Learning Outcome Statement: In the Spring 2009 semester the Sociology Department engaged in an in-depth exploration of the following student learning outcome:

- Students will be able to recognize the connection between social structure and the individual in society.

Means of Assessment and Criteria: In support of the identified student learning outcome, Sociology Department faculty developed the following means of assessment and criteria:

- A pre- and post-assessment instrument will be administered to students enrolled in Introduction to Sociology (SOC-10) sections. The pre-assessment instrument will be administered within the first two weeks of the semester and the post-assessment instrument will be disseminated near the end of the course. We expect that student scores will improve by at least 15% between pre- and post-assessment.

Early in the Spring 2009 semester, Sociology Department faculty identified five questions that demonstrated acquisition of the stated student learning outcome. Supported by the Office of Institutional Research, the Sociology Department developed a scannable survey form that identified student name, unique student identifier, section number, date that the form was completed, and student responses to the five survey items. In addition to scannable hard copy forms, companion web-based forms were created to accommodate online sections (see http://irsurvey.chaffey.edu/44450/44450.asp for an example of the post-assessment form).

Consistent with the stated means of assessment, pre-assessment forms were disseminated in 29 lecture and online SOC-10 sections the second through fifth weeks of the Spring 2009 semester, reaching a potential audience of 1,286 students. Post-assessment forms were disseminated in the same 29 sections in the 14th through 17th weeks of the Spring semester (April 20th – May 11th), reaching a potential audience of 1,128 students. In total, 875 valid pre-assessment forms were returned, a 68.0% response rate; 554 valid post-assessment forms were returned, a 49.1% response rate. Merging pre- and post-assessment data files, 472 students were identified who completed all pre- and post-assessment questions, allowing researchers the ability to generalize findings with a 95% confidence level (confidence interval ± 3.44).

Summary of Evidence: Table 1 provides a frequencies distribution of the number of items answered correctly at pre- and post-assessment. At pre-assessment, the mean number of items answered correctly was 2.71; at post-assessment, the mean number of items answered correctly was 3.52 (5 = all items answered correctly; 0 = no items answered correctly). This finding represents an improvement of 29.9% from pre- to post-assessment. Furthermore, the observed difference between pre-/post-assessment scores is statistically significant ($p \leq .000$). An examination of correlation ($r = .15; p \leq .002$) and effect size ($d = .75$) further suggest that a positive relationship exists between pre- and post-assessment scores and that observed differences are practically significant (i.e., not just an artifact of sample size (Cohen, 1977)).
Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Questions Answered Correctly</th>
<th>Pre Assessment</th>
<th>Post Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By Survey Respondents</td>
<td>N %</td>
<td>N %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Five Questions Answered Correctly</td>
<td>4 0.8</td>
<td>123 26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Questions Answered Correctly</td>
<td>82 17.4</td>
<td>132 28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Questions Answered Correctly</td>
<td>206 43.6</td>
<td>116 24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Questions Answered Correctly</td>
<td>137 29.0</td>
<td>73 15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Question Answered Correctly</td>
<td>37 7.8</td>
<td>24 5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Questions Answered Correctly</td>
<td>6 1.3</td>
<td>4 0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean Number of Items Answered Correctly | 2.71 | 3.52 |

Additional analyses were conducted for each survey item. For each of the five survey questions that demonstrated acquisition of the stated student learning outcome, Table 3 identifies the number and percentage of students who identified the correct response at pre- and post-assessment, as well as gain from pre- to post-assessment.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Pre Assessment Correct</th>
<th>Post Assessment Correct</th>
<th>Gain from Pre- to Post-Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>What source of information would be most reliable in estimating the percentage of people in the U.S. who have ever smoked marijuana? (correct response: Findings from research)</td>
<td>387 82.0</td>
<td>407 86.2</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Which of the following most strongly influences a person's beliefs? (correct response: Family)</td>
<td>289 61.2</td>
<td>338 71.6</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Which of the following statements is true? (correct response: Society affects the opportunities of individuals)</td>
<td>339 71.8</td>
<td>416 88.1</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Which of the following factors would most influence the likelihood that a person will graduate from college (correct answer: His/her parents are college graduates)</td>
<td>237 50.2</td>
<td>260 55.1</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Beauty is defined by: (correct response: Culture)</td>
<td>25 5.3</td>
<td>240 50.8</td>
<td>960.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use of Results for Planning: As the examination of pre- and post-assessment mean scores indicates:

- a mean pre-/post-assessment score improvement of 29.9% was observed
- the observed difference between mean pre-/post-assessment scores is statistically significant
- a positive statistically significant correlation exists between pre- and post-assessment scores
- a medium/large effect size was observed

As Table 3 indicates, two items – questions #4 and #5 – were correctly identified by only 55.1% and 50.8% of students at post-assessment, respectively. In examining this learning outcome assessment finding, a review of: a) the way these questions are worded on the survey and their clarity to students; and/or b) the extent to which these concepts are delivered and reinforced are two areas that Sociology Department faculty might want to explore.

Reference: