
The future of the liberal arts: A global conversation

A workshop by Universities Canada
March 7-8, 2016
Montréal





Université de Moncton

“Arts degrees can help you to think critically, to analyze texts and dialogue, to speak fluently, and you can take those skills with you everywhere in your life.”

Emiko Newman, fifth year English and sociology student, Simon Fraser University, 2016

“Many students and their parents now seek a clear and early connection between the undergraduate experience and employment. Vocationalism exerts pressure for substantive changes in the curriculum and substitutes a preoccupation with readily marketable skills.”

Donald L. Berry, Colgate University

That message could explain, in part, why Canada has seen an average decline in liberal arts enrolments of 20 percent in recent years. But the quote was actually written in 1977 by the late Donald L. Berry, professor of philosophy at Colgate University in the United States. Concern about the future of the liberal arts is not new.

What *is* new is the serious decline in liberal arts enrolment at Canadian universities in recent years, particularly in certain regions, and the abundance of attacks on the value of the liberal arts in media commentary – the latter doing much to drive the former.

This matters because Canada needs the liberal arts. In our global knowledge economy, employer demand for the skills and abilities nurtured through the liberal arts is growing. And more broadly, our increasingly complex, multicultural and technologically advanced world needs the knowledge, skills and adaptability that are integral to an education in the humanities and social sciences.

The liberal arts help us navigate disruptive change and build an innovative, prosperous and inclusive Canada.

This growing economic and social imperative was the impetus for Universities Canada to organize an international forum on the future of the liberal arts in March 2016.

The gathering

The future of the liberal arts: A global conversation is the latest in Universities Canada's ongoing work as a convener of dialogues on topics of importance to Canadians. In recent years, similar gatherings have addressed topics including the university role in national innovation systems; university engagement with digital technologies to enhance teaching, learning and research; and improving the student experience.

Organized in partnership with the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, the two-day workshop brought together leaders from 40 Canadian universities — including presidents, vice-presidents academic and deans — and external stakeholders in Montreal to discuss the future of the liberal arts for the benefit of Canadians. Presenters included higher education leaders from the United States, Asia and across Canada. The sharing of ideas and promising practices touched on topics from employer demand to re-envisioning the academy.

Topics and speakers included:

The future the liberal arts: How it matters to our collective future

Kathy Wolfe, vice-president for integrative liberal learning and the global commons, Association of American Colleges & Universities

The liberal arts: New directions and innovations in programming and research

Alan Wildeman, president, University of Windsor

Marie Battiste, professor, educational foundations, University of Saskatchewan

Robert Gibbs, member, SSHRC Council and director, Jackman Humanities Institute, University of Toronto

Christopher Manfredi, provost and vice-principal, academic, McGill University

The growth of liberal arts in Asia

Tan Tai Yong, executive vice-president, academic affairs, Yale-NUS College

Digital humanities

Kevin Kee, dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Ottawa

How artistic innovation can be an engine for Canada's human, social and economic prosperity

Simon Brault, director and CEO, Canada Council for the Arts

The value of university degrees: What tax data demonstrates

Ross Finnie, director, Education Policy Research Initiative, University of Ottawa

Presidents' armchair discussion: Setting an institutional change agenda

Alan Shepard, president, Concordia University

Dawn Russell, president, St. Thomas University

David Sylvester, president, King's University College

Storytelling and the arts

Joseph Boyden, author, writer-in-residence, University of New Orleans, presented by the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences

The challenge

Following the worldwide economic downturn of 2008, students, parents and commentators could be forgiven for questioning paths of study that don't have a direct line to a specific job. Training to be a welder leads to a job as a welder, whereas a degree in history can lead to many different career opportunities — and a lifetime of evolving careers. For example, Canada has almost 40,000 graduates with a bachelor's degree in history. They are employed throughout the economy; 18 percent work in management occupations and another 23 percent are in business, finance and administrative positions.

While Canada has recently been focused on delivering grads with “job-ready” skills, the strengths of a liberal arts degree — including career flexibility, adaptability and innovative thinking — are increasingly valued at home and around the world.



