

# Year 2 (2026) - FAR Implementation Report

## Sociology

### Graduate and Undergraduate Programs (reviewed 2023/24)

**Recommendation #1: Build on Strength**  
**Consider adding a co-op option to the Critical Criminology program.**

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee encourages the Department to utilize the resources mentioned by the Faculty Dean as they consider adding a co-op option to the Critical Criminology program.

**Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department with support from CCEE
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1: Meet with current SOCI Co-op students to assess the existing SOCI program from students' point of view.	Chair	O		
Action #2: Meet with Co-op office to assess potential work opportunities relevant to Critical Criminology.	Chair	T	C	
Action #3: Curriculum committee to examine sequencing of co-op work terms in relation to required courses (to explore viability of introducing a Co-op program).	Department	T	C	

**Comments 2025:**

**Action 1: Assess existing SOCI Co-op Program by meeting with senior students**

This action is complete and ongoing. On January 14, 2025, the Chair and Academic Advisor met with four current students who are in the final year of the Sociology Co-op program. A fifth student met separately with the Academic Advisor and provided written comments. The students described time-consuming searches for relevant work opportunities. They emphasized the scarcity of paid Co-op work suitable for Social Sciences' students in the Niagara Region. Relocating for a 4-month work term was not financially feasible for these students, as it would require paying rent in two locations. Some students were disappointed at needing to repeat their second or third Co-op work term with the same employer. The disappointment stemmed from not

developing new skills, work experiences and professional networks, as they had anticipated from Co-op. In the students' observation, the Co-op program is geared toward fields such as Business Economics and Business Management. A common stressful experience was not knowing whether an employment search would succeed until after it was too late to register for courses. If these students needed to switch from Co-op to the regular academic degree program they would miss an entire academic term. These five senior Sociology Co-op students' testimony suggests the department should not consider a new Co-op program in Critical Criminology.

**Action 2: Meet with the Co-op Office to assess potential for work opportunities in Critical Criminology**

This action is on target as it is pending the hire of new part-time staff in role of Student Facilitator with responsibility for experiential education in Critical Criminology.

**Action 3: Meeting of Curriculum Committee**

This action is on target as the Curriculum Committee can take into consideration information from Actions 1 and 2.

**Comments 2026:**

**Action 1: Assess existing SOCI Co-op Program by meeting with senior students**

Complete and ongoing. The Chair taught SOCI Co-op students in the SOCI 4P00 capstone course during their 4<sup>th</sup> year (Fall term) following their second of three work terms. These students communicated the value of their Co-op work terms but re-affirmed the challenges identified by students last year.

**Action 2: Meet with the Co-op Office to assess potential for work opportunities in Critical Criminology**

Complete. The Chair met with three members of the Co-op office on July 2, 2025 to discuss matters related to student concerns articulated above, including the difficulty of securing work opportunities relevant to students' area of study. The Co-op office is doing everything possible to add new employers but the labour market limits the positions available. The Chair explored possible avenues to adding employment opportunities throughout the year, but found no viable options.

**Action 3: Meeting of Curriculum Committee**

Complete. The Chair of the Curriculum Committee reviewed the Criminology Program Plan with the Academic Advisor to explore the viability of adding three work terms to the existing program. As the program has more required courses than the SOCI degree, adding Co-op to CRIM would limit students' elective options and give them less opportunity to repeat a course, if required.

Informed of the challenge SOCI Co-op students faced securing relevant work opportunities and the challenge of fitting Co-op requirements within the CRIM degree, the Curriculum Committee did not agree that a Co-op should be added at this time.

Currently, students interested in combining Criminology with Co-op can take the Sociology with Co-op degree and add a Concentration in Criminology.

**Recommendation #2: Enhance Program Objectives.****Develop a concrete plan for addressing recommendations in the TRC and ensure that the plan is made visible to students.****ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee encourages the Department to utilize the resources mentioned by the Faculty Dean as they enhance program objectives and develop a plan to address TRC recommendations.

**Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1: Map course learning outcomes (CLOs) related to Indigenous peoples, Indigenous knowledge, de/colonization, and reconciliation frameworks such as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission.	Chair	T	C	
Action #2: Through the Curriculum Committee, assess possible gaps and assess the possibility to develop CLOs related to the above.	Department	T	T	
Action #3: Create a webpage on department website detailing how the academic programs and faculty research address the UNDRIP, TRC, and related topics.	Department	T	T	

**Comments 2025:****Action 1: Map course LOs relevant to Indigenous studies**

This action is on target for completion by September 2025 taking into consideration Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer courses in 2024/25.

**Action 2: Curriculum Committee to assess gaps and potential**

On target. Via the Curriculum Committee, the department removed a registration restriction in SOCI 4P36 Indigenous Survivance (taught for the first time in Winter 2025 by Lyn Trudeau), which will make it easier for students to register in 25/26. This is one of the courses to be highlighted on the new webpage, among other required and elective courses at all year levels.

**Action 3: Create webpage on Indigenous Studies within Sociology and Critical Criminology**

On target. With the support of the Faculty of Social Sciences (FoSS) Communications Officer, the department has begun to redevelop the website. The changes will include a webpage dedicated to an overview of learning opportunities related to Indigenous studies and the TRC within our programs.

**Comments 2026**

**Action 1: Map course LOs relevant to Indigenous studies**

Complete. This work was completed with the help of a senior undergraduate student who reviewed all course outlines for 2025/26.

**Action 2: Curriculum Committee to assess gaps and potential**

On target. The Department will engage in a Course Learning Outcome workshop at the annual retreat facilitated by the CPI. One goal will be to develop course learning outcomes to make Indigenous topics more explicit within our curriculum.

**Action 3: Create webpage on Indigenous Studies within Sociology and Critical Criminology**

On target. This action is in progress as part of a larger set of website revisions to be completed in Spring 2026.

**Recommendation #3: (a) Enhance Learning Outcomes -clarify learning outcomes for courses based on best practices for writing learning outcomes; differentiate learning outcomes for different course levels; develop different learning outcomes for the MRP and thesis options in the MA program and (b) Consider Sustainability in Learning outcomes with potentially increased enrollments.**

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

- a) ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee encourages the Department to work with CPI as it reviews learning outcomes and determines best practices.
- b) ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee encourages the Department to consider Sustainability in Learning outcomes with potentially increased enrollments.

**Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department with support from CPI
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1: Maintain database of course outlines for faculty members on SharePoint to share best practices for learning outcomes (LOs) within the department.	Department	O		
Action #2: Meet with a CPI specialist on best practices for crafting CLOs in relation to program learning outcomes (PLOs), course levels, enrolments and mode of delivery.	Department	T	C	
Action #3: Update Sociology Department Instructor Handbook to include PLOs and guidance on writing LOs. Post on SharePoint.	Department	T	C	

Action #4: Mentor new and part-time faculty on writing LOs commensurate with course levels, enrolments and mode of delivery.	Chair and Department	T	O	
Action #5: Develop different LOs for the MRP and thesis options in the MA program.	GPD	C		

**Comments 2025:**

**Action 1: Maintain Database of Course Outlines**

Complete and ongoing. With staff support, we have improved the organization of our course outline database. The database is up to date.

**Action 2: Meet with CPI Specialist on writing Learning Outcomes**

On target. In Fall 2025, to be held in conjunction with a department meeting.

**Action 3: Update Instructor Handbook**

On target. The Instructor Handbook was last updated in August 2024. The next update in summer 2025 will include this guidance on learning outcomes.

**Action 4: Mentor new faculty and part-time instructors on writing LOs**

On target. In August 2024, the instructors of SOCI 1P90 and 1P91 met virtually to discuss how to differentiate learning outcomes (LOs) in the two Introduction to Sociology courses. The Department will continue the ongoing practice of reviewing course outlines of faculty and part-time instructors prior to the start of each term to ensure LOs are at the appropriate level and that pedagogies for delivery are commensurate with class size and mode of delivery.

**Action 5: Differentiate LOs for Graduate MRP and Thesis**

Complete. Differentiated learning outcomes for the MRP and thesis are presented in the MA in Critical Sociology Graduate Program Handbook. These are communicated to incoming students from the first day of term (or sooner). New graduate students enter the MRP stream by default. All students receive individual guidance from the GPD and the student’s faculty liaison on the difference between MRP and thesis and how to qualify for the thesis route, if desired.

