

Tomorrow

In looking at the future of the liberal arts it is important to start by recognizing this form of education can be traced to the Greeks and Romans. The approach has survived over time because there has always been a need for a learning environment that teaches people how to analyze complex problems and opportunities and connect the interrelated dots.

In recent times, much has been written about “skills-based” education that is focused on very intense but narrow approaches to specific requirements and which has as its core purpose instruction that leads to a first job. Undeniably, there is a place for that type of education and it is appropriate for many people.

A liberal arts education, on the other hand, is focused on preparing leaders, managers, entrepreneurs, inventors and creators for their last job. These are the people who will develop opportunities for those who are served by traditional skills-based instruction.

Think for a moment about how quickly the world around us is changing. Has there ever been a greater need for people who possess these skills?

- Listening actively and respectfully
- Ability to ask the right questions
- Desire to collaborate
- Open to new ideas and alternative approaches
- Willingness to seek win-win solutions
- Commitment to ethical behavior
- Confidence to make decisions
- Respectful of all people

These are the skills of a liberal arts education. These are the skills required in an increasingly uncertain dynamic world. These are the skills that produce leaders, managers, entrepreneurs, inventors and creators. The liberal arts approach at Hiram College is doing exactly that.

Hiram has opened doors to rooms you did not know existed. The gift is not the B.A. degree; the gift is a Hiram liberal arts education. The magic is not in the diploma. It is in you.

(Commencement remarks by Board of Trustees Chair Ken Moore, Hiram College B.A. Class of 1969 and Harvard University Law School J.D. Class of 1973 .)

