THE UNIVERSITY *of* TENNESSEE ᵁᵀ
CHATTANOOGA

2020-2025

Academic Program Review

External Reviewer On-Site Visit Packet
(Undergraduate Programs)

Prepared by the Office of Accreditation and Assessment (OAA)

Introduction

Thank you for your willingness to conduct an external program review for the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC). Your commitment to the process (time, input, feedback, etc.) is much appreciated.

The academic program review process is intended to provide UTC faculty and academic administrators with information to identify program strengths and weaknesses. Program review is perhaps the most essential component in academic planning. This information should play a major role in helping faculty to define initiatives, improve quality, and justify needed resources.

As an external reviewer, you will receive a copy of the program's self-study for review at least two weeks before your scheduled visit. Campus site visits generally span two days. During the site visit, you will have the opportunity to meet with faculty members, students, and key administrators at the university to assess various aspects of the program under review. Before leaving campus, you will be asked to complete the THEC Rubric (included in this document), and within two weeks of the visit, asked to complete and submit a narrative report.

This packet contains three documents.

2020-25 Quality Assurance Funding
Program Review: Baccalaureate Programs

Institution: The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Program Title: Sociology, Anthropology, and Geography (SAG) / SCJS
CIP Code:

Instruction for External Reviewer(s)

In accordance with the 2020-25 Quality Assurance Program Funding guidelines of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC), each non-accreditable baccalaureate program undergoes either an academic audit or external peer review according to a pre-approved review cycle.

The criteria used to evaluate a program appear in the following *Program Review Rubric*. The *Program Review Rubric* lists 30 criteria grouped into six categories. THEC will use these criteria to assess standards and distribute points into baccalaureate programs. The four criteria noted with an asterisk are excluded from the point calculation but will be used by the institution in its overall assessment.

For each criterion within a standard, the responsible program has provided evidence in the form of a *Self Study*. Supporting documents will be available for review as specified in the *Self Study*. As the external reviewer, you should evaluate this evidence and any other evidence observed during the site visit to determine whether each criterion within a standard has been met. A checkmark should be placed in the appropriate box to indicate whether the program currently exhibits poor, fair, good or excellent in meeting the criterion. If a particular criterion is inappropriate or not applicable to the program under review, the item should be marked NA.

This evaluation becomes a part of the record of the academic program review. The rubric will be shared with the department, college and central administration, as well as the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. When combined with the written report, prepared by the entire program review committee, the *Program Review Rubric* will facilitate development of a program action plan to ensure continuous quality improvement.

Your judgment of the criteria will be used in allocating state funds for the university's budget.

Name, Title and Institutional Affiliation of Reviewer(s)	

Name	**Marieke Van Willigen**	**Name**	
Title	**Professor of Sociology**	**Title**	
Institution	**Georgia Southern University**	**Institution**	
Signature		**Signature**	
Date	**3/18/2025**	**Date**	

Program Review Rubric
Baccalaureate Programs

Directions: Please rate the quality of the academic program by placing a checkmark in the appropriate box to indicate whether the program currently exhibits poor, fair, good or excellent evidence of meeting the criterion.

1. Learning Outcomes		N/A	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1.1	Program and student learning outcomes are clearly identified and measurable.					X
1.2	The program uses appropriate evidence to evaluate achievement of program and student learning outcomes.					X
1.3	The program makes use of information from its evaluation of program and student learning outcomes and uses the results for continuous improvement.				X	
1.4	The program directly aligns with the institution's mission.					X

2. Curriculum		N/A	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
2.1	The curriculum content and organization are reviewed regularly and results are used for curricular improvement.					X
2.2	The program has developed a process to ensure courses are offered regularly and that students can make timely progress towards their degree.					X
2.3	The program incorporates appropriate pedagogical and/or technological innovations that enhance student learning into the curriculum.					X
2.4	The curriculum is aligned with and contributes to mastery of program and student learning outcomes identified in 1.1.					X
2.5	The curricular content of the program reflects current standards, practices, and issues in the discipline.					X
2.6	The curriculum fosters analytical and critical thinking and problem-solving.					X
2.7	The design of degree program specific courses provides students with a solid foundation.					X
2.8	The curriculum reflects a progressive challenge to students and that depth and rigor effectively prepares students for careers or advanced study.					X
2.9	The curriculum encourages the development of and the presentation of results and ideas effectively and clearly in both written and oral discourse.					X
2.10	The curriculum exposes students to discipline-specific research strategies from the program area.					X

3. Student Experience		N/A	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
3.1	The program provides students with opportunities to regularly evaluate the curriculum and faculty relative to the quality of their teaching effectiveness.				X	
3.2	The program ensures students are exposed to professional and career opportunities appropriate to the field.					X
3.3	The program provides students with the opportunity to apply what they have learned to situations outside the classroom.					X
3.4	The program seeks to include diverse perspectives and experiences through curricular and extracurricular activities.					X
3.5	Students have access to appropriate academic support services.					X
4. Faculty (Full-time and Part-time)		N/A	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
4.1	All faculty, full time and part-time, meet the high standards set by the program and expected SACSCOC guidelines for credentials.					X
4.2	The faculty are adequate in number to meet the needs of the program with appropriate teaching loads.			X		
4.3*	The faculty strives to cultivate diversity with respect to gender, ethnicity, and academic background, as appropriate to the demographics of the discipline.					X
4.4	The program uses an appropriate process to incorporate the faculty evaluation system to improve teaching, scholarly and creative activities, and service.					X
4.5	The faculty engages in regular professional development that enhances their teaching, scholarship and practice.					X
4.6	The faculty is actively engaged in planning, evaluation and improvement processes that measure and advance student success.					X
5. Learning Resources		N/A	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
5.1*	The program regularly evaluates its equipment and facilities, encouraging necessary improvements within the context of overall institutional resources.					X
5.2	The program has access to learning and information resources that are appropriate to support teaching and learning.					X

6. Support	N/A	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
6.1* The program's operating budget is consistent with the needs of the program.				X	
6.2* The program has a history of enrollment and/or graduation rates sufficient to sustain high quality and cost-effectiveness.					X
6.3 The program is responsive to local, state, regional, and national needs.					X

Criteria not scored as part of Quality Assurance Funding.

Guidelines for Narrative Report

I was pleased to be asked to complete a second program review on the SAG programs. When I last visited the department and reviewed these programs, they were in a period of significant transition and additional transitions have occurred since that time. Thus, I looked forward with interest to learning how the department and the programs have evolved. I found the department to be well-grounded and can see that significant strides have been made in the Anthropology, Sociology, and Georgraphy programs even beyond the strong foundation they had when I first visited. I anticipate that these upward trajectories will continue given the outstanding faculty who have joined the department in recent years. The energy is palpable.

The strong growth in external and internal grants over this review period is particularly notable and contributes to the university's goal of shifting to R2 status. These grants have helped to bolster enrollments in Anthropology through increased field and lab experiences funded by these projects.

PART 1 – Learning Outcomes

How would you rank this program with similar ones in the state, region, and nation?

Anthropology:
The Anthropology programs are very strong. The modified four-field approach (minus linguistics) exposes students to the breadth of work being done in the field. Yet recent investments in archaeology and biological anthropology have allowed for specializations which are attractive to students and provide concrete skills for the job market. The addition of a skills requirement as well as variety of lab-based courses allow students to specialize their training. The number of Anthropology students participating in internships, honors projects, and research presentations is noteworthy. While the temporary nature of the labs is not ideal, the space itself allows for excellent hands-on experiences as well as for students to congregate and build community. I hope that similar spaces will be provided when the new facilities are complete. I remain concerned, as I was in my previous review, about the storage space in the basement of the Guerry Center which risks damage to the artifacts being stored there. I am pleased to see that time and resources are being invested to address this issue; it can't happen soon enough.

Enrollment in the Anthropology undergraduate programs (BA and BS) are impressive, both in the sheer number of majors and in the enrollment growth of 131% over the five years under review (42 to 97 students). These numbers are particularly remarkable given that nationally the number of degrees awarded in anthropology has declined slightly (although jobs and wages are growing according to the *BLS Occupational Outlook Handbook*). I include several program comparisons I made below. These include the flagship institution in the state, UTC peer institutions, and institutions of which I have been a member.