TORONTO STAR

Innovation should be a Canadian value

By Navdeep Singh Bains

Published Saturday, May 7, 2016

‘The key to securing Canada’s place in the new industrial age is innovation. It needs to be among our defining values as a nation,’ writes Innovation Minister Navdeep Bains.



THE GLOBE AND MAIL

Liberal arts is the future of work, so why is Canada pushing ‘job-ready’ skills?

By David Helfand

Published Monday, May 12, 2014

What do Pulitzer Prize winners, the wealthiest Fortune 500 CEOs, and PhDs elected to the U.S. National Academy of Sciences have in common? They attended liberal arts programs. Graduates of these programs are over-represented by 300 per cent to 800 per cent among those at the pinnacle of their respective fields.

Evolving careers

“You’re not just going to get narrow specialties. You’re going to get the ability to innovate and adapt in an economy in which the jobs most of you are going to have don’t even exist yet. In an economy where, on average, you will change jobs 15 times before you retire. If you’re too narrowly specialized, you’re not ready for that economy.”

Kathy Wolfe, vice-president for integrative liberal learning and the global commons,
Association of American Colleges & Universities

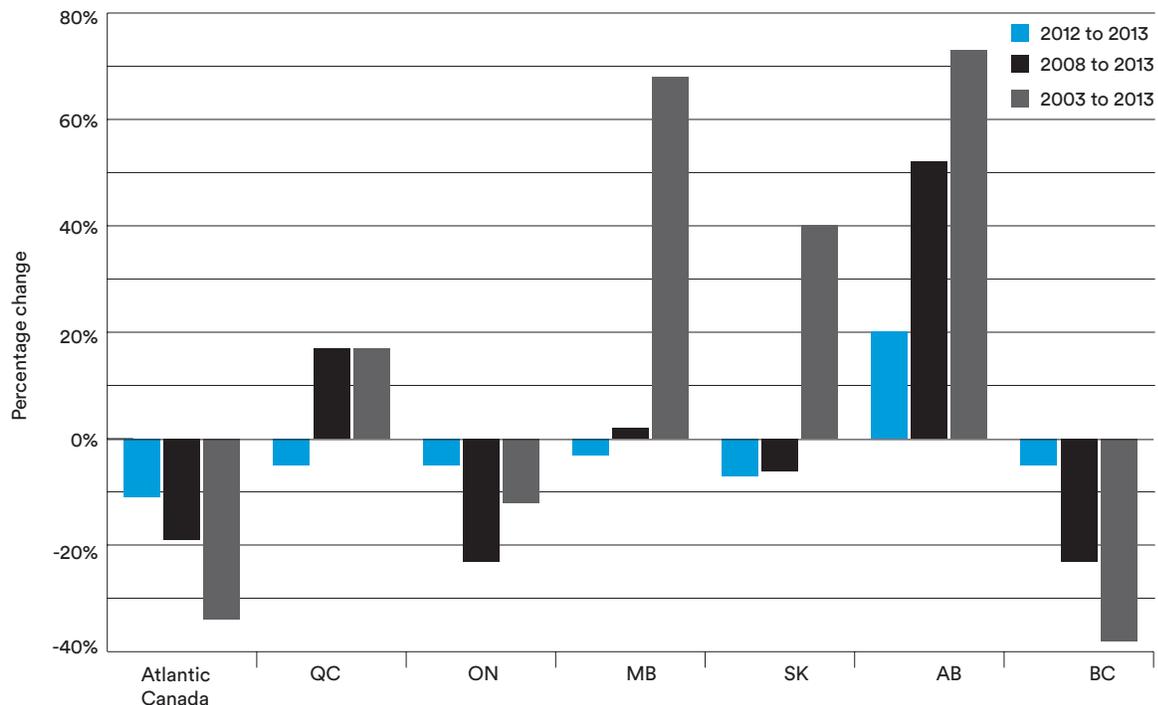
Why the urgency?

Declining program enrolments and misconceptions about graduates’ employment prospects have created a false-crisis narrative. However, workshop participants agreed that there is urgency for universities and arts faculties to better rebrand and communicate the value of a liberal arts education, and to reframe its relevance in today’s diverse society and innovative economy. There is no shortage of compelling narratives, but these are not being shared enough, or in a way that adequately reaches prospective students, parents, the media and policy makers.

