Foundation: Social and Behavioral Sciences

The social and behavioral sciences examine the human condition from various perspectives including the study of individuals, communities, institutions, social structure, culture, and international relations. The methods, theories, and empirical findings of the social and behavioral sciences are essential to public discourse and constitute a basis for self-reflection, critical evaluation, public and social policy decisions, and social and cultural changes.

Students select two courses from different disciplines. Each course introduces the content and methods of a social or behavioral science field. Courses are concerned with the development of principles that explain: A) individual thought, action, and experience, B) collective thought and action, C) group experience, D) the interactions between people in the context of small groups, communities, institutions, states, and societies, or E) the functioning of social systems.

Content Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:
1. Explain how knowledge in the social and behavioral sciences is created and applied.
2. Explain the major approaches, methods, theories, and substantive findings of the field.
3. Weigh and apply ideas and claims from the social and behavioral sciences outside the classroom.

Skills Student Learning Outcome 1 (choose one of the following):
Graduates are proficient in:
   a) Critical thinking — use systematic reasoning to examine and evaluate information and ideas and then synthesize conclusions to propose new perspectives and solutions; or
   b) Quantitative literacy — a competency and confidence in working with numbers; or
   c) Information literacy - identify, access, evaluate, and synthesize multiple forms of information.

Skills Student Learning Outcome 2 (choose one of the following):
Graduates are proficient in:
   a) Problem solving — design and evaluate strategies to answer open-ended questions; or
   b) Ethical reasoning — use a decision-making process based on defining systems of value; or
   c) Oral communication - effectively communicate verbally with a public audience across a variety of contexts.