**Comments 2026**

**Action 1: Maintain Database of Course Outlines**

Complete and ongoing. The database is up to date and available to all instructors.

**Action 2: Meet with CPI Specialist on writing Learning Outcomes**

On target. The Chair consulted with Ashlynn O’Neil on January 14, 2026 to discuss delivering a workshop on writing Learning Outcomes. This has been planned for the June 2026 annual retreat.

**Action 3: Update Instructor Handbook**

Complete. The Handbook has been updated.

**Action 4: Mentor new faculty and part-time instructors on writing LOs**

Complete and ongoing. Sharing previous course outlines and the Instructor Handbook with new instructors is a regular practice.

**Action 5: Differentiate LOs for Graduate MRP and Thesis**  
Complete.

**Recommendation #4: Boost Curriculum in Specific Areas and in Sociology overall.**  
**Modify Animal Studies and African Studies to bring students in; reduce the number of required core theory and methods courses; add areas in Sociology such as Digital Sociology and Sociology of Health.**

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted for consideration. The Committee believes the Department is best positioned to determine appropriate strategies to boost curriculum in specific areas and in Sociology overall.

**Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1: Convene a meeting of the Curriculum Committee to consider the number of required courses for SOCI and CRIM degrees.	Department	O		
Action #2: Develop and promote the Concentration and Minor in Critical Animal Studies through communication with faculty who teach in this area.	Department	T	T	
Action #3: Develop and promote the Minor in Black Studies through communication with faculty teaching in this area.	Department	T	C	
Action #4: Develop department website pages for Critical Animal Studies and Black Studies.	Department	T	T	
Action #5: Develop areas of study around Digital Sociology and Sociology of Health.	Department	O		

**Comments 2025:**

**Action 1: Consider number of required courses for SOCI and CRIM**

Ongoing. The Department discussed required courses at the 2024 retreat. We consider the current number of required theory and methods courses necessary for students to learn the discipline. We discussed reducing the number of required Year 2 CRIM courses (currently 3) and referred the decision to the Curriculum Committee. In September 2024, the Curriculum Committee decided to defer the decision until more faculty with expertise in Critical Criminology were present.

**Action 2: Develop and Promote the Concentration and Minor in Critical Animal Studies**

On Target. Consultations with faculty and chairs in other units in Fall 2024 led to four new courses from other units being added to the minor in Critical Animal Studies. Also in 2024, the Department made SOCI 2P85 Interspecies Justice more accessible by eliminating the prerequisite of Introduction to Sociology, which enlarges the pool of students who could enroll in the Minor.

**Action 3: Develop and Promote the Minor in Black Studies**

On target. In 2024, the department changed the name of the Concentration and Minor from Africana to Black Studies, which is more recognizable to students and aligned with other initiatives at Brock such as the Black Student Success Centre.

**Action 4: Develop department webpages for concentrations and minors**

On target. With the support of the FoSS Communications Officer, the department has begun to redevelop our website. New webpages dedicated to the concentrations and minors are at draft stage.

**Action 5: Develop areas of study around Digital Sociology and Sociology of Health**

Re. Digital Sociology: In 2024, we added CRIM 3P62 Criminal Justice in the Age of AI to the calendar, which will be included as an elective in the proposed new BA Honours in AI. We have scheduled this course to be taught by Fernando Avila for the first time in Fall 2025. Additionally, we have scheduled SOCI 4P12 Foundations in Digital Social Research to be taught for the first time by a new faculty hire in Winter 2026.

Re. Sociology of Health: We have four courses in the Sociology calendar in the area of health. Only one is scheduled for Fall 2025 (SOCI 3P99 Social Dimensions of Mental Health and Illness, taught by Dennis Soron). These are popular areas of study among majors and non-majors. To develop strength in these areas, we need to advocate for additional resources.

**Comments 2026****Action 1: Consider number of required courses for SOCI and CRIM**

Complete. In 2025, the Curriculum Committee decided not to change the number of required CRIM courses. The three courses were considered important. Instead we have begun offering required courses in the Spring on rotation. The Spring offerings support retention and timely completion of the degree.

