

The Arts and Humanities Degree: Value and Benefits

In this paper, I address the misconception that an Arts and Humanities degree is not applicable to the modern workforce. I will discuss how the degree sets up a graduate for a very large number of jobs that carry good wages and benefits. The Arts and Humanities student acquires skills in critical thinking, creative and innovative problem-solving, proficiency in oral and written communication, multi- and intercultural sensitivity, ethical training, and the ability to work collaboratively. Companies prefer employees with that skill set rather than those with specialized knowledge. The earnings gap between STEM graduates and Arts and Humanities graduates decreases over time, until by the age of 40, it disappears. Arts and Humanities graduates also move into lucrative careers in business, law, and politics and become entrepreneurs.

For years now, the degree in Arts and Humanities has been the subject of jokes and aspersion. In the United States, politicians, both Republican¹ and Democrat², make fun of the humanities while championing trade schools and majors in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics)³. In the United Kingdom, STEM programs are emphasized, with extra government funding allocated to them at the expense of arts and humanities programs, which are deemed 'less essential'⁴; this has led, in turn, to universities cutting humanities courses due to lack of monetary support and students⁵. The government of China has outlined a strategy to turn 42 universities into top-ranked institutions dedicated to science and technology⁶.

Such politicians and government planners are shortsighted; they should be consulting employers about the people whom they prefer to hire.⁷ If they did, they would discover that company CEOs and Human Resource hiring firms give a consistent message: the skill sets that one gains from studying Arts and Humanities are more important than a specialized area of study⁸. Employers (up to 93 percent in some surveys) are frank in their insistence that they seek in graduates and potential employees a particular set of skills: communication skills, critical thinking skills, the ability to work in teams, and intercultural skills. This is exactly what an education in Arts and Humanities can provide⁹. For example,

¹*Inside Higher Ed* 2024.

²Nazworth 2015.

³Cf. Perry 2020.

⁴Banerjee et al. 2024.

⁵Burton 2021.

⁶Grove 2017.

⁷ See the essays in Bilbro 2023.

⁸See the excellent materials listed on the website of the National Association of Colleges and Employers 2024 (link in the Works Cited).

⁹Flaherty 2021.

1 LinkedIn has published its research on the skills that employers most value¹⁰:
2 creativity, persuasion, collaboration, and people management (a skill made
3 possible with the stress in the Arts and Humanities on empathy and cultural
4 sensitivity)¹¹. David Deming has demonstrated in a working paper for the
5 National Bureau of Economic Research that companies' "rewards to performing
6 routine tasks have fallen, while the returns to workers' ability to cooperate and
7 adapt to changing circumstances have risen"¹². Adaptability, collaborative work,
8 and creative problem-solving are now more key than specialized training. A
9 recent headline, "Microsoft's President Says Liberal Arts Majors Are Necessary
10 for the Future of Tech"¹³, encapsulates the growing view that Arts and Humanities
11 students are a critical force in the workforce, even in Silicon Valley¹⁴. Brad Smith,
12 the president of Microsoft asserts: "Languages, art, history, economics, ethics,
13 philosophy, psychology and human development courses can teach critical,
14 philosophical and ethics-based skills that will be instrumental" to the future of
15 technology.

16 George Anders's 2017 book, *You Can Do Anything: The Surprising Power of a*
17 *"Useless" Liberal Arts Degree*, demonstrates how an Arts and Humanities education
18 can open the door to thousands of cutting-edge jobs. In Chapter 2, Anders
19 analyzed more than 5,000 job advertisements that listed a salary of more than
20 \$100,000. Many of these advertisements called specifically for critical thinking and
21 five key skills:

- 22
- 23 • A willingness to explore new areas
 - 24 • Excellent analytic skills, especially in murky areas
 - 25 • First-rate problem-solving; the ability to find the right answer when it's
26 not obvious
 - 27 • High emotional intelligence; being able to "read the room"
 - 28 • Persuasive communication skills, with speaking/listening probably
29 rated even higher than writing
- 30

31 The National Association of Colleges and Employers¹⁵ highlights the
32 importance for graduates being able to demonstrate written communication,
33 critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration/teamwork, as well as verbal
34 communication, ethics, empathy, and leadership¹⁶.