Concern around declining enrolments in the humanities in particular is understandable, especially in certain regions.

Change in Full time undergraduate enrolments in the humanities at Canadian universities

Source: Statistics Canada, Postsecondary Student Information System



Butting out:

Christopher Manfredi, provost and vice-principal academic, McGill University likes to tell the story of how the liberal arts helped cut the rate of smoking in Canada:



Christopher Manfredi

“What we had to do was persuade people to engage in a massive change of behaviour – that’s why we reduced the incidence of smoking. And how did that happen? It happened largely through regulation, taxation and communication. And all of those strategies – the regulatory schemes, the taxation schemes, the communication schemes (just look at those nice pictures on your packs of cigarettes) – all of those were driven by disciplines in the social sciences and humanities.”

“How do you prepare students for a life of careers, not a career for a life?”

Tan Tai Yong, executive vice-president, academic affairs,
Yale – National University of Singapore College

There may not be a crisis in the liberal arts, but there is a very clear need for transformation. As illustrated in the sharing of success stories at the workshop, some of that transformation is already taking place — but more needs to be done. Participants agreed that innovation in the liberal arts needs to be broadened and scaled up on a priority basis.

With stakeholders across the university community increasingly mobilized and ready to rally for the renewal of the liberal arts, this is a critical moment and opportunity to shift programs, curriculum, tools and techniques to better meet the needs of students, employers and Canada’s future.

Dr. Wolfe stressed that it doesn’t demean the liberal arts to talk about them as something practical. “It’s essential preparation for work and civil life. These studies should be available to every student no matter what institution or discipline they choose.”

“[My] liberal arts background allowed me to say, “You know what? This is a good challenge... Don’t turn away from this challenge.”

Joseph Boyden, author and writer-in-residence,
University of New Orleans

Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP):



Kathy Wolfe

“The goals of LEAP have been to articulate learning outcomes, promote curricular designs and teaching strategies that guide students to better learning and to assess that learning; to combine career preparation with personal and civic development; to counter this tendency we continually see to track some students into very narrow job training and others into the liberal arts; and to redirect a policy focus toward valuing actual student learning as opposed to just the accumulation of a certain amount of credit hours.”

Kathy Wolfe, vice-president for integrative liberal learning and the global commons, Association of American Colleges & Universities

Employer demand

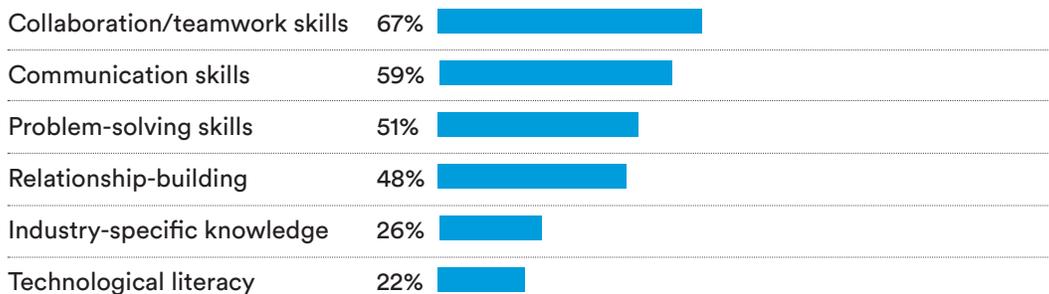
“Since the turn of the century, we’ve seen a surge in experiential learning in engineering, business and medical science, and as a result, general arts students are being left behind. While the talent pool is improving overall, the erosion of liberal arts is a problem for universities and business. In business, we need a lot more of the soft skills that campuses were traditionally good at.”

David McKay, President and CEO of the Royal Bank of Canada, *The Globe and Mail*, May 3, 2016

According to a 2016 study by the Business Council of Canada, Canada’s largest employers value soft skills over technical knowledge. And the soft skills most often listed as desirable by employers include relationship-building, communication and problem-solving skills, teamwork, and analytical and leadership abilities — attributes developed and honed through studies in the social sciences and humanities.

