



**LIBERAL ARTS**  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

**Dean's Welcome: The Value of a  
Liberal Arts Degree in Today's  
World**

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# What Is Liberal Arts?

- The concept of *Liberal Arts* goes back 2,500 years. The *artes liberales* were the skills that were considered necessary for a citizen to possess in order to be a contributing member of a society and to carry out her or his job functions.
- The skills that a Liberal Arts degree gives are the very skills that employers today value highly.
- They are the kinds of skills that never grow obsolete. Although the world is constantly changing, especially with technology, the abilities, attributes, and skills gained in liberal arts are always relevant.
- Knowledge is one thing, application of knowledge is another.



# Transferable Skills with a Liberal Arts Degree

- It's important to know what employers look for in graduates and future employees. And their list has not changed in recent years: Still at the top are communication skills, critical-thinking skills, the ability to work in teams, possessing intercultural skills. This is exactly what a liberal arts education can provide: transferable skills.
- Things are changing so rapidly. So, you need a strong skill set to adapt well. If you focus only on specific job preparation, that job may not be there in the future. In fact, today's college graduates will change jobs an average of four times before age 30. In order to succeed, you need to be flexible with skills that can move with you.



# Transferable Skills with a Liberal Arts Degree

- Employers in survey after survey describe what sort of college graduates they consider the best employees.
- Nearly all employers (93 percent on surveys) reply that the sorts of skill-sets gained from studying Liberal Arts were more important for them as employers than a specialized area of study.



# Transferable Skills and Skill-Sets

- Employers want people who are **comfortable with subjectivity and ambiguity**. Often there are multiple solutions or approaches to solving a problem. Many jobs require nuanced thinking, a way of seeking solutions that are not simply black and white and that dig beneath the surface.
- Now desirable in the workforce are skills in **problem-solving** and an ability to approach a problem from **multiple perspectives**. Employers value workers who have mastered a solid content base, but who also have a general breadth of knowledge and who can put that knowledge to work in solving problems.



# Transferable Skills and Skill-Sets

- Employees should have excellent **verbal communication** abilities. They need to be able to articulate clearly their ideas and to communicate effectively with co-workers and customers.
- **Active listening**, or the ability to fully hear and understand another's ideas and opinions, is necessary in effective communication. An employee must be able to give thoughtful consideration to others, especially when there are differing opinions.



# Transferable Skills and Skill-Sets

- Employees must have excellent **written communication** skills. Employers want employees who can write for different levels of understanding and for different purposes.
- Employees need to have excellent **research skills**, an ability to consult and analyze multiple sources and synthesize them to reach meaningful conclusions.





# Transferable Skills and Skill-Sets

- **Ethical thinking and integrity** are central to any organization. Businesses require ethical behavior and personal integrity from their employees in the workplace.
- A Liberal Arts education prepares students to **negotiate an increasingly diverse environment** and give them the intercultural understanding to thrive in a diverse environment.



# Transferable Skills and Skill-Sets

- **Collaboration** is a highly desirable skill for employees. This includes the ability to work with others; to respect, listen to, and acknowledge the feelings, opinions, and ideas of others; to complete assigned group tasks in a timely way; and to support group decisions even when not all members are in total agreement.
- Employers seek **creativity and innovation**, the ability to approach a problem in a novel way.



# Transferable Skills and Skill-Sets

- Because the world is ever and rapidly changing, employers are interested in hiring workers committed to continuous learning. Liberal Arts education fosters a **commitment to a lifelong learning** that prepares majors to meet the unknown demands of the future, and to anticipate, respond to, and manage change.
- **Applied knowledge** is a highly desirable skill that is hands-on, real-world experience. Many of our programs offer internships as well as Independent Studies, Directed Studies, and Directed Readings courses in which students can hone their skills.



# The College and Transferable Skills

- We have created a college core curriculum on top of the University Core Curriculum. We ask students to take 12 hours in literature, communication, creative arts, and social science beyond what the University Core Curriculum requires.
- Most curricula contain gateway courses, seminars, and capstone courses that emphasize critical thinking and creative thinking.
- We stress in our classes oral and written communication skills.
- We encourage students to become involved in student organizations, especially a leadership role in them, and to attend college-sponsored lectures, departmental symposia, and special events across campus.



