

Snow College

Social Sciences Program Review

representing courses taught in Anthropology, Economics, Geography,
History, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology
submitted to the State Board of Regents
summer 2017

Reviewed the spring semester 2017 with the rating of recommended

Reviewers:

- Spencer Blake, Associate Dean, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Salt Lake Community College.
- Larry Smith, PhD., Professor of Physics and Physical Sciences, Snow College

Program Description:

The Social Science Department at Snow College has a two-part mission. First, the department is committed to providing general education social science courses that engage non-majors in the study of human behavior and an understanding of social sciences. The department strives to produce citizens that are culturally and historically aware and literate, and who understand the nature of the social sciences as a method of inquiry about the world. Second, the department exists to prepare social science and other majors for successful transfer to four-year institutions. The majority of the courses in the areas of anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology help fulfill the general education outcome of applying cultural and historical awareness to a variety of phenomena.

Anthropology

Anthropology is the holistic study of humankind. The field is divided into two major areas of study. First, the study of physical anthropology which draws on the theories and concepts of biological science in order to place humans in the taxonomy of living primates, and to explain the principles upon which Darwinian and modern evolutionary theory is based. Second, the study of cultural anthropology, including archaeology, linguistics, ethnography and ethnology.

Economics

Economics studies the patterns of economic behavior from the micro to the macroeconomic level. Specific courses in economics offer more insight in to distinct areas of economic learning and analysis. For all economic courses offered, the emphasis is on the United States economic system and capitalism.

Geography

Geography is the study of the interaction of humankind with their environment and the world in which we live. It is concerned with the imprints of human activity on the surface of the earthy. There are a number of specializations within the discipline; including cultural, regional, physical, spatial organization, cartography,

and geographic information systems (GIS) to name a few. Geography also helps students understand the ongoing changes and new directions, including sustainability issues, taking place in our world.

History

History is the study of humanity's past. All that mankind has written, thought, done, or created is of interest to the historian. The study of history is a liberating endeavor because it enables individuals to appreciate others and to understand themselves in the context of mankind's collective experiences. Courses in Ancient and Modern World History take the perspective of today's global community to make history relevant and meaningful.

Political Science

Political science is a discipline within the social sciences that studies systems of governments and analyzed past and current political activity/issues. Topics in the discipline include the theory and practice of politics, which is considered as determining the distribution of power and resources. Political sciences draws upon all the other fields in the social sciences, namely history, geography, psychology, anthropology, and sociology. Aspects of law and international relations also contribute to a comprehensive view of political thought and action. Political science at Snow College concentrates on the history, theory, practice, and current events associated with United States politics.

Psychology

The Psychology program at Snow College was developed to fulfill social science general education requirements. This began as one introductory course that transferred for general education credit to four-year schools and a few other courses that were not recognized for transfer credit. Since that time it has grown. The psychology program still offers the introductory course along with five other courses recognized and accepted by every USHE institution.

Faculty and Staff:

Economics

- Kerry Hansen, full-time faculty, D.A., Idaho State University

Geography

- Cless Young- Adjunct

History

- Michael Seibt, full-time faculty, A.B.D., University of Oregon, University of Colorado School of Law
- David Graham, full-time faculty, PhD. Purdue University
- Nate Caplin J.D. Brigham Young University

Political Science

- Bradford Young, full-time faculty, M.A. University of California, Irvine
- Kerry Hansen, full-time faculty (teaches adjunct in this program).