Today’s employers are focused on finding people who can work in teams, solve complex problems and show a willingness to learn.

Skills and capabilities employers seek when hiring entry-level candidates:



Source: Business Council of Canada and Aon Hewitt,
Developing Canada’s future workforce: a survey of large private-sector employers, 2016

“Does the average person in this room know that your average business student, 13 years out, makes just a tad more than the average humanities graduate? I don’t think so. That’s useful information.”

Ross Finnie, director, Education Policy Research Initiative, University of Ottawa



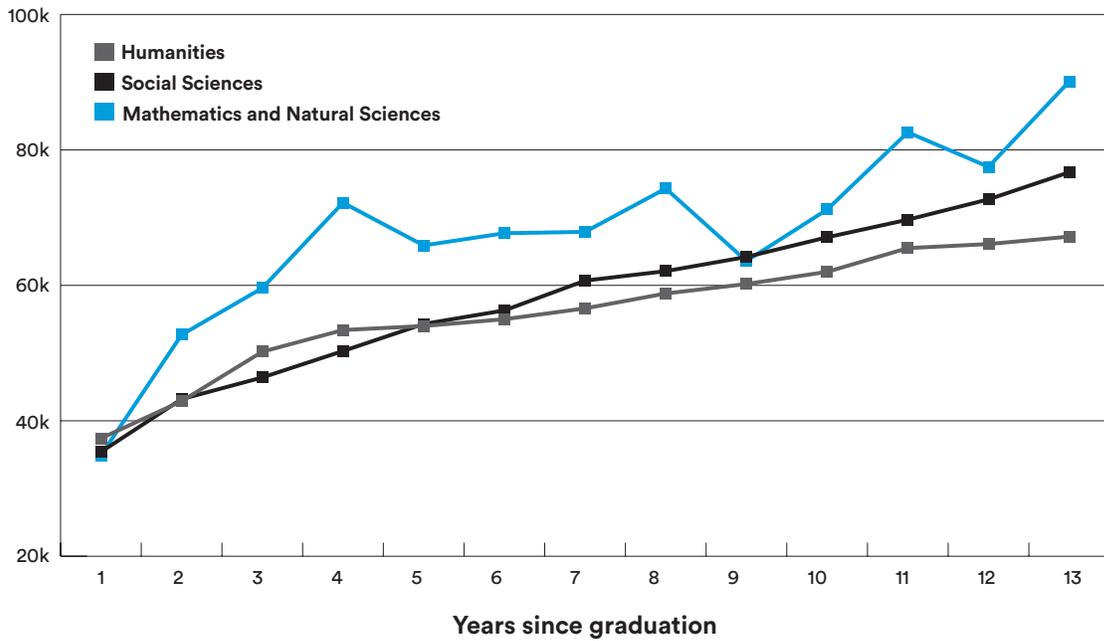
Dawn Russell

“Employers increasingly want employees with global understanding and cultural sophistication. That is what a liberal arts education [gives]. The value of a liberal arts education is worth the private and public investment – engaged citizens, workforce development and a strong society.”

Dawn Russell, president, St. Thomas University, *The Daily Gleaner*, May 25, 2016

Research shows that graduates with these abilities are rewarded in the job market. Ross Finnie, director of the Education Policy Research Initiative at the University of Ottawa, whose research links student program choices with tax data, demonstrated the significant value of liberal arts degrees with respect to long-term career earnings and employment success. His research shows that social sciences and humanities graduates from the University of Ottawa enjoyed steady increases in earnings in their early careers, starting at an average of \$40,000 right after graduation and up to \$80,000 only 13 years later — similar to the average earnings of math and science grads.

Humanities and social science graduates enjoy steady increases in earnings throughout their careers



	Humanities	Social Sciences	Mathematics and Natural Sciences
Year 1	\$37,400	\$35,400	\$34,900
Year 13	\$67,200	\$76,700	\$90,100

Source: Education Policy Research Initiative, based on income tax data of University of Ottawa graduates from 1998 to 2011.

