

SHARED FUTURES GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A twenty-first-century liberal education must provide students with the knowledge and commitment to be socially responsible citizens in a diverse democracy and increasingly interconnected world.

Colleges and universities committed to liberal education have important civic responsibilities to their communities, their nations, and the larger world.

Global learning helps students:

- Gain a deep, comparative knowledge of the world's peoples and problems;
- Explore the historical legacies that have created the dynamics and tensions of their world;
- Develop intercultural competencies so they can move across boundaries and unfamiliar territory and see the world from multiple perspectives;
- Sustain difficult conversations in the face of highly emotional and perhaps uncongenial differences;
- Understand—and perhaps redefine—democratic principles and practices within a global context;
- Gain opportunities to engage in practical work with fundamental issues that affect communities not yet well served by their societies;
- Believe that their actions and ideas will influence the world in which they live.

“By its nature . . . liberal learning is global and pluralistic. It embraces the diversity of ideas and experiences that characterize the social, natural, and intellectual world. To acknowledge such diversity in all its forms is both an intellectual commitment and a social responsibility, for nothing less will equip us to understand our world and to pursue fruitful lives . . . liberal learning is society's best investment in our shared future.” — AAC&U's Statement on Liberal Learning

●● SHARED FUTURES INITIATIVE STAFF

Caryn McTighe Musil, *Senior Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Global Initiatives*
Kevin Hovland, *Program Director, Global Initiatives and Annual Meeting*
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●● SELECTED AAC&U GLOBAL PUBLICATIONS

●● *Assessing Global Learning: Matching Good Intentions with Good Practice*, by Caryn McTighe Musil (2006)

“Citizenship Destabilized,” by Saskia Sassen, in *Liberal Education* (Spring 2003)

Globalizing Knowledge: Connecting International and Intercultural Studies, by Grant H. Cornwell and Eve W. Stoddard (1999)

“Peripheral Visions: Towards a Geoethics of Citizenship,” by Eve Walsh Stoddard and Grant H. Cornwell, in *Liberal Education* (Summer 2003)

Purposeful Pathways: Achieving Critical Learning Outcomes, edited by Ross Miller and Andrea Leskes (2006)

Shared Futures: Global Learning and Liberal Education, by Kevin Hovland (2006)

Shared Futures: Global Learning and Social Responsibility, special issue of *Diversity Digest* (Vol. 8, No. 3, 2005)

www.aacu.org/SharedFutures



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●● SHARED FUTURES: GLOBAL LEARNING & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

Liberal education prepares students to live responsible, productive, and creative lives in a dramatically changing world. It achieves this, in part, by providing students with rich global learning opportunities—unscripted, developmentally appropriate occasions to gain and test skills and knowledge. Colleges and universities across the country and around the world are articulating global learning goals and aspirations. Shared Futures, an initiative of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), is designed to support administrators and faculty members as they translate those global learning goals into curricular practices that improve teaching and learning.

Global learning asks students to approach the world's challenges and opportunities from multiple perspectives and to wrestle with the ethical implications of differential power and privilege. At its best, it integrates curricular and experiential learning and provides intellectual coherence and integrity to the curriculum. Global learning is disciplinary and interdisciplinary. It can be found in the major as well as in general education. In fact, global learning goals can be used to bridge the two.

Through Shared Futures, AAC&U and its campus partners place questions of diversity, identity, citizenship, and responsible action at the heart of global learning opportunities. Shared Futures challenges students to explore the relational nature of their identities—identities that are variously shaped by the currents of power and privilege, both within a multicultural U.S. democracy and within an interconnected and unequal world. Such an approach ensures that global learning is not seen as something that occurs only abroad or as something that relates to students from other places. Global learning occurs everywhere and is relevant to all of our students.

Shared Futures offers one way to engage all students—in all of their diversity—with some of the most pressing questions of our time: What does it mean to be a responsible citizen in today's global context? And how should one act in the face of large unsolved global problems?

INITIATIVE ACTIVITIES

SHARED FUTURES: GENERAL EDUCATION FOR GLOBAL LEARNING

This curriculum and faculty development network combines the best theory and practice of general education reform with the transformative promise of global content. Through a grant from the Henry Luce Foundation, sixteen colleges and universities will use global learning goals to organize general education programs and to prepare students for citizenship in a world of global change and interdependence.

LIBERAL EDUCATION AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP: THE ARTS OF DEMOCRACY

Through this curriculum and faculty development project, eleven institutions integrated complex examinations of global issues, civic engagement, and social responsibility into selected undergraduate majors. The project was supported by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education with additional funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES AND GLOBAL LEARNING

This research project, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, examined liberal arts colleges that have assumed leadership in addressing global learning. By exploring the distinctive terrain of liberal arts colleges, AAC&U staff members identified promising practices and national trends that continue to shape the Shared Futures agenda.

PARTNERSHIP FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

AAC&U and the Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future are working together to encourage new ideas, campus-based innovations, research, and collaborations that advance student and campus commitments to global learning and sustainable development.

SHARED FUTURES SYMPOSIA

“Advancing Sustainable Democratic Cultures: Citizenship, Human Rights, and Civic Responsibility,” June 21–22, 2006. The Council of Europe Committee on Higher Education and Research and the International Consortium for Higher Education, Strasbourg, France.

“Recentring: Science and Global Learning in the Undergraduate Curriculum,” January 25, 2006. AAC&U Annual Meeting, Washington, DC.

“Shared Futures: Diversity, Inequality, and the Challenge of Global Citizenship,” January 22, 2003. AAC&U Annual Meeting, Seattle, Washington.

ABOUT AAC&U

AAC&U is the leading national association concerned with the quality, vitality, and public standing of undergraduate liberal education. Its members are committed to extending the advantages of a liberal education to all students, regardless of academic specialization or intended career. Founded in 1915, AAC&U now comprises more than 1,000 accredited public and private colleges and universities of every type and size.

AAC&U functions as a catalyst and facilitator, forging links among presidents, administrators, and faculty members who are engaged in institutional and curricular planning. Its mission is to reinforce the collective commitment to liberal education at both the national and local levels and to help individual institutions keep the quality of student learning at the core of their work as they evolve to meet new economic and social challenges.

AAC&U organizes its work around four broad goals:

- Preparing All Students for an Era of Greater Expectations
- Educating Students for a World Lived in Common
- Making Excellence Inclusive
- Taking Responsibility for the Quality of Every Student's Liberal Education

INFORMATION ABOUT AAC&U MEMBERSHIP, PROGRAMS AND PUBLICATIONS CAN BE FOUND AT WWW.AACU.ORG.

ABOUT AAC&U'S OFFICE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND GLOBAL INITIATIVES

AAC&U's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Global Initiatives seeks to foster civic engagement and social responsibility among today's college students and provides national leadership for diversity and global learning through conferences, projects, Web sites, and publications. The office supports colleges and universities in their efforts to make diversity an institutional priority and to create settings that foster education for a world lived in common.