

# The Liberal Arts: “What can you do with a liberal arts degree?”...and Five More Common Questions Asked by Parents

## 1. What are the liberal arts?

The liberal arts refer to a general studies curriculum that is intended to provide students with knowledge and intellectual development, rather than specialized occupational training and skills.

Today’s liberal arts programs aim to focus less on direct professional training and education, rather promoting a general education that often includes courses in natural and social sciences; political science; writing and literature; history; math; language and the arts.

## 2. What can you do with a liberal arts degree?

Anything! Take a random poll sometime and assess how many of your family members or friends are in jobs that would obviously match the degree or education they received. More and more people are promoting their transferable skills and taking on careers they never thought they would. College is not job training; it is life learning. Your student is gaining lifelong skills that will guide him successfully not only in a career, but in life.

Encourage your student to embrace those ambivalent classes that he “has to take” and be open to the new interests and passions that may emerge.

## 3. How do you market a liberal arts degree?

- ▲ Show your passion and interest in the field
- ▲ Demonstrate your ability to communicate effectively
- ▲ Demonstrate problem-solving capabilities
- ▲ Share tangible examples that exhibit constructive and collaborative interaction with others
- ▲ Promote your adaptability to change
- ▲ Transferable, Transferable, Transferable – your

skills are transferable

- ▲ Share your willingness, ability and interest in learning

## 4. Can she acquire a good paying job with a liberal arts degree?

Myth # 1 – she can follow her heart, but it’s not going to pay the bills. How does the motto go, “Follow your heart, and the money will follow.” For many parents, and understandably so, this is just too risky.

Money isn’t everything, but it is understood that you want your student to invest in her future and be financially secure. You may find comfort in knowing that recent research suggests that approximately 60 percent of the nation’s CEOs have a liberal arts degree, and the average starting salaries for liberal arts graduates is in the range of \$40,000, depending on the geographic location.

A professional degree does not ensure a high salary career; nor does a liberal arts degree determine a low-salary career.

*Referenced from “What Can I Do with a Liberal Arts Degree” by Barb Norrbom, The Business Report, <http://www.colostate.edu/Colleges/LibArts/careewha.htm>*

## 5. What specific skills and knowledge will a liberal arts degree provide that will be attractive to a future employer?

Research shows that the skills that today’s employers most commonly seek in their employees are the exact ones gained through a liberal arts cur-

*continued on the next page*