“There must be bold action to cultivate an entrepreneurial and creative society. Can we get to a place where “innovation” is thought of as a core Canadian value? I believe so, if we properly leverage our talent and our diversity.”

The Honourable Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science, and Economic Development, *The Toronto Star*, May 12, 2016.

55 percent of the world’s professional leaders with bachelor’s degrees studied liberal arts

The social sciences and humanities together make up more than half of bachelor’s degrees among current professional leaders with higher education qualifications, across 30 countries and all sectors. Younger leaders (under 45 years) are more likely to hold a degree in social sciences or the humanities.

Source: British Council, *Educational Pathways of Leaders: an international comparison*, 2015

Addressing society's most pressing problems



Alan Wildeman

“As a multicultural country of Indigenous peoples and immigrants playing in the global arena, Canada needs a citizenry that learns and studies human differences, social behaviours and cultural traditions. It needs a citizenry that encourages respect for human rights. It needs a citizenry that encourages artistic creation and appreciation of the arts. The humanities and social sciences engage in these intersections, and contribute to what makes us human.”

Alan Wildeman, president and vice chancellor, University of Windsor,
The Globe and Mail. September 7, 2015

The liberal arts are not only solid preparation for rewarding careers; they also develop civic engagement and nurture personal fulfillment. Workshop participants spoke about the role of the liberal arts in fostering service and leadership, broadening intercultural awareness and fuelling creativity. They highlighted the vital role of the liberal arts in preparing students to tackle our society's most pressing problems, including the national project of reconciliation with Canada's Indigenous peoples.

Marie Battiste, professor of educational foundations at the University of Saskatchewan, reminded participants that some key issues around Indigenous knowledge remain to be addressed to truly advance reconciliation in Canada, including “the respect for it, as well as how do we help other non-Indigenous faculty members start to embrace indigenization as part of their work.”



Marie Battiste

Advancing reconciliation and enhancing Indigenous student success at Canada's universities

Education plays a vital role in the reconciliation process and universities are committed to improving Indigenous peoples' access and success in higher education.

Across the country, universities are strengthening Indigenous leadership within institutions; updating academic programs to reflect Indigenous history and realities; fostering meaningful intercultural engagement between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students; and providing targeted resources and gathering spaces for Indigenous students, staff and faculty.

From 2013 to 2015, new programming and services for Indigenous students grew by 33% at universities across Canada.

- Nearly 2/3 of Canadian universities offer undergraduate programs — and 1/3 offer graduate programs — with an Indigenous focus or specifically designed for Indigenous students.
- Canadian universities offer 233 undergraduate programs and 62 graduate-level programs with a focus on Indigenous issues or specifically designed for Indigenous students — a 33% increase since 2013.
- More than 30 Indigenous languages are taught at Canadian universities. Between 2013 and 2015, the percentage of universities offering Indigenous language courses increased from 44% to 54%.



Jean Marc Mangin

“Consider this government’s current policy priorities: settling refugees, implementing the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, addressing challenges relating to climate change, crafting new legislation around end-of-life medical treatment and so on. These issues are all fundamentally rooted in humans and how they interact with each other – areas where researchers in the humanities and social sciences excel.”

Jean Marc Mangin, executive director of the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, *Research Money*, December 2015.

“The study of history and literature, or sociology and anthropology, or philosophy and religion – they each add to our collective interpretation and understanding of who we are, the complexities that we confront and the possibilities of what we can achieve together. These insights and perspectives give us a world view as well. Can we fully understand what is happening in Greece, Syria, China or in the U.S. today without having a grounding in and understanding of the history, cultures and emotions that comprise these societies?”

Robert Campbell, president of Mount Allison University,
The Times & Transcript and *The Telegraph Journal*, August 8, 2015

The growth of liberal arts in Asia

In recent years, educators and administrators in countries including China, Japan, South Korea and Singapore have introduced liberal arts programs to strengthen their higher education offering to students. This augmentation of the liberal arts in Asia — which stands in contrast to declining enrolments in many liberal arts programs in Canada and the U.S. — is part of a series of innovations across the region’s higher education sector to broaden opportunities for students and prepare them to navigate and thrive in an increasingly uncertain and complex globalized world. It also opens up numerous possibilities for educational partnerships between North American and Asian institutions.