As is evidenced by these data, UTC's Anthropology enrollment as a percent of total enrollment is quite close to that of state and national R1 institutions, and well above that of UTC peers.

Institution	Fall 2024 Anth Majors	Fall 2024 Undergrads	Anth % of Total
UT-Chattanooga	97	10,203	0.95%
UT-Knoxville	349	30,564	1.14%
University of Eastern Kentucky *	36	13,448	0.27%
University of Western Kentucky*	44**	14,590	0.30%
University of West Georgia *	33	9,157	0.36%
Georgia Southern University	50	23,618	0.21%
East Carolina University	80	21,445	0.37%

*UT-Chattanooga peer institutions
**Fall 2023 data

Given the strong tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty who have been hired into the program, strong curriculum, and wide array of opportunities for student engagement in archaeology and biological anthropology, I anticipate continued growth in the program as well as strong placements for graduates.

Sociology
The Sociology program is strong and the combination of continuing faculty with new tenure track faculty bodes well for its future growth. The specialty areas of the faculty both bring in a level of currency to the course content and research being conducted but also address long-standing areas of focus in the field, particularly the continuing significance of social inequalities. The faculty have made changes to the curriculum that are largely in line with national standards, reduces bottle necks, and allows students more flexibility in choosing courses of interest. The faculty and students are rightly frustrated by the lack of a natural gathering space for sociology, as faculty offices are a significant distance from where courses are held. While sociology students could gather in the same space as the anthropology students, there is no reason for them to come to the trailers except to meet with faculty. So, most do not. I hope this issue will be resolved once the department moves into its new space.

Institution	Fall 2024 SOCI Majors	Fall 2024 Undergrads	SOCI % of Total
UT-Chattanooga	60	10,203	0.59%
UT-Knoxville	287	30,564	0.9%
University of Eastern Kentucky*	34	13,448	0.25%
University of Western Kentucky*	109**	14,590	0.75%
University of West Georgia *	117	9,157	1.28%
Georgia Southern University	130	23,618	0.55%
East Carolina University	72	21,445	0.36%

*UT-Chattanooga peer institutions
**Fall 2023 data

Like the trends in Anthropology, nationally the number of degrees awarded in sociology is declining (although jobs are growing faster than the national average according to the *BLS Occupational Outlook Handbook*). Like that of many Sociology programs, enrollment in the Sociology program (BS) has fluctuated across the time period under review. Yet, their percent of total undergraduate enrollment is

comparable or ahead of that of most other programs compared below. The notable exception is the University of West Georgia, a UTC peer institution. However, West Georgia's degree program is available completely online and West Georgia is the hub for the USG's ECore offerings, which likely facilitates online recruitment.

It should be noted that UTC's Sociology program is competing with its Social Work and its Criminal Justice program. At many institutions at least one of those areas is included within the Sociology program. For example, in Georgia Southern's Sociology program we have a Human Services emphasis which includes many of the courses required for a BSW program and those courses are taught by faculty with MSW degrees. Thus, we can recruit students interested in that training and career path. The UTC Sociology program does not have that luxury.

Given the strong faculty in the program, the program's relevance to the community, and the interesting array of specialty areas represented among the faculty, I believe the program can grow in enrollments and impact. However, as with all Sociology programs, this will rely on the faculty's ability to articulate its utility to students and strong recruitment efforts on the part of the faculty. As the Anthropology trends have documented, protected time for Sociology faculty to seek external funds to support students and involve them in research should also improve enrollments in the program.

Geography
While there is no undergraduate degree in geography, I am impressed by how well developed and current the geography minor course offerings are. The addition of a physical geographer to the department appears to be paying off through an increase in the number of geography minors. The Geography faculty demonstrate a clear commitment to the department and the institution, and enthusiasm for working with students. I anticipate that this program will continue to grow and can envision synergies with Environmental Science faculty and others. Indeed, the addition of the Meteorology and Climatology courses beg the question of whether a minor in Meteorology might be possible in the future. With a degree in a natural science and 24 credits in Meteorology, students would be qualified for federal employment as meteorologists (NOAA 2025). The BLS Occupational Handbook predicts faster than average growth in atmospheric science including meteorology.

Are the intended program and learning outcomes clearly identified?
- Has the department specified program mission, vision, and goal statements? Do these statements clearly identify intended program and student learning outcomes? Are they appropriate for the program level (undergraduate) and for UTC?

The department has a clear set of learning outcomes that encompasses its three undergraduate degree programs in Anthropology and Sociology, as well as its minors in Anthropology, Geography, and Sociology. As a result, while the faculty represent three distinct disciplines, they engage with each other as a cohesive group. This is not always the norm in a multi-disciplinary department. I found these department-level learning outcomes outlined on page 15 of the Self Study document to be quite appropriate for and applicable to all three disciplines. Importantly they then inform the specific program SLOs used for assessment.

Program-level student learning outcomes reflect national standards for undergraduate education as outlined by the American Sociological Association (Pike et al 2017) and American Anthropological

Association (AAA 2025). The curriculum in Sociology and Anthropology has undergone a curriculum mapping process to ensure that each SLO is "introduced", "reinforced", "practiced", and "mastered" before graduation. It should be noted that the Anthropology faculty are currently revising their Student Learning Outcomes, as they have not been revised since the last review period. I am pleased to see this as their existing Student learning Outcomes were not all measurable criteria.

The department and program level SLOs reflect the mission statement of the university:
> The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga is a driving force for achieving excellence by actively engaging students, faculty and staff, embracing diversity and inclusion, inspiring positive change and enriching and sustaining our community (UTC Strategic Plan 2021-2025).

At the core of social science disciplines, but most particularly Anthropology and Sociology, is an overarching goal of helping students to better understand and embrace the diversity of human experience and to use the knowledge and skills they develop to better their communities. The curriculums of these programs at UTC are uniquely poised to achieve the 2021-2025 Strategic plan goal of "ensur(ing) all students are prepared to live, work and engage in reasoned discourse in a diverse, global society." Furthermore, the Sociology, Anthropology, and Georgraphy faculty actively engage students through hands-on learning in the classroom, through applied research, and through community-engaged internships. In this way, they stand to help the university achieve its goal to "embed high impact practices within the GenEd curriculum", to "increase the number of undergraduate students participating in faculty supervised research" and "to increase community-engaged learning opportunities."

The incorporation of Professionalism in Anthropology and Professionalism in Sociology courses help to guide students early in their academic careers towards making informed and conscious decisions throughout their undergraduate career which will better prepare them for the workforce, a key element of the UTC Strategic Plan. Coursework in all three disciplines draws heavily from the rich resources available in the Chattanooga area, raising students' awareness of the unique opportunities and issues within their community and encouraging them to give back. Placement data indicate that many students stay in the region after they graduate. Thus these programs work to achieve the university's goal of giving back to the community.

- What goals should the department establish regarding its curriculum? In particular, what advice should be offered to the department developing goals regarding the following aspects.
  - Student performance on standardized exams
  - Student opportunities for research/involvement in faculty research
  - Student opportunities for practical/field experiences
  - Graduates' admittance to/performance in graduate schools
  - Student placement in occupational positions related to major field of study

The SAG programs have strong records of student involvement in faculty research and in practical/field experiences. This is most true in the field of Anthropology, where funding is available to support students in these endeavors. The Sociology program could further incentive these experiences by 1) cultivating donors to support their students even with only modest funds and 2) developing a curriculum structure that requires a capstone experience (such as research, internships, or service learning projects). However, I see growth in research and field experiences in Sociology as well. The involvement of Geography minor students in research projects is impressive given that it is not their major field.

Anthropology has good placement data for their students and the placements appear to be strong. Less is known about the Sociology graduates and I would encourage the program to begin tracking them in a more systematic way.

- What goals should the department establish regarding its teaching? Faculty qualifications? Faculty development?

See section on faculty below.

What criteria does the department use to evaluate sufficient achievement of intended program outcomes? Are the criteria appropriate for such evaluation and/or for the program?