¹⁰Petrone 2018.

¹¹See also Lobosco 2017, a very useful survey.

¹²Deming 2017.

¹³Feloni 2018.

¹⁴See Stross's 2017 book on Liberal Arts; Stross describes how Arts and Humanities graduates succeed and flourish in Silicon Valley.

¹⁵National Association of Colleges and Employers 2024.

¹⁶See the discussion in Ruggeri 2019.

1 A unique feature of good oral and written communication skills, critical
2 thinking skills, the ability to work in teams, and empathy (intercultural) skills is
3 that they are *transferable*, that is, they allow a person to move from one job to the
4 next, or to react to changes in their existing job. These days, things change very
5 quickly, and so one needs a strong skill set to adapt. If one focuses only on a
6 single specific job preparation, that job may not even exist in the future (see
7 below). Today's college graduates will change jobs an average of four times
8 before age 30, and so to succeed, they need to be flexible with skills that they can
9 take from one employment to the next with little difficulty. The skills that a
10 degree in Arts and Humanities gives are those very skills¹⁷. They are the kinds of
11 skills that never grow obsolete. Although the world is constantly changing,
12 especially concerning technology, the abilities, attributes, and skills gained in
13 studying Arts and Humanities remain relevant¹⁸. What are some of these
14 transferable skills¹⁹?

15 Employers want people who are comfortable with subjectivity and ambiguity.
16 Often there are multiple solutions or approaches to solving a problem. Many jobs
17 require nuanced thinking, a way of seeking solutions that are not simply black
18 and white but dig beneath the surface.

19 Also desirable are skills in problem-solving and the ability to approach a
20 problem from multiple perspectives. Employers value workers who of course
21 have mastered a solid content base, but who have also a general breadth of
22 knowledge and put that knowledge to work in solving problems.

23 Highly sought are excellent verbal communication abilities. Employees must
24 be able to clearly articulate their ideas and to communicate effectively with co-
25 workers, supervisors, and most importantly clients and customers.

26 Active listening, or the ability to fully hear and understand another's ideas
27 and opinions, is necessary for effective communication. An employee must be
28 able to consider the feelings and thoughts of others, especially when opinions
29 differ²⁰.

¹⁷See Bouchrika 2024.

¹⁸On a personal note, during my doctoral studies, I was faced with the need to visit European libraries to study the manuscripts relevant to my thesis; now, the manuscripts are digitalized and easily available on the Internet. I had no personal computer, but rather used an IBM Selectric typewriter with removable balls for different languages. Things have changed much since 1980 in terms of technology, but my thesis ultimately depended not on technology, but on critical thinking, analytic reasoning, problem-solving, and good writing.

¹⁹See Castrillon 2023. The subject of transferable skills has been widely discussed, and any Internet search will yield dozens of excellent articles.

²⁰I refer the reader to the thought-provoking essay by Newman 2024, who argues that students studying humanities and Liberal Arts can educate each other (and us) "about the perils of simplistic slogans and narrow-minded thinking, and to reinforce the values of critical inquiry and respectful disagreement". Newman even ventures that students in Arts and Humanities can heal the current ideological rift in America.

1 Ethical thinking and integrity are central to any organization. Businesses
2 require ethical behavior and personal integrity from their employees in the
3 workplace. Students in Arts and Humanities, through their studies and courses,
4 understand the principles of ethics and morality. Related to this, an Arts and
5 Humanities education prepares students to negotiate an increasingly diverse
6 environment and gives them the intercultural understanding to thrive in a global
7 economy and to work comfortably with an ever-increasing diverse workforce.

8 Collaboration is a highly desirable skill for any employee. This includes the
9 ability to work with others; to respect, listen to, and acknowledge the feelings,
10 opinions, and ideas of others; to complete assigned group tasks in a timely way;
11 and to support group decisions even when not all members are in total agreement.

12 Employers seek creativity and innovation, the ability to approach a problem
13 in a novel way. Arts and Humanities students are accustomed to think 'outside
14 the box' and to seek solutions.

