



Report 2025: A Liberal Arts-Based Education as Fundamental Career Readiness

Prepared by the 2024-25 UNC Faculty Assembly “Make the Case” Workgroup

Toby King (UNC Asheville), Chair

Debbie Acker (NC State)

Sharrah Lane (UNC-Chapel Hill)

Torin Alexander (WSSU)

Derek Maher (ECU)

Charles Bolton (UNCG)

Larissa Malone (UNCW)

Derek Davidson (App State)

Meghan Millea (ECU)

Yvonne Ford (N.C. A&T)

John Smail (UNC Charlotte)

Elizabeth Klaimon (UNCSA)

Abe Walker (FSU)

Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary
 - a. UNC System Perspective
 - b. The Rewards of a Liberal Arts Approach
 - c. Metrics, Both Focused and Broad
 - d. Student Engagement
 - e. Shifting Sands
 - f. This Document
2. This Workgroup of UNC System Faculty
 - a. Sets of Stakeholders
 - b. Faculty's Charge
 - c. Student Drive
 - d. The Contexts of Learning
3. The History of US and NC Education
 - a. The Development of a Dual Approach
 - b. Adding Depth, Encouraging Breadth
 - c. UNC System: Inspired by the Past, Envisioning the Future
4. The Current State of Affairs
 - a. A Reflexive Approach to Assessment
 - b. UNC System: Inspired by the Past, Envisioning the Future
 - c. Assessment: Values and Rewards of Investment
5. Our Pedagogical Trajectory
 - a. The Value of Holistic Development
 - b. Career-Readiness: Immediate Impact and Lifelong Value
 - c. Societal Benefits of a College Education
 - d. A Renewed Commitment to a Holistic Education
6. Shared Goals: Researching the Issue
 - a. ROI: Benefits and Beyond
 - b. Avoiding Systematic Underinvestment
 - c. Misperceptions of Impact
 - d. Fully Informing Prospective Students
7. Momentum: Current Initiatives Across the UNC System
 - a. Undergraduate Research
 - b. NC Innovation
 - c. Appalachian State University
 - d. East Carolina University
 - e. Elizabeth City State University

- f. Fayetteville State University
 - g. North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University
 - h. North Carolina Central University
 - i. NC State University
 - j. University of North Carolina Asheville
 - k. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
 - l. University of North Carolina at Charlotte
 - m. University of North Carolina at Greensboro
 - n. University of North Carolina Pembroke
 - o. University of North Carolina School of the Arts
 - p. University of North Carolina Wilmington
 - q. Western Carolina University
 - r. Winston-Salem State University
8. Engaging New Energies: Proposed Initiatives
9. Case Studies in Educational Value
- a. Appalachian State University
 - b. University of North Carolina at Charlotte
 - c. East Carolina University
 - d. NC State University
 - e. University of North Carolina at Greensboro
10. Selected Readings

Executive Summary

UNC System Perspective

Our leaders in the University of North Carolina System have consistently embraced a historically-proven curricular model for the modern university – a pragmatic combination of liberal arts education and professional or specialized study. Correspondingly, this UNC Faculty Workgroup advocates for the maintenance of a balanced approach to public education. Recent events may have appeared to skew the understanding of the value of a Liberal Arts approach to education, in a world that demands the empirical demonstration of that value. We seek to redress this perceived imbalance by demonstrating the many values of including a liberal arts-based approach in a fundamental undergraduate education.

A college education that emphasizes the liberal arts develops well-rounded individuals who are able to operate under rapidly-changing circumstances. It exposes students to various disciplines, encouraging them to value multiple approaches to societal engagement and to become the kind of student who can be nimble, creative and effective as society develops. By emphasizing shared inquiry, varied perspectives, and community engagement, a UNC System education can continue to produce thoughtful leaders and engaged citizens who contribute to an engaged, collaborative, and productive world.

The Rewards of a Liberal Arts Approach

Through the engaged liberal arts, our graduates leave college with a commitment to participate meaningfully in many overlapping aspects of their communities. Such an education approach is

intended to prepare students for more than just professional roles but also for local, state, and national participation. A cross-disciplinary approach built on a liberal-arts based core curriculum is designed to instill a sense of excitement toward engaged communication and civic responsibility.

Although the specifics of each scholarly program may look different, broadly speaking: students in the arts, humanities, and social sciences benefit highly by applying their imaginative creativity to an empirically-based framework like STEM. Reciprocally, those in the technical fields benefit highly from setting their focused expertise within a framework of socially-embedded knowledge exemplified in the liberal arts.

Metrics, both Focused and Broad

Universities are educational institutions designed to serve our young and/or newly-engaged community members. They are also important civic resources serving local and regional communities. How should these dual roles be assessed? Earnings-based return assessments (“ROI”) are methodologically appealing, offering a straightforward, quantifiable metric which has proven to be quite inspiring. The North Carolina System of Higher Education is resoundingly worth the investment, even in the narrowest sense of financial costs and benefits.

The concept of ROI is, however, incredibly complex¹. Summarizing the benefit of higher education simply as initial earnings misses many substantial value factors². Additionally, for over seventy years, management experts have warned that returns on investment are insufficient

¹ Martinez, 2021

² Wolla et al., 2023

as a measure of performance³ and that multiple criteria are necessary for effective evaluation⁴.

An earnings-based definition of ROI underestimates the value of an already valuable college degree. This will too easily result in systematic underinvestment⁵. Rather than relying on a single metric, every UNC System institution should have transparently defined goals and metrics supplementing ROI with 1) the varied benefits that accrue to graduating individuals, and 2) the positive impacts the graduates have on their local community and region.

Student Engagement

Students (and their supportive families) understandably expect a financial return on their investment in our public education, but they also deserve an emergent career trajectory that provides deep personal satisfaction. Faculty must meet both our most earnest and our most skeptical students where they are, at the moment we meet them. Our goal is to identify that spark that will ignite the student's internal engine of enthusiasm. When that enthusiasm can be identified, cultivated, combined with meaningful feedback—and if its effect on others can be clearly demonstrated to them—a student's natural response will be to engage. They will eagerly seek to add powerful momentum to that spinning millstone. The driving force of their internal engagement will naturally spill over into all aspects of a college career and beyond. A natural interest in these liberal arts and sciences – a sense of a “calling”—is, for many, one of the most motivating pathways through an education that will ultimately lead to that elusive goal: career readiness. And we will all benefit if students do not feel compelled to ignore that call.

³ Newman & Logan, 1955

⁴ Drucker, 1954

⁵Orphan and McClure, 2022

Shifting Sands

Universities have a responsibility to equip graduates with both specialized and transferable skills as they enter the job market. Our university system must resist the impulse to tether its curriculum to specific, but bounded, job skills that end up limiting our graduates' ability to shift careers as needed or desired. Instead of tightening the link between education and current job market conditions, our institutions must leverage the two essential features of a college education (specialized skills AND transferable modes of inquiry) to ensure that our graduates, and our state, are competitive in an unpredictable future. Luckily, the University of North Carolina System is well-positioned to build on its past successes to meet and thrive under the influences of new opportunities.

This Document

Following this Executive Summary (1), you will find justification for the above statements, including:

- 2. An explanation of the role and perspective of UNC System Faculty, as crucial stakeholders in this discussion,
- 3. A history of how the UNC System curricula came to prioritize certain educational principles,
- 4. A characterization of the current state of affairs, from a liberal arts-faculty perspective,
- 5. A liberal arts-centered projection of where we are – and should be – headed, as an educational institution,
- 6. An explicit setting of our argument within the framework of the latest scholarly literature,

- 7. A collection of Systemwide initiatives already in place,
- 8. A collection of proposed actions for the System to consider supporting and effecting,
- 9. A representative collection of pedagogical success stories: students whose careers have demonstrated the value of their liberal arts education at a UNC System institution, and
- 10. A list of cited and/or recommended reading on the larger subject of liberal arts education and its many values.

This Workgroup of UNC System Faculty

Sets of Stakeholders

The request for this report was made by the UNC System president and UNC System Office, of the UNC Faculty Assembly, a representative body from across each of the 17 institutions of the UNC System. The Faculty Assembly then solicited this workgroup from a broad spectrum of UNC System faculty. The UNC System faculty is one of many interested stakeholders in our renowned UNC System. Our students, our staff, our trustees, our campus administrators, our System administrators and our governors all have vested interests in the institutional investment in student success and societal outcomes. From the broad guidance offered by the University of North Carolina Board of Governors to the recruitment and admission managed by our administration, all of us have our distinct roles. The present argument can be laid parallel to the arguments of our many fellow stakeholders, but this document is, at heart, based upon the unique faculty-student experience. We are grateful to the UNC System president for the opportunity to share our perspective.

Faculty's Charge

In our capacity as faculty, we offer our service to our home universities, we engage the wider world through our original research and creative activity, and of course, we teach. Teaching is at once the most obvious aspect of our job and is the one that many know the least about. We are charged with the transfer of knowledge to the subsequent generation, and we have accepted that charge willingly. But when much data is available online, when convincing rhetorical stances can be created using AI drawing upon Large Language Models, and art and other cultural

artifacts can be downloaded in a fraction of a second, what is our actual charge? We are in the position of engaging with these students in all aspects of their everyday humanity. We look for the spark in the eye that indicates the sudden alteration of a student's primary consciousness, in William James' conception. Whenever and wherever we can find it, we shelter that ember, fan it, and add just the right amount of fuel to encourage it to burn steadily. The appearance of this spark can seem unpredictable, even accidental, but engaged faculty work to become accident prone, drawing that spark from different students in different ways.

Some students find inspiration in the elegance of mathematics, in the dependability of chemistry, the productivity of engineering. Some find it in the opened doors of perception and expression offered by the acquisition and mastery of a new language, or in the affective communication offered through art and music. Some students are inspired by the echoes of their own experience in both time and space offered in history or anthropology. But in all of these cases, through these encounters and experiences, students come to see the world in themselves, and then to see themselves in the world, and are excited by the possibilities that this offers.