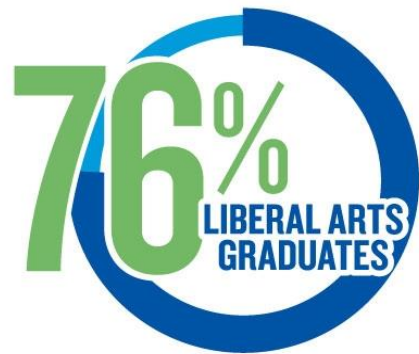
# The College and Transferable Skills

- ❑ Liberal Arts majors have a flexibility and uniqueness not found in other degree plans.
- ❑ Our students can add a minor, certificate, or even a double major or double degree without delay to degree.
- ❑ Students, if they discover a new passion or a different career path, can change majors without loss of previous course work and remain on schedule for graduation. The average college student changes majors two times, and our college is friendly to changes of curriculum.



# Liberal Arts as a Career

## Liberal Arts by the Numbers



Rated their college experience highly for preparing them for their first job

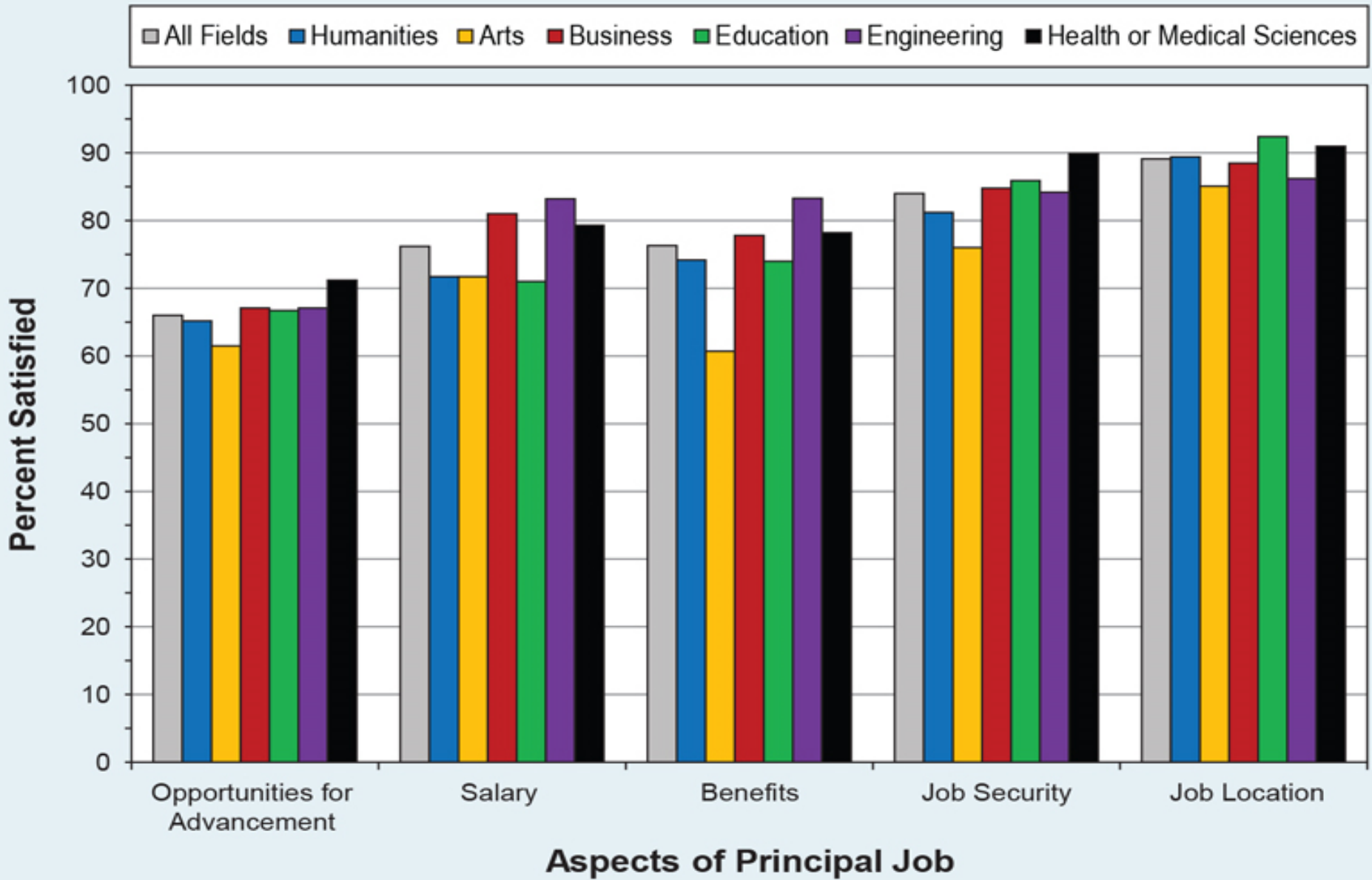


Fortune 500 CEOs have liberal arts degrees



Recommend a 21st-century liberal education





# Top 15 U.S. Colleges for Salaries for Liberal Arts Graduates

Rank	University	School	Average Salary
1	Carnegie Mellon University	Dietrich College of Humanities & Social Sciences	\$60,723
2	Worcester Polytechnic Institute	Arts & Sciences	\$57,235
3	Claremont McKenna College		\$53,583
4	University of Pennsylvania	The College (School of Arts & Sciences)	\$52,270
5	Georgia Institute of Technology	Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts	\$50,100
6	Cornell University	College of Arts & Sciences	\$48,260
7	Georgetown University	Georgetown College	\$47,979
8	Pomona College		\$47,968
9	University of Notre Dame	College of Arts & Letters	\$45,700
10	Lehigh University	College of Arts & Sciences	\$45,403
11	Boston College	College of Arts & Sciences	\$45,250
12	College of the Holy Cross		\$45,151
13	New York University	College of Arts & Science	\$45,129
14	Stanford University	Humanities & Sciences	\$44,101
15	Texas A&M University, College Station	College of Liberal Arts	\$42,823



# Liberal Arts Graduates

Name	Company	Degree
Mitt Romney	CEO, Bain Capital	English
Peter Thiel	founder of PayPal	Philosophy
Carly Fiorina	Ex-CEO, Hewlett-Packard	Medieval History and Philosophy
Ken Chenault	CEO, American Express	History
Carl Icahn	Investor	Philosophy
Michael Eisner	Ex-CEO, Disney	English and Theatre
Hank Paulson	Former Secretary of the Treasury	English
Lloyd Blankfein	CEO, Goldman Sachs	Political Science
Sheila Bair	FDIC Chair	Philosophy
Clarence Thomas	Supreme Court Justice	English
Harold Varmus	Noble Prize Winner in Medicine	English
George Soros	Hedge Fund Manager	Philosophy
Ted Turner	Founder, CNN	Classics
Anne Mulcahy	Ex-CEO, Xerox	English
Richard Anderson	CEO, Delta	Political Science



# Liberal Arts Graduates

Name	Company	Degree
Brian Moynihan	CEO, Bank of America	History
Larry Fink	CEO, Blackrock	Political Science
