



Is There a Case for the Liberal Arts?

FIFTH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

THE SHERATON MEMPHIS DOWNTOWN
MEMPHIS, TN 2 OCTOBER 17-19, 2013

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Thursday, October 17, 2013

5:00 PM

Registration Opens

Heritage Foyer

6:00-6:45 PM

Opening Reception

Heritage Foyer

All welcome; hors d'oeuvres/open bar

7:00-9:00 PM

Opening Plenary

Heritage I & II

Liberal Education: Both the Highest and
Most Practical Education of All!

DR. CHRISTOPHER B. NELSON, President,
St. John's College-Annapolis

Human beings think and wonder. They need to communicate with one another in order to survive and to make sense of the world around them. But they also need to understand themselves and to fathom the meaning

of life. Insofar as we all employ reason to meet these demands of our nature, we all practice the liberal arts—the arts of freedom. Should we not, then, learn to practice those arts well enough to fashion a life worth living, a life we may rightly call our own? To do so, I believe we must broaden and deepen our capacity for imagination. Using imagery from texts and experience to remind us of the richness of our shared humanity, I hope to refocus the image of our responsibility to our students. We owe them an introduction to the arts that will help them to imagine and shape a fully lived life.

CHRISTOPHER B. NELSON has been president of St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland, since June 1991. He is an alumnus of St. John's (B.A. 1970) and a graduate of the University of Utah College of Law (J.D. 1973). He practiced law in Chicago for 18 years and was chairman of his law firm when he left the practice to take his current position at St. John's College. He has served in numerous capacities on many boards of state and national educational associations and chaired several task forces for the City of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County on a wide variety of issues. Dr. Nelson has been a panelist and speaker on state, regional, and national programs concerning liberal education, issues of institutional autonomy in the face of government regulatory intrusion, and changes proposed in the accrediting system. He has lectured on Virgil, Plato, Homer, and John Henry Cardinal Newman, and is a published author on issues facing higher education.

Friday, October 18, 2013

7:30 AM–12:00 PM

Registration Opens

Heritage Foyer

7:30–8:30 AM

Continental Breakfast

Heritage Foyer

7:45–8:30 AM

A Conversation on the Presidents' Pledge Against Global Poverty

Heritage I

Featuring DR. CHRISTOPHER NELSON, President, St. John's College-Annapolis

Join Dr. Nelson as he leads a discussion about the President's Pledge Against Global Poverty. Open to everyone.

8:30–10:00 AM

Concurrent Sessions

1A. The Explorations Curriculum at Birmingham-Southern College: Renewal of the Liberal Arts in a Time of Fiscal Crisis

St. Louis

Across the landscape of American higher education, financial pressures have put those dedicated to the liberal arts on the defensive in justifying their programs and curricula. Beginning in the summer of 2010, Birmingham-Southern College (BSC) confronted a particularly severe financial crisis that, in part, led to a revision of the College's general education curriculum as well as its major programs of study. This session illuminates how the BSC faculty dealt with that crisis and launched a successful process to deepen its commitment to the liberal arts as a result of it. The session will include commentary from administrators and faculty on how the curricular revision process was designed as well as its results. It will also engage session participants in a wider conversation on how institutions may use crisis situations to

strengthen a commitment to the liberal arts rather than to diminish it.

MARK S. SCHANTZ, Provost and SUSAN K. HAGEN, Associate Provost, HEATHER MEGGERS-WRIGHT, Associate Professor of Psychology, TIMOTHY SMITH, Associate Professor of Art History, all from Birmingham-Southern College

1B. The Case for the Liberal Arts for Adult Students

Memphis

Post-traditional learners (PTLs) are a growing demographic that universities are fast embracing. PTLs' need for a college education may matter more to them than to traditional students. Employers want the outcomes of a liberal arts education identified in the AAC&U LEAP initiative, plus degrees that are occupationally focused. PTLs seek to make connections in class with their life experiences as subject matter. Effective PTL programs provide an environment that nurtures the benefits of a liberal education in small classes that feature writing, application, presentations, and discussion. We'll explore the importance of a liberal arts education for PTLs, best practices, and ways to promote the liberal arts to PTLs.