We tell our students, "You are important! Your actions matter", too often eliciting the familiar shrug we may recognize from our former, younger selves. The possibilities of engagement with the world are easily left by the wayside by the unconvinced student. Depressed voter turnout among the young reminds us that the spark of engagement is easy to extinguish. But if a student is either spoon-fed this information through a passive medium or is confident that any important information will always be available somewhere online, their motivation – for action, for socio-economic engagement, for pragmatic and personal productivity – that personal motivation will be in short supply.

Student Drive

Faculty know –have learned through valuable experience – that we must meet both our most earnest and our most skeptical students where they are, and from there, to try to find the spark that will ignite their internal engine of enthusiasm. Without the power and growing momentum of that engine of enthusiasm, their diploma may represent a Pyrrhic victory at best, and an expensive wall-hanging, at worst. But if enthusiasm can be engendered, combined with meaningful feedback, and if its effect on others can be clearly demonstrated, a student's natural response will be to do more of the same, to add powerful momentum to that spinning wheel, and ultimately to harness the momentum of that wheel to drive his or her community's engines. We need to cultivate eager engagement wherever we can find it, and that is frequently through the human experience communicated in history, languages, philosophy, the expressive arts. An interest in these liberal arts, for many, one of the most motivating pathways through an education that will ultimately lead to that elusive goal: career readiness. Students bring their interests when they arrive at the University– music (hip hop, country, or classical), literature (JK Rowling, comics, or James Joyce), art (graffiti, TikTok, or Leonardo da Vinci), drama (Minecraft, Marvel movies, or Shakespeare). Our faculty help them to articulate the drive behind their natural enthusiasms and help them decide how to direct – and how to redirect, when appropriate – that energy. The driving force of that internal engagement may then spill over into all aspects of a student's college career and beyond.

The Contexts of Learning

Through what is often called the Liberal Arts and Sciences, but what is also often called the Humanities – or perhaps simply humanity – our teaching goal is to motivate our students to draw

upon their newly discovered internal energies, to encourage them to generate original contributions to our communities, to critique the coherence of their arguments and expression, and to impress them with the significance and urgency of the shared task at hand in North Carolina and in our country. In encouraging our students' inherent internal engagement, they will be more naturally inclined to grow themselves, and ultimately to give back, building us all up, together.

The History of US & North Carolina Education

The Development of a Dual Approach

The history of higher education in the United States includes a tradition of liberal education, as well as an emphasis on applied or professional education. The earliest higher education institutions in the United States, including both state-funded and private institutions, modeled themselves on a European system of classical or liberal education, which included the study of literature, rhetoric, philosophy, languages, and science. During the earliest days of the republic, an advanced education was thought appropriate for only that small group of people deemed eligible for citizenship – white, male, property holders, and a liberal arts curriculum was thought best suited for instilling the qualities needed for republican citizenship: virtue and disinterestedness. Over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, the definition of who was eligible for citizenship expanded (to encompass all adults by 1920), and the American economy became increasingly industrialized. As a result, the higher education curriculum, in addition to continuing to ensure an informed citizenry in a democratic republic, also expanded to focus on training a workforce able to staff a progressively complex and diversified economy.

In 1862, the U.S. Congress passed the Morrill Act (1862). This law provided federal land for the states to create public institutions to train students in agriculture and other professions. The legislation, however, called for an expansion, not the replacement, of the traditional liberal arts curriculum, with each state providing for “the endowment, support, and maintenance of at least one college where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical

studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts.” Since people of color, especially Black individuals in the south, were excluded from these initial land-grant institutions, a second Morrill Act in 1890 granted federal funds to the states, which helped create numerous historically Black colleges in the south.

Adding depth, encouraging breadth

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, higher education was transformed into its modern form by several developments, including the increasing importance of science and technology to business and industry; an increased focus on research in addition to the traditional task of teaching; the fragmentation, specialization, and professionalization of academic subjects; and the growth of practically oriented and vocational courses and disciplines. Enrollment in higher education increased dramatically during the twentieth century, spurred initially by the increase in high school attendance and graduation, and after World War II, through the educational benefits provided by the G.I. Bill to World War II and Korean War veterans.

In the modern university, the study of the liberal arts has continued alongside training in professional and specialized disciplinary offerings. By the mid-twentieth century, the creation of general education programs, sometimes referred to as a core curriculum, emerged as a way for higher education institutions to balance the important knowledge gained through specialized study for a specific job with the benefits long associated with a liberal arts education, especially knowledge of the wider world and civic and social responsibility. Traditionally, a liberal arts education simply provided breadth and depth in a student’s educational experience through exposure to a wide array of disciplinary knowledge in the arts and humanities, the social

sciences, and the natural sciences. More recently, people have recognized that a liberal arts education can also help students develop foundational skills or competencies important in preparing them for the workforce, such as critical thinking, communicative abilities, and quantitative and information literacy.

UNC System: Inspired by the Past, Envisioning the Future

The University of North Carolina System is well-positioned to build on its past successes to meet and thrive under the influences of new opportunities. From its inception, the UNC System embraced the curricular model of the modern university – a combination of liberal arts education and professional or specialized study. When the North Carolina legislature in the early 1930s consolidated the University of North Carolina, North Carolina State College (NC State), and the North Carolina College for Women (UNCG) into the Consolidated University of North Carolina (UNC System), it standardized the general education curriculum offered at the three campuses. In 1931, the first president of the UNC System, Frank Porter Graham, described the multiple missions of the new consolidated university when he noted that it provided the foundation for an “intellectually effective, economically productive, and spiritually beautiful civilization.”

Visionaries of the past, like the UNC System President Bill Friday, who shaped the System into a world class educational powerhouse from 1956-86, understood the transformative role higher education could play in helping the state of North Carolina become a better version of itself. In the middle of the twentieth century, southern states, in general, were not shining examples of how higher education could overcome society’s challenges. Access was largely limited to the already privileged, and few others were able to lift themselves up economically through the impact of higher education. Society was missing out on the creativity and problem-solving

ingenuity that could have been unleashed to address social needs in healthcare, poverty, computing, and the environment.

When mid-century governors and legislators in North Carolina invested in the UNC System, thousands of people across the state and throughout the social hierarchy had opportunities to improve their own lives, to expand their families' opportunities, and to enhance the prospects of their communities. The Research Triangle Park, the largest and most dynamic research center in the United States, developed in the heart of our state because the System had trained a highly qualified workforce capable of carrying out the work of hundreds of cutting-edge companies. The ripple effects helped people across the state, throughout the nation, and around the world, as well-educated North Carolinians applied their learning to real life challenges and opportunities.

We must take up the mantle offered to us by our preceding governors and legislators, as we continue to strengthen and broaden the balanced offerings of our universities, that buoy our state's proud culture and dependable economy.

The Current State of Affairs

A Reflexive Approach to Assessment

The UNC system is one of the most valuable institutional resources in North Carolina. Regular communication among our diverse stakeholders allows faculty, staff, and administrators in the UNC System to provide services and training that benefit stakeholders as their, and our, needs change over space and time. Critique and cooperation in the continual development, modification, and growth of university programs are both crucial, and welcome.

Our primary stakeholders are, of course, the students who attend our universities, and the alumni that they are destined to become. Students, and their supportive families, have invested in our programs, and they deserve a financial return on their investment. These students, and their supportive families, invest in our university programs, and they also invest in themselves. They also seek and deserve a work life that provides meaningful personal satisfaction.

Finally, the state that offers this education at very reasonable rates subsidized by our taxpayers is likewise interested in the success of these personal and financial investments. What is the nature of the values that we assign to success in this case? Universities are not just educational institutions, but are also social and civic resources for their local and regional communities. Every UNC System institution should have transparently defined goals for the positive impact the institution has on their local community and the region. The metrics for positive impact should include personal health, quality of life for students and their community members, and for seemingly “external” economic benefits.

Creating a narrative of the benefits provided by university programs requires a potentially enlightening reflective process. In short, it is an opportunity to see what has been done well and what can be improved so that the institution can continually improve its service to taxpaying NC citizens. Rather than episodic reflection, universities and university programs can incorporate reflection into their structure. One method of doing this is to identify and seek regular input from critical stakeholder sectors of the community and economy.

Assessment: Values and Rewards of Investment

Business and STEM courses are without doubt essential and greatly desirable among many students, businesses, and society generally. Employers also want graduates entering the local and state economy to possess the knowledge and practical skills these courses give them. A business-based model offers useful measures for evaluating the worth of one's educational experience, at least as it relates (when it relates) to a student's financial security and career outcomes.

But, we must admit, many first-year students are still discovering why they are in college: an easy ROI evaluation could not reflect of the often circuitous college career, in which one finds him- or herself, during that first year. We can further break down this group to capture students whose parents tell them what to do, students who come to college not knowing what they want to study (let alone major in), students who DO know what they want (and it's not humanities); and students who love and want to major in the humanities. No matter how we categorize the student population, it is clear that statistics derived from ROI studies alone cannot give us a complete picture. So, the worry remains: how to serve them all. And if we serve only those students fitting easily within the strictures of a business model, which students are we failing? Our Founding Fathers, after all, announced in their Declaration that those truths their new nation

should uphold and allow its citizenry to pursue include the right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Whose liberties, whose rights to pursue (their own definitions of) happiness do we curtail?

Many business leaders understand the value of broadly educated employees. They are actively seeking to hire qualified employees with a background in the humanities. For example, Appalachian State University alum Grayson Reith works in the lucrative business of video-recording technologies for corporations, and had this to say about humanities-educated employees:

“Corporations need the humanities, not simply from an ethical perspective but from a standard that is set by modern business practices and evolving technology. Doing away with those courses at the early level will eliminate our competitive advantage and will set our students on a course for inevitable failure.”