The Singapore solution

Yale-NUS College is one such partnership initiative and Tan Tai Yong, executive vice-president, academic affairs, talked about the rationale for creating a liberal arts college at the National University of Singapore. He explained that the move to strengthen the liberal arts offering was not about replacing one model of education with another, but rather to diversify curricula and learning experiences to better meet the varied needs of students and employers in the region.

“What can we do to ensure that our students, our graduates from our local universities, will be able to function in a VUCA world — in a world that is so hard to predict? And what are the kinds of pathways we can create from a traditional university model to facilitate that range, that diversity, the kinds of complexities that our students are likely to encounter as they leave the university and join the working world?”

Prof. Tan Tai Yong, executive vice-president, academic affairs, Yale-NUS

The logo for VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) is displayed in large, bold, black capital letters on a solid blue rectangular background.

Volatility • Uncertainty • Complexity • Ambiguity

Innovation in liberal arts education



David Sylvester

“I don’t have to, nor does my vice principal have to ask our faculty to talk about the realities that are in place here. They’re talking about it now. They’re finding very creative ways of programming and responding...They have the wherewithal to turn it all around.”

David Sylvester, president, King’s University College

The workshop explored how teaching and research are changing to meet the evolving 21st century needs of students and society, and how this can be scaled up. Several speakers gave examples of the creation and redesign of programs to better meet the needs of students and employers in a changing world.

Participants stressed that faculty must be integrally involved with program changes, and that students need to be at the forefront of this discussion. The need to better engage with local communities was also identified as a priority, along with exploring new approaches to tenure and promotion.

Undergraduate research

A recurring theme during the workshop was the need to increase and better integrate research opportunities into undergraduate liberal arts programs. Doing so would not only enhance students’ learning outcomes, but would have a significant impact helping find solutions to the questions and problems Canada faces today. Future employers would be well served by liberal arts graduates who are able to explore and seek new knowledge, solve problems and broadly communicate solutions.

Undergraduate students have intellectual curiosity and bring questions that can be the basis for research. It is important that faculty respond to the raw inquiry that undergraduate students bring to classes, and in fact, many faculty are already actively engaged. Robert Gibbs, director of the Jackman Humanities Institute at the University of Toronto, was particularly passionate on this point. “Every student going to our universities should be learning how to do research,” he said. “That should be the central learning outcome.”

Several speakers gave examples of innovative research opportunities for undergraduates. Dr. Manfredi, for instance, spoke about the arts research internship awards program at McGill University. Jointly funded by members of the faculty of arts and the department, this program supports undergraduate students who undertake research during the summer under the direct supervision of a faculty member. Students contribute to the professor’s research agenda while gaining useful academic research skills.

“The arts teach you
how to learn and how to interpret
information in different ways ...
and help students be adaptable and able
to meet changing demands.”

Todd Hirsch, chief economist for ATB Financial,
Alberta Adventure, January 2016

Experiential learning

Participants highlighted the need to embed experiential learning in liberal arts programs. Dr. Wolfe said today’s employers want students to have applied learning experiences. Discussion focused on challenges and strategies for scaling up successful models, including the value of engaging recent alumni in fundraising for experiential learning opportunities, given their own positive career outcomes as a result of such experiences.

“Research must transcend university walls; it must be open to the world and it must, more than ever, be the result of exchanges: of collaboration between disciplines, of the meeting of cultures, of partnerships between academia and practitioners, and it must address both scientific and public concerns.”

Robert Proulx, Rector, Université du Québec à Montréal, at the 84th Acfas Conference opening ceremony, May 9, 2016.

Applied learning is increasingly integrated in arts programs

An innovative course offered at the **University of Calgary** allows English majors to apply their expertise and interest in literature to a real-world setting. Students in the Community Engagement Through Literature course design, implement and lead activities for the Calgary Public Library's "Homework Help" literacy and learning program for elementary school pupils. Weekly volunteering sessions at a library branch are coupled with on-campus seminars where students learn about service learning, make recommendations to enhance the program and reflect on the relationship between literary studies and public service.

