provided within them.

The department's governance practices are highly democratic. While there is a standard governance structure of a chair and standing committees, by tradition, most decisions are made through open faculty discussions. This system ensures that all have "voice" in the governing process.

Limitations

Since most intellectual exchange and routine discourse goes on within well-developed "shops," the department culture is balkanized. There is little in the way of a common departmental culture of intellectual exchange. While a balkanized culture may have worked once for the department, it is problematic at present for several reasons.

First, recent target of opportunity hires, although they have measurably strengthened the faculty, have also introduced a new diversity of interests and approaches that is not always well integrated into the present structure. Those faculty, both junior and senior, who do not fit tidily within a well-developed shop find it harder to locate an intellectual community in the department and, thus, may seek it elsewhere. As a result, the department does not achieve the full potential of its gain in hiring them. Similarly, realignments in the shop structure have left some existing faculty less clearly connected to a shop, and therefore, to the department than they once were.

Second, the balkanized culture of intellectual exchange inhibits the department's ability to take full advantage of diverse, smaller alliances of intellectual interests in the department, some of which have the potential to provide bridging ties across the shops. It also reduces the department's ability to respond to developments in the discipline with new hires that do not fit well into a shop, since the department currently lacks a common intellectual community to offer these people.

Finally, the balkanized culture, some feel, is an impediment to intellectual openness, tolerance for diverse perspectives, and overall intellectual vitality in the department. Some faculty are simply concerned that ideas or perspectives outside the dominant modes that characterize the current shops are ignored or dismissed. Others complain of a decline in recent years of the collegial tradition of showing respect for fellow faculty regardless of intellectual traditions. When a common intellectual exchange is lacking, it appears that the in-ward looking focus of shops can allow reasoned intellectual disagreements between perspectives to deteriorate into distrust and lack of mutual respect.

In regard to governance, the department's traditions of extensive discussion and democratic voice consume an inordinate amount of faculty time and energy especially when they act as impediments to change. These costs act as a disincentive for investments in collective efforts on the part of faculty. Furthermore, faculty complain that the tradition of excessive discussion of all matters often leads to poor decision making as the careful work of committees is rewritten in an ad hoc manner. Despite all the talking, many feel little is actually accomplished with the current governance practices.

Clearly, the limitations of the department's culture and governance are in effect the dark side of its strengths. In our view, efforts to build a common culture of intellectual exchange in the department and modestly revise its governance practices will allow the department to retain the strengths of its current traditions while overcoming their limitations.

Recommendations

The department should take steps to create a common, department-wide culture of intellectual exchange. A good place to begin is with the establishment of a regular departmental seminar series that all faculty pledge to attend. To be successful, the

department should find a way to clear a regular, practical time for this series and the shops should endeavor avoid conflicting engagements for their members. Furthermore, the broad range of faculty interests should be represented in series presentations.

In addition, the faculty should step back from their efforts to always achieve unanimity in decision-making. The chair should be granted greater discretionary authority over designated matters. Committees should be delegated more power to make strong recommendations that are respected by the department. A note of caution is necessary here, however. The above governance changes can only be made successfully in an atmosphere of trust among the faculty; otherwise they may engender conflict. To the extent that the department is successful in creating a common department-wide culture, however, problems of trust may recede.

Diversity

The Sociology department has made a concerted effort to be inclusive of underrepresented groups. As noted in the self-study, 30% of the faculty are female and there are (or will be) six people from various underrepresented racial and ethnic groups on the faculty. It is also worth emphasizing, as done in the self-study, that women and minority faculty have held a number of important leadership positions in the department. The department's view that they can and want to have a more diverse faculty is applauded. Despite serious and multifaceted efforts, recruiting a more diverse group of graduate students has been a challenge for the department. While having more financial resources, as noted in the self-study, helps recruitment and retention of graduate students of color, it is more likely that having a significant number of faculty of color and curricula appealing to those students will be more beneficial in the long run. The department acknowledges in the self-study, having some difficulty maintaining a viable graduate curriculum in gender and race relations. While some of these difficulties no doubt are due to retirements and administrative appointments, the department has had ample opportunities to address these problems in the series of hires it engaged in the past seven years. Perhaps these difficulties can be addressed in a long-term faculty recruitment plan. Finally, the department acknowledges in the self-study, that there has been some difficulties in the way faculty portray women in class and how the views of graduate students of color have been respected. These concerns with regard to the climate for underrepresented groups are important. While the committee did not find widespread concern among graduate students and faculty in this regard or more generally with regard to department climate, some concerns continue to be expressed and in some cases quite strongly. We urge the department to address these concerns and, to the extent such problems continue to occur, to work vigorously to eliminate them.

Relationships with other units

Sociology department faculty have strong ties to many other units on campus through both joint appointments with other departments and schools and affiliations with interdisciplinary centers (including several leadership positions). In general, these ties both add to the resources and intellectual vitality of the department, and enable the

department's productive and energetic faculty to contribute to the College and the University. As such, these relationships constitute a major strength of the department.

Particularly notable are the department's relationships with CSDE and CSSS. Individuals head these interdisciplinary centers with joint appointments in Sociology, and they both reflect and enhance the department's traditional strengths in, respectively, demography and methodology. Both faculty and graduate students emphasized the value of the resources provided by these centers in the form of training, computing facilities and support, administrative and statistical support, graduate fellowships, and seminar series. Cooperation between the department and the centers is particularly important, both because of the potential value of coordinated efforts, and because the vitality of the centers could impede the development of a department identity and effective department governance without such cooperation. The competing demands of multiple seminar series on faculty time, and the subsequent difficulty in setting up a regular department seminar, is one example of a potential problem that coordinated efforts (such as joint sponsorship of speakers) could ease.

The tensions between the leadership of the department and CSDE mentioned in the self-study were considered to be a serious problem by the committee. If this situation is not resolved, it could have a substantive impact on the future effectiveness of both the department and CSDE by inhibiting cooperative efforts that should continue to bring resources, including faculty and funding to the University. The conversations that were intended to solve this problem have not done so, and there is no alternative plan in place. The restoration of a productive relationship between the department and CSDE should be a high priority for the College.

Sociology's ties to many units have been reciprocal and mutually beneficial, but others have served largely to pull productive faculty away from department involvement. Attention should be paid to opportunities for enhancing or expanding the department's relationship with other centers and units, particularly if new faculty have related interests.