Current Appalachian State University medical student Elyssa Ghazali (App State ‘25) says:

“Bedside manner can be more important sometimes than the actual treatment—this you get from humanities courses...This is why I [work in Theater as a] TA: it gives me joy. I don’t get any credit; I do it because I love it. Without the humanities you send people out into a soulless world. You’re creating a soulless world.”

Elyssa is a medical student who understands the importance of her non-medical curriculum. As a matter of fact, medical schools have been using works of theatre to teach their students better bedside manner for years⁶. Courses in the humanities actually make students into better doctors.

Many young people eagerly work toward a STEM or business degree. Others have within them different yearnings, ambitions, and hopes for their futures. Some follow what is often termed a “calling.” We use this word when describing a person’s embrace of the priesthood, when trying to capture that overwhelming feeling of being called to a profession, of being destined to it. We don’t question the genuineness of this feeling. We hold it in high regard, we accept that these lucky few (who we may say admiringly have been “chosen”) follow a path they were destined for, for which they have been given the gift of inspiration, an inner sense that this thing is the thing that they have been made to do. Recall our own U.S. Declaration of Independence: what could it mean by “pursuit of happiness,” if we don’t really want all our citizens to pursue what makes them happy?

What of the thousands of young people who wish to follow their love of language, their passion for historic battlefields, their feeling that they are destined to make films, or perform and record music? They may not feel the same drive for the fields that their parents or the state would have them follow, but our institutions of Higher Education should not dissuade students from pursuing their passions, from seeking their best lives, or from following their callings. We should seek to help all of our students – Business, Engineering, Health, English, History, and Art majors – to find these callings, to pursue their happiness, to our mutual benefits.

⁶ For instance, the Pulitzer-winning play *Wit* by Margaret Edson has been used to impress upon first-year students the value of empathy in their profession (see Deloney, Graham, 2003).

Cultivating a Culture

In order to maximize these benefits, we should channel the support and guidance of our UNC System, working to create communities that would both support, and benefit from, these energies. Consider the groundbreaking “Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 Study” (2023)⁷ which made plain that over 30 years, “locally as well as nationally, arts and culture are a critical economic driver of vibrant communities,” and that “America’s nonprofit arts and culture sector is a \$151.7 billion industry – one that supports 2.6 million jobs and generates \$29.1 billion in government revenue.” For example, the nonprofit arts and culture industry in Paducah, Kentucky generated \$36,163,994 in economic activity in 2022. How many up-and-coming towns in North Carolina could do the same, benefiting from the revenue associated with associated tax, tourism activity. Here in North Carolina, Asheville’s attraction is not its banks but its vibrant arts scene. Spartanburg, South Carolina is one of the state’s fastest growing medium-sized towns, chiefly because it has embraced its writers, artists, and musicians. Rather than ask “How is a student’s Humanities major going to secure a job?”, we should invest in civic models which encourage this kind of activity, retaining our creative and proud North Carolina students as committed North Carolinian citizens. Let’s work to retain these loyal and productive taxpayers by developing seed programs of organizations and non-profits that embrace the arts as a means of economic security. When properly cultivated and supported, the Humanities are good for business and would benefit our wider North Carolina communities. North Carolina’s “dream of the ‘90s” is alive in Asheville. But it is also nascent in Graham, in Mebane, in Elkin, in Clayton, and in so many other cities.

⁷ <https://aep6.americansforthearts.org/study-findings>

Ultimately, however, any discussion regarding the importance of the humanities should include more than overly reductive “bottom line” concerns, because what the humanities (and the arts) give to society reaches far beyond the weekly paycheck. Drew Faust, president of Harvard University from 2007 to 2018, emphasizes that the “question should not be whether we can afford to believe in such purposes in these times, but whether we can afford not to.” As Martha Nussbaum reminds us:

If we do not insist on the crucial importance of the humanities and the arts, they will drop away, because they do not make money. They only do what is much more precious than that, make a world that is worth living in, people who are able to see other human beings as full people... (Nussbaum: Not for Profit, 143)

So a UNC System student should not only ask, “How much money will I make?” but also, “What kind of world do we want to work to nurture into being?” and, “What citizenry would we wish to populate the world, however it may be manifested?”

Our Pedagogical Trajectory

The Value of a College Education: A Commitment to Holistic Development

As UNC System faculty, we underscore the fact that our universities have educational responsibilities that match our fiduciary responsibilities in terms of societal weight and ultimate significance. In today's accelerating and complex world, a college education provides more than a path to personal success; it equips graduates with skills, perspectives, and a sense of community responsibility that enrich society as a whole. College is thus a foundation for both individual growth and societal advancement.

On an individual level, college graduates have access to a wider range of job opportunities and tend to earn higher salaries compared to those without a college degree because their degree equips them with competencies and capacities that allow them to develop over time. A college education also provides a platform for personal growth, helping individuals discover their passions, strengths, and potential. And on a societal level higher education drives economic growth by fostering a skilled workforce capable of innovation and efficiency. This, in turn, leads to increased productivity and competitiveness for the region, state, and nation.

A four-year college degree provides these benefits because of two, intertwined, features of the university learning experience. The first defining feature of a college education is its "T-shaped" approach, combining specialized disciplinary knowledge with a broad liberal arts foundation. This structure nurtures essential skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication, while fostering collaboration, creativity, and leadership. T-shaped learning encourages adaptability, enabling students to navigate complex issues from multiple perspectives

– qualities highly valued in today’s dynamic workplaces. College graduates who possess both in-depth expertise and interdisciplinary awareness are prepared to approach challenges holistically and drive innovation. This balanced development allows them to adapt as industries and societal needs evolve, equipping them with the resilience to succeed in diverse professional environments.

A second defining feature of a college education is how it develops curiosity through cross-disciplinary exploration, fostering a foundation for lifelong learning and deeper engagement. Exposure to a variety of subjects enriches students’ perspectives and inspires intellectual curiosity, which is crucial in an interconnected world where complex problems require multifaceted solutions. College graduates learn to approach challenges from multiple perspectives, making them more effective in tackling issues both in their fields and in broader societal contexts. Moreover, cross-field education can promote social mobility, providing individuals with the tools and opportunities to improve their socio-economic status. Individuals educated broadly are also more likely to participate in civic activities and contribute positively to their communities, thereby strengthening democratic institutions and fostering a more informed and engaged citizenry.

Career-Readiness: Immediate Impact and Lifelong Value

Universities have a key role, and a responsibility, to develop their students’ job-ready skills so that they graduate ready to successfully launch their career. Through coursework, internships, and co-curricular activities students build the employer-recognized competencies identified by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) such as teamwork, problem-solving, professionalism, and digital literacy. Universities also have a key role, and a

responsibility, to equip graduates to be able to showcase both their specialized and transferable skills as they enter the job market. This can look somewhat different in the many different fields of study available to students, but broadly speaking students in the arts, humanities, and social sciences benefit from opportunities to apply their learning, while those in technical fields benefit from opportunities to showcase the “soft skills” that complement their technical expertise.

Beyond immediate job readiness, college education fosters a strong and adaptable foundation for graduates’ career development over a lifetime. The combination of deep study and broad engagement, unlike more narrowly focused vocational training, builds students’ foundational skills, ensuring graduates are prepared for diverse roles across industries, and that they can adapt and grow as they navigate today’s shifting career landscapes. A college education also instills a commitment to lifelong learning, encouraging students to adapt and seek new knowledge that often leads to career advancement.

Societal Benefits of a Liberal Arts-Based Approach

The impact of a college education extends well beyond individual success. Through shared inquiry, interdisciplinary learning, and community involvement, college graduates are prepared to work collaboratively, think critically, and engage as active members of society. To quote a recent study by Richard A. Detweiler, “A liberal arts education involves fulfilling a common good purpose by creating an educational ecology involving both the content of study and the educational context” What is the content, the context, the purpose of a liberal arts-based education? Definitions abound, but we follow Detweiler, in treating the liberal arts as 1) being a broad education, aimed at developing creative, analytic and rational thinking skills rather than at a specific vocational outcome; 2) engaging in authentic human interactions at different scales

(classroom, campus activity, internship...), intended to widen perspectives; 3) creating engaged, life-long learners, who become socially committed leaders, who are personally successful and individually fulfilled. Key societal benefits of this approach include:

Shared Inquiry and Openness to Learning:

College fosters intellectual curiosity and openness to new ideas, enabling graduates to approach problems collaboratively. This shared experience – cultivated through research, discussions, and liberal arts coursework – provides a foundation for empathy, understanding, and cooperation. As graduates enter diverse fields, they bring a willingness to consider multiple viewpoints, strengthening **collaboration** and **innovation**.

Appreciation of Perspectives and Principles:

A liberal arts-based education exposes students to various disciplines, encouraging them to value multiple approaches. This cross-disciplinary awareness enables graduates to tackle complex challenges holistically, drawing from diverse knowledge bases. In the workplace, this appreciation for different perspectives allows for **dynamic learning** and **shared productivity** in a world of continuous change.

Engagement as Active Community Members:

College instills a sense of civic responsibility, preparing students for more than just professional roles. Through volunteer work, internships, and civic engagement, graduates leave college with a commitment to active participation in their communities. This involvement strengthens **social**

bonds and encourages a **spirit of service**, enabling graduates to contribute positively to society and address whatever relevant issues arise

A Renewed Commitment to a Holistic Education

The true value of a college education rooted in the liberal arts lies in its dedication to developing well-rounded individuals. Higher education institutions uphold a model that fosters not only job-ready skills but also intellectual curiosity, adaptability, and civic responsibility. By prioritizing these goals, colleges ensure that a degree remains a lifelong asset, equipping graduates for both personal success and meaningful contributions to society. By emphasizing shared inquiry, interest for differing perspectives, and participation in community engagement, higher education can continue to produce thoughtful leaders and active citizens who contribute to a more collaborative, networked, and engaged world.