15 Finally, because the world is rapidly changing, employers are interested in
16 hiring workers who are committed to continuous learning. Arts and Humanities
17 graduates often pursue postgraduate degrees (see below); their college education
18 instills a commitment to lifelong learning that prepares them to meet the
19 unknown demands of the future and to anticipate, respond to, and manage
20 change²¹.

21 The Arts and Humanities degree prepares the graduate for employment by
22 providing these invaluable skills²², and because these skills are transferable, the
23 degree prepares one, not necessarily for a single specialized job, but for hundreds
24 of careers. Opportunities are limited only by one's imagination, interests, and
25 willingness to devote time and energy²³. Where do Arts and Humanities
26 graduates work? The American Academy of Arts & Sciences determined that in
27 2021, 61 percent of graduates had found jobs in management, professional, and
28 related occupations. More than 17 percent worked as managers. The business
29 sector is the most common destination (21 percent), but 13 percent enter the legal
30 profession and 13 percent go into the creative sector and communication²⁴.
31 Stephanie Blochinger, who studied the careers of 1,700 people from 30 countries,
32 concluded with this startling statistic:
33

²¹Overall see Detweiler 2021, who offers empirical evidence (interviews with more than 1,000 college graduates aged 25 to 65) for the value of a liberal arts education and its lasting impact on success, leadership, altruism, learning, and fulfillment.

²²And as Olejarz (2018) points out, Arts and Humanities majors are very happy with their education and with the jobs that they receive.

²³See the research by Glassdoor 2019. I would note that most students change their majors two or three times (for reasons see Jaradat 2017). Arts and Humanities students find the transition to a new major easy as much of their coursework can be applied to the new degree plan.

²⁴*Humanities Indicators 2022*.

1 The research found that more than half of the leaders studied (55 percent) had either
2 a social sciences (44 percent) or humanities bachelor's degree (11 percent). Those in
3 government jobs were more likely to have studied social sciences, while those in
4 non-profits favoured the humanities. Younger leaders (aged under 45) were more
5 likely to have a social science or humanities background, while those over 45 were
6 more likely to have studied science, technology, engineering or maths (STEM)²⁵.

7
8 In the Table at the conclusion of this paper, I list examples of CEOs and
9 renowned entrepreneurs who have succeeded without a degree in business;
10 rather, their training was in humanities, Liberal Arts, and arts generally²⁶.

11 Now, an oft-repeated statement is that an Arts and Humanities graduate will
12 not find a job unless it is low-paying and 'dead-end'. But the data from the
13 American Community Survey, which is run by the U.S. Census Bureau, show an
14 unemployment rate of about 4 percent for Arts and Humanities graduates²⁷. That
15 is nearly identical to the unemployment rate for holders of an engineering or
16 business degree (3 percent). Of course, the jobs held by Arts and Humanities
17 graduates are many times not in the major; that is, few anthropologists continue
18 to work in the field as anthropologists; instead, they use their skill sets and
19 become advocacy managers, public relations managers, advertising executives,
20 market researchers, social workers, political consultants, and equality and
21 diversity officers because of their expertise in and understanding of human
22 behaviors and cultures²⁸.

23 The benefit of an Arts and Humanities degree is not just its applicability to a
24 very wide range of jobs, but also a good salary and compensation. Obviously,
25 people in highly specialized areas like medicine will see the greatest return on
26 their education, but the Strada Education Foundation has issued an important
27 study of the long-term outcomes of a degree in Arts and Humanities (Weise et al.
28 2023). In this report, the key findings were as follows:

- 29
30 • While Liberal Arts graduates do not earn as much as STEM or healthcare
31 majors, they fare well in the job market: the average graduate earns

²⁵Blochinger 2015.

²⁶When I served as associate dean for undergraduate education (2013–2021) at Texas A&M University's College of Liberal Arts, I was struck by businesses like Goldman Sachs interviewing, not accounting majors, but English and history majors. They were looking for mid-level managers who analyze data and communicate to stakeholders, clients, and employees what those data meant, and who handle a diverse set of workers. This is why I always encouraged Liberal Arts students to study data analysis and statistics. The skill sets of an Arts and Humanities degree, coupled with computer skills and mathematical expertise, will lead to lucrative job offers.

²⁷In 2018, it was 3.6 percent. See *Humanities Indicators* 2024.

