Liberal Education & America’s Promise

Excellence for Everyone as a Nation Goes to College

**HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES, NATIONAL FOCUS AND TRENDS**

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Senior Director for Student Success, AAC&U
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About AAC&U

• The leading national association concerned with the quality of student learning in college

• 1,300 institutional members – half public/half private, two year, four-year, research universities, state systems, liberal arts, international

• A network of over 30,000 faculty members, academic leaders, presidents and others working for educational reform

• A meeting ground for all parts of higher education – about our shared responsibilities to students and society
Mission Statement

The mission of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) is to make liberal education and inclusive excellence the foundation for institutional purpose and educational practice in higher education.

(Approved by the Board of Directors of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2012)
**Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP)**

LEAP is a national initiative that champions the importance of a twenty-first-century liberal education—for individual students and for a nation dependent on economic creativity and democratic vitality.
LEAP Goals

From 2013 through 2017, AAC&U will work to advance:

– LEAP: Liberal Education as a Global Necessity
– Quality: 21st-Century Markers for the Value of US Degrees
– Equity: Innovation, Inclusive Excellence, and Student Success
– Social Responsibility: Integrative Liberal Learning for the Global Commons
The LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes

Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World
- **Focused** on engagement with big questions, enduring and contemporary

Intellectual and Practical Skills
- **Practiced** extensively across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance

Personal and Social Responsibility
- **Anchored** through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

Integrative and Applied Learning
- **Demonstrated** through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems
**Essential Learning Outcomes**

- Inquiry and Analysis
- Critical and Creative Thinking
- Written and Oral Communication
- Quantitative Literacy
- Information Literacy
- Teamwork and Problem Solving
- Civic Knowledge and Engagement—local and global
- Intercultural Competence
- Ethical Reasoning
- Lifelong Learning
- Across general and specialized studies
It Takes More Than A Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success

Key findings from survey among 318 employers
Conducted January 9 – 13, 2013
for

Association of American Colleges and Universities
Key Findings

- **Innovation is a priority** for employers, and they report that the challenges their employees face today are more complex and require a broader skill set than in the past.

- Employers recognize **capacities that cut across majors** as critical to a candidate’s potential for career success, and they view these skills as **more important than a student’s choice of undergraduate major**.

- Employers recognize the **importance of a liberal education** and the liberal arts. The majority agree that having both field-specific knowledge and skills and a broad range of skills and knowledge is most important for long-term career success.

- Employers endorse education practices that involve students in active, effortful work and the **application of skills**.

- Employers express **interest in e-portfolios** and **partnerships** with colleges to ensure college graduates’ successful transition to the workplace.
Consensus among employers is that innovation, critical thinking, and a broad skill set are important for taking on complex challenges in the workplace.

- Our company puts a priority on hiring people with the intellectual and interpersonal skills that will help them contribute to innovation in the workplace. 95% strongly agree, 57% somewhat agree.
- Candidates’ demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, & solve complex problems is more important than their undergraduate major. 93% strongly agree, 59% somewhat agree.
- Our company is asking employees to take on more responsibilities and to use a broader set of skills than in the past. 93% strongly agree, 52% somewhat agree.
- Innovation is essential to our company/organization’s continued success. 92% strongly agree, 51% somewhat agree.
- The challenges employees face within our company are more complex today than they were in the past. 91% strongly agree, 50% somewhat agree.
Majorities of employers want colleges to place more emphasis on selected outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>More emphasis than they do today</th>
<th>The 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>
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</tbody>
</table>
Majorities of employers want colleges to place the same or more emphasis on other outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>More emphasis than they do today</th>
<th>The same emphasis</th>
<th>Less emphasis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of science and technology</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to work w/numbers and understand statistics</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficiency in a language other than English</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of global issues/developments &amp; implications for the future</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of U.S. role in world</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of cultural diversity in America/other countries</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic knowledge/participation, community engagement</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of democratic institutions and values</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Employers believe a variety of emerging educational practices have the potential to help graduates succeed.

- Expecting students to develop the skills to research questions in their field and develop evidence-based analyses: 83% will help a lot, 45% will help a fair amount.
- Students complete significant project before graduation, demonstrating knowledge in major & analytical, problem-solving, communication skills: 79% will help a lot, 42% will help a fair amount.
- Students complete internship or community-based field project to connect classroom learning with real-world experiences: 78% will help a lot, 47% will help a fair amount.
- Expecting students to develop the skills to conduct research collaboratively with their peers: 74% will help a lot, 33% will help a fair amount.
- Students acquire hands-on experience with the methods of science to understand how scientific knowledge is developed: 69% will help a lot, 39% will help a fair amount.
- Expecting students to work through ethical issues and debates to form their own judgments about the issues at stake: 66% will help a lot, 34% will help a fair amount.

