

the old model of depth and breadth, but with a new focus on intellectual practice, engagement, and integration across the entire curriculum.

The liberal arts and sciences remain essential to this emergent vision for liberal education; there is no hope of preparing students for a complex world without them. But the New Academy design for liberal education holds that study in arts and sciences disciplines is necessary but not sufficient (see sidebar). The additional requirements for liberal education are (1) that students develop strong intellectual and practical skills, which they must use in any field and any context; (2) that they develop a strong sense of individual and social responsibility, which they will demonstrate through the way they use their knowledge—whether as citizens, as thoughtful people, or in the workplace; and (3) that they demonstrate the ability to gather, integrate, and appropriately apply their learning from many different sources and from many different fields of inquiry.

Defined in this way, as both core knowledge and a set of capacities and responsibilities, liberal education can and should be cultivated in the professional fields just as much as in the arts and sciences fields. These capacities take

**Liberal Education & America's Promise:
Preparing Students for an Era
of Greater Expectations**

Collaborative Leadership and Educational
Programs That Foster Liberal Education
Outcomes in All Students, Including . . .

**Knowledge of Human Cultures
and the Natural and Physical World**
*social sciences, sciences and mathematics,
humanities, histories, and the arts*

Intellectual and Practical Skills
*written and oral communication
inquiry, critical and creative thinking
quantitative literacy
information literacy
teamwork and problem solving*

Individual and Social Responsibilities
*civic knowledge and engagement
—local and global
intercultural knowledge and competence
ethical reasoning and action
foundation and skills for lifelong learning*

Integrative Learning
*the capacity to adapt knowledge, skills,
and responsibilities to new settings and questions*

different forms, but they matter in every field, whether we're talking about English, economics, engineering, or education.

The LEAP campaign

If this is a promising picture for liberal education, it is also an unfinished picture. So, in sum, what I see when I look across the academy are five realities. First, we have invented a new ethos or a new ethic for liberal education, which we can characterize as an alliance between the traditional liberal arts and purposeful engagement in the world. Second, we have invented a host of new programs, curricula, and ways of learning that, collectively, can help students develop empowering intellectual skills, acquire a strong ethical compass, contribute to their communities, and develop the practical know-how to translate their learning to new contexts and to rally to the challenges of new problems. Third, the research on many of these new practices confirms their effectiveness and underlines their particular value for students who, historically, have been underserved by the academy. However, fourth, the more powerful forms of learning remain available to only a fraction of today's students. Many college students are still sitting in large lecture classes and getting, at best, a fragmented college education.

Moreover, the final reality is that we have done almost nothing to help either our publics or our students understand the New Academy vision for liberal education. This year, AAC&U has been interviewing college-bound students. And we are finding that, while their support for higher education is very strong, their actual understanding of liberal education is virtually nonexistent. Similarly, studies show that while business leaders place a high value on the outcomes described in the sidebar, only 6 percent of them think their employees should have a liberal arts education.

As a community, we have been enormously creative in developing new approaches to liberal education that are keenly attuned to the needs of today's students. Those same new approaches also are well-attuned to the demands of a knowledge-intensive economy and to the complexities of our global and domestic challenges. But almost no one outside the academy knows what we are doing or why it matters.

If this New Academy we're creating together is going to move from the margins to the center, if liberal education and the practices that achieve it are going to serve most of our students instead