Shared Goals: Researching the Issue

ROI: Benefits & Beyond

Growth in college costs and associated student debt has fueled national interest in a return on investment (ROI) in higher education. Multiple ROI calculators and ratings have been created to determine if future earnings make the cost of college worth it. There are variations on how ROIs are calculated, but they typically focus on either the value of lifetime earnings by college degree recipients minus the cost of college (Deloitte) or pay comparisons between college goers and individuals with high school diplomas (McMahon, 2021).

Earnings-based return assessments are methodologically appealing with a straightforward, quantifiable metric; however, the concept is much more complex (Martinez, 2021). Measuring the benefit of higher education as earnings misses many substantial gains from higher education (Wolla et al., 2023). Levy and Graff (2023) criticize the earnings-based ROI, "...a lifetime ROI analysis has, at best, a tenuous relationship with any student's reality. The further from the beginning of a career you look, the more variables, life experiences, choices, opportunities, failures, and change events impact earning potential in ways that cannot be measured."

To link broader benefits of higher education back to dollar metrics of ROIs, McMahon (2021), an educational economist, estimated college degree premium (additional pay for a college graduate over that earned by a high school graduate) was \$32,102 per year in 2016 (\$42,105 in 2024 dollars). His estimate for the dollar value of private non-market benefits was \$50,176 in 2016 dollars (\$65,810 in 2024 dollars). Non-market benefits of higher education include improved health outcomes, greater happiness, improved efficiency in household management,

appreciation for lifelong learning, higher labor force participation rates, better decision-making, and lower unemployment (Oreopoulos & Salvanes, 2011; Nietzel, 2019). In total, the individual benefits accumulate to \$82,278 in 2016 dollars (\$107,915 in 2024 dollars) where the wage premium is only 39% of the total benefits. McMahon extends his estimate of the value of higher education to the monetary estimated gains to society including functioning civil institutions, lower poverty, lower crime rates, higher tax revenue, environmental benefits, and positive wage gains for others. He estimated the social gains of higher education to be \$77,123 in 2016 dollars (\$101,154 in 2024 dollars). Adding wage premiums, private non-pecuniary benefits, and social benefits results in a total \$159,401 in 2016 dollars and \$209,069 in 2024 dollars. Even limiting the value of higher education to dollar values yields ROI that are substantially higher than earnings gains. According to McMahon's economic estimates, a focus on pay *misses 80% of the positive financial value of higher education*. It would be an abdication of our fiduciary responsibility to ignore this data.

Avoiding Systematic Underinvestment

It is clear that evaluating higher education based simply on wage data can be misleading. ROI is an excellent proxy for short-term personal gain. However, ROI is not a useful proxy for short- or long-term state-revenue. ROI is not a helpful proxy for altruistic engagement. ROI is not a relevant proxy for human life experience. For nearly seventy years, management experts have warned that returns on investment are insufficient as a measure of performance (Newman & Logan, 1955) and that multiple criteria are necessary for effective evaluation (Drucker, 1954). When singular criteria are used, resources are aligned to achieve whichever outcomes are measured (Argyris, 1952;

Granick, 1954). A single earnings-based definition of ROI thereby underestimates the value of a college degree, resulting in systematic underinvestment (Orphan and McClure, 2022). There is also the satisfaction that comes with choosing a college and a major based on one’s strengths and interests rather than average wage-by-major statistics (Bleemer, 2023); that is, choosing with one’s heart as well as one’s wallet (Morrison, 2019).

Misperceptions of Impact

The case for supplementing the concept of return on investment to include other measures of value of investment has been consistently and recently reinforced by studies in multiple disciplines.⁸ Some findings from these reviews are provided in Table 1. Each year, the College Board publishes a paper reviewing data related to the benefits of higher education for individuals and society as part of its “Trends in Higher Education” series. Observations from the most recent paper in this series (Ma & Pender, 2023) are also referenced in Table 1.

Table 1. Impact of college attendance on individuals, their children, and society

Category of influence	Specific effect	Literature review authors
Job-related benefits	Higher labor force participation rates; jobs that offer greater sense of accomplishment, autonomy, opportunities for creativity, social interaction, recognition, support, prestige/status, and satisfaction.	Chan (2016); Hout (2011); Ma & Pender (2023); McMahon (2009); Oreopoulos & Petronijevic (2013); Oreopoulos & Salvanes (2009)

⁸ More than 30 years ago, Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) conducted an exhaustive review of the literature on how college affects students, while in school and beyond. Subsequently, McMahon (2009, 2021), Oreopoulos and Salvanes (2009, 2011), Hout (2011), Oreopoulos and Petronijevic (2013), Barrow and Malamud (2015), Chan (2016), and Zajacova and Lawrence (2018) have also reviewed the literature. Table citation: King and Millea (2025).

Category of influence	Specific effect	Literature review authors
Attitudes & values	Increase in aesthetic, cultural, and intellectual values as well as value placed on human rights and civic participation. Decrease in traditional views of gender roles and greater appreciation of diversity.	Chan (2016); McMahon (2009); Oreopoulos & Salvanes (2009, 2011); Pascarella & Ternzini (1991)
Psychosocial changes	Increase in social skills and interpersonal relations, self-concept, autonomy, independence, personal adjustment, and psychological well-being. Decrease in authoritarianism and egocentrism.	Oreopoulos & Salvanes (2009); Pascarella & Terenzini (1991)
Learning & cognition	Increase in specific subject matter knowledge, general verbal and quantitative skills, written and oral communication skills, formal reasoning, critical thinking; ability to utilize new knowledge and adapt to new technologies.	Chan (2016); McMahon (2009); Oreopoulos & Salvanes (2009); Pascarella & Terenzini (1991)
Quality of life	Better health, life expectancy, and consumer decision-making; greater self-reported happiness, savings and investment efficiency, household management and efficiency, marital satisfaction, and personal/professional mobility; lower rates of poverty.	Barrow & Malamud (2015); Chan (2016); Hout (2011); Ma & Pender (2023); McMahon (2009, 2021); Oreopoulos & Salvanes (2009,2011); Pascarella & Terenzini (1991); Zajacova & Lawrence (2018)
Intergeneration al effects	Better health and educational attainment of children; children are more likely to engage in a variety of educational activities (e.g., visiting libraries, art galleries, museums, or historical sites).	Barrow & Malamud (2015; Ma & Pender (2023); McMahon (2009); Pascarella & Terenzini (1991)
Benefits to society	Lower crime rates, welfare, medical and prison costs for states; higher payback for states in the form of sales, property, and state income taxes; social cohesion; increased charitable giving and community service; and higher rates of voting and volunteerism.	Chan (2016); Hout (2011); Ma & Pender (2023); McMahon (2009, 2021)

The college environment provides an incubator or “foundation for social and emotional development and psychological maturation” (Castro & Clyde, 2018, para. 5). In fact, Klafter (2020) has posited that the “real purpose of undergraduate education is the maturation of students rather than the transfer of knowledge” (p. 34).

In the language of developmental psychology, one might say that college provides a “scaffolding” (Wood, et al., 1976) for the development of critical thinking, one of the primary goals of higher education (Wass, et al., 2011). According to cognitive developmental psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978), the critical thinking that students acquire will be applied not only in the original environment but also in their personal lives and will help them make meaning in other circumstances (Ismail, 2023). Thus, the cognitive and social maturation that occurs during the college years can be tied to better decision-making throughout life, leading to many of the positive benefits associated with higher education.

The results of several recent surveys indicate that most Americans believe a college education is important, whether they have a college degree or not, and among those with college degrees, that the cost is worth it (Kelderman, 2023; Nguyen, et al., 2023; Nicola, 2023). Most respondents to New America’s annual survey on higher education (Nguyen, et al., 2023) believed not only that individuals with undergraduate credentials earned more and enjoyed greater financial stability but also that they contribute to greater civic engagement, lower unemployment rates, and better public health within their communities. In response to a survey by the Chronicle of Higher Education (Kelderman, 2023), respondents pointed out, in open-ended comments, the benefits of college beyond good jobs. Sample comments were: “College also exposes you to people different from where you grew up....It helps you figure out who you are and who you want to be,” and “Achieving a bachelor’s degree demonstrates the ability to set and achieve goals...to

persevere toward goals, to manage your time productively, to work with teams and to face and overcome problems”” (para. 14).

Fully Informing Prospective Students

Prospective students and their families should be encouraged to keep these benefits in mind as they evaluate the costs associated with college. Over 80% of high school responders to an ACT survey considered education as their path to getting good jobs (Schiel, 2023). In a survey of parents of 5th to 12th graders, parents rated getting a good job as the top reason for their children to go to college (Inside Higher Ed, 2013). When describing a “good job” neither students nor parents prioritized the quantity of pay but rather the quality of work. According to a 2014 Gallup Survey, great jobs focus on multiple aspects of well-being, including social, financial, and physical well-being (Gallup, 2014). Nearly 10 years later, Ton (2023), an operations management researcher, described good jobs as ones that fulfill basic needs, including pay sufficient for financial autonomy, stable schedules, safe and secure work environments, and higher-order needs, including meaningfulness, autonomy, respect, and dignity. Collapsing the goal of higher education to pay oversimplifies the objectives of degree-seekers who want good jobs. When considering employment goals, students and parents should be encouraged to look beyond the dollar and consider higher-level attributes of employment.

Existing Momentum: Current Initiatives Across the UNC System

We are encouraged by the framing offered above, but let us not feel compelled to create new initiatives out of whole cloth when there is already considerable momentum in this direction across the UNC System. Let us take advantage of the creative and meaningful work already underway, both statewide, and at each of our institutions. Below are some representative examples from each.