²⁸I took these sample jobs from actual advertisements. See also the various careers for anthropologists in Schanzenbach et al. 2017.

- 1 \$20,000 more than the average high school graduate, and the top 25
2 percent earn \$90,000 or more per year.
- 3 • Two out of five Liberal Arts graduates go on to earn graduate degrees,
4 which further boosts their earnings to \$76,000 annually, on average.
 - 5 • From their first job to their third job, Liberal Arts graduates commonly
6 transition into high-skill, high-demand careers in marketing, advertising,
7 public relations, management, and human resources.
 - 8 • Seventy percent of Liberal Arts graduates change careers from their first
9 to their second job, compared to 53 percent for IT majors, 54 percent for
10 allied health majors, and 59 percent for education majors.
 - 11 • Liberal Arts graduates hit their stride later in their careers, experiencing
12 rapid wage growth in their late 30s and early 40s—the fastest among all
13 majors.

14
15 The pay gap between a STEM graduate and an Arts and Humanities graduate
16 narrows, in fact, over time. Several reasons account for this. First, Arts and
17 Humanities graduates are committed to lifelong learning. While in college, many
18 students discover that they have much more room in their degree plan than
19 STEM majors, who often have little to no freedom to explore outside their field.
20 Arts and Humanities majors, on the other hand, often easily can incorporate a
21 second major, a minor, or a professional certificate, without adding to the credit
22 hours required for graduation. Those extra areas of study have the potential to
23 enhance job mobility or promotions at a current job. After graduation, postgraduate
24 work is common for Arts and Humanities graduates. Some universities and non-
25 profit institutions cater specifically to offering a master’s degree to established
26 workers. For example, the business school at my university purposely constructed
27 a master’s in business administration which is targeted to workers who have had
28 no prior coursework in business. Postgraduate degrees or at least adult education
29 courses can help cut the pay gap with STEM workers.

30 Second, as Jim Chow points out, some STEM jobs can become obsolete, and
31 quickly²⁹. David Deming found that job advertisements for some fields in
32 engineering now call for skills that did not exist a decade earlier and that the jobs
33 of 10 years ago often required skills that are no longer applicable³⁰. The Arts and
34 Humanities degree instills skills that stand above technology and cultural and
35 social changes: critical thinking, good communication, analytical problem-
36 solving, cultural sensitivity, and collaboration are independent of scientific
37 advancements.

38 Third, while Arts and Humanities graduates may not fully catch up to STEM
39 graduates in earnings, they still do well in the labor market³¹. According to the

²⁹Chow 2023.

³⁰Deming 2019; Deming and Noray 2005 and 2019.

³¹Again consult Weise et al.2023.

1 data and analysis by Schanzenbach et al. 2017³², there is slower growth in
2 earnings for STEM graduates between college graduation and age 40. Both Chow
3 and Deming discuss how, for example, computer science majors and history
4 majors even out eventually in wages. Computer science and engineering majors,
5 by age 40, will reach an average salary of \$124,458. A history major, on the other
6 hand, achieves, by the same age, an average salary of \$131,154, and that average
7 can be even higher as many history majors enjoy excellent lucrative careers by
8 moving into “management, business, and law”³³.

9 These, then, are some of the strengths and advantages that a degree in Arts
10 and Humanities provides. Contrary to myth, a student pursuing a degree is not
11 facing a fate of cooking hamburgers or teaching high school; rather, they can look
12 forward to good and important jobs because of their skills in critical thinking,
13 creative problem-solving, oral and written communication, multi- and intercultural
14 sensitivity, as well as the vast knowledge of various topics that they possess.

15 My point is that we need the Arts and Humanities major just as we need the
16 STEM major. Yes, the world may be better off, if there were more engineers,
17 scientists, and technologists; but it would be for the worse without the musician,
18 writer, film director, and historian. An Arts and Humanities education enhances
19 one’s knowledge and improves one’s understanding of the world and its people.
20 It can also help us to engage in the controversies of our time—whether about the
21 environment, cultural diversity, social justice, ethnic strife, gender relations, or
22 foreign policy. Real-world problems rarely ever have textbook solutions. More
23 than anything, the purpose of an Arts and Humanities education is to teach
24 students how to think critically and know what questions to ask, and to mold
25 them into well-rounded, well-informed global citizens.