Yale-NUS's Week 7 LABs (Learning Across Borders) program allows students, faculty and staff to engage in learning projects of up to a week that explore themes of the common curriculum in a broader context, in an interdisciplinary way and in a cross-border setting. Recent projects included Genomics in the Jungle and Maker Movement — Art and Craft of the New Economy.

All undergraduate arts students at the **University of Alberta** are given the opportunity to integrate workplace learning in their studies through the schools' co-op programs. Alternating between academic semesters and paid, career-related work experiences in their final years of study, participating students put the transferable knowledge and abilities they learned in the classroom to work in professional settings and gain invaluable experience and contacts which help them in their future profession.

Work experience placements are an integral part of **Cape Breton University's** Bachelor of Arts Community Studies degree. To complement in-class learning, students are placed in the field with professionals twice during the program. Placements are chosen according to students' graduation plan or career interests.

“Our world is changing – economically, socially, politically...
To meet the challenges ahead, we'll need help from a broad range of non-technological innovators, including designers, economists, business managers, political scientists, humanities researchers, psychologists, legal experts and artists. Their crucial contribution must be embraced as we build a new innovation agenda.”

Stephen J. Toope, president, Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, and director, Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto, *The Hill Times*, July 4, 2016

Interdisciplinarity

Speakers stressed the importance of embedding the liberal arts across disciplines in ways that align with employer demand for well-rounded grads. Students in the STEM fields provide positive feedback on the value of developing their communication, teamwork and creative skills through liberal arts courses.

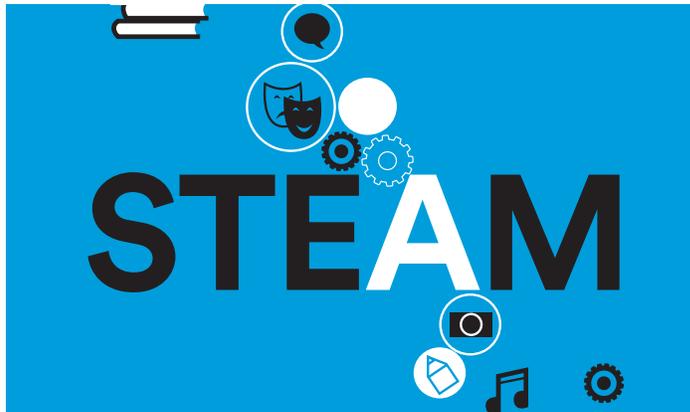
For example, McMaster University offers a five-year Engineering and Society program which explores the human side of engineering through core courses that deal with the culture, history and social control of technology. The program develops broadly educated, resourceful engineers with a multidisciplinary outlook and strengths in communication and effective interaction with others.

Many universities — such as the University of New Brunswick, the University of Victoria and the University of British Columbia — offer joint computer science and arts programs which combine in-depth scientific training with the understanding of people and the sophisticated analytic and critical skills acquired in an arts degree.

From STEM to STEAM

A 2015 expert panel concluded that future innovation and productivity growth will require a workforce with a balance of both STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) and non-STEM skills, such as those acquired and used in the humanities and social sciences. Leadership, creativity, adaptability

and entrepreneurial ability can help maximize STEM skills and allow Canadians to actively compete within the ever-changing global marketplace.



Source: Council of Canadian Academies, *Some Assembly Required: STEM Skills and Canada's Economic Productivity*, 2015

“[Interdisciplinarity] is important, because how do we communicate science in a way that makes sense to people? ...Pairing my environmental science [degree] with Indigenous governance was a perfect meld for me in really understanding how humans and the environment interact.”

Jazmin Alfaro, environmental science graduate and Indigenous governance Masters student, University of Winnipeg, 2016

“Technologies will require us to reset,
rethink and reimagine
what we can do for education.”

