

Pathway Abstracts

Conflict and Cooperation Studies

Life is full of conflict and cooperation, from the workplace to family to politics. Success in life requires learning how to manage conflict and cooperation well. This pathway will explore how people can work together to achieve great things, despite the constant challenge of interpersonal and group conflict, and the difficulty of coordinating diverse human beings. Students will gain practical skills and theoretical knowledge of conflict-resolution, cooperation, and leadership, as well as developing a broader understanding of the cultural, economic, political, religious, and philosophical conflicts that shape our world.

The pathway will explore such questions as: Why is conflict so much a part of the world? Are conflict and competition sometimes good things? Why do they so often get out of control? How can conflict best be managed? Does it demand leadership to bring people together? What strategies are best for guiding people and forming cooperative ventures? Are we built to thrive when we cooperate with others? Do different cultures and religions see these matters differently? Exploring these questions will prepare students to navigate their future personal and professional lives, and to understand the diverse and complex modern world in which we live.

Ethics, Justice, and Social Policy

The central goal of this pathway is to prepare students to participate knowledgeably and thoughtfully in the public policy process: locally, nationally and internationally. To get to this position, students need to mature intellectually in three related areas. First, since individual positions on public policy are always informed by ethics and views of justice, students need to develop a strong sense of both their own ethical positions and the oftentimes subtle ethical implications of public policy issues and options. Second, students need to have a full understanding of the social, economic and political processes by which public policy is addressed and through which social action is regulated. Finally, students need to be exposed to the many, complex, and often controversial social, economic, political, cultural, religious, criminal justice, and technological issues which confront contemporary society and which promise to challenge future policymakers in their effort to promote a just, prosperous, and harmonious society.

Food

Food is all around us. It's in the vending machines at the end of the hall. It's in the orchards and farmlands surrounding our campus. It's on cooking shows on TV. Our bodies are even food for the countless micro-organisms that live in and on it. Because food is so important to our everyday lives, it's no surprise that contemporary American society seems obsessed by it: cookbooks top the bestseller lists; the Food Network runs shows 24/7; and issues like genetically modified salmon are debated locally, nationally, and internationally. Food is not only what we eat, it's who we are.

The food we eat is not only needed for physical survival, it is a symbol of our culture and an artifact of our historical era. In learning about food, you will learn about nutrition and healthy eating choices, you will investigate your own food habits and details about food production and distribution. In many classes, you can learn about the cuisines of other cultures around the world. In some, you can even share your grandmother's favorite recipe, taste similar dishes made by classmates and hear why those foods are important to their families.

Global Development Studies

This pathway focuses on the human-centered challenge of interrogating 'development' in its many contexts and manifestations. It takes a comparative and global approach to fundamental human questions of value, well-being, and change across more than 190 countries, 6000 languages, and a myriad of intellectual traditions. Courses will illuminate the historical forces, cultural institutions, and ecological dynamics of issues from public health, food, security, and conflict to population, migration, education, and political mobilization.

The pathway is designed to help prepare students for global citizenship and responsibility in a 21st century in which communication, exchange, and vulnerability are intensifying across borders through new and revolutionary technologies. It will also offer a greater understanding of a vast range of societies and groups underrepresented or unrepresented in US curricula: the majority of humanity living in 'developing' or underdeveloped countries, including much of Asia, Africa, the Islamic world, Oceania, and Latin America, as well as indigenous peoples, migrants, and refugees worldwide. The pathway will thus speak to the choices faced by the interdependent peoples of the earth today, through their own arts and literatures and in the light of the sciences, in our shared trajectories from industrialization and colonialism to 'globalization' and beyond.

