Liberal Arts Education in the Professions

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Liberal Arts – The Journey
Germany’s Humboldt University
Liberal Arts – The Journey Globalizes
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United States Liberal Arts Hybrid
--Four year liberal arts
--Graduate/professional

Humboldt Model Exported Globally
--Specialized “high school”
--Specialized university
Educational Purpose

Liberal Arts Tradition
Analytic thinkers
Engaged citizens

Humboldt Tradition
Economic Impact

Mastery of Facts
Purpose: Your Colleagues
Purpose: Your Colleagues
Purpose: Your Colleagues

- Intellectual Development
- Be analytic
- Autonomy and initiative
- Ethical, integrity, skepticism
- Confidence to challenge and question convention
- Engaged Citizens
- Well Rounded
- Develop knowledge
- Prepared for world of work
Purpose: Some AUB Students

• Critical thinking
• Understand a diversity of perspectives
• Not narrow; broadly educated
• Interest in learning
• Involved
• Well rounded individual
• Understand any aspect of life
• Acquire knowledge
(Not profession/career/job preparation)
Liberal Arts Education: Three Aspects

1. **Purpose** – desired outcome(s)? *Take a student outside the boundaries of their major with development of broader human capacities and priorities.*

2. **Content** -- What must be studied or learned?

3. **Context** – Optimal total learning environment...
What do employers want to see in a higher education?

(sorry, only US data is available)
### Employers Want More Emphasis on Key Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>More Emphasis (%)</th>
<th>Same Emphasis (%)</th>
<th>Less Emphasis (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking/analytical reasoning</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to analyze/solve complex problems</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective oral communication</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective written communication</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply knowledge/skills to real-world settings</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locate, organize, evaluate info from multiple sources</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation/creativity</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork/collaboration in diverse group settings</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to connect choices and actions to ethical decisions</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“It Takes More Than a Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success” (Hart Research Associates, 2013)
Employers value:

- **Ethical judgment and integrity**: 76% very important, 24% fairly important
- **Comfortable working with colleagues, customers, and/or clients from diverse cultural backgrounds**: 63% very important, 37% fairly important
- **Demonstrated capacity for professional development and continued new learning**: 61% very important, 39% fairly important
- **Interest in giving back to the communities in which our company is located or those that it serves**: 26% very important, 74% fairly important
- **Knowledge of global cultures, histories, values, religions, and social systems**: 16% very important, 84% fairly important
What do employers want in people they hire?

(sorry, only US data is available)
Employers Want to Hire:

• 95% of employers “put a priority on hiring people with the intellectual and interpersonal skills that will help them contribute to innovation in the workplace”

• 93% of employers say that they are asking employees to “take on more responsibilities and to use a broader set of skills than in the past”

• 95% of employers say that “a candidate’s demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems is more important than their undergraduate major”

• 91% of employers say that “the challenges their employees face are more complex than they were in the past.”
Employers Want to Hire People Who:

• Communicate effectively 89%
• Critical and analytic thinking 81%
• Ability to apply knowledge and skills 79%
• Ability to analyze and solve complex problems 75%
• Connect choices and actions to ethics 75%
Employers Want a Balance of Broad Knowledge and Specific Skills

Which is more important for recent college graduates who want to pursue advancement and long-term career success at your company?

- Having both field-specific knowledge and skills AND a broad range of skills and knowledge: 55%
- Having a range of skills and knowledge that apply to a range of fields or positions: 29%
- Having knowledge and skills that apply to a specific field or position: 16%

“It Takes More Than a Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success” (Hart Research Associates, 2013)
Who is Most Successful?

(sorry, only US data is available)
Who is Most Successful in Graduate and Professional School Enrollment?