Diana Oblinger, President emeritus, EDUCAUSE at Universities Canada’s “Canadian Universities and our digital future workshop,” 2015

“Anyone worried about the rise of the robots should be doing whatever it takes to extend a liberal arts education to anyone who wants one...We don’t have too many poets and playwrights, we have too few. We don’t have too many philosophy and history and sociology majors, we have too few. We don’t have too many educators, we have too few. The liberal arts graduates will create the good jobs of the future. The liberal arts graduates will create the companies of the future.”

Joshua Kim, Director of Digital Learning Initiatives, Dartmouth Center for the Advancement of Learning, *Inside Higher Education*, July 15, 2015

“Equipping students with the environment and infrastructure they need to develop their innovation potential is now an essential element of a university education. These are the generations that will carve Canada’s innovation future.”

Suzanne Fortier, principal of McGill University at Universities Canada’s “Canadian Universities and our Digital Future workshop”, 2015

The digital revolution poses both an imperative and an opportunity for the liberal arts. Participants discussed a growing demand for the liberal arts to help society navigate a rapidly changing world. The social sciences and humanities help us identify and communicate how new technologies can address human needs. And they guide us through the ethical and moral dilemmas that often arise from technological advances. At the same time, new tools give us new ways to do research, teach and share knowledge in the liberal arts.

Kevin Kee, dean of arts at the University of Ottawa, discussed how scholarly practices in the liberal arts are adapting to the new digital age. Many of today's faculty are eager to experiment and use new tools that digital scholarship has to offer. Traditional forms of scholarship are not obsolete, he said, but there is an opportunity for liberal arts programs to embrace the best of what works and what is emerging.

In his address, "Humanities in the zettabyte age," Dr. Kee suggested there is now a real opportunity for a new generation of scholars to navigate vast amounts of digital information, to publish in new formats on different platforms, and to create and share information as individual scholars, while also creating and sharing it with citizen-scholars outside of the academy.



Kevin Kee

“If we negotiate these changes well, the result will be a newly energized liberal arts and a newly energized university.”

Kevin Kee, dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Ottawa

In closing



Simon Brault

“Let us be far-sighted, let us remove constraints so that the arts can become free, and the liberal arts open and alive – for the future – and avoid instrumentalization.”

Simon Brault, director and CEO, Canada Council for the Arts

Participants agreed on a number of institutional priorities related to reinvigorating the liberal arts, including:

- Engaging multiple champions to help re-imagine programs and re-energize the liberal arts, such as:
 - faculty who are willing to experiment and take risks in how they teach and engage undergraduate students in research;
 - alumni as supporters of change and new opportunities for students, especially recent grads who can demonstrate the connection between their success and the skills they acquired in liberal arts programs; and
 - librarians, who are increasingly helping students navigate new digital learning spaces.
- Leveraging and promoting research and labour market data that demonstrates liberal arts grads' long-term earnings and career successes.
- Articulating the value of the liberal arts to Canada's future economic and social prosperity through students' and graduates' voices.

As the Canadian government advances strategic policy reviews for economic growth, science and innovation that will steer Canada towards 2067 and beyond, Universities Canada will share workshop outcomes to demonstrate how Canadian university graduates are equipped with the 21st century skills needed to navigate a rapidly changing world. We will also continue to champion the need for enhanced investment for more students to benefit from undergraduate research experiences, work-integrated learning and global study opportunities.

People are at the heart of innovation, and universities develop young Canadians' skills, fuel their creativity and mobilize their talents to ensure Canada's future success. Working in partnership with business, civil society and postsecondary stakeholders, Canada's universities are committed to meeting the evolving needs of students and society and contributing to an innovative, inclusive and prosperous Canada.

“Decision-making, communication, debate – all of these were at the centre of every turning point in history and literature, just as they are in business. ... We often find that humanities and social sciences (graduates) can be excellent for providing the grit, the resilience, the empathy for which we are looking.”

David McKay, president and CEO, Royal Bank of Canada,
speech to the Universities Canada membership meeting in Toronto, April 27, 2016



Sarah Pousette

“I had a ton of different opportunities especially in liberal arts. I had the opportunity to go on multiple kinds of exchanges, I got to be part of different student associations, I had the opportunity to work really closely with my professors and do research, so many things I never anticipated.”

Sarah Pousette, 2016 economics graduate, University of Calgary, 2016

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