



Editorial: Liberal Arts and Sciences for Everyone

by [Nicole Adrian](#)

It's no secret that I come from the school of liberal arts and sciences programs. I earned my English degree from my university's College of Liberal Studies and my two minors—professional writing and French—also came from that college. I'll always have a soft spot in my heart for what these types of programs teach and represent.

While I think there is a place for every discipline in education so each student finds exactly what he or she is looking for in an education and, ultimately, a career, I think it's important to remember the basis of a liberal arts education and how it can positively affect all subjects and job positions.

The three articles in this issue provide good insight and background into a liberal arts education. Two of the three authors reflect on their education and current job positions in liberal arts, while another provides details about a nationwide liberal arts initiative.

In her article, Susan R. Stapleton of Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo writes about how the university emphasizes traditional liberal arts areas of learning, such as communication, critical thinking and foreign languages. She also reflects on how her liberal arts background has helped her as a scientist and educator.

In another article, Ken Anselment of Lawrence University in Appleton, WI, writes about how you can take a liberal arts and sciences degree into any position in the workforce. He writes, "We need engineers, scientists, accountants, developers and others who can solve problems. But we also need people in these professions to be able to explain to others how they solved the problems—and even to teach others how to solve them for themselves."

Lastly, Bethany Zecher Sutton describes the Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) nationwide initiative, which aims to champion the importance of a 21st century liberal education for individual students and the nation. Like Stapleton, Sutton writes that LEAP envisions an educational environment in which students pursue the essential learning outcomes across every field of study, including the traditional arts and sciences disciplines, as well as fields such as nursing and engineering.

I think Anselment said it best in his article: "The liberal arts and sciences can play an important role in developing the whole person—professionally and personally." The skills you learn and develop through liberal arts and sciences carry over throughout your education and well into your career and personal life. It only makes sense to place an emphasis on it at the university level.