[Undergraduate Research Experiences](#)

Our UNC System undergraduates interact with faculty members whose scholarship is nationally and regionally acclaimed. Research projects large and small provide high impact learning opportunities. These collaborative research-based relationships are integral to many of our students' educational experiences. Studies show that undergraduate research experiences positively affect academic performance, critical thinking, satisfaction, and persistence. In addition, research opportunities can influence a student's academic and career choices and other outcomes. The discoveries students yield in our science labs, in fields, and abroad prepare undergraduates to be innovative problem solvers and creative thinkers when they enter the workforce.

Sometimes these collaborations generate original research and creative activities that can lead to publications, presentations, creative works, and other outcomes. This work benefits our universities, our students, and the communities we serve.

[NCInnovation](#) unlocks the innovative potential of North Carolina's world-class public universities. We provide grant funding and support services to public university applied

researchers working on discoveries that have commercial promise. NCInnovation helps inventions advance towards commercialization – accelerating the transition from academia to industry – by supporting university applied research through the critical research & development (R&D) phase between proof concept and readiness for the private market. The North Carolina state budget established the \$500 million NCInnovation reserve, split into \$250 million allocations over two years. Instead of spending taxpayer dollars from the state budget each year, these funds create an endowment that is independently managed to produce interest and low-risk investment income which funds NCInnovation’s programs. East Carolina University, Western Carolina University, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, and North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University are a part of this initiative. North Carolina’s public university system is the crown jewel of our state and home to some of the top minds in the world. However, North Carolina right now is not commercializing its university research success on par with the volume of its research and development activity. In fact, we’re falling behind other states – losing researchers, intellectual property and revenue as commercialization opportunities flee to other states with better innovation ecosystems or die on the vine without the support needed to scale into commercial products.

University-Based Initiatives

Appalachian State University

[Community Fellows](#) is a community of practice that is an immersive semester-long experience where a group of students partner with a local nonprofit and work to address a specific social issue through the lenses of education, service, philanthropy, and advocacy. Students will complete service hours at a local nonprofit twice a month, as well as work with their group to

plan education and advocacy events for the App State community. Social issue themes for Fall 2024 are Food Security and Hunger Alleviation, Affordable Housing, Environmental Justice, and Local-to-Global Service. Students can expect to spend around 10 hours a month in this engagement (average 1-2 hours a week)

East Carolina University

[21st Century Leadership Program](#) is a non-credit micro-credential program designed to equip current and aspiring leaders with the understanding, skills, and tools needed to lead strategically. You will learn to build a team or organization that is goal focused and vision driven, while creating an environment for people to thrive, grow, and contribute. Organized as a seven-course series, the High Impact Leader micro-credentialing program focuses on the development of critical capabilities needed to grow your impact as a leader.

[Innovation Design Lab](#), part of the ECU Honors College, is a technology-facilitated environment using design to translate across academic disciplines, industries, public agencies, and the marketplace to enhance innovation for new products, processes, and public policies. The facility is fully connected globally via networked computing, video, and voice communication systems.

Elizabeth City State University

[Aviation sciences PROGRAM](#) is a four-year collegiate aviation education program in North Carolina. The airline industry supports more than 65 million jobs worldwide, making it one of the world's largest employment sectors. Our aviation programs can help you find your calling in this diverse field. With an airport just 1.5 miles away from the heart of our campus, you'll have easy access to hands-on experience at working aviation facilities. We also offer two majors to

choose from and a wide array of concentration areas, including unmanned aircraft systems. You'll graduate with the skills you need to start the career you want in aviation.

Fayetteville State University

Fayetteville State University (FSU) received its inaugural Carnegie classification as a research university in 2025. This recognition is an outcome of the University's commitment to innovation and excellence through research endeavors. Fayetteville State has also been awarded membership in the Academic Engagement Network (AEN) of the US Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM). This membership enables FSU to participate in a variety of workforce development activities including supporting the National Security Agency (NSA) national defense and cybersecurity. Fayetteville State has developed community/ business outreach centers to assist students find their career path(s), develop business ideas, and work with leading local, state, and national organizations. These entities include the Center for Entrepreneurship, Center for Economic Education, and the Construction Resource Office, among others.

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University

North Carolina A&T has several high-impact experiences in their College of Engineering. [N.C. A&T Grant Develops Clean Energy Apprenticeship, First of Its Kind in Nation](#) is a youth apprenticeship in the eastern part of the state. Another outreach experience that occurs every April the College of Engineering participates in the [North Carolina Science Festival](#), a month-long celebration of science. The events are hosted by the College of Engineering and involve hands-on demonstrations by faculty, industry and community representatives who share a mutual passion for engaging K-12 area youth in fun, hands-on engineering and computer science

activities. The events, sometimes a first exposure to engineering for young North Carolinians, are designed to inspire the next leaders of engineering.

North Carolina Central University

The [HOPE Program](#) aims to develop and support approaches to health equity and build upon research that has assessed, measured and implemented approaches to tackle inequalities in health. Since its inception, the HOPE Program has worked to provide solutions to longstanding health disparities. The program will build upon this foundation and ensure that research efforts are used to facilitate a learning health care system that: Translates research evidence into community actions; Identifies gaps in health disparity research and conducts meaningful research in gap areas; Develops high-level health equity mapping in every county throughout the state to identify places where health inequalities are impacted by social determinants of health and can be addressed by improved understanding of these factors; Disseminates our research evidence to facilitate knowledge exchange with our internal and external academic partners, health institutions, local public health departments and communities; Responds to emerging situations (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic) that aggravate existing health disparities.

NC State University

[William & Ida Friday Institute for Educational Innovation](#) are deeply involved in bringing competency-based approaches into educator preparation, credentialing and professional development. To further this effort, the Friday Institute has begun developing a series of micro-credentials for teachers, coaches and administrators. These micro-credentials often support and extend the learning opportunities offered in the Courses but can also be earned by educators

within or outside of the context of the course. [Report, Seven Lessons Learned from Implementing Micro-Credentialing.](#)

The [Global Leadership & Team Decision Making Minor](#) is a collaboration between the Shelton Leadership Center and NC State European Center in Prague. The Global Leadership and Team Decision-Making minor is a 15-hour minor that is designed for students who seek to gain greater knowledge and understanding of leadership and team decision-making from a European global perspective. The coursework is composed of courses grounded in theory, inquiry, and application. The program will have 17-20 students for the semester abroad. All students start and end the program in the Czech Republic. Cohort one will travel to Germany and France for two courses. Cohort two will travel to England and Austria. The student will be required to take SLC 250: Critical and Creative Decision-Making either prior to or following the study abroad experience to complete the 15-hr requirement. The student in the minor may be preparing for graduate work or any field of study within the university. [\(Acker & Bocarro, 2021\).](#)

In today's world, where leadership increasingly values empathy and understanding, educational methods must adapt to bridge the gap between traditional pedagogy and the dynamic needs of modern interdisciplinary majors. [Virtual Reality \(VR\)](#) emerges as a cutting-edge solution, offering a unique avenue for experiential learning. By integrating VR into academic curriculums, we open a gateway to immersive education that enhances empathy, perspective-taking, and understanding of complex power dynamics. To better understand organizational power dynamics and interpersonal relationships, the Shelton Leadership Center (SLC) is incorporating the use of VR for more immersive learning experiences, including within the curriculum of our SLC 350 Leadership and Negotiations course as well as within professional development.

The [Office of University Interdisciplinary Programs](#) builds on successful interdisciplinary efforts that started as part of NC State's previous strategic plan. The office also brings key Provost's Office units and initiatives that cross disciplinary boundaries together in one place. It fosters and supports partnerships with university-level interdisciplinary programs and oversees the following: the Chancellor's Faculty Excellence Program, academies, the Biotechnology Program, the Climate Solutions Collaborative, the Coastal Resilience and Sustainability Initiative, NC State Innovation and Entrepreneurship, the Integrative Sciences Initiative and Woodson Hall, the Shelton Leadership Center and the Sustainable Futures Initiative. The office's work is closely aligned with Wolfpack 2030: Powering the Extraordinary, NC State's 2021-2030 Strategic Plan, and will advance all three pillars of the university's land-grant mission: excellent teaching, research and engagement.

University of North Carolina Asheville

[IGNITE](#) supports the transition of first-year students by helping them develop personal skills and confidence to be successful at UNC Asheville. Peer Advising Leaders (PALs) initially meet their cohort of students at the end of EmBark, UNC Asheville's first-year student orientation. First-year students are grouped by IGNITE/First-Year Seminar cohorts throughout EmBark, allowing for relationship-building and connection from the first day they set foot on campus.

At the end of EmBark, PALs facilitate the first session of IGNITE entitled "Finding Your Spark," which invites students to start identifying a passion area and set intentions for their time at UNC Asheville. During the fall semester, PALs visit First-Year Seminar classes every other week to facilitate IGNITE sessions on topics including identity development, values exploration,

building authentic relationships, effective communication, identifying strengths and skills, and becoming a change agent.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

[IDEAS in Action](#) support the high-impact experience that helps connect academic studies and outside-the-classroom engagement, thus putting learning into action! There are several types of high-impact experiential opportunities at Carolina: public service; study abroad; internships; performance creation or production; Undergraduate Learning Assistant (ULA) or other teaching experiences; Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) — students can fulfill this requirement by taking a second Research & Discovery course.

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

During the [Truist Immersive Learning Experience](#), held March 31-April 1 at the Truist Innovation and Technology Center in Uptown Charlotte, students partnered with Truist teammates and executives, and senior leaders from IBM, FLOWX.AI and AWS to solve real-world business challenges using the latest in “low code/no code” technology. Through the hands-on program, students learned through experimentation, allowing them to conceptualize and then create enterprise-grade software solutions all without writing a single line of code.

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

[Humanities at Work Program](#), (Mellon [Funded](#))

NC Greensboro has been awarded a \$5 million grant from the Mellon Foundation to implement a five-year paid internship and educational program for humanities students called “Humanities at

Work.” This landmark grant is the largest ever received by UNCG’s College of Arts & Sciences – as well as one of the largest in the University’s history.