Great Books and Ideas

The Great Books and Ideas pathway represents the classic GE program, as described by Kenneth Boning in his article on the history of General Education (GE Design Team website). It will offer Chico State students many aspects of a liberal arts education within a state university. As with similar programs (at

places like the University of Chicago), students will read classic texts, from Sappho to Garcia-Marquez, and encounter the big ideas, such as “the Great Chain of Being” and Darwinian evolution, that have shaped their world. In other words, “students will cultivate and refine their affective, cognitive, and physical faculties through studying great works of the human imagination” (Executive Order 1033, General Education Breadth). One feature that distinguishes this Pathway will be its self-reflection, both in intra-faculty discussions and with students, about which books and ideas merit inclusion in Pathway courses. Another innovative feature is that the upper-division component will reduce budgetary and curricular stress by establishing cross-listed courses: *Great Books and Ideas: The Humanities*; *Great Books and Ideas: The Social Sciences*; and *Great Books and Ideas: The Natural Sciences*.

Health and Wellness

The Health & Wellness Pathway will provide students an opportunity to integrate knowledge and skills gained through pathway courses to an essential area of their lives, their health. Health goes beyond the biological context and also includes psychological, spiritual, emotional, and social components.

The symbiotic relationship between personal health and the environmental will be demonstrated using a multidisciplinary cohort of classes. Students will be provided the knowledge and skills needed to examine relevant theoretical models as well as those which promote effective life changes. These tools will assist students in understanding the reciprocal relationship between the mind and the body and in taking personal and social responsibility to create opportunities for improvement.

The achievement of optimal Health and Wellness is a lifelong process. Through a collaborative effort this pathway strives to provide the knowledge and skill bases needed to create optimal Health and Wellness. The common circular goals will be to understand the factors that define and determine Health and Wellness, promote healthy lifestyles, and enhance the quality of life. Classes will prepare students to examine and act in the present as well as to create new approaches in order to grapple with life’s continuing challenges.

Human Diversity and Inclusion

The Human Diversity and Inclusion pathway celebrates humanity through the exploration of diversification mechanisms at global, national, community, familial and individual levels. Completion of this pathway prepares students to become active, appreciative and conscientious participants of society.

Common to the social sciences, natural sciences and humanities when exploring human diversity, is the tension between theories that promote inclusion, or serve as the ideological basis for exclusion of individuals or groups. All courses in this pathway will critically analyze this tension. This interdisciplinary approach examines the interplay of environmental and genetic factors that contribute to diversity in a variety of contexts. Diversity is understood to mean such attributes as a person’s race, ethnicity, age,

gender, ability/disability, culture, nationality, native language, religion, socioeconomic status, or sexual orientation (Cumnningham, 2007; Desensi, 1995).

The Human Diversity and Inclusion pathway prepares students to apply classroom learning to real problems in the community and life beyond the university experience. Ultimately, courses in the pathway will develop within the students: 1) Conscious recognition of their reactions to people who are different from themselves; 2) Increased awareness of the formation of biases; 3) Knowledge of diverse social practices and worldviews; and 4) Cross-cultural skills (Martin & Vaughn, 2007).

International Studies

International Studies is the interdisciplinary exploration of the world's cultures, languages and institutions, and their diverse traditions and common interests. International Studies fosters appreciation of the world's cultural diversity and recognition of the common issues that contemporary societies face.

This pathway explores world languages, cultures, and institutions. It introduces students to the myriad artistic, intellectual, religious, and cultural traditions; and the histories and possible futures of the world's regions. It emphasizes the use of diverse cultural and disciplinary lenses to examine global issues. Courses will illuminate choices and dilemmas of business, government, diplomacy, environment, gender, engineering, media, education, hospitality and tourism, among others. Students develop critical comparative perspectives of ethical, sustainable, and socially responsible institutions.

Students are encouraged to study abroad to gain first-hand experience and knowledge of another culture. This pathway also emphasizes international languages by allowing students to take two semesters of language toward the interdisciplinary minor.

This pathway offers cross-cultural understanding, technical skills, and pre-professional experience for the globalizing world of the 21st century, preparing students to make informed and meaningful contributions in an interconnected world. In so doing, it directly addresses the call to global understanding that are the University and CSU system strategic goals.