26 27 28 Works Cited

- 29
30 Anders 2017 = George Anders, *You Can Do Anything: The Surprising Power of a “Useless”*
31 *Liberal Arts Education*. New York–Boston–London: Little, Brown, 2017.
32 Association of American Colleges and Universities 2014=Association of American
33 Colleges and Universities, *Liberal Arts Graduates and Employment: Setting the Record*
34 *Straight*. Retrieved from [https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/LEAP/nche](https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/LEAP/nche.ms.pdf)
35 [ms.pdf](https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/LEAP/nche.ms.pdf) (accessed on 18 January 2024).
36 Banerjee P, Graham K, Given G (2024) “A Systematic Literature Review Identifying
37 Inconsistencies in the Inclusion of Subjects in Research Reports on STEM Workforce
38 Skills in the UK”. *Cogent Education* 11:1 (2024). doi: 10.1080/2331186X.2023.2288736

³² Schanzenbach et al.’s data are in the charts found at <https://www.hamiltonproject.org/data/putting-your-major-to-work-career-paths-after-college/> (accessed on 19 January 2024).

³³The National Center for Education Statistics, a part of the U.S. Department of Education that collects, analyzes and makes available data related to education in the U.S. and other nations, shows that history majors enjoy better employment rates than economics majors.

- 1 Billbro J, Hooten Wilson J, Henreckson D (2023) *"The Liberating Arts: Why We Need Liberal*
2 *Arts Education"*. Walden, NY: The Plough Publishing Company, 2023.
- 3 Blochinger S (2015) *What Do the World's Most Successful People Study?* Retrieved from
4 [https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/what-do-worlds-most-successful-](https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/what-do-worlds-most-successful-people-study)
5 [people-study](https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/what-do-worlds-most-successful-people-study) (accessed on 18 January 2024).
- 6 Burton K (2021) "The Battle of the Sciences: UK Government's STEM vs SHAPE
7 Priorities". *Political Studies Association*. Retrieved from [https://www.psa.ac.uk/sites/](https://www.psa.ac.uk/sites/default/files/SHAPE%20STEM%20blog%2012%20Oct%202021.pdf)
8 [default/files/SHAPE%20STEM%20blog%2012%20Oct%202021.pdf](https://www.psa.ac.uk/sites/default/files/SHAPE%20STEM%20blog%2012%20Oct%202021.pdf) (accessed on 19
9 January 2024).
- 10 Castrillon C (2023) "How to Leverage Your Transferable Skills When Changing Careers".
11 *Forbes*. Retrieved from [https://www.forbes.com/sites/carolinecastrillon/2023/11/26/](https://www.forbes.com/sites/carolinecastrillon/2023/11/26/how-to-leverage-your-transferable-skills-when-changing-careers/?sh=5c37583470d1)
12 [how-to-leverage-your-transferable-skills-when-changing-careers/?sh=5c37583470d1](https://www.forbes.com/sites/carolinecastrillon/2023/11/26/how-to-leverage-your-transferable-skills-when-changing-careers/?sh=5c37583470d1)
13 (accessed on 18 January 2024).
- 14 Chow J (2023) "Myth or Fact? STEM Majors Are Inherently More Valuable than
15 Humanities Majors". *Forbes*. Retrieved from [https://www.forbes.com/sites/jinchow/](https://www.forbes.com/sites/jinchow/2023/10/26/myth-or-fact-stem-majors-are-inherently-more-valuable-than-humanities-majors/?sh=45780baa3606)
16 [2023/10/26/myth-or-fact-stem-majors-are-inherently-more-valuable-than-humanities-](https://www.forbes.com/sites/jinchow/2023/10/26/myth-or-fact-stem-majors-are-inherently-more-valuable-than-humanities-majors/?sh=45780baa3606)
17 [majors/?sh=45780baa3606](https://www.forbes.com/sites/jinchow/2023/10/26/myth-or-fact-stem-majors-are-inherently-more-valuable-than-humanities-majors/?sh=45780baa3606) (accessed on 19 January 2024).
- 18 Deming D (2017) *The Growing Importance of Social Skills in the Labor Market*. National
19 Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper 21473 ([www.nber.org/papers/w214](http://www.nber.org/papers/w21473)
20 [73](http://www.nber.org/papers/w21473)).
- 21 Deming D (2019) "In the Salary Race, Engineers Sprint but English Majors Endure". *New*