**Action 2: Develop and Promote the Concentration and Minor in Critical Animal Studies**

On target. A meeting is planned in Spring for faculty who regularly teach in Critical Animal Studies to discuss how to promote the Concentration and Minor.

**Action 3: Develop and Promote the Minor in Black Studies**

Complete and ongoing. In 2025, the department made extensive changes to the Minor in Black Studies. We consulted with eight units to update the course offerings, and we changed the calendar description. Working with the Black Student Success Centre, we created a marketing poster for display in hallways and at recruitment events such as Fall Preview Day and Spring Open House.

**Action 4: Develop department webpages for concentrations and minors**

On target. This action is in progress as part of a larger set of website revisions to be completed in Spring 2026.

**Action 5: Develop areas of study around Digital Sociology and Sociology of Health**  
Complete.

**Recommendation #5: Develop principles for decisions about online course delivery.**

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee notes that rules and guidelines are already in place and believes the Department is best positioned to review them and determine appropriate strategies concerning online course delivery.

<b>Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)</b>	
Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Year One</b>	<b>Year Two</b>	<b>Year Three</b>
Action #1: Review the existing principles for decisions about online course delivery already been adopted in Rules of Procedure prior to October 1 each year.	Rules of Procedure Committee and Department	O		
Action #2: Further discuss online course delivery at a Retreat.	Department	T	C	

**Comments 2025:**

**Action 1: Review existing principles about online course delivery in Rules of Procedure**

Complete and ongoing. The department has a set of principles for decisions about online course delivery in our Rules of Procedure. The Rules of Procedure Committee and the department reviewed and affirmed these in Fall 2024, as we will continue to do annually.

**Action 2: Discuss online course delivery at retreat.**

On target. On the agenda for Spring 2025 retreat in association with discussion on online course delivery in the face of large language model generative AI.

**Comments 2026:**

**Action 1: Review existing principles about online course delivery in Rules of Procedure**

Ongoing and complete. The department reviews our Rules of Procedure annually prior to October, and votes on any changes. In Fall 2025, we made minor revisions to the language due to faculty retirement and deletion of a few formerly 'grandparented' online courses.

**Action 2: Discuss online course delivery at retreat.**

Complete. We used the 2025 Spring Retreat to discuss the issue of student use of LLM generative AI in online courses. We decided to always schedule online courses with in-person tests and exams to ensure some course integrity, as online assessments rely heavily on tests and written work that can be completed by bots.

**Recommendation #6: Assessment.**

**Develop some expectations around grade distributions; Develop strategies to address learning outcomes in online courses that have less opportunity for participation.**

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee encourages the Department to utilize the resources mentioned by the Faculty Dean as they develop assessment strategies and set expectations.

**Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department with support from IPAP
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Year One</b>	<b>Year Two</b>	<b>Year Three</b>
Action #1: Obtain data on grade distributions in all recent courses to guide a retreat discussion.	Chair	T	C	
Action #2: Discuss grade distribution at a Department Retreat.	Department	T	C	
Action #3: Expand guidance about grade distribution in the Sociology Instructor Handbook. Continue to share Handbook with new and part-time instructors. Continue to circulate Handbook to all instructors prior to start of each term.	Chair	T	C	

**Comments 2025:**

**Action 1. Obtain data on grade distributions**

On target. The Chair has obtained data on grade distributions in graduate and undergraduate courses to inform a departmental discussion at the annual Spring retreat in 2025.

**Action 2. Discuss grade distributions at Department Retreat**

On target. On the agenda for Spring 2025 retreat.

**Action 3. Expand guidance about grade distribution in Sociology Instructor Handbook**

On target. On the agenda for Spring 2025 retreat.

**Comments 2026:**

**Action 1. Obtain data on grade distributions**

Complete.

**Action 2. Discuss grade distributions at Department Retreat**

Complete. At the Spring 2025 retreat, the Chair presented data and led a discussion of grading norms and interpretations of grades.

**Action 3. Expand guidance about grade distribution in Sociology Instructor Handbook**

Complete. The data has been included in the Instructor Handbook as a source of guidance on departmental grading norms.

**Recommendation #7: Resources. Engage in a planning process to ensure faculty complement and expertise can deliver the program; Develop a policy to outline faculty roles and responsibilities.**

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted for consideration. The Committee believes the Department is best positioned to determine strategies concerning faculty roles and responsibilities, noting that workload matters are outside of ARC’s jurisdiction.

**Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1: Participate in a new multi-year planning process.	Faculty and Department	T	O	
Action #2: Outline faculty roles and responsibilities collegially through the annual review and approval of Rules of Procedure and Normal Workload Standards.	Department, Dean, Faculty Association	O		
Action #3: Match faculty expertise to the needs of the program through the Annual Workload Plan.	Chair and Dean	O		
Action #4: When required, strike a search committee for the next Chair and GPD, and follow established appointment processes.	Chair and Department	O		

**Comments 2025:**

**Action 1. Participate in multi-year planning**

On target. This process commences in 2025. The Chair has informed the department as information becomes available. Information has been collected from faculty about availability to supervise over next four years for graduate enrolment planning.

**Actions 2 through 4. Collegial practices to decide faculty roles and responsibilities**

Complete and ongoing. The department participates in existing processes for planning, delivering programs, and distributing roles and responsibilities within the framework of collegial governance established by the Senate and the BUFA-Brock Collective Agreement. In 2024, we approved voluntary sub-committee assignments and collectively discussed our Normal Workload Standards and Annual Workload Plan. In Spring, 2025, we struck a sub-committee to search for the next Chair. This appointment starts July 1, 2026.

**Comments 2026:**

**Action 1. Participate in multi-year planning**

Complete and ongoing. The department has participated in the Faculty of Social Sciences multi-year planning process and will continue to do so.

**Actions 2 through 4. Collegial practices to decide faculty roles and responsibilities**

Complete and ongoing.

**Recommendation #8: Boost Quality Improvement Effort and Connections to Alumni/Advisory Committee.**

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee encourages the Department to utilize the resources mentioned by the Faculty Dean as they develop appropriate strategies to boost connections with alumni.

<b>Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)</b>	
Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Year One</b>	<b>Year Two</b>	<b>Year Three</b>
Action #1: Consider creating an Alumni Advisory Committee.	Department	C		
Action #2: Maintain Department LinkedIn site to network with alumni.	Chair and staff	O		
Action #3: Organize annual Career Night for undergraduate students featuring a panel of alumni.	Chair	O		
Action #4: Meet with Alumni Relations to explore further ways to maintain connections with alumni.	Chair	T	C	
Action #5: Boost quality improvement efforts through an annual exit survey. Gather feedback on the structure of undergraduate degree programs.	Chair and Department	O		

**Comments 2025:**

**Action 1: Consider creating an alumni advisory committee**

Complete. At the Spring retreat in 2024, the department considered and decided against introducing an advisory committee of alumni. We saw insurmountable challenges to appointing people who would be representative of our current students and available to meaningfully participate. We were concerned about not being able to compensate recent alumni for their time.

**Action 2: Maintain LinkedIn site to network with alumni**

Complete and ongoing. In 2024/25, the department maintained and grew its LinkedIn site.

**Action 3: Organize Career Night featuring panel of alumni**

Complete and ongoing. In March 2025, a Career Night was held online. Four alumni participated, representing careers in the fields of law, education, social work, and advocacy.

**Action 4. Explore ways to connect with alumni**

On target. In February 2025, the Chair met with the Alumni Relations Officer and discussed ways to improve connections with alumni, such as participating in Homecoming.

**Action 5. Implement and discuss Exit Survey**

Complete and ongoing. 21 out of 87 graduating students responded to an exit survey (24% response rate). Results will be discussed at the annual spring retreat.

**Comments 2026:**

**Action 1: Consider creating an alumni advisory committee**

Complete. The department deliberated and decided not to take this step.

**Action 2: Maintain LinkedIn site to network with alumni**

Complete and ongoing. The Academic Advisor and a faculty volunteer work together to maintaining the LinkedIn site.

**Action 3: Organize Career Night featuring panel of alumni**

Complete and ongoing. The annual Career night in March 2026 featured a panel of six alumni and was well received.

**Action 4. Explore ways to connect with alumni**

Complete and ongoing. We continue to liaise with the Alumni office and shared names of the Career Night participants to track engagement.

**Action 5. Implement and discuss Exit Survey**

Complete and ongoing annually.