Leadership

The ultimate goal of the leadership pathway is to develop leadership potentials in students and prepare them for this new era characterized by global interdependence and diversity. This pathway rejuvenates a Chico State tradition on cultivating strong leadership, and enriches it with the civic engagement spirit of developing leadership potential in every citizen. Students will come out of this pathway not only learning how to be a competent leader, but also how to be exemplary followers to support leaders in

accomplishing common goals, as well as having the skills and visions to address public concerns and engage in civic participation as competent citizens.

This interdisciplinary pathway explores various leadership contexts including government, corporation, outdoor, etc. The pathway also examines leadership theories and approaches, and help students develop personal knowledge on what counts as effective leadership. In addition, the pathway promotes values and ethics that are important to principled and ethical leadership. Last but not least, the pathway equips students with necessary skills such as critical thinking, communicating, and problem solving, as well as sensitivity to cultural and diversity issues. Aiming to combine theory and practice, the pathway intends to integrate classroom experience with participation in leadership-related programs/activities.

Mind-Brain Studies

This pathway will explore different views about the nature of mind and self -- ancient and modern, spiritual and scientific, from Western and global perspectives. Students will learn how different fields shed light on the mind: what novels and the arts unveil about emotions and human nature, the contributions of philosophy and religion to understanding the mind's deepest longings, the findings of modern psychology, and what anthropology and sociology tell us about the great variety to be found in different cultural understandings of mind. The pathway will ensure enough exposure to cognitive science and the brain to deserve the title "mind-brain studies". This pathway may be beneficial to students who plan careers that require strong people-skills, such as business, social work, education, or counseling, and also to students planning further study in psychology or the cognitive sciences.

Mindfulness, Self, and Society

At the center of the *Mindfulness, Self, and Society* pathway lies a theory of human nature that addresses the central questions of life that humans have been asking and discovering the answers to for millennia. It draws upon classical and modern wisdom literature from the philosophical and religious traditions of East and West as well as modern scientific literature. These literatures challenge the enlightenment view of the atomized human being and invite students to consider what it means to live in connection to other beings as part of a structured whole. Moreover, the pathway's integrative, holistic, and whole person approach to pedagogy challenges the "third person only" approach to learning that dominates our education today and adds to it a "critical first person" approach. That is, students cannot be limited to studying *about* mindfulness using only their minds; they must also experience mindfulness by engaging their bodies, minds and spirits in mindfulness practices. Such an approach aims to transform students into human beings who can think both rationally and intuitively, and act with mindful awareness, wisdom, and compassion toward self and other beings in order to bring about positive human growth and transformation in the individual and society.

Natural and Cultural Diversity and Evolution

The broad spectrum of issues that humans confront is a product of natural and cultural processes that have occurred over long periods of time across heterogeneous space. It is only by understanding the richness and texture of the past, and its enduring imprint on the present that we can begin to move forward. Natural processes which have affected the environment include the evolution and diversification of plants and animals in a dynamic landscape, and human evolution and cultural diversity are inexorably tied to these processes. Natural processes and events which could be encompassed by this pathway would include a broad array of subjects such as evolution, genetics, plate tectonics, and climate change. Cultural processes and events to be covered in the pathway include the evolution and growth of the human species, their expansion across the globe (including issues surrounding migration such as sequent occupance, settlement, and social change) and the technological, cultural and ideological developments which have buttressed and conditioned these changes. *This pathway is a merger of two earlier proposed pathways (Cultural History and Biological Diversity) and will focus on biological and cultural change, and the inseparable reciprocal interactions associated with human species, their cultures and their environment.*

Peace and Conflict Studies

The objectives of the Peace and Conflict Studies Pathway are three: (1) to provide students with the conceptual tools needed to understand the conflict rich environments that constitute human social and political reality today, (2) to propose a specific view of what it means to be human, and (3) to demonstrate that this view of humanity is central to seeing through conflict to the creation of trusting, nonviolent relationships between adversaries. The Peace and Conflict Studies Pathway argues that only nonviolence can create an environment in which adversaries treat one another as fellow human beings and so are able to reconstruct conflict situations in ways that all parties to a particular conflict are able to get what they require and are able to create useful, meaningful and ongoing relationships with one another.