The department draws extensively from in-class assessments, including research proposals, written exams, and course assignments to determine whether students are meeting program learning outcomes. In addition, they document students' involvement in independent study projects with faculty, honors theses, internships, conference presentations, and the like. The latter are clearly the most impactful measures of student outcomes. Finally, the programs have become tracking students through LinkedIn profiles to document post-graduation placement. These profiles are part of the Professionalism courses and are a clever way to ensure graduates can be tracked over time.

Does the department make use of evaluation information and/or information obtained from student, alumni, and employer surveys and/or data from institutional research to strengthen and improve the program?

Indeed, the department actively engages in ongoing assessment of the curriculum as a result of evaluation data collected from students, as well as assessment data and student placement data. I know of no efforts to collect data from alumni or employers. Although given the effort to have students create LinkedIn profiles, collecting data from alumni would now be facilitated through these profiles.

The programs appear to be highly dynamic when it comes to re-evaluating curricula as needs are revealed and also as new faculty join the program.

PART 2 – Curriculum

Is the current curriculum appropriate to the level and purpose of the program? Is it adequate to enable students to develop the skills and attain the outcomes needed for graduates of the program? Does it reflect the current standards, practices, and issues in the discipline?

Does the department regularly review and revise curriculum content and organization to ensure that it is appropriate and that it prepares students to meet the specified learning outcomes? Will the department need to update the curriculum and/or develop new or alternative offerings in the near future?

Indeed, both Anthropology and Sociology have made significant revisions to their curriculum since the last program review as outlined above. I will discuss these changes and the curricula in general below.

Anthropology:
The Anthropology BA and BS programs have clear and well-defined curricula well-focused on student learning outcomes. Recent revisions to the curriculum are appropriate and reduce obstacles to graduation for students. For example, removing the four-field introductory course which overlapped with the introductory courses in the subfields was a logical choice. Removing the linguistic anthropology requirement and elective courses was a practical choice as there is no faculty member in this specialty area. This is not an uncommon problem across Anthropology programs nationally.

The addition of a Technical Skills requirement is a strong choice for the program and its students. As the self-study points out, the skills represented in the list of technical skills courses are in high demand and will enhance the marketability of the students. Our Anthropology faculty at Georgia Southern also recommend that students take coursework in one or more of these areas to ensure their marketability for employment and/or graduate programs. Making it a requirement makes it much more clear how important these skills are and ensures that individuals using VA benefits can have those courses covered by their benefits.

The "field and lab-based course" requirements (one for the BA students and 2 for the BS students) further ensure that all students have hands-on experience that will enhance their marketability as well as help them to identify what career path they hope to pursue. The variety in offerings in this category allows students to choose what specialty area they want to focus on. The new Professionalism in Anthropology course likely assists them in identifying earlier in their academic careers what field they may want to pursue and how to focus their studies towards that end.

Finally, the Community Engagement Internship is a strong addition, likely to enhance student outcomes. I am particularly impressed by the number of students in Anthropology who have completed an internship, suggesting that the faculty recognize the value of these experiences and are encouraging students to pursue this option.

Examining the Spring 2025 through Fall 2025 course schedules, I do note a paucity of elective offerings in the area of cultural anthropology. With Dr. Zibin Guo in the position of co-head of the department, Dr. Emma McDonnell is left teaching the majority of courses in this area. However, I see no elective courses on the schedule for her during this entire period, as she is covering Ethnographic Methods and the Internship course, in addition to lower-level cultural anthropology. This is unfortunate as her areas of interest are likely to draw in students. In addition, her interest in applied ethnographic work is another area of potential growth for the program with a strong link to occupational opportunities.

Forensic Science certificate
The addition of the interdisciplinary Forensic Science certificate was a wise choice given the heavy interest of students in this area. In addition, the biological anthropology faculty have strong training, skills, and opportunities to bring to the students in this program. I also imagine it might lead to some recruits for the Anthropology major more generally.

Sociology:
The Sociology program revised its curriculum in Fall 2020. This included several changes to the requirements as well as additions to the list of courses offered by the program. Three new General

Education courses were developed – including Social Problems, Sociology of Globalization, and Social Movements. Elective courses were added which reflect the specialty areas of the new faculty. I was pleased to see the move to make SOC 1510 Introduction to Sociology a prerequisite for all 3000-4000 level courses. My own program went in the opposite direction five years ago and it has made teaching upper-division courses much more challenging, as students come in without basic knowledge of the discipline. It's frustrating to advanced majors who want to engage in informed discussions.

The Sociology program requires a statistics course, as is the norm, and a strong and valuable skill for students to develop. I note that while a variety of courses are accepted to meet this requirement, the program does offer its own Social Statistics course which is great. While I know these courses are time- and labor-intensive to teach as I teach them myself, I find that students understand statistics more intuitively when they are applied to real world social issues. They won't get that understanding from a math-based Introduction to Statistics course. That said, giving them the option to meet the requirement with a different course provides students and the program with some flexibility.

In terms of the required Sociology curriculum, the decision was made to move from a two-semester theory sequence to one theory course incorporating both classical and contemporary theory. A quick review of the degree requirements at the three peer institutions listed at the beginning of this review confirm that a single theory course is the norm at UTC's peers. This is also true for both of the Sociology undergraduate programs at the institutions for which I have worked. Thus, I find this to be an appropriate choice which provides students with more flexibility in their coursework.

The addition of the Professionalism in Sociology course requirement was a strong choice. For too long sociologists, me included, have relied on the "you can do anything with a sociology degree" line for recruitment and mentoring. But the reality is that students crave and need more focus for their studies. Introducing students early to information about career options and how to build their skills and knowledge to prepare for work and/or graduate school should encourage them to focus their choices throughout the remainder of their academic career.

Also in Fall 2020, the Sociology faculty chose to move away from a two-semester Research Methods course sequence which culminated in a capstone research project. This requirement was indeed a heavy burden on faculty, supervising upwards of 30 individual research projects at a time. I am familiar with the burdens of this model from my own experience teaching the capstone course in this two-semester sequence. However, it does move the curriculum out of alignment with the ASA recommendations for undergraduate programs, which includes a capstone experience (Pike et al 2017). A review of other Sociology programs reveals variation in this regard – the University of West Georgia, Eastern Kentucky, and East Carolina require a capstone/senior seminar course while Western Kentucky does not. At my own institution we also had a Research Methods (proposal writing class) and a Senior Seminar (research paper class) which presented considerable burden for the faculty. We have chosen to address the issue of capacity in the senior seminar course by providing students with three options: complete the Senior Seminar course (including a research paper) OR complete an internship OR complete an honors thesis. As a result, two-thirds of our students now complete an internship for their capstone experience. The Community Engagement Internship at UTC lends itself well as a capstone experience, whether as a specific capstone requirement option or simply as an elective option that students are strongly encouraged to complete. Over this review period the number of internships completed by Sociology students (8) falls well below that in Anthropology (29). Even if it were not a requirement,

encouragement to pursue an internship could come through the Professionalism in Sociology course, along with the professional advisors and informal mentoring.

Geography

The geography program added two courses to the curriculum over this year period – Meteorology and Climatology. These strike me as courses with great potential as jobs the field of Meteorology is anticipated to grow at a faster than average rate in the coming years. Perhaps in the future a Meteorology minor could be developed to meet this need.

Overall Observations:

I am pleased to see the Community Engagement Internship option within both Sociology and Anthropology. In reviewing the course schedules for both disciplines for both Summer 2024 and Summer 2025, I note that the internship option is not available to students in summer. Based on what I have observed in both departments in which I have been employed, internships are quite popular in the summer when students tend to have more unscheduled time. Thus, I would encourage both programs to consider offering the internship option in the summer. However, this requires that a faculty member is willing to supervise the internship students AND that the faculty member is paid for doing so. This is the model we use at Georgia Southern where we typically have 15 students completing internships each summer, mostly in Sociology. One option to build this up might be for one faculty member to supervise internships in both disciplines until the summer numbers build up to a point where two are needed.

Is the curriculum content appropriate for UTC? Are the core and advanced courses approximately balanced? Does the overall curriculum ensure the development of appropriate skills in the following areas: general education, critical thinking skills, research strategies and skills, written and oral communications, and computer and technology-related skills (in general and specific to the discipline)?

