



HILLSDALE COLLEGE

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Freshman Foundation Lecture Discusses Liberal Learning

Professor Mark Kalthoff told students that learning should be pursued for its own sake, not just for the sake of a grade or a career.

HILLSDALE, Mich. — Hillsdale College Chairman and Professor of History Mark Kalthoff presented the Freshman Foundation lecture on Sept. 24. Kalthoff's lecture emphasized learning as the first pillar of a Hillsdale College liberal arts education.

The lecture was introduced by Provost Christopher VanOrman.

"The purpose of this lecture is to acquaint you with the four founding principles of the college: learning, character, faith, and freedom," VanOrman said. "As you know, Dr. Arnn gives lectures during the senior capstone on these four topics, and it was his desire to introduce you to these fundamental principles early during your freshman year, as these themes are going to continue to be woven through your education over the next four years."

Following this introduction, Kalthoff spoke on liberal learning as something pursued for its own sake, not merely for the sake of utility.

"Pursue the learning without regard to its practical usefulness, and there will be many useful consequences, but pursued with the principal concern being utility, the liberal education will be deficient," Kalthoff said. "Liberal learning produces people who have at their disposal a wealth of general knowledge and who in light of this knowledge can judge matters of significance in a disinterested manner. Liberal education likewise produces people capable of continuing in educating themselves, people endowed with the necessary intellectual frameworks to achieve success."

Kalthoff encouraged the students to pursue learning in this liberal — or free — manner.

“Learning at this place should be conditioned by remembering that the word for school means leisure,” Kalthoff said. “Free yourself to enjoy learning for its own sake, not for the sake of the grade or for what learning will do for you practically. “For it is when learning is pursued for its own sake, and only then, will that learning do its most for you: it will order your soul, discipline your mind, and equip you not just for a job, but for flourishing in all the capacities that await you after college.”

Hillsdale College launched the Freshman Foundation Lecture Series in the fall of 2021. The series addresses the four purposes — or pillars — of Hillsdale College: learning, character, faith, and freedom. It complements the Senior Capstone Course, established in 2019, in which students discuss the four pillars in the context of each student’s major course of study.

For photos from previous Freshman Foundation Lectures, click [here](#).

For a high-resolution copy of the Hillsdale College clocktower logo, click [here](#).

About Hillsdale College

Hillsdale College is an independent, nonsectarian, Christian liberal arts college located in southern Michigan. Founded in 1844, the College has built a national reputation through its classical liberal arts core curriculum and its principled refusal to accept federal or state taxpayer subsidies, even indirectly in the form of student grants or loans. It also conducts an outreach effort promoting civil and religious liberty, including a free monthly speech digest, *Imprimis*, with a circulation of more than 6.6 million. For more information, visit hillsdale.edu.

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