Psychology

- Nick Marsing, full-time faculty, MS in Psychology (certified school counselor), MS in Sociology,.
- Dana Erksine, full-time faculty (2014 to present), PhD in Psychology
- Cless Young, adjunct faculty, MS in Psychology
- Jared Hill, adjunct faculty, BS in Psychology, MS in Social Work

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Faculty Headcount					
With Doctoral Degrees					
Full-Time Tenured	1	1	1	1	5
Full-Time Non-Tenured					
Part-Time	1				
With Master's Degrees					
Full-Time Tenured	3	2	3	2	4
Full-Time Non-Tenured	2	2	1	3	3
Part-Time	1	1	1	1	4
With Bachelor's Degrees					
Full-Time Tenured					
Full-Time Non-Tenured					
Part-Time	6	3	2	3	4
Other					
Full-Time Tenured					
Full-Time Non-Tenured					
Part-Time	1	1	1		
Total Headcount Faculty	15	10	9	10	13
Full-Time Tenured	4	3	4	3	9
Full-Time Non-Tenured	2	2	1	3	3
Part-Time	9	5	4	4	4
FTE					
Full Time	5.63	5.2	5.3	6.3	6.3
Teaching Assistants					
Part-Time	2.1	1.5	1.5	1.1	2.0
Total Faculty FTE	7.7	6.7	6.8	7.4	8.3

Students

Students participating in Social Science program courses share the general education outcome of applying a cultural and historical awareness to a variety of phenomena. More specific student outcomes are aligned with the respective course (i.e. psychology courses have outcomes regarding scientific inquiry, communication skills, and so forth). These outcomes are assessed through in-class participation, student presentation of applied knowledge, homework assignments, testing, and service learning experiences.

Many of the students take Social Sciences classes to fulfill general education requirements. Students who are declared pre-majors or majors pursue coursework in economics (business majors), sociology (social work/criminal justice majors), psychology (psychology majors), and political science (pre-law majors).

Students who take economic courses at Snow College prepare themselves to transfer to four-year economic or business programs. Possible careers in economics include teaching, research, business, journalism, political consulting, government/civic involvement, law, banking/finance, and stock market analysis.

For students majoring in geography, history, or political science; teaching is the likely career path. Graduates with a teaching endorsement can fill education positions at most middle schools and high schools. Recently, businesses and government agencies have preferred these majors for entry level positions. Students interested in the legal profession will also find that these programs of student prepare them well to transfer to four-year programs and respective graduate schools. The information provided in the tables combined data for respective economic, geography, history, and political science programs.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Economics

Students who complete the recommended economic curriculum at Snow College will be expected to demonstrate that they:

- know the basic forces of the market system at both the micro and macro levels;
- know the basics of the various economic models to which students are exposed;
- know the basic concepts that underlie micro and macroeconomics;
- are familiar with various statistical definitions such as inflation, unemployment, recession, and GDP.

Geography

Students who complete the recommended geography curriculum at Snow College will be expected to demonstrate that they:

- know the world's realms; regions and key geographical concepts;
- know all of the world's political units, long with many of the earth's physical features;
- have a spatial perspective of the world;
- can develop a lifelong interest in world happenings while becoming familiar with current global events;

- have an appreciation of their own circumstances and recognize their responsibility as stewards of their environment;
- understand the differences between those who live in the developed world and those that live in the less developed areas of the globe;
- understand the inter-connectedness of the global economy and of world trade.

History

Students who complete the recommended history curriculum at Snow College will be expected to demonstrate that they:

- know the historical developments of the nations, cultures, societies and eras they have studied;
- know the religions, value systems, class structures, and philosophies of the societies they have studied;
- know the contributions of leading historical figures to their respective societies;
- know the aesthetic and artistic achievements of diverse cultures;
- know the role which ideologies play in history;
- can interpret and explain historical documents;
- can employ the tools of historical scholarship in historical research and writing;
- can interpret current events by the application of historical knowledge and understanding to contemporary developments;
- can think critically and analytically about historical developments and events, cause and effect relationships, and the meaning and significance of historical events;
- appreciate the way historical understanding broadens intellectual horizons;
- appreciate the way diversity enriches the human experience;
- appreciate the way historical knowledge can foster a more empathetic understanding of the challenges and tribulations which have confronted mankind;
- appreciate how an awareness of past racial, ethnic, or religious struggles should foster a reluctance to judge and impose one's own values on others;
- appreciate the way the legacy of freedom and personal liberty bequeathed to us by our forbearers is a privilege to be cherished, nurtured, and preserved.

