Economics is the study of choices -- everything from how individuals decide about spending and working to how societies decide how much to spend on education or how to regulate pollution. Choices have to be made, and economics helps us to make better choices. At Mines, we focus on choices about how we use the earth's resources, how we generate and use energy and how we can protect the environment.

**This discipline is unique as it...**

Focuses on what makes people better off. Economics is a social science so its main interest is people and how people interact. The tools of economics help us understand how to use our resources and organize our activities for the benefits of individuals and societies.

Who excels in this discipline?

Students who excel in economics ask good questions. The basic tools of economics can be applied to an astonishing range of issues that are both important and interesting. The key is to connect your understanding of economics to the questions that you care about.

**Research**

What are some of the most popular research areas for this discipline?

Our students do research in energy, environmental policy, corporate finance and innovation. Many of our students leverage their undergraduate research into internships, employment and graduate studies.

This discipline often seeks answers to... Practical questions. Economics has a reputation of being very abstract and theoretical. Of course, some economics is exactly that. However, most of economics is directed at very practical issues including how to improve quality of life, how to preserve our environment and to get the most out of our resources.

Answers provided by representatives of the respective department. Students are encouraged to connect with CASA or the Academic Department for more information.

**The future of this discipline includes...**

Energy and the environment. Economists are on the forefront of determining the best ways to use earth's resources to fuel human activity while guaranteeing the quality of our lived environment.

Do students who graduate in this discipline often pursue graduate work (Masters, PhD, etc.)?

Economics graduates pursue graduate work in many areas including economics, business, law and public policy. Our students are well-prepared for graduate school in economics because our program is grounded in applied mathematics. The flexibility and rigor of our economics degree provides great preparation for business, law and public policy because students have the ability to think critically about business decisions and policy.

What misconceptions do students often have about this discipline?

Students mistakenly think that there's not a connection between economics and engineering. Economists and engineers have very similar ways of thinking. Both are concerned with efficiency, trade-offs and finding the best way to solve a problem.

What minors are often paired with this major/degree? Why?

Many economics students focus on energy economics and policy; therefore, the energy minor is a natural complement to the economics degree. Applied math and statistics are also good minors for economics students because they can develop the mathematical tools that are useful for economic analysis. Finally, many economics students are interested in working in global settings so they pursue a minor in international political economy.

**Why should a student pursue this degree? Why should they not?**

Students who are interested in solving real world problems should consider a degree in economics. Our graduates leave with a competitive and technological advantage for careers in energy, business, government and consulting.