Science, Technology & Values (STV)

The rise of science and technology has profoundly affected nearly every aspect of the world in which humans live—the natural and built worlds around us, our social and cultural institutions, our daily habits and our very bodies and minds are all inextricably connected to science and technology. The Science, Technology and Values pathway (STV) is essentially concerned with the relationships between the three concepts in the title: it is about how science, technology and values all influence each other. Students of STV will explore the nature of science and technology from various disciplinary perspectives and investigate the connections between science, technology and a variety of aspects of contemporary human experience. In so doing, they will arrive at a deeper understanding of the world and their place in it, and they will develop the skills and values needed to make it better.

Sexuality and Gender

Sexuality & Gender Studies, a pathway focused on diversity and critical thinking, introduces to students the multidisciplinary study of gender and sexuality and fosters personal and social responsibility for building inclusive and respectful communities. The timeliness of this theme is apparent in global, national and state news; gratifyingly it also reflects the CSUC commitment to diversity (2010-2015 Diversity Action Plan, developed by the Diversity Scorecard Committee at the request of the President, Provost and Vice President for Student Affairs). This pathway will encourage students to avoid assumptions and think critically about sexuality and gender. Students will see how sexuality and gender influence all social interactions and are connected to the majority of academic disciplines. They will understand that discriminatory and oppressive practices are unsustainable in diverse global cultures and learn how they may promote gender equity and practice LGBTQ Ally behavior, making them more successful in our diverse world. Given the historical development of gender studies and sexuality studies over the last thirty years, as well as their relevance to a great number of professions, we believe that this pathway offers a much-needed plan of study for our students.

Sustainability

The global community is faced with the need to solve a set of complex and interrelated problems all of which deal with the question of how to create sustainable ecosystems, sustainable economies, and healthy and viable communities. Sustainability is a new way of thinking about an age-old concern: ensuring that our children and grandchildren inherit a tomorrow that is at least as good as today, preferably better (US EPA).

We propose to develop a curriculum that emphasizes the need for a systems approach to help students understand and to solve a set of problems involving the biosphere, human institutions, and the economy. We will link course syllabi and student learning outcomes from existing and newly developed classes to provide students with a broad understanding of the interconnected nature of human activities and their environmental consequences. The envisioned curriculum will intentionally integrate the natural and social sciences, agriculture, engineering, economics, and humanities into a central theme of sustainability.

We are building on a strong foundation; for several years many faculty have been working to integrate the concept of sustainability into their teachings. We will continue the work of a CELT funded faculty learning community that developed a set of common learning outcomes for sustainability to serve as the framework for a general education pathway.

Visual Media Pathway

The Visual Media Pathway is a cutting-edge approach to enabling students to become life-long learners and civically engaged individuals by enabling them to be competent modern citizens, communicators and actors. In a world in which visual imagery is steadily displacing standard language literacy as a primary mode of communication, students must be empowered to access, analyze and act upon these messages both to be responsible for themselves and for their respective communities.

The Visual Media Pathway is an inherently multidisciplinary approach to developing vision competencies across academic domains so that one may “discriminate and interpret the visible actions, objects, symbols, natural or man-made, that [S/he] encounters in [his/her] environment... [and to be] able to communicate with others...”¹ Whether the source of visual imagery is political, journalistic, medical, psychiatric, mathematical, artistic or otherwise, the ramifications of decisions one makes from them are substantial. Therefore, it is critical that when one sees roadside billboards, Facebook ads, iPhone pictures, political marketing, food advertisements, social art, social and cultural documentaries (and many other visual messages), one can make *informed* judgments and decisions about them.