WALTER PEARSON, Dean, School for Continuing and Professional Studies, Loyola University-Chicago; HELENE CAUDILL, Dean, New College, St. Edward's University; ROSEMARY LINK, Associate Vice-President for Academic Affairs, Simpson College

1C. Helping the "Coddled" Millennials in Liberal Arts Institutions:

The Role of Academic Support Services

Natchez

How much help from a professor is too much? This interactive session will discuss the role of Academic Support Services and the best way to guide students in need of remedial skill development. Participants will share best practices on how to work with Millennials and discuss how the UDL (Universal Design for Learning) model can help students "who make too many visits" to faculty looking for remediation guidance. Helping students identify early the appropriate source for academic support on campus will reap long term benefits by increasing their self-confidence and decreasing the perceived need to be coddled by their professors.

YVONNE RB-BANKS, Dean, Center of Programs and Academic Support Services and Professor, Department of Education, Northwestern College

1D. First Year Common Courses: How Can They Contribute to Both a Liberal Arts Education and Preparation for Life After College? *Beale*

Individuals seeking practical applicability of education may overlook the value of a liberal arts education. Some first year courses at liberal arts institutions take a variety of forms, including core courses with a common syllabus in which small groups of students engage in discussions of irresolvable human questions guided by careful reading of texts. Can this approach prepare students for fulfilling lives? Why is human interaction necessary when new technologies reach more students inexpensively? In this interactive session the panelists and audience will explore these ideas.

PAUL STERN, Professor of Politics, Ursinus College; ROBERT DAWLEY, Professor of Biology, Ursinus College; TIM SPURGIN, Associate Professor of English, Lawrence University; THOMAS MCGOWAN, Associate Professor of Anthropology and Sociology, Rhodes College; REBECCA KOHN, Assistant Dean and Professor of Biology, Ursinus College, Session Moderator

10:00–10:30 AM

Coffee Break *Heritage Foyer*

10:30 AM–12:00 PM

Concurrent Sessions

2A. The Liberal Arts and Decision Making: Cultivating Ethical Reasoning and Exercising Judgment

Beale

The ability to engage in complex reasoning that leads to sound judgment and ethical decision making is one of the hallmarks of a liberal education. This ability has never been more critical. The two presentations in this session will consider how 21st-century colleges and universities can enhance modern undergraduates' ability to make careful, ethical decisions. First, participants will hear how digital technologies affect the way we weigh outcomes and make decisions. Then they will learn about an innovative effort to infuse ethical reasoning skills into a large university's general education program. A robust discussion of the ideas presented will follow.

MEG MULROONEY, Associate Vice Provost, University Programs and FLETCHER LINDER, Director, Interdisciplinary Liberal Studies Program, both from James Madison University; DAVID BURROWS, Provost and Dean of the Faculty, Lawrence University

2B. Liberal Education: Process, Not Product *Heritage I*

The current attack on liberal education has emphasized measurable results: completion rates, employment rates, and cost. What has been lost, even in the defenses of liberal education, is a focus on education as a process – as a communal experience of learning and maturation in and out of the classroom. Such “intangibles,” which are very much the essence of the lived experience of educators and students on college campuses, are not readily quantified or commodified. This panel will mount an impassioned defense of the claim that education is not a product, but a process.

HANK DOBIN, Professor of English and Former Dean of the College, Washington and Lee University; DAVID REHM, Provost and Professor of Philosophy, Mount St. Mary's University; JEFF ABERNATHY, President, Alma College

2C. Helping Students with the Transition to College Through a Cohort Based in the Liberal Arts *Memphis*

The panel addresses an initiative at the University of Mississippi to strengthen the position of the liberal arts in the general undergraduate curriculum. A program—known as “FASTrack”—sponsored by the UM College of Liberal Arts has helped students whose high school grades and test scores suggest that they would have an increased likelihood of not thriving in college. Students are assigned to cohorts of 20 students who take three classes together during both the fall and spring semester, building a sense of community and peer support. Two of the three courses are in Liberal Arts disciplines.

JOSEPH WARD, Professor and Chair of the History Department, STEPHEN MONROE, Assistant Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, KAREN FORGETTE, Instructor of Composition and Rhetoric, all of the University of Mississippi

2D. Can't We All Just Get Along?/Crossing Boundaries: Modern Languages and Literature and Nursing in an Undergraduate Transformational Educational Collaboration *Natchez*

The liberal arts merit investment when viewed as a collaborative effort between professional schools and faculty teaching in liberal arts programs. This session will engage in conversations with participants to highlight the benefits of reciprocal collaboration by showing the University of Redlands' success in developing collaborative efforts between the College of Arts and Sciences and its professional schools, and presenting the rewarding collaboration at Simmons College between Modern Languages and Literatures and Nursing focused on providing

undergraduate students with a transformative professional, cultural and language learning experience at the Granada Institute of International Studies in Spain.

