PRAC Minutes
March 12, 2015

Present: R. Zopilo, L. Vitale, K. Gorniak, J. Webb, S. Clerc, R. Silady, C. Dellinger-Pate, T. Radice, M. Kiarie
Guest: Dr. Gregory Adams, Sociology

Meeting convened 9:38 a.m.

The Committee discussed the self-study from the Department of Sociology. No revisions are required. The Committee will vote on its recommendation at the April 2 meeting.

Dr. Gregory Adams joined the meeting at 10:15 and the committee shared the following observations and suggestions with him.

Both curriculum and assessment are undergoing revisions. The department recently changed their mission statement. The most notable curricular change is the creation of the BS in Sociology with a Criminology and Criminal Justice Concentration based on anecdotal and quantitative data that would-be Sociology majors were being syphoned off by the IDS criminal justice minor although almost all of the courses are housed in Sociology. In addition to increasing enrollment of Sociology majors, the new degree should also ease some of the preparedness problems caused by the number of non-majors in the Sociology courses who, since they aren’t majors, aren’t required to take core methods and theory courses.

The committee suggested that the department consider the external reviewers comments and change their mission statement again. Several members felt that it was read more like a public relations statement than a mission.

The Committee suggested that expanding the table on page 8 to show which courses introduce, reinforce, and require working knowledge of core concepts, like the methods course, would help identify stress points in the curriculum. A curriculum matrix like this would also underpin the department’s assessment plan, which is currently in transition.

The Committee suggested that the current infrastructure of learning goals should be fleshed out. Each goal needs component objectives and assessment measures. A curriculum matrix linking the objectives and measures to specific courses, would allow the department to chart progression and make it easier to see gaps in curriculum.

Meeting adjourned 10:53 a.m.