“We are absolutely thrilled to be one of only five universities in the country to receive this historic award from the Mellon Foundation,” said UNCG Chancellor Franklin D. Gilliam, Jr.

“The Humanities at Work project will not only provide hundreds of UNCG humanities students with high-quality, paid internship experiences, but it will also help them to articulate the value of a humanities degree to potential employers, translating to fulfilling careers.”

University of North Carolina Pembroke

[Capping Student Success: Using Capstone Experiences to Enhance Student Learning](#) as a part of their quality enhancement plan seeks to increase student engagement in high impact practices, specifically capstone courses and experiences. With respect to student learning outcomes, students completing a capstone course should be able to: 1. Connect relevant experiences outside of class to academic knowledge from different courses in the university setting; 2. Make connections across disciplines, perspectives, fields of study; 3. Adopt and apply information to new situations; and 4. Engage in meaningful self-reflection. With thirty-six undergraduate degrees offered at the University, the goal is to involve a maximum of six undergraduate programs per year in the development process

University of North Carolina School of the Arts

[ArtistCorps](#) is a program which utilizes the skills of UNCSA students and graduates to provide arts instruction, integration and exposure to school-aged children and seniors in the Winston-

Salem community. ArtistCorps serves at a variety of settings including Title I Schools, Head Start programs, and community organizations.

University of North Carolina Wilmington

In furthering workforce development, UNCW has partnered with industry leaders to provide training, research, and high- tech career opportunities in advanced manufacturing and open-source data storage. Not only will this collaboration assist students in career development, it will positively impact workforce development in the region. The University hails this partnership “as an opportunity to align its educational programs with the needs of the technology industry, helping to create a pipeline of skilled professionals ready to meet the demands of local employers.”

The National Academy of Inventors has recognized four faculty members at UNC Wilmington (UNCW) as senior members. These faculty have trained a cadre of student inventors who focus on projects such as educational use of technology as well as increased environmental surveillance of toxins by decreasing costs and increasing ecological relevance and reproducibility.

Western Carolina University

[High Impact Practices](#) are defined by the Association of American Colleges & Universities as teaching and learning practices that have been “widely tested and [...] shown to be beneficial for college students from many backgrounds, especially historically underserved students, who often do not have equitable access to high-impact learning.” At WCU, High Impact Practices are

quickly becoming a major focus in all colleges, as we seek to provide the very best experiential and classroom learning opportunities for our students.

Winston-Salem State University

Winston-Salem State University fosters greater collaboration with the community and develops new services and programs to address community needs while enriching the learning experiences of our students. There are several [centers and institutes](#) through the university that offer an educational approach anchored in active and experiential learning, their curriculum reflects high-impact practices that support student learning and success.

Engaging New Energies: Proposed Initiatives

Encouraged by our findings, we have several actionable suggestions that take advantage of existing momentum, while generating new points of enthusiasm, and possibilities for investment.

Adopt Successful Industry Practice

See this document, Section 1. We should all be pulling in the same direction. Let's acknowledge and adopt industry practices that have proven benefits. For example, consider the Health Insurance industry's low-cost/high-reward wellness engagement phone-apps. We could develop a phone-app program that rewards low-stakes career-readiness engagement (updating your C.V. on LinkedIn) with rewards/prizes like, a 1-on-1 with an elite career counselor, or a meeting with a successful arts producer.

Offer Complementary Financial Aid Models

See this document, Section 2. In addition to CIP-Code categories of classwork, consider adding aid categories based on "Mode of Instruction" or "Learning Experience Type", in order to allow the engagement exemplified by a liberal arts-centered approach to all socio-economic sectors.

Cultivate local NC Culture

See this document, Section 4. Develop / invest in / participate in seed programs of organizations and non-profits that embrace the arts as a means of economic security in smaller NC cities.

Cross-pollinate career-counselling across Industry Categories

See this document, Section 5. Introduce statewide “Interdisciplinary Workforce Development” Programs, in preparation for the contemporary workplace.

Generate New Statewide Studies

See this document, Section 6. Generate a complementary data set to the Deloitte Study: “Multidimensional Values of Investment,” in order to **avoid systematic underinvestment** (up to 80%, unacknowledged) in certain degree programs.

Acknowledge Institutional Actions

See this document, Section 7. Assess Pre-existing Momentum: Execute a comprehensive search of Liberal-Arts based programs already in place across the state, and offer meaningful support to these programs, in order to take advantage of work already being done.

Curate New Alumni Data Sets

See this document, Section 9. Execute a comprehensive search across the UNC System for practical, applied, disciplinary experiences of students and alumni, for recruitment and fundraising purposes.

Case Studies of Successful Careers

A selection of successful career trajectories stemming from Liberal Arts-Centered Undergraduate Degrees

Appalachian State University

- Grayson Rieth '16 (Theater Education); “As a corporate media professional, I have had the privilege of stepping into worlds and rooms traditionally taking years of sole ROI-focused dedication to reach. I have photographed CEOs, interviewed board members, and dined with the business elite across various industries. From directing the "Core Philosophy" video of a multi-billion dollar hedge fund to building the digital messaging for a major advertising automation platform, I have seen a consistent through-line that rings clear. Corporations need humanity.”

UNC Charlotte

- John Woddal '13 (BA Music Performance): Singer/Songwriter and Film Scorer/Actor, Camp4Heroes Retreat Center Staff Executive Director; Camp4Heroes, a non-profit organization that serves wounded veterans and first responders. John organizes the artistic events and music program for the camp and provides outlets for the veterans to write their own music and to receive music therapy. He is also writing and performing music to build awareness of and support for the camp's mission.
- Kalin Devone '15 (BFA in Art/Painting): Professional independent artist (Charlotte) <https://coaa.charlotte.edu/faces/kalin-devone/>; Professional Visual Artist; Kalin Devone is a working artist in Charlotte, who has been involved in the creation of various murals across the city, along with commissioned orders for paintings. In early 2020, Devone was a part of the experimental residency program, 'Untitled,' by BLK MRKT CLT and Brand the Moth. The program highlighted local artists who work in traditional studio mediums to create work in a public space, such as the Black Lives Matter Mural on South Tryon, as well as giving artists of color a voice on social issues. Kalin created three large-scale self-portraits that were later displayed in the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture.
- Melissa Farling '88 (BA in Architecture); Principal, Multistudio, Phoenix, AZ: Melissa works with neuroscientists to better understand the mind-body connections to the built environment and co-chaired the AIA Justice Research program for over a decade. Her expertise in mental health and the justice system led to her invitation to the AIA's mental health and architecture incubator group. Melissa initiated and chaired the 2018 AIA

Justice annual conference, Enlightened Justice/Advancing Treatment, focused on mental health in the justice system.

- Kimberly Henderson '13 (BA in Studio Art with Minors in Art History, Women/Gender Studies, and Psychology); Digital Curator at the New York Public Library Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture (New York); The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in Harlem is the nation's premiere cultural institution devoted to the research, preservation, and exhibition of materials focused on African American, African Diaspora, and African experiences. As the Digital Curator, Kimberly Henderson develops, directs, and manages projects that digitally preserve and present the Schomburg's vast archival collection of visual materials.
- Vijay Nagpal '09 (B.A. in Music, Emergency room doctor); As a UNC Charlotte graduate with a degree in music, my goal was to conquer whatever piece was in front of me—if not for an upcoming concert, then at least to avoid disappointing my trumpet teacher during our weekly private lessons. The ability to spend hours on end in rehearsals, lessons, lectures, is also a skill shared by the successful medical student to make it through the grueling hours spent memorizing an astounding number of facts or working with patients in the hospital.
- David Ravin '94 (BA in Architecture with a Minor in Geography); President and CEO, Northwood Ravin LLC (Charlotte): Northwood Ravin employs more than 350 associates and has projects in six states. Concentrating on developing, constructing, and managing luxury for-rent and mixed-use housing, Northwood Ravin is the second-largest commercial developer in the Raleigh- Durham market and fourth-largest in the Charlotte area and was Charlotte's top commercial real estate developer in 2020.
- Devlin McNeil '00 (BFA in Art/Photography); President and CEO of Arts+, named a 2024 "Most Admired CEO" by the Charlotte Business Journal (Charlotte): Founded in 1969, Arts+ serves more than 4500 students of all ages each year, with programs in music and visual and multimedia arts. About 60% of them participate for free or reduced fees. "What attracted me to this organization to begin with was its mission. A high-quality arts education should be accessible to all."
- Christina Hudgins '15 (BA degrees in Dance and Psychology); Board Certified Dance/Movement Therapist (Greensboro, NC): Christina Hudgins has recently established herself in Greensboro, NC, after a stint as a creative arts therapist at Riveredge Hospital, a mental health facility in the Chicago area. She primarily works with children and adolescents, as well as adults diagnosed with development/ intellectual disabilities. "My identity as a dancing artist and teaching artist informs my work as a dance/movement therapist."

East Carolina University

- Malcolm Armwood made his Broadway debut in *Hadestown!* He was in American Repertory Theater's production of *The Black Clown*. He performed in the 2017 national

tour of *Motown* and the 2014 tour of *Smokey Joe's Cafe* with director and choreographer Chet Walker. Regional credits: *Grease*; *Ragtime*; *Showboat*; *Hairspray*; and *Kiss Me, Kate*. BFA: East Carolina University.