I find the curriculum content across all three disciplines to be very appropriate for both UTC and the disciplines. All three disciplines include skill-building courses within their curricula. These include the Social Statistics and Research methods courses in Sociology, the Technical Skills and Lab category courses in Anthropology, and Maps and Mapping, Meteorology, and Climatology courses in Geography. In addition, the faculty as a whole include a wide-variety of High Impact Practices across the range of courses being offered (from core to advanced courses). I am impressed by the extent to which faculty focus on real-word applications of the content knowledge within their courses.

Are appropriate pedagogical and/or technological innovations included that enhance student learning? Are the department's instructional practices consistent with the standards of the discipline?
- Do the instructional practices provide adequate opportunities for student interactions with one another, faculty, and professionals?
- Does the department make adequate efforts to include students in the life of the program (e.g., seeking student advice in reviewing the curriculum/course schedules/teaching methods, etc.)?

After reviewing the syllabi provided and discussing the curriculum and specific courses with the faculty, I must say I am impressed with the level of attention the faculty put into developing engaging and interactive courses and course assessments. Anthropology, Sociology, and Geography offer six courses

that are certified as experiential learning courses at UTC. These courses are part of the UTC ThinkAchieve: Beyond the Classroom platform in which "students participate in and reflect on experience-based learning. These courses range from General Education courses including Sociology of Social Problems and Maps and Mapping to upper division courses focused on Archaeological Field Methods as well as the two internship courses. The fact that faculty are bringing experiential learning into General Education courses, which tend to be larger and include students with a range of interests, is particularly noteworthy.

Beyond these courses, I note that faculty engage students by incorporating current technologies into many of their courses. To name just a few examples of the use of current technologies, students in Anthropology courses work with 3D printed fossils, participate in the annual Paleoskills Workshop, engage in blood spatter analysis and fingerprint lifting, work with fossil cast and skeleton collections, engage in SONAR mapping, use Perusall to analyze readings, and more. Students in Sociology courses use census data, the UTC Policy Map database, the Social Explorer database, and GIS to understand the distribution and predictors of social phenomena. Students in Geography courses work with Google Earth exploring satellite and aerial imagery as well as layers of mappable data.

While many faculty are moving away from the challenges of writing assignments, the SAG faculty incorporate writing into the majority of their courses. Some examples from Sociology include Dr. Vidmar's *Sociological Imagination* paper in Introduction to Sociology, Dr. Walsh's *Learning Journal* in Sociology of the Family, Dr. Simoni's *Deviance in Online Spaces* paper, Dr. Ward's *Urban Ethnographic Research* assignments, and Dr. Blanton's *Final Research Paper* (and Presentation) in Sociology of Sexualities. In Anthropology, examples include Dr. Workinger's *Nacirema* and *Kinship Assignments* in Cultural Anthropology, Dr. McDonnell's *application assignments* in Food, Society, and Identity, Dr. Smith's *final essay* in Anthropological Theory, Dr. Guo's *interview assignments* in his Emotions course, and Dr. Person's *position papers* in Archives, Collections Management and Curation course. In Geography examples include *Travel+Leisure papers* in Dr. Laing's Geography of Travel and Tourism course and a *term paper* in Dr. Hodge's Climatology course. I mention specific examples to illustrate the variety of ways in which faculty are incorporating writing into their course, which I find to be important and consistent with expectations in their disciplines. I note that most of the faculty have some policy articulated in their syllabus regarding the use of AI, which is critical at this point.

Many of the department's courses across all levels (Gened to advanced electives) incorporate work in groups. This is especially important as students have little experience with group-work these days, in my experience, but employers are looking for this kind of experience. Not surprisingly the most intensive group work happens in the archaeology field courses.

Do students have adequate opportunities to participate in research, practice/field experiences/internships, or other experiences that allow them to apply learning outside the classroom and/or expose students to professional and career opportunities appropriate to the discipline?

SAG offers a wide array of opportunities for students to engage in research, practical experiences, and other experiences outside of the classroom.
The self-study lists the following independent study courses, internships and other opportunities for students to earn credits engaging in work outside of the classroom:
• Research (ANTH 4997r, SOC 4997r, GEOG 4997r)

• Individual Studies (ANTH 4998r, SOC 4998r, & GEOG 4998r)
• Group Studies (ANTH 2999r/3999r/4999r; SOC 4999r, & GEOG 4999r)
• Internships (ANTH/SOC/GEOG 4940r)
• Departmental Thesis (ANTH/SOC/GEOG 4995r)

In addition, internal and external grants as well as donor funds have provided a range of paid research opportunities for students especially in Anthropology. Students noted how important these opportunities have been I allowing them to work for pay while gaining experience in their field.

Anthropology:
In archaeology students gain practical experience and skills through the archaeology field school. Students also assist with experimental archaeology projects related to the program's PaleoSkills event, which reportedly draws an impressive 400-500 participants each year. They also assist collections management work on our large inventory of material, as well as research projects associated with Dr. Persons's research agenda in the Caribbean. While in biological anthropology, students have assisted faculty in ensuring NAGPRA compliance as well as in the creation of 3D printed teaching materials. Students in the Geoarchaeology and Submerged Landscapes Laboratory help with artifact and remote sensing data processing from grant and contract work.

I note also that 29 students in Anthropology completed an internship during the period under study, while 8 completed an honors project. Indeed, I noted on the program website that two Anthropology majors received paid internships to work with the Southeastern Observation Corps, quite prestigious postings. The program also encourages students to present research papers at local and regional conferences, with high levels of participation.

Sociology:
In Sociology, Dr. Blanton has worked with several students on her ongoing research project related to environment and society, resulting in a collaborative research presentation involving students. Sociology students have worked with Dr. Ward on a number of research projects, gaining experience in qualitative note taking, transcribing of focus group interviews, and conducting survey interviews.

During the period under review an impressive 13 Sociology students completed an honors project, while 8 completed an internship. As honors projects are labor intensive for faculty, I applaud the program's support of these opportunities. Sociology students also presented their work at local and regional conferences.

Geography:
The number of students who presented research papers at local, regional, and even national conferences is particularly impressive given that the program does not exist as a major. This suggests to me that the geography faculty and their courses are highly impactful.

Study Abroad:
I am pleased to see the SAG faculty seeking out opportunities to lead study abroad trips. These trips are extraordinarily labor-intensive, but so impactful for students. I note in particular the trip to China that was led by Dr. Guo in Summer 2018. In addition, I am pleased by the fact that Dr. Morgan Smith was selected to lead the first archaeology study abroad course in Madrid, Spain in Spring 2025. The

department reports that, during this program review, eight students took advantage of opportunities to study in Spain, Germany, India, and other destinations. I anticipate this number will go up if SAG faculty are leading trips themselves. What an impactful experience for the programs' students!

Does the department clearly outline program requirements and offer courses regularly to ensure timely completion of the program?

Yes, I have reviewed the department website assuming this may be a primary source for students on program requirements. The requirements for the programs are clearly articulated on the website and in the University Catalog. The programs have plans to ensure that courses are offered on a rotation to meet the students' graduation requirements in a timely fashion. I also note that many of the General Education courses are offered in the evening and also online. I asked the students with whom I met whether they felt the course rotations met their needs. They agreed that they did but said that sometimes they were not informed by their advisors that a particular course needed to be taken in a given semester. This had happened with an Anthropology course that students needed to graduate this Spring; a faculty member in Anthropology offered the course as a small group independent study to meet the students' needs.

PART 3 – Student Experience

Does the program and curricula provide students with the opportunities to evaluate the curriculum and the faculty? What procedures are in place to ensure and document that the department provides students with regular opportunities to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of teaching? How well is this information used to improve the program?

Students regularly evaluate faculty through student course evaluations. The University requires that tenure track faculty submit responses to their evaluation responses to demonstrate that they are critically assessing their course design. A similar procedure exists for faculty undergoing post-tenure review.

In addition, as part of the annual evaluation process, the SAG faculty are required to critically consider their course evaluations and identify areas for course improvement.

