Key Findings from 2013 Survey of Employers

- **Innovation a Priority:** 95% of employers say they give hiring preference to college graduates with skills that enable them to contribute to innovation in the workplace.

- **It Takes More than a Major:** 93% of employers say that a demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems is more important than a candidate’s undergraduate major. More than 75% want higher education to place more emphasis on critical thinking, complex problem solving, written and oral communication, and applied knowledge.

- **Broad Learning is Expected:** 80% of employers agree that, regardless of their major, all college students should acquire broad knowledge in the liberal arts and sciences.

- **Students Need Liberal and Applied Learning:** Employers strongly endorse educational practices that involve students in active, effortful work—practices including collaborative problem solving, research, internships, senior projects, and community engagements.

- **E-Portfolios Would Add Value:** 83% of employers say an electronic portfolio would be useful to indicate that job applicants have the knowledge and skills they need to succeed.

### Employer Priorities and Consensus on College Learning Outcomes

**Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World**
- Broad knowledge in the liberal arts and sciences 80%
- Global issues and knowledge about societies and cultures outside the US 78%
- Knowledge about science and technology 56%

**Intellectual and Practical Skills**
- Critical thinking and analytic reasoning 82%
- Complex problem solving 81%
- Written and oral communication 80%
- Information literacy 72%
- Innovation and creativity 71%
- Teamwork skills in diverse groups 67%
- Quantitative reasoning 55%

**Personal and Social Responsibility**
- Problem solving in diverse settings 91%
- Ethical issues/public debates important in their field 87%
- Civic knowledge, skills, and judgment essential for contributing to the community and to our democratic society 82%
- Ethical decision making 64%

**Integrative and Applied Learning**
- Direct experiences with community problem solving 86%
- Applied knowledge in real-world settings 78%

**NOTES:**

■ indicates percentage of employers who “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that, “regardless of a student’s chosen field of study,” every student should attain this area of knowledge or skill.

♦ indicates percentage of employers who say they want colleges/universities to “place more emphasis” on this area of knowledge/skill.