22 *York Times* 20 September 2019. Retrieved from [https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/20/](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/20/business/liberal-arts-stem-salaries.html)
23 [business/liberal-arts-stem-salaries.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/20/business/liberal-arts-stem-salaries.html) (accessed on 18 January 2024).
- 24 Deming D, Noray K (2005) "Earnings Dynamics, Changing Job Skills, and STEM Careers",
25 *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 135.4 (2020), 1965–2005. doi: [https://doi.org/10.1093/](https://doi.org/10.1093/qje/qjaa021)
26 [qje/qjaa021](https://doi.org/10.1093/qje/qjaa021).
- 27 Deming D, Noray K (2019) "STEM Careers and the Changing Skill Requirements of
28 Work". *Working Paper Series rwp19-025*. Harvard University, John F. Kennedy School
29 of Government, 2019.
- 30 Detweiler RA (2021) *The Evidence Liberal Arts Needs: Lives of Consequence, Inquiry and*
31 *Accomplishment*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2021.
- 32 Feloni R (2018) "Microsoft's President Says Liberal Arts Majors Are Necessary for the
33 Future of Tech". *Business Insider*. Retrieved from [https://www.businessinsider.com/](https://www.businessinsider.com/microsoft-president-says-tech-needs-liberal-arts-majors-2018-1)
34 [microsoft-president-says-tech-needs-liberal-arts-majors-2018-1](https://www.businessinsider.com/microsoft-president-says-tech-needs-liberal-arts-majors-2018-1) (accessed on 18
35 January 2024).
- 36 Flaherty C (2021) *What Employers Want*. Retrieved from [https://www.insidehighered.](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/04/06/aacu-survey-finds-employers-want-candidates-liberal-arts-skills-cite-preparedness)
37 [com/news/2021/04/06/aacu-survey-finds-employers-want-candidates-liberal-arts-](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/04/06/aacu-survey-finds-employers-want-candidates-liberal-arts-skills-cite-preparedness)
38 [skills-cite-preparedness](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/04/06/aacu-survey-finds-employers-want-candidates-liberal-arts-skills-cite-preparedness) (accessed on 16 January 2024).
- 39 Grove J (2017) *China Targets 'World-Class' Status for 42 Universities*. Retrieved from
40 [https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/china-targets-world-class-status-42-](https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/china-targets-world-class-status-42-universities)
41 [universities](https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/china-targets-world-class-status-42-universities) (accessed on 13 January 2024).
- 42 *Humanities Indicators 2022 = The American Academy of Arts & Humanities, Occupations of*
43 *Humanities Majors with a Terminal Bachelor's Degree*. Retrieved from [https://www.ama](https://www.amacad.org/humanities-indicators/workforce/occupations-humanities-majors-terminal-bachelors-degree#en_-1_7&)
44 [cad.org/humanities-indicators/workforce/occupations-humanities-majors-terminal-](https://www.amacad.org/humanities-indicators/workforce/occupations-humanities-majors-terminal-bachelors-degree#en_-1_7&)
45 [bachelors-degree#en_-1_7&](https://www.amacad.org/humanities-indicators/workforce/occupations-humanities-majors-terminal-bachelors-degree#en_-1_7&) (accessed on 14 January 2024).
- 46 *Humanities Indicators 2024 = The American Academy of Arts & Sciences, The Employment*
47 *Status of Humanities Majors*. Retrieved from <https://www.amacad.org/humanities->

1 indicators/workforce/employment-status-humanities-majors (accessed on 17 January
2 2024).

3 *Inside Higher Ed* 2024. Retrieved from [https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2015/](https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2015/11/11/gop-debate-rubio-again-criticizes-philosophy)
4 11/11/gop-debate-rubio-again-criticizes-philosophy (accessed on 19 January 2024).

5 Jaradat MS (2017) "Reasons That Influence Students' Decisions to Change College
6 Majors". *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 7.3 (2017), 223–238.