Pre Professional Success

• U.S. Medical school
  – Admission Rates
    Biology  35%  Chemistry 39%  Physics 42%
    Biochemistry 43%  English 46%  History 49%
    Philosophy  50%
  – Success
    • No difference by college major

• U.S. Graduate School in Sciences
  – Higher rate of admission to best graduate programs from liberal arts colleges.
The Salary Premium for People with Liberal Arts Competencies

From a federal database analyzing qualifications for 1,100 different jobs, there is consistent evidence that the highest salaries apply to positions that call for intensive use of liberal arts education capabilities, including:

- Writing
- Inductive and Deductive Reasoning
- Judgment and Decision Making
- Problem Solving
- Social/Interpersonal Skills
- Mathematics
- Originality

Source: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce
Long Term Success and the Liberal Arts

Though liberal arts colleges educate only 3 percent of all U.S. graduates:

• Alumni account for 20 percent of all U.S. presidents;
• 20 percent of Pulitzer prize winners;
• Twice as many science doctorates as other institutions per capita;
• Seven of the top 10 schools per capita whose graduates earn the most PhD’s;
• One in twelve of the nation’s most successful CEOs is a liberal arts college graduate.
Who Can Best Succeed in Our Rapidly Changing, Globalized, Living and Working Environment?

“Irrespective of college major or institutional selectivity, what matters to career success is students’ development of a broad set of cross-cutting capacities…”

Anthony Carnevale, Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce
The Growing Demand for Higher Order Skills
Source: Council on Competitiveness, Competitiveness Index
The Liberal Arts: Flexible, Creative, the Habit of Continuous Learning

- Every year, more than 1/3 of the entire US labor force changes jobs.

- Today's Students May Have Between 10-14 Jobs by the Time They Are 38.

- 50% of Workers Have Been With Their Company Less Than 5 Years.

- Every year, more than 30 million Americans are working in jobs that did not exist in the previous quarter.
The Liberal Arts: Flexible, Creative, the Habit of Continuous Learning

• In a globalized knowledge economy, the capacity to drive innovation is the key strategic economic advantage

• Rapid scientific and technological innovations are changing the workplace and demanding more of all employees

• Global interdependence and complex cross-cultural interactions increasingly define modern society and the workplace and call for new levels of knowledge and capability
In a Global Knowledge Economy Liberal Arts Education Has Become, Even More, the Key to Capability and Success
Are Liberal Arts Education and Professional Education Incompatible?

1. **Purpose** – desired outcome(s)? *Take a student outside the boundaries of their major.*

2. **Content** -- What must be studied or learned?

3. **Context** – Optimal total learning environment...
Examples of Context Applicable to Professional and Liberal Arts Courses: Deep Liberal Arts Learning from NSSE

• Integrating ideas or information from various sources
• Including diverse perspectives in class discussions/writing
• Putting together ideas from different courses
• Discussing ideas with faculty members outside of class
• Discussing ideas with others outside of class
• Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, theory
• Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experience
• Making judgments about the value of information
• Applying theories to practical problems or in new situations
• Examining the strengths and weaknesses or your own views
• Trying to better understand someone else’s views
• Learning something that changed how you understand an issue
Some Non-Representative Insights from Your Students

• What is the liberal arts? Of 10:
  – 3 know
  – 4 recognized after prompting
  – 3 unfamiliar

• Is it valuable in your major or your work?
  – 1 yes, and encourages social activism/involvement
  – 1 maybe later, e.g. to be effective in sales
  – 5 when “old” to be a cultured person
  – 3 no

• Parents: “for nothing”
• Faculty/advisors not usually proponents
• What is best or most important about AUB?
  – Student life
  – Campus Facilities
  – (When prompted) – Academics (assumed)

Linking in and out of class is powerful and distinctive
Opportunities and the Challenges

Opportunities
1. Clarify the *purpose* of AUB’s liberal arts education
   – Enhance or develop the content and context
2. Link outside the major and inside the major LA learning – *by faculty and in courses and with students*
3. Communicate the near term and long term value to faculty and students and the world.

Challenges
1. Societal values
   – Assumptions about the professions (here and outside)
2. Disciplinary priorities

*Strengthen the value and impact of an AUB education*
Data and Reports Cited Here May be Found at:

• www.CIC.edu/LiberalArts
• http://cew.georgetown.edu/
• http://www.aacu.org/leap/index.cfm
www.LiberalArtsAlliance.org