It Takes More Than A Major – January 2013 – Hart Research for
Employers say that an electronic portfolio of students’ work and knowledge areas would be useful in evaluating candidates for hire.

In addition to a recent college graduate’s résumé and college transcript . . . how useful would it be to see an electronic portfolio of student work that demonstrates accomplishment in key skill and knowledge areas (effective communication, knowledge in their field, evidence-based reasoning, ethical decision-making)?

- Very useful: 43%
- Fairly useful: 40%
- Only somewhat useful: 13%
- Not useful: 4%
“High-Impact Practices” that Help Students Achieve the Outcomes

- First-Year Seminars and Experiences
- Common Intellectual Experiences
- Learning Communities
- Writing-Intensive Courses
- Collaborative Assignments & Projects
- Undergraduate Research
- Diversity/Global Learning
- Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
- Internships
- Capstone Courses and Projects
**HIPs: Eight Key Elements**

- Performance Expectations Set at Appropriately High Levels
- Significant Investment of Time and Effort by Students Over an Extended Period of Time
- Interactions with Faculty and Peers about Substantive Matters
- Experiences with Diversity
- Frequent, Timely and Constructive Feedback
- Structured Opportunities to reflect and Integrate Learning
- Opportunities to Discover Relevance of Learning Through Real-World Applications
- Public Demonstration of Competence

HIPs: What we Know
High-Impact Practices: Good Effects & Equity Effects

- In what ways can campuses engage with data on high-impact practices and student learning to inform an equity-minded, inquiry-based model for improving student success?

Developing an Inquiry-Based Model

1) Who participates?
2) What are the effects of participation in specific experiences?
3) What are the effects of participation in multiple activities?

- Compared to students in the same group who do not participate?
- Compared to students in other groups that do participate?

Developing an Inquiry-Based Model

1) What learning experiences do underserved students value in developing the skills and competencies they view as important to employers?

2) What factors do underserved students identify as barriers or obstacles to their participation in high-impact learning experiences?

How “high-impact”? And for whom?

- Data from 38 four-year public institutions (CA, OR, WI)
- NSSE data from 2006-2008 (one year of data from each campus)
- HIPs examined
  - Learning Communities
  - Service learning
  - Study Abroad
  - Internship
  - Capstone
  - Student/Fac. Res.
  - 0-6 experiences
- 20,000+ students
  - First Year = 36.5%, SR = 51.1% (included Soph., Jr, Unclassified)
  - Transfer = 33%
  - First-generation = 51%
- Race
  - White = 58.7%
  - African American = 2.5%
  - Asian American = 11.8%
  - Hispanic = 13.2%
  - (Other = 6.2%, No Response = 7.5%)

Who participates in HIPs?

- Overall students participated in 1.3 HIPs experiences.
- Non first-generation students participate in more HIPs than first-generation (1.5 vs. 1.2).
- Transfer students participate in more HIPs than non-transfer (1.5 vs. 1.2).
- White students participate in more HIPs than Asian American and Hispanic students (1.4 vs 1.3 & 1.2, respectively).
- No difference bet. White and African American students.

What are the effects of participation in certain high-impact experiences?

What are the effects of participation in multiple high-impact experiences?

Outcomes Examined

- **Deep Learning** = Pursuit of learning beyond memorization to seek underlying meanings & relationships
- **Gains in General Education** = Writing/speaking skills, acquire broad general educ, analyzing quant. probs
- **Gains in Practical Competence** = Work related knowledge & skills, working effectively w/ others, use of technology, quant. problem-solving, solving complex real-world problems
- **Gains in Personal & Social Development** = Developing ethics, understanding diff. bkgrds, understanding self, contributing to community, voting

HIP Participation vs. No Participation: Avg. Boost Across All Outcomes

- Learning Com: +7.7pts
- Serv Learn.: +8.5pts
- Study Abr: +4.2pts
- Internship: +5.2pts
- St/Fac Res: +8.1pts
- Capstone: +6.1pts

Effect of participation in *Multiple* HIPs on Outcomes

![Bar chart showing the effect of participation in multiple HIPs on outcomes](chart.png)

- **Deep Learning**
  - No HIPs: 51
  - 1-2 HIPs: 64
  - 3-4 HIPs: 71
  - 5-6 HIPs: 74

- **Gains Gen. Ed.**
  - No HIPs: 59
  - 1-2 HIPs: 64
  - 3-4 HIPs: 69
  - 5-6 HIPs: 74

- **Gains Practical**
  - No HIPs: 58
  - 1-2 HIPs: 65
  - 3-4 HIPs: 70
  - 5-6 HIPs: 76

- **Gains Pers. & Soc.**
  - No HIPs: 43
  - 1-2 HIPs: 50
  - 3-4 HIPs: 57
  - 5-6 HIPs: 67