Faculty teaching 3000 level courses evaluate student results on their course assessment materials on a regular basis to identify potential necessary revisions. My discussions with faculty during my visit suggest to me that faculty regularly revise their courses as they recognize needs on the part of students and to maintain the currency of the curriculum.

Do students have adequate opportunities to participate in professional and career opportunities appropriate to the discipline and to opportunities to apply what they have learned outside of the classroom?

The Professionalism in Anthropology/ Sociology courses are an important opportunity early in students' careers to engage in professional development. In this course students create a resume, cover letter, and Linked In profile. They also get exposed to resources available to support their development throughout their academic career at UTC. Finally, this course is an excellent opportunity for career exploration while students still have time to then develop the skills necessary to achieve that career. My expectation

would be that this course would develop a student mindset focused on development towards career goals.

As was discussed in section 2, students have many opportunities to engage in learning outside of the classroom through individual research, honors projects, internships, fields schools, study abroad and the like. According to the data presented in the self-study many students do take advantage of these opportunities. The increased availability of paid work particularly for Anthropology students has had a positive impact on these studies. Some of these opportunities exist as a result of donor funding, while others exist due to faculty grants and contracts. This demonstrates that providing faculty with the time to pursue these types of funding opportunities pays off for both the faculty member and the students.

Many of the faculty also bring in guest speakers relevant to potential careers students may be considering. For example, a virtual panel of Anthropology alumni occurred during this review period. As noted above, all three programs offer skill building courses through which students can become familiar with what they might be doing "on the job". The Internship courses are, of course, an excellent opportunity to "test drive" a career and gain job experience.

What curricular and/or extracurricular activities does the department offer towards exposure to diversity? Do these activities provide adequate opportunities for students to be exposed to the perspective or underrepresented groups?

The curriculum in Sociology, Anthropology, and Geography as disciplines, but also specifically at UTC, is intentionally and intensely focused on exposing students to diverse perspectives and to the experiences of under-represented groups. Indeed, the very notion of developing a "sociological imagination", a concept introduced in introductory-level sociology courses, is about seeing the world through diverse lenses. In Sociology, courses like Sociology of the Family, Deviance and Conformity, Urban Sociology, Race and Ethnicity, Gender and Society, Social Inequality, Sociology of Globalization, and more expose students to the diversity of human experience. We witness this in courses like Native Americans, Human Variation, Plagues and Peoples, Becoming Human, Cultures of Latin America, Chinese Society and Culture, and Wealth, Money, and Power in Anthropology. Cultural Geography and Culture, Environment, and Power are but two of the courses in Geography which expose students to diverse experiences and perspectives.

Extracurricular activities linking students with each other outside of class include student organizations like the Sociology Club, Alpha Kappa Delta (the sociology honors society), and Lambda Alpha (the Anthropology honors society). Faculty also arrange activities outside of class including a student trip to The Black Doctoral Network's annual national conference, to the National African American History and Culture Museum, to the National Center for Civil and Human Rights, to the Chattanooga Zoo, to the Tennessee River to search for the wreckage of the USS Chattanooga, and to the Chickamauga Battlefield, to name a few. Dr. Smith's and Dr. Guo's study abroad trips to Spain and China, respectively. Given the diversity among the faculty including by race and ethnicity, gender, age, first-generation, military experience, as well as region or country of origin and areas of expertise, SAG offers broad perspectives to teaching pedagogies, research agendas, and student mentorship. This is evident in the course syllabi I reviewed, but also in the broad range of student honors projects and other research projects in which they engage.

Do the students have access to appropriate academic support services? Describe the academic support services and comment on their adequacy and appropriateness.

Students report being satisfied with the resources provided within the University Library as well as the Writing Center. Indeed, these resources seem both well-resourced and accessible to students, both in terms of location as well as the availability and willingness of librarians to be "imbedded within courses". However, students expressed concern about their experiences with advising. As the self-study points out, students report that advisement they receive from advisors in the Hub is not always clear nor accurate. This may be in part due to changes in curriculum in both the Sociology and Anthropology program. As mentioned earlier, a handful of graduating seniors in Anthropology felt they had been misadvised about the fact that a course they needed was only available in the Fall semester. They were enormously grateful to the faculty member who agreed to offer it to them as an independent study so that they could finish on time. Another student mentioned getting conflicting information from two different advisors about whether a course could meet requirements for both her major and her minor, leaving her uncertain as to how many more courses she needs to graduate.

Whether mistakes are indeed being made or students fail to pay attention to detail, I applaud the programs' vision to use the Professionalism in Anthropology/Sociology course to support the advising process. Using time in this course to review the curriculum, provide two-year course rotations, highlight specific courses that might be helpful for students interested in a given field, and reminding students of registration deadlines would help to supplement advisors' efforts. I also like the idea of having a Canvas page for majors and minors through which faculty can communicate with students about upcoming registration deadlines, new course opportunities, etc. We have the same difficulties with our professional advising model at Georgia Southern, as the advisors simply have too many students and they are not experts in the disciplines they are advising. The reality is that students still need mentoring when it comes to choices that are best for their particular career goals and advisors are not the ones to do this kind of work.

PART 4 – Faculty

Are faculty competencies/credentials appropriate to the level of the program, and do they at least meet the SACSCOC qualifications? Do faculty specialties correspond to the needs of the program? How might the program address needs for additional/different qualifications/expertise?

The full-time faculty in Sociology, Anthropology, and Geography are all exceptionally well-qualified scholars with each holding the PhD in their respective fields. Many of the faculty accrued significant applied experience prior to taking on their academic role with UTC, which I view as a significant strength in teaching and mentoring of students. The faculty are highly research productive and committed to creative and effective teaching. A number of the faculty have been recognized with teaching awards for their work in the classroom. During the last five years, several of the faculty have secured internal and external funding, including funding from the National Science Foundation, the US Department of Veterans Affairs, as well as grants from the Walker Center for Teaching and Learning. The self-study reports that adjuncts teaching for the programs are also all well-qualified and meet SACS-COC credentialing requirements.

During the period under review, new faculty hires in Anthropology have focused on archaeology and biological anthropology, including a new hire in biological anthropology for Fall 2025. These hires have made it possible for the program to provide strong, focused training in both areas. These hires have allowed the department to add the Geoarchaeology and Submerged Landscapes Laboratory alongside the long-standing Jeffrey L. Brown Institute of Archaeology initiative as centers for teaching and research. In addition, the program has developed strong NAGPRA policies and their efforts in this area provide unique opportunities in working within these federal requirements.

In the last five years the Sociology program has added four new faculty and transitioned Dr. Darrell Walsh to an Assistant Professor rank. The specialty areas among the Sociology faculty are broad, ranging from inequalities such as gender, sexuality, and race to reproductive and environmental justice, urban sociology, military sociology, medical sociology, and technology. These specialties cover key social inequalities typically covered in coursework in sociology programs, while also introducing contemporary specialized foci that will likely be of interest to students. Many of the faculty have cross-cutting interests providing opportunities for collaboration.

The two Geography faculty have complementary specializations which allow the minor to provide students with a variety of courses. The addition of Meteorology and Climatology courses introduce some unique opportunities.

Is the faculty adequate in number to meet the needs of the program with reasonable and efficient teaching loads and/or credit hour productions? Are the regular-to-adjunct faculty ratios appropriate for the program?

Both the Sociology and Anthropology programs have five full-time faculty, while there are two full-time Geography faculty. However, the department co-chair is an Anthropologist, reducing the number of Anthropology courses that can be offered – particularly Cultural Anthropology courses. This is a significant weakness given the modified four field approach of the program as well as the enormous opportunities for applied cultural anthropology work in the region.

While the official workload for tenure track and tenured faculty is nine-credits per semester, the self-study and the faculty report that overloads are routinely required to meet the course needs of the students. During the 2023-2024 academic year, 43% of the faculty taught one overload course. While the lecturers with whom I spoke were not concerned with taking on overload courses, the tenure track faculty were. I am particularly concerned with the high number of overloads being taught by tenure-track faculty. First, these faculty report that they don't believe their research expectations are adjusted despite regularly having a higher teaching load. This question must be addressed, Second, cuts to their research time impact their ability to seek grants and contracts, which reduces opportunities for students.[1] Given the potential for increased grant and contract funding among these well-trained faculty, protecting their research time seems a worthwhile investment.

