

Social Sciences¹

Catalog Copy: The goal of the social sciences is to help us understand the way that we live, especially the relation between the individual and the group, sometimes from an historical but often from a contemporary perspective. Vital to the continued health and success of our society is an understanding of the complex individual, political, and social dynamics that make up the modern world. Students should not only have knowledge of the principal concerns of the social sciences, but they should also understand the methods by which social scientists collect and evaluate knowledge.

1. *Students will demonstrate understanding of the complex individual, political, and social dynamics that make up the modern world.*
2. *Students will demonstrate understanding of the methods used by social scientists to collect and evaluate knowledge.*

SS Rubric for Written Work:

Outcome 1	1-Ineffective	2-Adequate	3-Effective	4-Outstanding
Understand the complex individual, political, and social dynamics that make up the modern world.	Demonstrates little to no understanding of the complex individual, political, and social dynamics that make up the modern world. The work is (1) not focused on such dynamics, and/or (2) does not provide support for positions with scholarly sources (as opposed to informal personal opinion) or relevant, detailed examples.	Attempts to demonstrate an understanding of the complex individual, political, and social dynamics that make up the modern world States reasonably clear positions and attempts to support them with scholarly sources and/or relevant examples, though often lacking in detail.	Demonstrates understanding of the complex individual, political, and social dynamics that make up the modern world by successfully taking a scholarly approach to discuss such dynamics. The author generally supports positions with scholarly sources and/or relevant, detailed examples.	Demonstrates a subtle understanding of the complex individual, political, and social dynamics that make up the modern world by providing detailed examples analyzed at a high level of complexity. The author uses scholarly sources and/or relevant examples effectively to support positions/claims.

Outcome 2	1-Ineffective	2-Adequate	3-Effective	4-Outstanding
Understand the methods used by social scientists to collect and evaluate knowledge.	Demonstrates little to no knowledge of the methods used by social scientists to collect and evaluate knowledge. The work demonstrates little understanding of the methods themselves, let alone when or	Attempts to demonstrate knowledge of the methods used by social scientists to collect and evaluate knowledge, but does not demonstrate a solid grasp on the methods, when they are useful, and/or why they are	Demonstrates knowledge of the methods used by social scientists to collect and evaluate knowledge. Understands the methods themselves as well as when and why they are useful.	Demonstrates extensive knowledge of the methods used by social scientists to collect and evaluate knowledge. Demonstrates a nuanced understanding of the methods themselves, when they are useful, and why they are useful. May also demonstrate understanding of the

¹ Note: the numbered student learning outcomes (in italics) and the rubrics are not yet official in the *Catalog*; however, these were developed and approved by the General Education Committee in 2013-14 to assess student work.

	why they are useful.	useful.		various methods' relative strengths and weaknesses.
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SS Benchmark Scale—Used with exam data; values for mastery vary across courses:

1-Ineffective: Mastery is not evident in most samples of the sample set (average score of [insert for course])

2-Adequate: Mastery is minimally evident throughout the sample set (average score of [insert for course])

3-Effective: Mastery is evident in most samples of the sample set (average score of [insert for course])

4-Outstanding: Mastery is evident in the vast majority of the samples throughout the set (average score of [insert for course])