JAMES SPEE, Professor of Management and STEVEN MORICS, Professor of Mathematics, both of the University of Redlands; DOLORES PELAEZ-BENITEZ, Professor of Spanish, Modern Languages and Literatures, College of Arts and Sciences, ANNE-MARIE BARRON, Associate Professor and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Curriculum and Student Affairs, School of Nursing and Health Sciences and KAREN TEELEY, Professor of Practice, Nursing, all of Simmons College

2E. Rethinking Challenges to the Liberal Arts: The Transformative Power of Liberal Arts Education *St. Louis*

This panel begins with the question, “Are the liberal arts essential...as intrinsic goods?” and transforms it into an inquiry that makes liberal arts education, in particular, an actor, not something acted upon, a sextant that makes liberal arts “transformative” of this world and individuals, one that makes economic, technological, political and aspirational forces respond to education, rather than the other way around. Acknowledging outside forces, the panel treats higher, liberal arts education as a shaping force in its own right. The panel rests on the proposition that unless the liberal arts assume a positive, actional, primary stance, we are done for.

J. SCOTT LEE, Executive Director, Association for Core Texts and Courses; ROOSEVELT MONTÁS, Director of Core Curriculum, Columbia University; DANIEL CULLEN, Associate Professor and Director of the Project for the Study of Liberal Democracy, Rhodes College; WILFRED MCCLAY, G.T. & Libby Blankenship Chair in the History of Liberty, University of Oklahoma

12–1:30 PM

Lunch On Your Own

1:45–3:15 PM

Phi Beta Kappa Event/Session *Natchez*

Executive Perspectives:
The Lasting Value of the Liberal Arts

Advocacy for education in the liberal arts and sciences is often the preserve of those who provide it. But those

in other walks of life, who have been its beneficiaries or who see its good effects in business, the professions, and cultural institutions, may be even more effective advocates. In this session, three influential professionals will offer their own perspectives, suggesting ways in which higher education providers can enlist the support of allies in the broader society.

Moderated by WILLIAM E. TROUTT, President, Rhodes College. Panelists include SPENCE L. WILSON, Chairman Emeritus, Rhodes Board of Trustees; W.J. MICHAEL CODY, Partner, Burch, Porter and Johnson PLLC; DOROTHY WELLS, Curate, Church of the Holy Apostles.

3:30–5:30 PM

Plenary *Nashville*

Vocation and the Liberal Arts

DR. DAVID ANDERSON, President, St. Olaf College

There is absolutely a case for the liberal arts, For it to be truly compelling to a broad range of people, especially those who are skeptical of a liberal arts education, we have to get better at communicating not only the intellectual rewards of that education, and the personal fulfillment that it causes, but also the ways in which it prepares you for a rewarding and productive work life. The goal is financial independence, professional accomplishment, and personal fulfillment.

DAVID ANDERSON earned the B.A. at St. Olaf College and the Ph.D. at Boston College, specializing in 18th-century British literature. He served on the faculty at St. Olaf College, Texas A&M University, and Florida Atlantic University, served as Dean of the College at Luther College and as Provost at Denison University before becoming the 11th President of St. Olaf in 2006. His scholarly writings range from articles on theodicy in 18th-century literature to a book on modern American detective fiction. He is Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Higher Learning Commission and Chair of the Advisory Council for Emeriti Retirement Health Solutions, a non-profit consortium that contributes to health care security in retirement for faculty and staff in higher education.

5:30 –7:00 PM

Reception *Heritage I*

All welcome; hors d'oeuvres/open bar

Saturday, October 19, 2013

7:30–8:30 AM

Continental Breakfast

Nashville Foyer

8:30–10:00 AM

Concurrent Sessions

3A. Re-Visioning and Re-Marketing Liberal Arts for the 21st Century

St. Louis

In recent years there has arisen a cultural contradiction between the belief that every young person needs a college degree and the belief that the actual content of that same college degree might not be of much value, at least in terms of the cost of getting it. This tension, while offering an opportunity to restructure and remarket a liberal-arts-oriented higher education, has instead created a handful of responses that serve to deepen this contradiction instead of resolve it. This presentation will examine some of these reactions and then engage participants in a small-group visioning exercise intended to help us think together about reimagining, restructuring, and remarketing a liberal arts education for the 21st century.