In addition to the high number of overloads, part-time adjunct faculty accounted for between 27.3% and 40% of the student credit hour production during the period under review. While the low end of this range is not overly concerning given that adjuncts typically teach introductory-level courses with higher

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[1] I also question whether tenure-track assistant professors have the freedom to refuse overloads, given their probationary nature. I don't see this as a particular issue within this department or at UTC, but an issue for the field as a whole.

enrollments, I would hope to see this number remain under 25%. For comparison, at the two institutions for which I have worked the percentage of SCHs taught by adjuncts within the Sociology and Anthropology programs have been no higher than 10%-15%. The use of adjuncts undermines the programs' ability to recruit students, as these faculty tend to teach introductory level courses but don't typically engage in recruitment efforts.

The self-study data document also documents a disparity in number of majors per FTE in History and Philosophy and Religious Studies as compared to Anthropology and Sociology, with the ratio in the SAG programs being higher.

In sum, I find the number of faculty in both Sociology and Anthropology to be inadequate and will make recommendations in my summary statements as to how these might be addressed as well as the benefits for doing so.

With respect to ethnicity, gender, and academic background, is faculty diversity appropriate for the program?

In part due to the diversity among the faculty including by race and ethnicity, gender, age, first-generation, military experience, as well as region or country of origin and areas of expertise, SAG offers broad perspectives in teaching pedagogies, research agendas, and student mentorship. This is particularly important in the fields of Sociology and Anthropology which directly address issues of diversity and inequality within their curricula. I find this to be a strength of the programs.

Does the program use a faculty evaluation system to improve teaching, scholarly and creative activities, and service? Does the system include information from the teaching evaluations of student, alumni, and employer surveys? Are the faculty evaluation procedures adequate and successfully implemented and used?

Tenured and tenure-track faculty evaluation is accomplished through the university's Evaluation and Development by Objectives (EDO) process, by which department chair assesses whether faculty have met agreed upon objectives in teaching, research, and service. The evaluation process includes a self-assessment by the faculty member of their performance discussing their accomplishments in relation to the objectives agreed upon the previous spring. The department head reviews the assessment and, after individual conferences with each faculty member, assigns one of four possible performance ratings: Exceeds Expectations for Rank; Meets Expectations for Rank; Needs improvement for Rank; or Unsatisfactory for Rank.

In addition to the EDO process, pre-tenured faculty members undergo an annual reappointment review requiring that they prepare a dossier for review by the departmental promotion and tenure committee. After review, the committee forwards its recommendation to the department head and the Dean. The department head adds her recommendation to the Dean, who forwards his recommendation to the provost. Final action is reserved for the Chancellor.

The self-study reports that student course evaluations are used during evaluation processes in the department, with faculty expected to reflect on student comments and identify course revisions that

might be appropriate. I see no reference to the use of alumni or employer surveys in these processes or in program level decisions regarding curricular changes.

Are faculty engaged in scholarly, creative, professional association, and service activities that enhance instructional expertise in their areas of specialty?
- Are the faculty involved in research, publication activities, conference presentations, or other scholarly and creative activities that are appropriate for the program?
- Does each faculty member have a professional development plan designed to enhance his or her role as a faculty member? Is there evidence of successful achievements within the plan?
- Are faculty services to UTC and the community adequate? In view of UTC's mission, as a metropolitan institution, does the program have adequate linkages with the community?

I found the SAG faculty to be highly engaged in research, publication, and other scholarly activities (including grants). Indeed, in my opinion, the tenure track and tenured faculty within the SAG programs have research records which rival those at many R2 institutions. While many of the faculty do present their research at conferences, they report that their ability to present their research is constrained by the low travel funds available to faculty for such activities. These travel funds have remained the same for the last 10 years. Unfortunately, this constrains their ability to be engaged in national and international professional associations, which would raise the profile of the programs.

The faculty report a high level of engagement in professional development activities related to teaching and research. These activities have led to instructional strategies, like Dr. Williamson's development of a new strategy to teach evolution as a result of her involvement in the Faculty Fellows program and Dr. McDonnel's development of new assessment strategies in the age of AI as a result of participation in Walker Center workshops. Dr. Smith has participated in SONAR training which has informed his teaching and research and Dr. Ward's participation in a Walkable City at the Harvard Graduate School of Design led to her development of a 2 semester honors course sequence on equity-based urban design.

Much of the research of the faculty and students is focused on the Southeastern region. The community-engaged internships and service-learning courses provide direct impacts to the community, much of it through work with nonprofit organizations.

Are faculty engaged in the planning, evaluation and improvement processes that measure and advance student success?

The SAG programs work through a faculty governance model. Thus, faculty are involved in all aspects of planning, evaluation and improvement processes, particularly as they relate to student success. Faculty were clearly well aware of and critical thinking about the curriculum in their programs, the opportunities that exist for students, and the resources needed to meet students' needs.

Several faculty expressed to me that they would like to see the department move to a program director model, to give disciplinary faculty more involvement in curriculum processes, course scheduling, and the like. This option was also attractive to them as a way of distributing opportunities for administrative experience across a broader range of faculty.

PART 5 – Learning Resources

Does the program regularly evaluate its equipment and facilities and pursue necessary improvements?
- Has the program requested/encouraged necessary improvements of its equipment and facilities through appropriate internal mechanisms? Through appropriate external mechanisms?
- Does it appear that the program's resources are appropriate within the context of overall college resources?
- How should needs of the program be prioritized? Could savings be realized from current program operations to fund any new budgetary needs?

The SAG faculty are currently in temporary space while they wait for the State Office Building renovations to be completed. This is not ideal as the trailers have leaky roofs, internet outages and limited office space. In fact, during my visit the good news came that an administrative assistant had finally been hired after a period of years without a full-time admin, however there is no office space for that individual to be housed. Despite these difficulties, the department co-head and the faculty have made the best of the situation, particularly in ensuring that adequate space is available for the needs in archaeology and biological anthropology. The second Collins trailer has been successfully established as teaching and lab space and is clearly regularly utilized. It was clear from my conversations with Dr. Guo that he is in regular communication with the Dean's office as well as facilities about the issues the department faces because of these temporary spaces.

The Anthropology program has been well-supported by the Dean's office and by recent donations. The acquisition of an SUV, SONAR and GPS systems provide critical support for archeological research. Lab fees from the Biological Anthropology course also support the acquisition of teaching materials. In addition, the department reports support from the Dean's office in acquiring space for the new Vann Cunningham Anthropology Teaching Space and the Geoarchaeological and Submerged Landscapes Laboratory. Two donors have provided funds which provide financial support for Anthropology students, which the faculty have wisely tied to opportunities to gain practical experience through internships and/or assisting with faculty research. This has increased the profile of the program internally and externally.

The operating budget for SAG is clearly tight and has reportedly not changed significantly since the merger of Criminal Justice and SAG during the last review period. For example, it is striking to me that a gift fund has been used to furnish furniture, equipment, and marketing materials. These are basic necessities that would typically be included within an operating budget and/or covered by end-of-year funds in my experience. However, the department and its faculty are clearly entrepreneurial in their use of and acquisition of funds. For example, the department's use of an online funds account generated from online fees to support salaries for online classes taught by full-time and adjunct faculty. Faculty seek out internal support from programs like the Walker Center funding for course redesign for online instruction, the Collaborative Research Initiative for Sponsored Programs, the Experiential Learning Faculty Fellows grant, and the High-Impact Practices Development Grants. I note that Dr. Smith received the Ruth Holmberg Grant for Faculty Excellence recently. Dr's Guo, Smith, and Ward are UC Foundation Professors, which I understand provides a small supplement to their salaries.

The continued water leakage in the space in Guerry Hall where archaeological materials are stored and archived is a pressing issue which must be resolved as soon as possible. I know the Dean's office is

aware of this concern and has provided support to move the process along. Unfortunately, as is always the case with archaeological artifacts, this isn't something that can be "staffed out".

