

**Report on the Business, Entrepreneurship, and Liberal Learning
Project of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching**

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Adapted from:

Rethinking Undergraduate Business Education: Preparing for the Profession,
Anne Colby, Thomas Ehrlich, William M. Sullivan, and Jonathan Dolle
(San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2011)

The Size and Importance of the Business Major:

The great majority of undergraduate students in the United States major in professional or vocational fields, and business is the largest major of all.

--In 2006-07, the most recent academic year for which national data were available, *21 percent* of all undergraduates were business majors.

--When business is combined with other vocational majors such as engineering, nursing, education, agriculture, security studies, and others, the total rises to *68 percent* of all undergraduates (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2009, p. 398).

Liberal Learning and Its Central Dimensions:

Liberal Learning

The purpose of liberal learning is to enable students to make sense of the world and their place in it, preparing them to use knowledge and skills as means toward responsible engagement with the life of their times.

Analytical Thinking

Analytical thinking abstracts from particular experience in order to produce formal knowledge that is general in nature and independent of any particular context. It is methodical and consistent, beginning with a particular set of assumptions or categories, and proceeding to develop the implications of these concepts through deduction. Examples of such discourses range from mathematics and logic through theories in the various disciplines, such as economics.

Multiple Framing

Multiple Framing is the ability to work intellectually with fundamentally different, sometimes mutually incompatible, analytical perspectives. It involves conscious awareness that any particular scheme of analytical thinking, or intellectual discipline, frames experience in particular ways.

The Reflective Exploration of Meaning

The Reflective Exploration of Meaning encompasses the most self-reflective aspects of learning. It involves the exploration of meaning, value, and commitment. For example, it asks: What difference does a particular understanding or approach to things make to who I am, how I engage the world, and what it is reasonable for me to imagine and hope? This is the traditional heart of liberal education, the focal point of humanistic learning.

Practical Reasoning

Practical Reasoning represents the capacity to draw on knowledge and intellectual skills to engage concretely with the world. Practical Reasoning allows the individual to go beyond reflection to deliberate and decide upon the best course of action within a particular situation. Such thinking is characteristic of professional judgment, including that of business leaders, as well as being a key capacity of citizens and statesmen.