- Daniel Fetter (he/him) is an alumnus of East Carolina University, the Tepper Semester Program, North Carolina Governor's School, and a current cast member of *The Book of Mormon* on Broadway. A Raleigh, NC native, Daniel joined the 2nd national tour of *Mormon* in 2019 and continued into the Broadway company following the COVID-19 industry shutdown. He has performed in various cabarets and special performances in NYC including Broadway Sessions, At This Performance.
- Lisette Glodowski received her MFA at NYU Tisch School of The Arts, Graduate Musical Theater Writing Program, and her BFA in Musical Theatre and Acting at ECU School of Theater and Dance. She is a professional writer, actor, dancer, singer, and choreographer. She has written six full-length musicals, including the Broadway musical *Madame Clicquot: A Revolutionary Musical*. Lisette has been serving as an educator for over twelve years. Over the pandemic, she founded her own Voice and Acting Studio, LRG STUDIOS, and is currently coaching K-12, college students, and professionals.
- Chase Coston received a BFA in Musical Theatre and a BFA in Theatre Arts Education from East Carolina University in 2021. He is a certified K-12 Theatre Arts Teacher. Originally from Leland, North Carolina, he has been performing since he was 10 years old. He has taught workshops on audition preparation, led high school musical auditions, directed at the collegiate, high school, and community theatre levels, as well as taught classes for high school theatre students. Education is his passion.
- Lisa Cordelione is an actor/writer/producer. She produced the Crazy As A Loon for the TV series *Committed*. She co-wrote, produced, and played "Billie" opposite Alexandra Billings in the award-winning feature film *FREELANCERS ANONYMOUS* (Amazon). She played the lead role of Abby in the hit web series *EASY ABBY* (14 episodes) with Mouzam Makkar (*The Fix*, *Champions*). Her work has screened at 40+ film festivals internationally. As a voice-over actor and award-winning audiobook narrator of 130 titles, she works with Penguin Random House, Hachette, Harper Collins, Macmillan. She is a graduate of The Second City Chicago Improv Conservatory, Music Improv Conservatory, and 2-year Meisner program at East Carolina University (North Carolina), earning a B.F.A in Professional Acting.
- Steven Cozart was born and raised in Durham, North Carolina, and works and lives in Greensboro, NC. Cozart received his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Art Education with a concentration in printmaking and drawing from East Carolina University. His work has been exhibited at multiple venues. He has received grants and awards for his work and was the recipient of the Dorthea Lange-Paul Taylor Prize from the Center of Documentary studies at Duke University. He teaches at Weaver Academy for Performing & Visual Arts and Advanced Technology in Guilford County and has been a visiting lecturer at ECU, North Carolina A&T State University, and Guildford College.

- Matt Munoz began with a BFA in Design from ECU, and is now the CEO and founding partner of Raleigh design firm New Kind, where he focuses on growth and aligning the firm's offerings with the needs of B2B tech companies. A nationally award-winning designer, he currently serves on the board of directors for AIGA, the professional association for design. His specialties include community experience design, facilitation, collaboration, branding and identity design
- Jonathan Bowling grew up on a small farm in Kentucky. He attended the University of Kentucky where he received his BFA in sculpture and a BA in art history. In 1996 he moved to Greenville, North Carolina, to pursue an MFA in sculpture at East Carolina University. Bowling has been working out of his Greenville studio ever since.
- Anne Partna is a potter and founder of Blue Hen Pottery in Seagrove, NC. As a teenager, Anne landed one of three coveted openings in the Estonian Academy of Arts ceramics program in Tallinn. A spring semester exchange program at East Carolina University inspired her to return to ECU for her graduate degree. She and Adam met as students in ECU's ceramics program and moved to Seagrove in 2007. They built their Bourry Box kiln and opened Blue Hen Pottery in 2011.
- Jessica Bradsher — sculptor and art educator at John Paul II High School in Greenville. She earned her MFA in sculpture at East Carolina University in 2018. She has been showing my outdoor sculpture work since I began my career in 2009. She participated in outdoor sculpture programs in seven states along the East Coast and the Midwest. As a metal sculptor, she has studied and taught welding for artists. She has served as the secretary for the Tri-State Sculptors organization of NC, SC, and VA.
- Courtney Barr is a graphic designer and full professor/Assistant Director at Louisiana State University. She is a graphic designer, letterpress artist, and educator. In her work she uses visual explanations to reveal new understandings and perspectives. She merges digital printing techniques with letterpress printing to create unique information/art pieces.
- Scott Avett grew up in a musical household in rural North Carolina. He is a founding member of the three-time Grammy-nominated band, The Avett Brothers. In addition to recording multiple records with legendary producer Rick Rubin, the band collaborated with directors Judd Apatow and Michael Bonfiglio on the documentary *May It Last: A Portrait of The Avett Brothers*. Beyond Avett's work as a musician, he is also an accomplished visual artist with a BFA in studio art from East Carolina University. He has released two art books, *Invisible* and *Purpose at Random*, and his paintings and prints have been showcased in coveted galleries. Avett resides in North Carolina with his wife and three children.
- Vivien Sansour is an artist, researcher and writer. She is a conservationist of international stature whose main goal is highlighting the cultural and agricultural heritage of communities. She uses installations, images, sketches, film, soil, seeds, and plants to enliven old cultural tales in contemporary presentations and to advocate for seed conservation and the protection of agrobiodiversity as a cultural/political act. Sansour

founded the Palestine Heirloom Seed Library in 2014, where she works with farmers in Palestine and around the world. She is currently the Distinguished Artistic Fellow at Bard College, in New York, where she premiered her art performance, “The Belly is A Garden” at the Fisher Center for Performing Arts and the Bard Farm.

- Valerie Madden graduated from the ECU School of Art & Design in 1991 with a bachelor’s degree in communications arts and graphic design. She is a multi-disciplined entertainment marketing and advertising professional with more than 20 years of industry experience. In her current role as a multi-disciplined Entertainment Marketing & Advertising Creative Director, she collaborates to develop innovative marketing and advertising strategies and creative content for 360-integrated campaigns for Amazon Original Series, specials and movies on Prime Video.
- Windy O’Connor, an award-winning and globally renowned American painter, graduated from ECU in 1990 with a bachelor’s degree in interior design. Based in Charlotte, N.C., her passion for art and design developed into a lifestyle brand of textiles, wallpaper, clothing and home accessories. Her series of abstract portraits of women – called “Chicas” – has taken on a life of their own. Representing the intricacies, humor, strength and power of women, the Chicas are mothers, sisters, friends and history-makers. Windy’s work is guided by the notion that we are all connected and divided by religious, ethnic and cultural biases and beliefs.
- Annie Young is a dance artist and Pilates instructor based in Greensboro, North Carolina. She is a dedicated instructor at Dance Project, the nonprofit dance organization where she first fell in love with movement. Young teaches Classical and Contemporary Pilates in private, semi-private, and group settings while continuing to perform as a modern-based dancer. Now in her third season with JOYEMOVEMENT, she has performed in the original works A Wicked Silence and Love Notes and collaborates on freelance projects throughout the Triad. In 2023, Annie returned to Appalachian State University to complete her Classical Pilates Teacher Training certification.

NC State University

- Gentry Smith (Political Science ‘83): Assistant Secretary of State for Diplomatic Security: Gentry oversees the U.S. Department of State’s global security operations, ensuring the safety of U.S. personnel and facilities at 270 diplomatic posts worldwide. Smith’s DS career began in 1987, serving in roles such as Regional Security Officer in Tokyo and Rangoon, and Deputy Assistant Secretary for Countermeasures. He later became Director of the Office of Foreign Missions, with the rank of Ambassador.
- Angela Rivers (Sociology ‘83); Vice President, Bank of America: Rivers leads a team of professionals accountable for the performance and risk management of third parties to help ensure the delivery of products and services to the bank’s 66 million consumer customers. Rivers has nearly 40 years of risk management experience in the public and financial sectors. Previously, she worked in law enforcement for 17 years, including

criminal investigations for the Raleigh Police Department and the Department of Revenue.

- Charles Gaddy (History, '93); Managing Partner VL Ventures, Founded Global Data Consortium: Gaddy co-founded Global Data Consortium (GDC), a global anti-money laundering financial markets infrastructure and data provider. It later transitioned into verifying mailing addresses for international delivery companies like DHL and FedEx and eventually providing comprehensive data checks for its clients. The founders sold GDC in 2022. Gaddy is now managing partner at VL Ventures, a business acquisition, marketing, and solutions advisory company.
- Andrew Bates (Political Science '09); Deputy Press Secretary, White House Communication Office: On the job since March 2021, Bates serves as a main contact for national reporters, prepping the White House press secretary for press briefings and coordinating public announcements. He is, however, a political communication veteran. Previously, he interned for Congressman Brad Miller and worked on the presidential campaigns of Barack Obama, Hilary Clinton, and Joe Biden, joining President Biden's White House press staff.
- Doug Warf (Communication '03); President of Hurricane Holdings, LLC: Warf oversees the business operations for the Carolina Hurricanes and the arena, including managing arena renovations and the construction of a mixed-use district. After 16 years with the Canes, Warf left in 2017 to join MDO Holdings, an investment and management firm, as chief marketing officer before becoming president in 2019. During his previous years at the Canes, Warf held various sales and marketing roles, including vice president of marketing.
- Maggie Kane (International Studies '13); Founder, A Place at the Table: Kane opened Raleigh's only pay-what-you-can café in 2018. Diners can pay a suggested price for meals; they can also add money or buy a token for \$10 to give to a person who needs a free meal. Those who can't pay can still eat, and can also volunteer in the kitchen in exchange for their meal. Since its opening, the non-profit has served more than 255,000 meals and attracted 2,000 volunteers each year, who help address local food insecurity.
- Michael Glasheen (Political Science '96); FBI Supervisory Special Agent: Glasheen directs the Terrorist Screening Center in Vienna, Virginia, which is a division of the FBI's National Security Branch that identifies potential terrorists. It was created after the September 11, 2001, attacks to consolidate information from various agencies and make it accessible to federal security screeners and law enforcement. He joined the FBI in 2001 and has held various previous positions at the agency.
- Christie Wood (Communication '97; M.S. in Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management '02); Video Scouting Coordinator for Major League Baseball's Draft Operations: Wood spends her late winters, springs, and summers, compiling videos of top prospects. She travels up and down the East Coast, visiting different high school and college practices and games, capturing the swings and curveballs of talent that MLB

teams hope to draft every summer. When Wood was hired in 2000, she was the first – and is now the longest-serving —female scout in the MLB.

