



University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus

BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT RUBRICS

The behavioral sciences are the scientific disciplines that use observational and experimental methods to study human behavior and its underlying mechanisms. These sciences place emphasis on theory-driven research and a search for general principles of behavior, and recognize the roles of context, biology, learning and development, individual variation, socio-demographic variables, environment, and culture as determinants of behavior.

Research in the behavioral sciences has consistently revealed that human behavior is complex, multiply determined, malleable, and variable. Both basic and applied research in the behavioral sciences reveals, also, that the determinants of behavior are not always “intuitive”, and that theory can be applied successfully to alter human behavior. The goal of coursework in the behavioral sciences, as it applies to the CU Denver General Education Core, is to provide students a foundation in the knowledge, process, function and values of the behavioral sciences.

In the Behavioral Sciences core area, students will be able to:

- 1) *Knowledge.* Explain major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in the Behavioral Sciences.
- 2) *Method.* Use critical and creative thinking skills, including skeptical inquiry and the use of the scientific method, to interpret and solve problems in the Behavioral Sciences.
- 3) *Application.* Apply theoretical principles from the Behavioral Sciences to personal, social, and/or organizational issues related to the human experience.
- 4) *Reflection.* Critique their own perspectives and analyze human behavior from the diverse perspectives that are the foundation of the Behavioral Sciences.
- 5) *Quality of Writing.* Use language correctly and gracefully in conveying their thoughts.

Behavioral Sciences Assessment Rubric

1) Knowledge

Students will be able to explain major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in the Behavioral Sciences.

| <i>Below Proficient</i> | <i>Proficient</i> | <i>Above Proficient</i> |
|---|---|--|
| Major concepts and/or other content are not clearly understood or used incorrectly. | Major concepts and/or other content are understood and used correctly, through the lower levels of Bloom's taxonomy (retention, comprehension). | Major concepts and/or other content are understood and used with sophistication, reflecting higher levels of learning a la Bloom's Taxonomy. |

2) Method

Students will be able to use critical and creative thinking skills, including skeptical inquiry and the use of the scientific method, to interpret and solve problems in the Behavioral Sciences.

| <i>Below Proficient</i> | <i>Proficient</i> | <i>Above Proficient</i> |
|---|---|--|
| Problem is not clearly explained or is irrelevant. | Problem is relevant and clearly explained. | Problem is highly relevant and explored deeply. |
| Use of critical thinking skills and/or application of the scientific method is unclear, incomplete or inappropriate to the problem. | Critical thinking skills and/or the scientific method is applied correctly and is appropriate to the problem. | Critical thinking skills and/or the scientific methods is applied with sophistication and reflects a deep insight to the nature of the problem. |
| Application of critical thinking skills/the scientific method does not help solve the problem or create new insights. | Application of critical thinking skills/the scientific method solves the problem or creates new insight. | Application of the critical thinking skill/the scientific methods leads to deep insight and generates profound new ideas or problems to be solved. |

3) Application

Students will be able to apply theoretical principles from the Behavioral Sciences to personal, social, and/or organizational issues related to the human experience.

| <i>Below Proficient</i> | <i>Proficient</i> | <i>Above Proficient</i> |
|--|--|---|
| Issue cited is not clearly explained or is irrelevant. | Issue is relevant and explained clearly. | Issue is highly relevant and explored deeply. |
| Explanation of theoretical principle(s) unclear or incomplete. | Explanation of theoretical issues is clear. | Explanation of theoretical principles is nuanced. |
| Application of theory to issue is unsound or unfounded. | Application of theory to issue is appropriate. | Application of theory to issue is insightful. |

4) Reflection

Students will be able to critique their own perspectives and analyze human behavior from the diverse perspectives that are the foundation of the Behavioral Sciences.

| <i>Below Proficient</i> | <i>Proficient</i> | <i>Above Proficient</i> |
|--|---|---|
| Student's critique of own perspective or ideas is unclear, incomplete, or inappropriate. | Student's critique of own perspective or ideas is clear, complete, and appropriate. | Student's critique of own perspective or ideas is deep and sophisticated. |
| Analysis of human behavior from diverse perspectives is unclear, incomplete, or incorrect. | Analysis of human behavior from diverse perspectives is clear, complete, and correct. | Analysis of human behavior from diverse perspectives is nuanced and insightful. |

5) Quality of Writing

Students will be able to use language correctly and gracefully in conveying their thoughts.

| <i>Below Proficient</i> | <i>Proficient</i> | <i>Above Proficient</i> |
|--|--|---|
| Frequent grammar (misspellings; abbreviations, etc)/format errors; ideas jump around and distracts reader from understanding paper. Writing would benefit from visiting UCD writing center | Some grammar/formatting errors or awkward sentences but they do not impede reader from understanding content. Proofread future work for mistakes | A well-polished, error-free essay that demonstrates polish and poise. Proper grammar and formatting; ideas flow coherently. |