I would not recommend any redistribution of funds as I don't observe any excesses. However, the obvious positive impacts of the private donations to Anthropology highlight the impact such donations can have. I would recommend that similar efforts be made to secure donations to support Sociology students; for example, Sociology majors who choose to complete an internship. As the Vann Cunningham experience highlights, such donations can start off small and then grow as the donor witnesses the impact of their contributions. When I was chair of my current department, I acquired a commitment of a modest $5000 per year from an alum of our Sociology program. The funds are paid out each year to 2-3 Sociology majors. While not large scholarships, they do make an impact for our students who often struggle to cover their educational costs. After seven years of $5000 donations and seven years of thank you letters from grateful students, the donor is now doubling their contributions. Again, not a life-changing amount for the department as a whole but significant for the individual students who receive the funds.

Are library holdings and other learning and information resources current and adequate to support the teaching and learning needs of the discipline?

As during my previous visit, I remain impressed with the UTC Library, its staff, and resources. The UTC Library Studio resources strike me as particularly useful in providing students with the tools to develop skills which they can bring to future employees. The dean of the Library reports that the SAG faculty make use of the Library Instruction resources, including having librarians "embedded" in courses to assist students. Self-study examples of students using library resources to make research posters and films, and use library space to host student organization events are good to hear. The location of the Writing and Communication Center in the library seems ideal and students with whom I met reported that they have used the services of the Center.

The Library website of databases is designed to make searching for literature related to one's discipline easier. The fact that one can search databases by subject is quite useful and not a feature available in an accessible form at our university library. The Research Guides by discipline are also useful resources for students and faculty. The Data and Statistics Research Guide is also a great resource to identify data sources for social and behavioral sciences projects. Unfortunately, the library resource list for Sociology and Anthropology was not available to me. I note from the name that it may also be out of date. However, I heard no concerns from faculty or students about access to library sources. The ease of electronic inter-library loan services has made some of these issues easier to work around in a relatively short amount of time.
http://wiki.lib.utc.edu/images/3/3f/Current_Print_and_Online_Serials_List_for_Sociology_and_Anthropology_2017.pdf

Part 6 – Support

Is the program's operating budget consistent with the needs of the program?
- Considering current budget constraints, what are the most pressing resource needs of the program?

As I have discussed above, the operating budget for SAG faculty is tight, when some necessities are having to be purchased out of gift funds. In addition, faculty report having to curtail their professional travel as a result of stagnant travel funding. The latter impacts the visibility of the programs and the scholarship of the faculty.

While the upcoming split of the departments (Criminal Justice and SAG) is a positive step, I am concerned that operating funds be allocated equitably to support each new department. I don't expect nor did I hear of any efficiencies in resource utilization as a result of the merger. Indeed, likely in part because of the physical distance between the two faculties and the fact that they continued to operate essentially as two units (with co-heads, etc), it is unlikely that any efficiencies were gained from the merger. So my assumption is the split will not exacerbate the current operating budget issues, but it is an issue to be cognizant of as planning occurs.

In my assessment, the most pressing resource need is in personnel to reduce the overloads being taught by tenure track faculty. Overloads constrain the faculty members' ability to have focused research time and, if so desired, to pursue internal and external funding opportunities, which could then support students. I would add that the department has a history of faculty being hired and leaving for a number of reasons which I believe have mostly resolved themselves. However, if junior faculty feel that their workloads are not in keeping with rising R2 research expectations and not what they were told when they signed their contracts, they may seek employment elsewhere. This would be a shame because the department has a good group of faculty who are highly productive and effective teachers and seem genuinely interested in being at UTC. In addition, hiring new faculty is always a lot of work, which has to be repeated if the faculty then leave. Thus this issue needs to be addressed.

Does the program have a history of enrollment and graduation rates sufficient to sustain high quality and cost effectiveness?

Indeed, the programs in SAG have a strong history of enrollment relative to trends in their respective disciplines. This is particularly the case with respect to Anthropology. The faculty in both degree programs have identified and eliminated key bottlenecks for students, which should translate to reduced time to graduation. While both programs experienced a dip in graduation numbers during the Covid-19 pandemic, both have rebounded with Sociology graduating a strong 31 students in 2022-2023 and 20 in 2023-2024 and Anthropology graduating a record 21 students in 2023-2024. As the self-study reports, this represents an average of 32 students per year which is only slightly below the average of 36 students during the last program review cycle (despite the impact of the pandemic).

I anticipate continued growth in the Anthropology program in response to the development of new initiatives like the Geoarchaeology and Submerged Landscapes Laboratory and the Forensic Science certificate, as well as the continued high-profile work associated with the Jeffrey L. Brown Institute of Archaeology. In addition, the popular PaleoSkills event brings the media and public attention to the program as well. Finally, the financial support provided by private donors is an enticement for students to consider the programs and ensures strong job placement after graduation, supporting continued growth.

I believe the Sociology program also has significant growth potential given the energy and exciting work being done by the faculty in the program. If the Sociology faculty come together to develop a concerted recruitment plan, I believe it will bear fruit. In addition, Dr. Ward, the senior member of the Sociology faculty, has a strong reputation and her successful grant activity has enabled her to fund students on her research projects which is a draw for students. I anticipate that members of the junior faculty will also establish successful records in grant activity, especially as there are some interesting synergies between faculty both within sociology, across the disciplines of SAG, and across the University. While the initial investment in applying for grants is substantial, once a record is established faculty can then use their research funds to enhance their own research productivity but also the skills of their students.

Finally, the enrollments in the Geography General Education courses are strong and the number of students in the Geography minor are growing. The Geography minor is a strong complement to a number of degree programs on campus and the Geography faculty clearly have strong relationships with their students (as evidenced by the number of research papers I see coming out of Geography students).

Is the program responsive to local, state, regional and national needs of the discipline?

The Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Outlook Handbook projects a higher-than-average growth in anthropology, archeology, and sociology jobs between 2023-2033 (estimated at 7- 8%). Forensic science technicians have an estimated growth rate of 14%, much faster than average. Jobs related to Geography are expected to increase by about 3% (average), while atmospheric scientists (including meteorologists) are expected to grow at a rate of about 6%. The sociology figures do not take into account the fact that the second most common occupation sociology graduates go into is business (Van Vooren and Spalter-Roth 2008), including human resource management which is growing at a rate of 8%. Thus, the SAG programs are meeting current national needs.

Regionally, the Southeast is a rich area for archaeological work, including a high demand for Cultural Resource Management positions even entry-level positions for which graduates of the UTC program would be qualified. Many Cultural Resource Management firms specialize in the Southeastern United States, including Bland and Associates, Inc. (BAI), Archaeological Consultants, Inc. (ACI), Archaeological Consultants of the Carolinas, Inc. (ACC, Inc.), SWCA, UES Professional Solutions, and New South Associates, to name a few. In addition, the Southeast Archaeological Center, a constituent organization of the National Park Service, is another potential employer, as are many universities, museums, and municipalities.

Biological anthropology and forensic science in particular lends itself to jobs in work in labs at universities and research firms; curation, collection management and archive work in museums; law enforcement agencies; medical examiner offices; and technical writing, for example.

Applied cultural anthropologists and sociologists lend themselves well to community development, community health programs, social services, government and policy analysis, and social research. As the Southeastern US is an area with significant health and social inequalities, applied cultural anthropologists and sociologists have much to contribute in this area.

PART 7 – Summary Recommendations

Overall, what are your impressions of the program?
- What are the major strengths of the program?

A common and most important strength of all the programs within SAG is the faculty. The senior faculty in all three disciplines are dedicated, well-trained professionals with interesting and important research agendas and a strong commitment to the institution and its students. Adding to that core group, the department has made exceptional hires since the last program review, including the transition of Dr. Walsh to tenure-track. Their specialty areas expand the breadth of the curriculum in new and interesting ways. Yet I see potential synergies both within the department and across the university. It was a pleasure to witness the supportive and collegial interactions among the faculty, including across members of all three disciplines. The research agendas of the tenure-track and tenured faculty are rich and unique, with great long-term potential for publication and external funding.

