

A Prophecy for the Liberal Arts at Private Institutions in 2022

Presiding: Pat Mosto, Rider University

Project Management Team & Panelists:

Gerald R. Greenberg, Syracuse University

Steve Peters, Friends University



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Who did we ask?

Deans

Expert Panel

31 Deans—Publics

17 Deans—Privates

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Delphi Forecasting Method

The Delphi Method

Delphi Stages

Round 1: Participants are chosen.
Initial data is gathered.

Round 2: A list of possible statements or themes is compiled and distributed to participants.

Round 3: An amended, summarized list of themes is distributed for ratification.

Study Results

Delphi Processes

Participants present their responses to the question.

Ideas are synthesized and a smaller number of possible statements or themes are compiled.

These themes are fine tuned by the participants.

One collective prediction is established.

Delphi Advantages

Delphi Disadvantages

How Consensus is Reached

1. Gathering feedback
2. Summarizing (categorizing into statements, themes ranked 1-5; based on % agreement)
3. Ranking (degree of agreement)

Research Topic

The evolution of the liberal arts over the next decade (by 2022)

Round One

How do you see the liberal arts curriculum evolving in the next decade?

Predictions -Themes

1. Economic uncertainty will continue
2. Tuition will become less affordable
3. University resources will decline
4. Public doubt about the traditional Liberal Arts will grow
5. Value proposition of the liberal arts will have to be re-imagined

Predictions -Themes

6. Technology will be transformative
7. Faculty role and composition will change
8. Students will shop for portability, best price & convenience
9. Societal demographics will further globalize our campuses

Top Five Change Drivers

- Rising cost of a liberal arts education (tuition)
- Declining resources & increasing program costs
- Public concern about the practicality, relevance, value of a liberal arts education
- Changing family and student cultural demographics and needs
- Increasing reliance on lecturers and part-time faculty

Round Two

How will each of these 5 factors directly affect the liberal arts curriculum at your institution (positively or negatively) in the next decade?

Responses

How will each of these 5 factors directly affect the liberal arts curriculum **(and the various stakeholders involved)** at your institution (positively or negatively) in the next decade?

Predictions

Stakeholders

The Public

Students

Faculty

The Curriculum

Deans

THE PUBLIC

- There will be uncertainty in a globalizing market economy
- Will demand more accountability
- Will question the traditional liberal arts “value proposition”
- Will be concerned about sustainability (human, agricultural and ecological, etc.)

STUDENTS

- More who lack preparation; special needs
- Attracted to “practical,” vocational preparation and specific, high-paying jobs
- Expect a streamlined curriculum and convenient delivery options, portability
- Want quicker paths to graduation
- Use emerging technologies
- Bring new challenges and opportunities

FACULTY

- Work in multi-tiered teaching and advising staffs
- Expected to create meaningful faculty and student interactions
- Teach a broader range of different kinds of learners
- Use pedagogical approaches that may seem foreign to the values inspired by traditional liberal arts curricula
- Need professional development training to use technologies and pedagogical models that diversify the time, place for and experience of teaching

THE CURRICULUM

- Sustainability = survival
- Short term measurements of “success”
- Programs will integrate stackable credentials
- Pressure to erase dichotomy between liberal education and jobs
- Smaller “core curriculum”

DEANS

- Focus on mission-centric quality, civic mission
- Lead the disciplines out of their silos
- Be closing the gaps between disparate learners
- Face more competition for institutional support
- Be challenged to demonstrate relevancy in a market economy
- Hire and supervise fewer full-time faculty
- Hire and support more lecturers and adjuncts

Round Three

Name one or two leadership skills or abilities that you would need as a dean to manage the anticipated changes.

Leadership Skills

- Communication, Effective Storytelling, Persuasion
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Change Management
- Collaboration
- Conflict Management

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Questions & Wrap-up

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