

Students Attend Conference on U.S. Affairs at West Point

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UNH Political Science Majors Brianna Cole and Ashley Marcoux recently participated in the 65th annual Student Conference on U.S. Affairs at The United States Military

Academy at West Point. It is the largest and most prestigious conference of its kind in the world.

The Student Conference on U.S. Affairs (SCUSA) is an annual four-day conference that facilitates interaction and constructive discussion between civilian student delegates and West Point cadets in order that they may better understand the challenges that the United States faces in an increasingly interconnected global society. SCUSA delegates attend panel discussions, hear from high-profile keynote speakers, and develop policy recommendations over the course of four roundtable sessions. Roundtable sessions covering regional and topical demographic issues put delegates on the forefront of national issues, exposing them to complex problems facing leaders today. Delegates conclude the conference by submitting a policy recommendation to their peers, the best of which are published in the Undergraduate Journal of Social Sciences.

During the conference, the attendees were sorted into 15 roundtables to discuss the complex problems that our leaders face today. "Our roundtable discussion focused on how social media can work as a tool to improve foreign perceptions of the United States," says Ashley Marcoux. "Our policy paper outlined options for expanding U.S. public diplomacy efforts in Venezuela through existing social media platforms to mitigate anti-American sentiment."

Brianna Cole focused on Former President Lula's legacy, Brazil's rise and South America's future. "We also discussed Brazil's role as an emerging economy and world power. Our policy paper outlined ways to improve U.S.-Brazilian relations with specific regard to the economy," says Cole.

Marcoux and Cole concluded that "SCUSA was a rewarding experience that gave us much more than we could have anticipated. We listened to experts discuss the scarcity of water and role of technology in today's world. The conference also included mixers, socials, and some fabulous meals. Being with students who are passionate about world affairs and being thrown together on a breathtaking campus nestled on the Hudson was a marvelous experience. Working with some of the brightest minds in the country was extremely rewarding. Forming friendships with them was an extra special benefit."

If you would like to learn more about SCUSA and upcoming opportunities to attend the annual conference, go to <http://www.usma.edu/scusa/SitePages/Home.aspx> or email Political Science Professor Col. Lionel Ingram at lionelingram@comcast.net.

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