7 Lobosco K (2017) *Liberal Arts Majors Can Get High-Paying Jobs, Too*. Retrieved from
8 <https://money.cnn.com/2017/06/02/pf/college/liberal-arts-majors-salary/index.html>
9 (accessed 19 January 2024).

10 National Association of Colleges and Employers (2024) [https://www.naceweb.org/career-](https://www.naceweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/career-readiness-defined)
11 [readiness/competencies/career-readiness-defined](https://www.naceweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/career-readiness-defined) (accessed on 12 January 2024).

12 National Center for Education Statistics = National Center for Education Statistics,
13 *Employment Outcomes of Bachelor's Degree Holders*. Retrieved from [https://nces.ed.](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/coe_sbc.pdf)
14 [gov/programs/coe/pdf/coe_sbc.pdf](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/coe_sbc.pdf) (accessed on 18 January 2024).

15 Newman L (2024) *Look to the Liberal Arts to Lower the Temperature of Campus Culture Wars*.
16 Retrieved from [https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/opinion/look-to-the-liberal-arts-](https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/opinion/look-to-the-liberal-arts-to-lower-the-temperature-of-campus-culture-wars-opinion/ar-AA1mI6DT?ocid=ent-newsntp&pc=U531&cvid=9618671cc8374577a1771972176395ae&ei=21)
17 [to-lower-the-temperature-of-campus-culture-wars-opinion/ar-AA1mI6DT?ocid=ent-](https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/opinion/look-to-the-liberal-arts-to-lower-the-temperature-of-campus-culture-wars-opinion/ar-AA1mI6DT?ocid=ent-newsntp&pc=U531&cvid=9618671cc8374577a1771972176395ae&ei=21)
18 [newsntp&pc=U531&cvid=9618671cc8374577a177197217639](https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/opinion/look-to-the-liberal-arts-to-lower-the-temperature-of-campus-culture-wars-opinion/ar-AA1mI6DT?ocid=ent-newsntp&pc=U531&cvid=9618671cc8374577a1771972176395ae&ei=21)
19 [5ae&ei=21](https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/opinion/look-to-the-liberal-arts-to-lower-the-temperature-of-campus-culture-wars-opinion/ar-AA1mI6DT?ocid=ent-newsntp&pc=U531&cvid=9618671cc8374577a1771972176395ae&ei=21)(accessed on
19 January 2024).

20 Olejarz JM (2018) *Liberal Arts in the Data Age*. Retrieved from [https://www.insidehighered.](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2018/02/07/study-finds-humanities-majors-land-jobs-and-are-happy-them)
21 [com/news/2018/02/07/study-finds-humanities-majors-land-jobs-and-are-happy-them](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2018/02/07/study-finds-humanities-majors-land-jobs-and-are-happy-them)
22 (accessed 18 January 2024).

23 Perry DM (2020) *Why I'm Optimistic about the Future of the Humanities*. Retrieved from
24 [https://www.cnn.com/2020/01/24/opinions/humanities-arent-dead-yet-perry/index.](https://www.cnn.com/2020/01/24/opinions/humanities-arent-dead-yet-perry/index.html)
25 [html](https://www.cnn.com/2020/01/24/opinions/humanities-arent-dead-yet-perry/index.html) (accessed on 14 January 2024).

26 Petrone F (2018) "The Skills Companies Need Most in 2019—and How to Learn Them".
27 *LinkedIn Learning Blog*. Retrieved from [https://www.linkedin.com/business/learning/](https://www.linkedin.com/business/learning/blog/top-skills-and-courses/the-skills-companies-need-most-in-2019-and-how-to-learn-them)
28 [blog/top-skills-and-courses/the-skills-companies-need-most-in-2019-and-how-to-](https://www.linkedin.com/business/learning/blog/top-skills-and-courses/the-skills-companies-need-most-in-2019-and-how-to-learn-them)
29 [learn-them](https://www.linkedin.com/business/learning/blog/top-skills-and-courses/the-skills-companies-need-most-in-2019-and-how-to-learn-them) (accessed on 20 January 2024).