AMY E. STORY, Director of the Honors Program and Associate Professor of Philosophy, Baldwin Wallace University, and KIM GARCHAR, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Kent State University

3B. What We Talk about When We Talk About Gen Ed or, What are the Liberal Arts?

Natchez

Are our definitions of “the liberal arts” working against us? We suggest that how we define the liberal arts is at best opaque and at worst contradictory. Looking at a variety of institutions, we’ll grapple with what makes liberal arts curricula distinctive, what competencies we tout as we define our colleges against the competition, and whether these definitions get at what we really mean by a liberal arts education. Using the Wabash Study, we’ll examine the relationship between cost, outcomes, and value. We will conclude by thinking about what an alternative understanding of the liberal arts might look like.

MARGARET FARRAR, Associate Dean of the College and MARK SALISBURY, Director of Institutional Research and Assessment, both of Augustana College

3C. Making the Case for Liberal Education: The Transylvania Seminar

Memphis

The theme of the panel is the influence of the Transylvania Seminar on its participants in their endeavors to make the case for liberal education both within the academy and to the broader, non-academic public. The Transylvania Seminar meets every summer on the campus of Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky to discuss the future of liberal education in the twenty-first century. The stated goal of the Seminar is “To clarify the meaning of liberal education for its practitioners and to foster a deeper commitment to its preservation at institutions of higher learning in America.” Now in its eighth year, it has been attended by 120 faculty members from over 85 different liberal arts colleges across the country.

JEFFREY FREYMAN, Professor of Political Science and Director of the Center for Liberal Education, Transylvania University; ROBERT PROCTOR, Professor of Italian, Connecticut College; JOHN SEERY, Professor of Politics, Pomona College; BARBARA BURCH, Professor of English, Georgetown College

3D. It Takes a Village: Making the Case for the Liberal Arts

Beale

The question “Is there a Case for the Liberal Arts?” crystallizes the nature of collaborative work across many roles within colleges and universities. Most imperative is that the case actually *be made*—and made in a way that helps those students who do not already know what they will get from study in the liberal arts and sciences. That case requires an *integration* facilitated through a variety of roles: leaders who keep the academic mission front and center in all planning and budgeting; faculty members who create intentional curriculum and co-curriculum to transform the knower; advisors/mentors who help students to integrate their “paths” through the curriculum; and career counselors who aid students in “translating” their knowledge, skills, and experiences in the pursuit of happiness, employment, or further education.

JOSEPH FAVAZZA, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, CHRIS IVES, Professor of Religious Studies, and HEATHER HEERMAN, Director of Career Services, all of Stonehill College

10:00–10:30 AM

Coffee Break

Nashville Foyer

10:30 AM–12:00 PM

Closing Plenary

Nashville

The American Educational Experience and the Study of Liberal Arts: Does Liberal Art Study Contribute to the 'Greater Good' of Society in the 21st Century?

DR. PRINCILLA EVANS MORRIS, Executive Vice President and Provost, Fisk University

Much of the preeminence experienced by the United States of America, as a world leader, was fostered by individuals educated in the Liberal Arts. From the movement to national independence, to the struggle for emancipation, and from issues of gender equality to today's global challenges in the area of social justice, individuals who were grounded in the liberal arts have been in the forefront of change, making a difference in the world. The cultivation of individual character has been one of the foci of the liberal arts tradition and it has produced people who changed their communities and society in magnanimous ways. In the 21st century, technology, citizens of the community, the government, and the