- Jeff Kelly (Philosophy '09); Emerging technology and complex litigation attorney: Kelly assists technology companies with corporate, securities, and regulatory compliance issues. That includes counseling clients on transactions and partnerships, guiding them on the regulatory risks of novel services and business models in highly regulated industries, assisting with technical issues in ongoing lawsuits, and responding to inquiries from regulators. He is also a fellow of Duke University School of Law's Center on Law and Technology.
- Erik Hooks (Political Science '88, MALS '05); Deputy Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency: Hooks serves as the agency's chief operating officer, providing leadership to roughly 20,000 professionals and working with an approximate 30 billion-dollar budget. He also serves as the agency's key intelligence official, responsible for Homeland Security Information and National Intelligence. Previously, Hooks was appointed by the Governor of North Carolina as the Secretary of Public Safety and the State's Homeland Security Advisor in January 2017.
- Paul Ridgeway (Political Science '82; MPA '90); Superior Court Judge: Judge Ridgeway is the senior resident superior court judge for North Carolina's 10th judicial district. He tries criminal and civil cases across the state, ranging from drug and homicide cases to medical malpractice suits. Before becoming a judge in January 2007, Judge Ridgeway worked for 20 years in the private practice of law, spanning commercial litigation, commercial transactions, and administrative law matters.
- Leigh-Kathryn Bonner (International Studies '15 with a Spanish minor); Founder, Bee Downtown and the BDT Leadership Institute: Bonner's company partners with businesses to help save honey bee populations by installing and maintaining hives — on rooftops and in other urban locales. The company also runs a biomimicry leadership development institute where leaders and aspiring leaders from all over the world can come to learn about effective leadership through lessons learned by honeybees. Bonner, a fourth-generation beekeeper, started her business while at NC State.
- Meaghan Lynch (Psychology and Communication '11); Works in federal public policy at Airbnb; Lynch helps share Airbnb's policy priorities in Washington, D.C. She is also an attorney, graduating from Howard University School of Law in 2014. Lynch is experienced in political advocacy, policy development and press relations. Before joining Airbnb's public policy team, Lynch enjoyed success in the legal, government, public affairs and communication fields. She has advised leaders from the White House and Capitol Hill to the C-suite of tech companies.
- Gen. Anthony J. Cotton (Political Science '86); Commander, U.S Strategic Command, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska: Cotton's command includes 150,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, Space Force Guardians, and civilians who operate globally. The command advises the secretary of defense and the president as necessary. Before his current assignment, Cotton served as the commander of Air Force Global Strike

Command and Air Forces Strategic-Air, USSTRATCOM, Barksdale Air Base, Louisiana. Cotton entered the Air Force through NC State's ROTC program.

- Therese Fowler (Sociology '00; MFA in creative writing '05); Novelist: Fowler's bestselling books are sold around the world in multiple languages. Her novels include *A Good Neighborhood* and *Z: A Novel of Zelda Fitzgerald*, which became a TV series. Her essays have been published internationally in newspapers and magazines such as *The Week*, the *London Telegraph* and *Harper's Bazaar*. Fowler has been a visiting professor at NC State and occasionally teaches fiction writing at conferences and workshops.

UNC Greensboro

- Haleigh Evans Alexander, '16 (BA in Classical Studies and a minor in English): After graduation she worked as a professional recruiter with Apex Systems and then became a Senior Recruiter with Lowes' Foods Human Resources. In an interview at an HNAC event on UNCG's campus in 2023, she explained that her humanities degree was a great benefit in transitioning to the workplace: "Once you're in the workplace, it's about what you've gotten out of your classes and major, the skills you got from that, and how you apply them. Don't limit yourself because you think, for example, I majored in English so I can only go be a writer or a high school teacher, you can go do anything with your undergraduate degree." She highlighted communications skills and leadership develop as key take-aways from her Humanities education: "My speaking-intensive ancient history class was really fun and really interesting. They gave me the chance to stand up and give speeches and to prepare to talk with people which was really helpful. I also learned a lot about leadership here at UNCG, which has helped me lead meetings and initiatives in the workplace. I was the president of the Classical Society here so that also helped me learn leadership and career skills."
- Krista Thomason '02 (née, Karbowski) (BA in Philosophy and Classical Studies). "I'm now an Associate Professor of Philosophy at Swarthmore College. It's not an overstatement to say that the UNCG Philosophy Department changed my life. I was a first-generation/low-income college student... Now I get to be a mentor the way my professors were mentors for me. Being a first-gen student, there's no way I would have ever known that this path was open to me without the encouragement of the UNCG faculty. UNCG didn't just open a door for me. It showed me there was a door! I feel very passionately about the idea that Philosophy is for everyone---no matter your background. To put it in slogan form, poor kids think, too. In fact, I loved my Philosophy classes at UNCG because it was one of the few places where I felt like people were asking me what I thought instead of making assumptions about me because of my background. UNCG gave me a space where my mind could grow. Even if I hadn't become an academic, I still would have graduated with a bigger mental world. And that's something we all need."

Selected Readings

Adrian K. Haugabrook: *3 Ways to Lower the Barriers to Higher Education*, 1639083124.

https://www.ted.com/talks/adrian_k_haugabrook_3_ways_to_lower_the_barriers_to_higher_education.

Anders, George. “Good News Liberal-Arts Majors: Your Peers Probably Won’t Outearn You Forever.” *Wall Street Journal*, September 12, 2016, sec. Markets.

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/good-news-liberal-arts-majors-your-peers-probably-wont-outearn-you-forever-1473645902>.

———. *You Can Do Anything: The Surprising Power of a “Useless” Liberal Arts Education*. First edition. New York Boston London: Little, Brown and Company, 2017.

“Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 | Americans for the Arts.” Accessed March 17, 2025.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/research-studies-publications/arts-economic-prosperity-6>.

Carlson, Scott. “Yale’s President Gives College Leaders a Primer on Making the Case for Higher Education.” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 7, 2011.

<https://www.chronicle.com/article/yales-president-gives-college-leaders-a-primer-on-making-the-case-for-higher-education/>.

Detweiler, Richard A. *The Evidence Liberal Arts Needs: Lives of Consequence, Inquiry, and Accomplishment*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2021.

- Fischer, Karin. "College as a Public Good: Making the Case through Community Engagement." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Accessed March 17, 2025. <https://store.chronicle.com/products/college-as-a-public-good>.
- Gogue, Jay. "Making the Case for Higher Education | LinkedIn," July 28, 2021. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/making-case-higher-education-jay-gogue/>.
- Hartley, Scott. *The Fuzzy and the Techie: Why the Liberal Arts Will Rule the Digital World*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017.
- "Is Higher Education Still Worth It?" Accessed March 17, 2025. <https://www.msn.com/en-us/money/careers/is-higher-education-still-worth-it/ar-AA1pU1mX?ocid=msedgntp&pc=LCTS&cvid=bf6275fa26a47079d741ac81c623a11&ei=34>.
- King, Beverly and Millea, Meghan. "More Than a Paycheck: The Value of a College Degree," *Journal of Higher Education Management* 40(1), 2025.
- Kolanski, Ilona. "10 Medical Schools for Nonscience Majors." *US News & World Report*, September 19, 2022. <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-graduate-schools/top-medical-schools/slideshows/medical-schools-where-humanities-and-social-sciences-majors-often-attend>.
- Lecture Martha Nussbaum: Not for Profit. Why Democracy Needs the Humanities (Audio Recordings)*, 2013. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mxgYsx1AJ68>.

Ma, Jennifer, Pender, Matea, and Welch, Meredith. “Trends in Higher Education Series, Education Pays 2019,” n.d.

Martha Nussbaum - The Value of the Humanities, 2011.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zS_gFRbb5zU.

Mersotis, Jamie. “Higher Education Needs to Change—Let’s Start with Why It Matters,” June 15, 2023. <https://www.luminafoundation.org/news-and-views/higher-education-needs-to-change-lets-start-by-making-clear-why-it-matters-in-an-increasingly-complex-dangerous-world/>.

Mott, Jonathan D, and Garin Granata. “Beyond ROI: Measuring the Value of an Investment Instead of Dollar-for-Dollar Return Provides a Clearer Picture of Benefits and Costs.” *Educause Quarterly*, no. 2 (2006): 48–54.

Nussbaum, Martha C. *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*. Updated edition. The Public Square. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016.

Roth, Michael S. *Beyond the University: Why Liberal Education Matters*. Paperback edition with a new preface. New Haven London: Yale University Press, 2015.

Stross, Randall E. *A Practical Education: Why Liberal Arts Majors Make Great Employees*. Stanford, California: Redwood Press, 2017.

Telling, Kathryn. *The Liberal Arts Paradox in Higher Education: Negotiating Inclusion and Prestige*. Bristol: Policy Press, 2023.

Tough, Paul. “Americans Are Losing Faith in the Value of College. Whose Fault Is That?”

The New York Times, September 5, 2023, sec. Magazine.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/09/05/magazine/college-worth-price.html>.

UNC System Press Release. “Gallup Releases Alumni Survey Highlighting the Value of a UNC System Education – UNC System.Pdf.” Google Docs, May 21, 2019.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/12grfcEeIVMHcAs6erRtZ0jWvcaTPpkUh/view?usp=embed_facebook.

Volk, Steve. *The Post-Pandemic Liberal Arts College: A Manifesto for Reinvention*. 1st ed.

New York: Belt Publishing, 2020.

Zakaria, Fareed. *In Defense of a Liberal Education*. First edition. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2015.