30 Ruggeri A (2019) *Why 'Worthless' Humanities Degrees May Set You up for Life*. Retrieved
31 from [https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20190401-why-worthless-humanities-](https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20190401-why-worthless-humanities-degrees-may-set-you-up-for-life)
32 [degrees-may-set-you-up-for-life](https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20190401-why-worthless-humanities-degrees-may-set-you-up-for-life) (accessed on 18 January 2024).

33 Schanzenbach DW, Nunn R, Nantz G (2017) "Putting Your Major to Work: Career Paths
34 after College". *Economic Review: The Hamilton Project* (May 2017). Retrieved from
35 [https://documents.pub/document/putting-your-major-to-work-career-paths-after-](https://documents.pub/document/putting-your-major-to-work-career-paths-after-college-career-paths-after-college.html?page=1)
36 [college-career-paths-after-college.html? page=1](https://documents.pub/document/putting-your-major-to-work-career-paths-after-college-career-paths-after-college.html?page=1) (accessed on 19 January 2024).

37 Stross R (2017) *A Practical Education: Why Liberal Arts Majors Make Great Employees*.
38 Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2017.

39 Weise MR, Hanson A, Sentz R, Saleh Y (2023) *The Real Long-Term Outcomes of Liberal Arts*
40 *Graduates*. Retrieved from [https://stradaedu](https://stradaeducation.org/report/the-real-long-term-outcomes-of-liberal-arts-graduates/)
41 [cation.org/report/the-real-long-term-](https://stradaeducation.org/report/the-real-long-term-outcomes-of-liberal-arts-graduates/)
42 [outcomes-of-liberal-arts-graduates/](https://stradaeducation.org/report/the-real-long-term-outcomes-of-liberal-arts-graduates/) (accessed on 17 January 2024).

1 **Table.** *Sample Executives and Entrepreneurs with Degrees in Arts and Humanities*

Name	Company	Degree
Steve Ells	Chipotle founder	Art History
Alexa Hirschfeld	Paperless Post co-founder	Classics
Larry Sanger	Wikipedia founder	Philosophy
Andrew Mason	Groupon founder	Music
Peter Hancock	CEO, AIG	Politics and Philosophy
Stewart Butterfield	Flickr co-founder	Philosophy
Carolyn McCall	CEO, ITV, and former CEO, EasyJet	History
Chad Hurley	YouTube founder	Fine Art
Brian Moynihan	CEO, Bank of America	History
Larry Fink	CEO, Blackrock	Political Science
Sam Palmisano	Ex-CEO, IBM	History
Andrea Jung	Ex-CEO, Avon	English literature
A. G. Lafley	CEO, Proctor and Gamble	French and History
Dam Hesse	CEO, Sprint	International Studies
Stephen Schwarzman	CEO, Blackstone Group	University Studies in Liberal Arts
Judy McGrath	Ex-CEO, MTV	English
Mario Cuomo	Former Governor of New York	English
Robert Gates	Ex-Secretary of the Defense	History
Jerry Governor	Former Governor of California	Classics
Robert Iger	Ex-CEO, Disney	Communications
Christopher Connor	CEO, Sherwin Williams	Sociology
Herbert Allison, Jr.	Ex-CEO, Fanny Mae	Philosophy
Mitt Romney	Former Senator of Utah; ex-CEO, Bain Capital	English
Peter Thiel	Founder of PayPal	Philosophy
Carly Fiorina	Ex-CEO, Hewlett-Packard	Medieval History and Philosophy
Ken Chenault	CEO, American Express	History
Carl Icahn	Investor tycoon	Philosophy
Michael Eisner	Ex-CEO, Disney	English and Theatre
Hank Paulson	Former Secretary of the Treasury	English
Lloyd Blankfein	CEO, Goldman Sachs	Political Science
Sheila Bair	FDIC Chair	Philosophy
Clarence Thomas	Supreme Court Justice	English
Harold Varmus	Noble Prize winner in medicine	English
George Soros	Hedge Fund Manager	Philosophy
Ted Turner	Founder of CNN, TBS, and TBN	Classics
Anne Mulcahy	Ex-CEO, Xerox	English
Richard Anderson	CEO, Delta	Political Science
Caterina Fake	Co-founder, Flickr	English

2