Sam Palmisano	Ex-CEO, IBM	History
Andrea Jung	Ex-CEO, Avon	English Literature
A.G. Lafley	CEO, Proctor and Gamble	French and History
Dam Hesse	CEO, Sprint	International Studies
Stephen Schwarzman	CEO, Blackstone Group	University Studies in Liberal Arts
Judy McGrath	Ex-CEO, MTV	English
Mario Cuomo	Former Governor of New York	English
Robert Gates	Ex-Secretary of Defense	History
Jerry Brown	Governor of California	Classics
Robert Iger	CEO, Disney	Communications
Christopher Connor	CEO, Sherwin Williams	Sociology
Herbert Allison, Jr.	Ex-CEO, Fannie Mae	Philosophy



# The College

- The College of Liberal Arts is a young college; it was formed in 1965 as a mega-college along with business and education. In 1969 the three colleges went their separate ways, although they maintain many points of commonality.
- We are the second largest college, with nearly 8,000 undergraduates. We have a four-year graduation rate of 73% and a five-year graduation rate of 85%. Over 92% of incoming freshmen complete a degree with us.



# The College

- We strive to be successful in retaining students. The college has put into place retention programs to assist students who are struggling. First-year students whose GPA fall under 2.2 are asked to come in to discuss their situation and to attend academic success events.
- The president has recognized college advisers with individual and team advising awards.
- Over 1,000 of our current majors have had an international experience. The college has given, since spring 2012, over \$2,000,000 in scholarships for study abroad.



# Classroom Experience

- Students enjoy small class sizes: the average size in major courses is 17 students, thanks to the large number of faculty that the dean has hired (450).
- Instructors of major course work are typically tenured professors, who receive tenure only after demonstrating excellence in teaching and research.
- Graduate students and lecturers teach core curriculum classes.
- But upper-level courses, especially in the major field of study, are taught by outstanding teachers and scholars in the field:
  - 13% of the tenured faculty hold an endowed position
  - 12% have won teaching awards from the Association of Former Students





A photograph of the Texas State Capitol building in Austin, Texas, viewed through a dense canopy of green trees. The building's iconic green dome is the central focus. In the foreground, a paved walkway leads towards the building, flanked by more trees and a low stone wall with small bushes. The sky is clear and blue.

*WELCOME TO*  
**TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY**

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