Political Science

Students who complete the recommended political science curriculum at Snow College will be expected to demonstrate that they:

- understand political science theory;
- appreciate how the practice of politics influences domestic and global relationships and decision-making.

Psychology

Students who complete the recommended psychology curriculum at Snow College will be expected to demonstrate that they

- Knowledge base of psychology: demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology

- Research methods in psychology: understand and apply basic, and scientifically sound, research methods in psychology
- Critical thinking skills in psychology: respect and use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and, when possible, the scientific approach to solve problems related to behavior and mental processes
- Application of psychology: understand and apply psychological principles to personal, social, and organizational issues
- Values in psychology: value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and reflect other values that are the underpinnings of psychology as a science
- Personal development: develop insight into one's own and others' behavior and mental processes and apply effective strategies for self-management and self-improvement
- Learn effective methods of studying, preparing for class, and working in groups

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number of Graduates					
Certificates	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Associate Degrees	10	13	11	4	4
Bachelor's Degrees	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Master's Degrees	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Doctoral Degrees	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Number of Students	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total Declared Majors	17	9	3	7	8
Total Department FTE	257.4	278.9	285.5	273.9	311.5
Total Department SCH	3861	4183.5	4282.5	4108.5	4672.5
Student FTE/Faculty FTE	33.3	41.6	42.0	37.0	37.5

Program Support:

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Cost					
Direct Institutional Expenditures	\$436,953	\$443,293	\$396,845	\$442,327	\$437,684
Cost per Student FTE	\$1,698	\$1,589	\$1,390	\$1,615	\$1,405
Funding:					
Appropriated Fund	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Other:					
Special Legislative Appropriation	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Grants of Contracts	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Special Fees/Differential Tuition	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Program Assessment:

In accordance with Utah State Board of Regents' policy R411 on the periodic review of educational programs, an on-site visit of Snow College's Social Sciences program was conducted in February 2017. This visit was followed by careful reading of the self-study document and included a comprehensive tour of educational facilities, conversations with students, class visits, and faculty interviews.

Program Strengths:

Students are generally learning appropriate material in their classes – on par with what they would learn at the same level at other institutions. Students were also enthusiastic about the faculty and the personal attention they received. Opportunities for undergraduate research, especially in psychology, were genuine attractions for students. The students we interviewed seemed pleased with the education they are getting.

Reviewer's Recommendations:

- 1) **Program Synchronization:** It would seem important and useful to review and synchronize program, program, and division definitions and descriptions. Ensure that all print and web-based information is correct, updated, and available. Each program should have a web-link from the Division page describing the offerings, faculty, and career information. For example, some faculty members we spoke with seemed concerned about a lack of clarity in the department organization, others thought it was not a problem. On the web site the psychology department is listed separately in one place, and as part of the social science department in another. Faculty members who have left the College are still listed.

Institutional Response: We agree that there is a need for the information on the program in whatever form should be consistent. We have and will continue to work on this. In reference to other concerns, part of the problem is in institutional support leading to overworked faculty that lack the time or expertise to accomplish this task.

- 2) **Workload:** Workload seems to be an issue for a lot of faculty. They teach a lot of credits and have large classes. On the other hand, this was actually part of a negotiation concluded with a prior administration in lieu of hiring another faculty member, so the situation is one of their own design. It is advisable to reduce faculty workload and overload teaching. Even though some faculty do appreciate the opportunity to earn supplemental income, some caps on the level and frequency of overload teaching should be considered. Additional information echoed from the 2011 review regarding excessive workload:
 - a. There remains a need to address student concerns about delays in feedback about grades and assignments, it may be advisable to establish a shared program-wide standard regarding timely provision of such feedback to students.

Institutional Response: *This is a very long and complicated recommendation and most is related to institutional issues such as faculty work load, pay, professional development, sabbatical leave, class room space, administrative help for Deans and Chairs, et cetera. We agree with most of what is in this recommendation and are more than willing to improve in areas recommended, e.g., timely grading of assignments. We believe the best response to this recommendation is to hire more faculty (adjunct and full-time).*