*Standardized Scores (0-100)*
What is the effect of participation in multiple HIPs relative to students in the same group who do NOT participate?
Avg % Increase in Outcomes w/ Participation in Multiple HIPs Vs. No Participation (by First-Generation & Transfer Status)

Avg % Increase in Outcomes w/ Participation in Multiple HIPs Vs. No Participation (by Race)

In Their Own Words: What Matters To Students…

- **15** focus groups
- **3** campuses/state (9 campuses total)
- **91** students

Focus Grp Characteristics:
- **48** first-generation
- **40** transfer
- **46** low-income
- **28** Hispanics
- **24** African-Americans
- **14** Multi-racial
- **11** Asian-Americans
- **9** Caucasians
- **4** Native Americans
- **1** Arab-American

“...I have teachers that take us out of the building. I don't know what it's called. It's called--it's called something here. They take you out of the building, and you go learn about like the vegetable gardens that they have growing here, among the Hmong society...So there's a lot of professors here that teach differently.”  

_Student, Wisconsin_

- **Expectations** set at appropriately high levels
- **Sig. investment of** _time & effort_
- **Interactions** w/ faculty & peers
- **Experiences with** _diversity_
- **Freq., constructive** _feedback_
- **Periodic, structured opportunities** to _reflect & integrate_
- **Relevance through** _real-world applications_
- **Public demonstration** of _competence_

_Source: Kuh & O’Donnell, 2013, Ensuring Quality and Taking High-Impact Practices to Scale. AAC&U_
Writing-Intensive Courses:
High Expectations & Frequent feedback

http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL0T0JIA54VHB1ygrH15oar-EOAqtlpQQ
Collaborative Assignments:
Public demonstration of competence
Undergraduate Research: Opportunities for Reflection & Integration
High-impact Learning

“I feel like by doing something hands-on and seeing how like more so like real world application, that’s when you walk away with like a meaningful like benefit to what you’re learning in the classroom”

“He would apply it to like our daily lives. Like he would use like TV shows or use radio or something else that like we actually listened to instead of just like and here’s Aristotle and blah-blah-blah, like all these old people that are already dead that like none of us knew or know anything about”

“I think it has to do with like it being relatable to who you are in your experiences”
High-impact Learning

“I feel like when you’re in an engaged environment like your interactions with both like your classmates and your professor is like a positive one to where not only is the professor helping you, but you are also receiving help and learning how to do something with your fellow peers, and I feel like that itself makes like the classroom and lab, for example, and engaging environment is when the professor and the students like collectively as a whole are willing to like work for like a certain outcome.”
What are the barriers or obstacles to participating in high-impact learning experiences?
Barriers and Obstacles

- They desire to participate in high-impact practices outside of the classroom, but there are competing priorities (e.g., family, work, earning money to pay for school)
- Students lack information about where to find engaged learning courses
- Underserved students are keenly aware of their academic deficiencies
- They strongly desire a caring adult—Teachers who care about their learning and advisors who have access to information so they can stay on course

Barriers and Obstacles
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Strategies for Long-Term Student Success

• Define in measurable terms institutional goals for Making Excellence Inclusive.
• Utilize disaggregated data and continuous feedback to inform campus designs for student success.
• Incorporate direct assessment of learning.
• Examine current institutional policies and practices that are not “equity-minded” and do not reflect how students’ learn best.
**VALUE Project (www.aacu.org/value)**

- **Project Goals**
  - 1) Create dialogue and develop shared understanding of common learning outcomes
  - 2) Create template for direct assessment of student work (in text and non-text formats)
  - 3) Create student-friendly format to engage students in self-evaluation

- **Rubric Development**
  - Teams of faculty/scholars nationwide
    - Reviewed existing rubrics to identify commonalities, clarify language, and develop broad agreement on outcomes criteria ([openedpractices.org](http://openedpractices.org))
  - To date accessed by over 3000 institutions, 11,000 individuals
    - Domestic & international, K-12
VALUE Rubrics

• Knowledge of Human Cultures & the Physical & Natural Worlds
  – Content Areas → No Rubrics

• Intellectual and Practical Skills
  – Inquiry & Analysis
  – Critical Thinking
  – Creative Thinking
  – Written Communication
  – Oral Communication
  – Reading
  – Quantitative Literacy
  – Information Literacy
  – Teamwork
  – Problem-solving

• Personal & Social Responsibility
  – Civic Knowledge & Engagement
  – Intercultural Knowledge & Competence
  – Ethical Reasoning
  – Foundations & Skills for Lifelong Learning

• Integrative & Applied Learning
  – Integrative & Applied Learning
Located at:
http://www.aacu.org/value/index.cfm
Thank you!

- Dr. Tia Brown McNair  mcnair@aacu.org
  Office of Diversity, Equity and Student Success, AAC&U

- Finley & McNair, Assessing Underserved Students’ Engagement in High-Impact Practices
  http://www.aacu.org/assessinghips