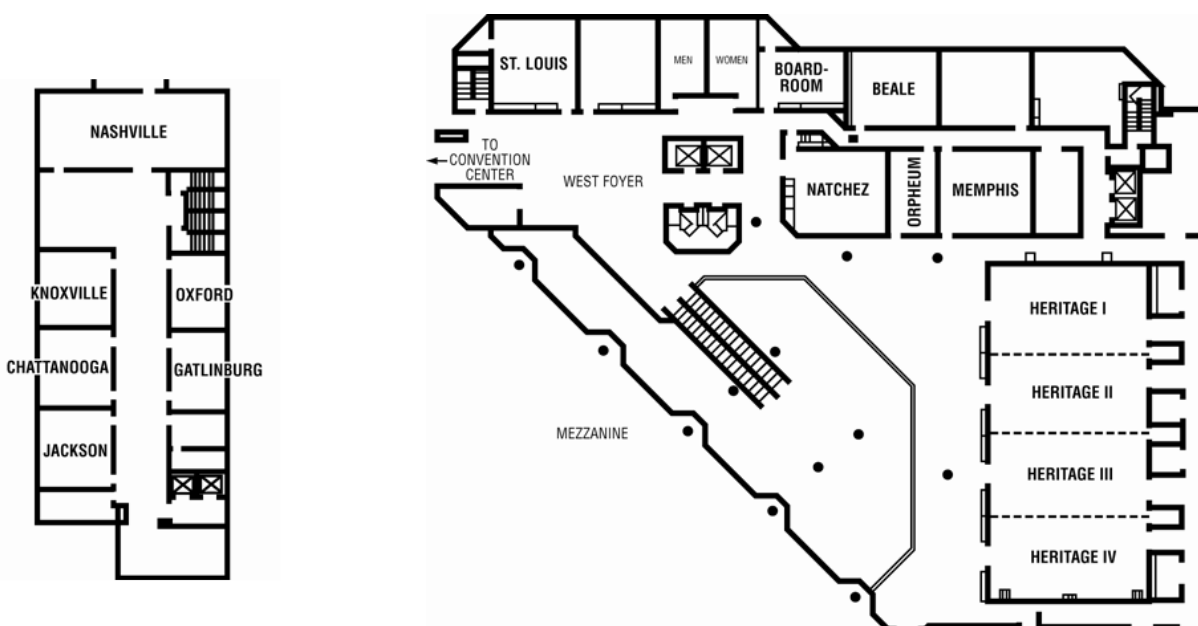
interdependence of the economies of different nations are factors that exert an exorbitant amount of pressure on how business is conducted in institutions of higher learning. This discussion will review the past contributions of people educated in the liberal arts tradition and explore whether a similar magnitude of positive effect can be realized today.

PRINCILLA EVANS MORRIS joined the Fisk University faculty in 1983 and was the Director of Graduate Studies at Fisk for over twenty years. Fall 2010, she was named Dean of General Education and Graduate Studies. Currently, she serves as Executive Vice President and Provost of Fisk University.

Dr. Evans Morris received her B.A. degree in Biology from Fisk University, graduating summa cum laude and earning Phi Beta Kappa membership. Re-directing her interests, she earned the Ph.D. in Chemistry from Howard University, specializing in the area of metallo-enzyme studies. She is a member of a number of professional organizations and has received honors and awards for her teaching efforts. She was selected Most Outstanding Teacher in Division of Natural Science and Mathematics several years, and was named one of the 'Top Minority Women in Science and Engineering' by the Journal of NTA in 1996. She was selected as an Extramural Associates Fellow of the National Institutes of Health and participated in the American Council on Education (ACE) Fellows Program.

Although trained formally in the physical and life sciences, Dr. Evans Morris loves the arts and all things creative. She is married to retired Bishop William W. Morris. They are the parents of six children and the grandparents of twelve.

CONFERENCE ROOM INFORMATION



SPECIAL THANKS

THE AMERICAN CONFERENCE OF ACADEMIC DEANS AND THE PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY BIENNIAL CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE

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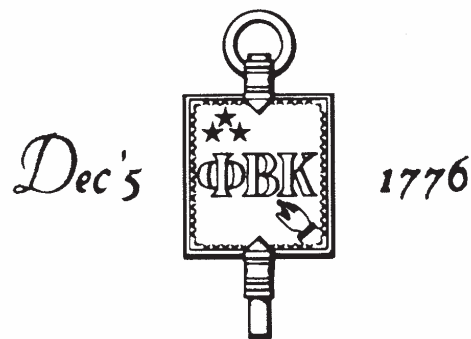
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ACAD

AMERICAN CONFERENCE OF ACADEMIC DEANS

The Mission of ACAD is to provide academic leaders who share a commitment to student learning and to the ideals of liberal education with networking and professional development opportunities and to support them in their work as educational leaders.

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Phi Beta Kappa celebrates and advocates excellence in the liberal arts and sciences. Its campus chapters invite for induction the most outstanding arts and sciences students at America's leading colleges and universities. The Society sponsors activities to advance these studies—the humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences—in higher education and in society at large.

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