The Value of a Liberal Arts Education

Dr. Myra Burnett
Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Choosing Liberal Arts

“A liberal arts education is most pronounced, and most prominently realized, at small residential liberal arts colleges. Such colleges offer a broad general curriculum as well as majors in the arts and sciences. They offer extensive extracurricular activities in an intimate and nurturing environment.”

"Our greatest danger is that in the great leap from slavery to freedom we may overlook the fact that the masses of us are to live by the productions of our hands.... No race can prosper till it learns that there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem. It is at the bottom of life we must begin, and not at the top."

Excerpt from Washington speech to the Cotton States and International Exposition, September 18, 1895.
“Was there ever a nation on God's fair earth civilized from the bottom upward? Never; it is, ever was and ever will be from the top downward that culture filters. The Talented Tenth rises and pulls all that are worth the saving up to their vantage ground. This is the history of human progress....”

Anna J. Cooper
“This gospel of work...was the only education the South gave the Negro for two and a half centuries.... The Negro knows that now, as then, the South is strongly opposed to his learning anything else but how to work.”

A “Flat” World

It is certainly a FACT that the world is changing. Every day, new developments in technology and society rewrite the guidelines for how we interact with our families, our colleagues, and our customers. The world gets smaller with each new development.

R. Kay Green, CEO and President, RKG Marketing Solutions
REposition, REstrategize, REinvent: 10 Tips for the "New-Age" Professional in 2014
Posted: 11/16/2013 12:44 pm EST Updated: 01/23/2014 6:58 pm EST
Think of it this way: your brain is a muscle. A strong muscle needs to be worked out correctly. Its exercises cannot be repetitive for then the muscle will adapt and cease its development. Therefore, the brain needs to be drilled in different techniques for the variety makes the brain into a more useful tool for critical thinking and analysis.

http://www.wheaton.edu/Student-Life/My-Wheaton/2013/10/6-Benefits-of-Liberal-Arts-Education #MyWheaton - 6 Benefits of Liberal Arts Education. POSTED BY ALEX SOHOLT '16
The opportunity to study outside of a specific major or path will advance your developing worldview. This concept is crucial to liberal education’s structure and purpose for the world’s majors and industries are not divided; all aspects in life affect how the world goes round. A broader view will allow you to live a systematic life with a wide range of understanding of different contexts.

http://www.wheaton.edu/Student-Life/My-Wheaton/2013/10/6-Benefits-of-Liberal-Arts-Education #MyWheaton - 6 Benefits of Liberal Arts Education. POSTED BY ALEX SOHOLT '16
93% of employers agree that candidates’ demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems is more important than their undergraduate major.

Liberal Arts and Career-Ready

When managers and employers are asked to identify what traits they want in employees, “without fail they almost perfectly describe liberal-arts graduates…They want people who are creative, who can deal with complexity, who can think for themselves, [and] work with other folks.”

Figure 18: Earnings Distribution of Workers Ages 25 to 34 in 2013

Percent

Bachelor's Degree

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Associate Degree

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Some College

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High School Diploma

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- $1-$20,000
- $20,000-$30,000
- $30,000-$40,000
- $40,000-$50,000
- $50,000-$60,000
- $60,000-$70,000
- $70,000+

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.
A Formula for Success

High Intellect +

Pride in Identity +

Commitment

= Success
High-Impact on Learning

- First-Year Seminars and Experiences
- Common Intellectual Experiences
- Learning Communities
- Writing-Intensive Courses
- Collaborative Assignments and Projects
- Undergraduate Research
- Diversity/Global Learning
- Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
- Internships
- Capstone Courses and Projects
The Black Intellectual Tradition Continues with You
Affirmation

“I can have whatever I am willing to work for.”