The Anthropology curriculum has been strengthened through a more-clear curriculum structure which specifically builds in skill development and experiential learning. The depths of training opportunities within the areas of archeology, geoarchaeology, and biological anthropology are particularly strong and will become stronger with the recent hire of a second biological anthropologist to begin Fall 2025. The resources accrued to support these areas are substantial and include the labs, equipment, and donor funding to support students. Should the lab space in the State Office Building equal or exceed that in the temporary facilities the department currently occupies, I expect the work in these areas will continue to expand and attract even more students. The annual PaleoSkills event serves as an excellent marketing tool for the program.

The Sociology curriculum has been streamlined to reduce bottlenecks towards graduation and to address staffing issues. In addition, upper division electives have been added that reflect the specialty areas of the faculty and current social issues. Some faculty have been able to provide funded research opportunities for students. Several of the Sociology faculty incorporate experiential learning into their courses, including in General Education courses. Faculty have organized field trips for students to museums and conferences.

The Community Engagement Internship option is a strength of both the Sociology and Anthropology programs. Internships have enormous potential to increase students' awareness of how their disciplinary knowledge and training can be utilized within the community. They also increase the marketability of graduates by providing them with the job experience they need to be competitive. I would like to see these internships available to students throughout the year, especially during the summer months when students are more likely to have the time to commit to them. However, success in this area inevitably means that supervising internships must be part of a faculty member's workload and cannot be treated as independent studies are or as an overload. For example, in my own program our Internship Director has a one-course release for supervising internships throughout the academic year and is paid the equivalent of a three-credit course for supervising internships during the summer months.[2]

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[2] A quick look at our current summer schedule reveals she has 19 summer internship students registered at this point in early April, suggesting the final total will probably be 25-30. This is about equivalent to how many student interns she supervises across the combined Fall and Spring semesters, making the course release and summer salary more than fair.

The Geography minor includes strong and popular General Education courses, as well as compelling upper-division electives. Many courses focus on skill development which would be valuable in a wide variety of fields; for example, Maps and Mapping, Meteorology, and Remote Sensing and Imagery Analysis. The faculty are clearly highly engaged with the students in a manner reflective of the kind of commitment faculty often make to majors, rather than minors.

There are significant synergies across members of the faculty which could lead to productive research collaborations and/or curricula. For example, the impacts of technology on people and society cuts across at least three sociology faculty and could potentially draw in geography faculty. Climate change could connect anthropology faculty with geography. Health and healthcare cuts across sociology and anthropology faculty. And gender cuts across sociology and anthropology faculty. These are just a few observations based on profiles in the self-study. I suspect there are more. As collaborative and interdisciplinary research is of particular interest to funding agencies and to publishers, seeking out opportunities for collaboration could be an effective mechanism by which faculty could promote and sustain their scholarship activities.

- What are the major weaknesses of the program?

The temporary space in which the SAG faculty are housed is a major weakness at this time, especially for Sociology and geography faculty and students who have no natural gathering place. This impedes the development of community the members of these disciplines. As many of the Anthropology students are focused on archaeology and/or biological anthropology, they tend to cluster around the lab spaces resulting in opportunities to chat and bond before and after classes.

The number of overloads being taught by tenure-line faculty is a significant weakness that should be addressed. If the university is serious about moving to R2 status, faculty must be given dedicated time to work on research. In addition, the department needs to live up to its commitment to faculty in its workload policy if it hopes to keep strong, research-active faculty. I have witnessed our Criminology and Criminal Justice department become a rotating door of faculty arrivals and departures as a result of "necessary" overloads over the last five years. Reducing the amount of time spent recruiting and training new faculty and the improvements in morale and productivity are worth the added expense associated with ensuring that the department is properly staffed. In order to accomplish this task without further increasing the number of adjunct SCHs and negatively impacting recruitment, I believe at least one new faculty member needs to be hired within Sociology and Anthropology post haste.

The Anthropology program is weak in the area of Cultural Anthropology, at least in part because the co-head representing SAG is one of the two Cultural Anthropologists. In addition, the remaining Cultural Anthropologist is primarily tasked with teaching General Education courses as well as Ethnographic Methods and Theory. As a result, what the self-study describes as a three-field approach is primarily a curriculum focused on archaeology and biological anthropology. Given the enormous potential in applied cultural anthropology, this leaves many potential students by the wayside. Furthermore, given Dr. McDonnel's compelling specialty areas, students are missing out on the opportunity to learn from upper-division electives she might otherwise teach if there were at least two cultural anthropologists with full-time teaching loads.

The decision by the Sociology program to cut the second-semester of its two-semester methods sequence essentially cut its capstone experience, bringing it out of alignment with American Sociological Association guidelines. While I understand the need to address the workload issue, I would encourage the faculty to consider what other opportunities there might be for a capstone experience. A selection of options that would meet this requirement might distribute the load in a more manageable fashion. As discussed above, the Community Engagement Internship is one such option, but clearly not all students will and should complete an internship. An Honors Thesis might be another such option. Additional options might be upper-division courses that include a service-learning component. I see that the Psychology program has an "Applying Psychology" requirement category. An "Applying Sociology" group of courses might be a manageable way to bring back a capstone experience in a manageable way. If the department were to bring in an additional Sociologist as suggested above in the discussion of overloads, this would also help to address the capstone issue.

The Sociology program has maintained enrollment over this review period but a deliberative recruitment plan needs to be enacted to bring in additional majors. Recruitment would also be enhanced by the identification of even a small donor or two who would make it possible to provide students with scholarships or even better paid work experience with a faculty member. This has clearly made an impact for the Anthropology program, enhancing not only the student experience but also the faculty's ability to accomplish both practical and research goals.

What goals would you suggest the program set for the next five years? Please list goals in order of priority (i.e., the most important goal first, followed by the second most important goal, etc.)

-Seek approval to recruit an additional cultural anthropologist, particularly if Dr. Guo is to remain head of the new independent SAG department.
-Seek approval to recruit an additional sociologist within a specialty area to be identified by the faculty, but potentially with an applied sociology perspective (to increase capstone course options).
-Work with Development staff to identify potential donor(s) to support sociology students and initiatives.
-Discuss whether a program director model might be of interest and benefit to the department as it reverts back into an independent unit.
-Identify means by which tenure-track work loads remains 9 credits per semester while approval for new hires is sought.
-Consider whether incentives might be available to encourage faculty to seek external funding, particularly if they don't exist at the college level (ex. Seed Grants, etc)
-Develop a deliberative recruitment plan for Sociology majors drawing upon agreed upon strengths of the program and its faculty.
-Identify means by which Community Engagement Internships can be completed throughout the academic year and summer, including identifying strategies for course release(s) and summer salary for faculty supervisor(s).
-Redistribute anthropology course assignments to allow for more cultural anthropology electives.
-Identify capstone opportunities for Sociology majors which can be formally incorporated into the curriculum or at least strongly advised for students.
-Consider the development of a Meteorology minor, perhaps in collaboration with faculty across the university.

<u>Ongoing (But I'll say it anyway):</u>
-Move archaeological collections out of basement in Guerry Hall as swiftly as possible.
-Move SAG faculty out of Collins temporary space as soon as possible.

How can the program work to achieve these goals over the next five years?
- Considering current budget constraints, what are the most realistic strategies the program can use to achieve the highest priority goals?
- What goals would require additional resources? What level of resources would these goals require? How might the program secure these resources?

The first two goals require the addition of two full-time faculty positions to the department. These are the most substantial investments on the list. In the long run a Meteorology minor might require an additional faculty member if individuals with related specializations are not available in other departments.

Ensuring that Internships are available to students through the summer months would require summer salary for the internship coordinators. Ensuring that the internship coordinators have a course release for supervising internships during the academic year requires sufficient faculty to cover those two course releases (either through the two hires above or through adjunct salaries).

Providing incentives for applying for grants would require discretionary funds either at the college or department level. These could be as small as $2000-4000. True Seed Grants that might involve preliminary data collection/pre-tests might involve funds in the neighborhood of $5000-$10,000, with an expectation that the project result in a grant proposal.

Providing funds to attract and support Sociology students requires donor commitments. But as I have noted previously, even small, annual donations can make a difference to students and may lead to larger donations in the future.

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