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ABSTRACT

The historical context of attempts to reconcile the humanities with business careers is discussed, and a number of cooperative programs that seek to link the two areas are described. Attention is directed to: faculty and student internships in business, executive-in-residence programs and executive institutes, career exploration programs for students, career development networks and consultations with business professionals, curriculum innovations and combined humanities/business majors, comprehensive cooperative strategies, and corporate training programs for liberal arts graduates. In the 1970s, business began to hire individuals who had specialized business training, and liberal arts learning and humanities were minimized in the business curriculum. However, business leaders were not satisfied with the writing, analytic, and communications skills of graduates, who had difficulty handling positions beyond the entry-level. In addition, career and public policy contexts were addressed in new broadened humanities programs. Programs linking the humanities to scientific/technological areas then attained prominence. Recommendations are included concerning strategies for future cooperative projects. (SW)

Building Bridges: Cooperative Projects for the Humanities and Business

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These are hard times for the humanities. Critics and friends commonly acknowledge their "decline" and "imperiled state." Countless commentaries, public speeches, and grant applications repeat the unwelcome news. And as the imminent ruin of the humanities nears, humanists gather at convention sites to darkly ponder the future of their race. But are things that bad? Are the humanities...(gasp) moribund?

Answers to these questions, of course, depend on which activities and areas of the humanities are monitored. We should recall, too, that the humanities have always suffered but grudging indulgence in American culture. However, if we examine the activities that now promote the humanities to their toughest critics (the business world and its students), the vital signs are encouraging. In fact, these activities could help revive the humanities as a whole.

Recently, a small but practical band of humanists--surely candidates for lasting myths and icons--have declared essential the link between the humanities and successful business careers. They have aligned with others on campus and in business to help launch projects that are innovative and effective: for example, corporate executives study in residence at Birmingham-Southern College; faculty from St. Olaf College pursue internships with corporations in Minnesota; Swarthmore College students explore business career options with alumni; liberal arts and business administration study are combined at Penn State University; Wheaton College students consult with business professionals about their

career intentions; and American Can Company trains and places liberal arts students throughout its organization.

Before describing and analyzing these projects, it's worth probing the circumstances stimulating their development. These circumstances include some unpleasant truths about the humanities and American business; they also include some gratifying facts about cooperative schemes and small funding programs. A brief check of these contributing circumstances will also help anticipate later suggestions for new projects.

By the time most of these projects began (the late 1970's), the humanities desperately needed a new image and marketing tools. Student enrollments had plummeted, support for research had contracted, and expansion of programs and faculty had little chance of funding. Other disciplines and areas of career study had captured the support of students and administrators; the humanities faced a dim prospect. The Rockefeller Commission on the Humanities (1978), though refusing an "apocalyptic view," had deep concerns "about serious social deficiencies of perception and morale." They suggested that much of the cause for worry traced directly to humanists themselves.[1]

Ironically, as critic Alston Chase has commented, the problems of the humanities occurred "during a time of unprecedented growth...and after fifteen years of persistent efforts to make them popular." In this period, college enrollments "grew seventy per cent," and "the number of courses in the humanities at private colleges and universities increased substantially...."[2] Congress also established the National Endowment for the Humanities in 1966, backed by substantial federal funds, to promote projects of research, education, and activity in the humanities. In effect, the humanities benefitted from economic boom times, but drew increasing criticism because of their remoteness from individual needs and societal concerns.

In the "good old days" of the 1960's, humanists ignored their precarious perch in American life; humanists also poured their energies into activities that isolated them from former friends. Times of plenty encouraged humanists to pursue highly specialized projects and arcane subjects. Many humanists, as teachers, formulated courses that reflected their rarified interests but left most students paralyzed. Business and business careers received careless responses from humanists.

Only graduation requirements and the lingering--but failing--regard for liberal arts degrees over business degrees kept most students in humanities classes.

Beyond these mistakes, and a curious "whiz kid" zeal for reputation and academic profits, many in the humanities continued to be what people always thought they were--snotty elitists. They refused to justify their research and disciplines beyond knowledge for its own sake; they also succeeded in alienating students who had practical concerns about employment and career interests. Humanists attempted no bridge building to the working world, increasing the psychological distance between them and students who wanted business careers. Stereotypes and misconceptions developed further so that personal interaction between humanists (fuzzy-headed idealists) and business persons (profit-mongers) virtually ended, with predictable results: neither side knew what the other expected; each lost sight of what the other side could offer of mutual value.[3]

With notable exceptions, humanists earned the criticisms always reserved for them. Retorts by humanists about low-brow, anti-intellectual, and crassly materialistic businessmen made matters worse. The stream of first generation, minority, and working class students that swelled college campuses in the 1970's had deep suspicions about humanists who chided them about vocational-professional studies.

Obviously, my analysis so far is based on impressionistic evidence and it too generally summarizes a complex story. But it's not too far off the mark, I think. If I can be allowed a certain lack of scholarly precision here, I'd like to complete this brief historical tour. For that task, a few words on the role of business leadership in the story are necessary.

Sometime between the late 1960's and the mid-70's, business leadership began to ignore their debts to liberal learning and usable skills, attitudes, and knowledge found in the humanities. In this time, the fairly equitable and respectful relationship between liberal learning and business declined. Business thinking changed concerning what kinds of education prepared individuals for success in management positions. Hiring practices reflected this change toward specialized business training. Business--directly and indirectly--encouraged schools of business administration to further

specialize their curricula and to minimize liberal learning. A fascination with technology and scientific management schemes squeezed liberal learning and the humanities out the door.

Students responded pragmatically to hard times in the job market and the emphasis on specialized course-work for business careers. "Want a job at graduation?... study business administration." Forget the liberal arts! Professors, educational writers, and national study commissions fretted at students' "vocationalism" and "narrowness." Yet, the students--can we blame them--enrolled increasingly in business and professional programs. They avoided such staples as history, philosophy, and literature. Though humanists sneered politely at marketplace education, the tilt toward the business administration programs continued.

Fortunately, a combination of circumstances and activities, nicely represented by the cooperative program models this paper will soon discuss, have helped change attitudes. First, business leaders grew dissatisfied with the new group of students they had hired. Many fledgling arrivals in the business world--largely from the growing pool of business graduates--didn't have the necessary writing, analytic, and communications skills to handle positions beyond the entry-level.

Effective management, business leaders knew, requires more than rote responses. It demands individuals with the skills, the attitudes, and the breadth of knowledge that liberal learning can often best produce.[4] Questions of how to do something better, quicker, and more cheaply had to be joined by "Should we...? What are the human implications of...? Is this appropriate to corporate and public interests...?" Legions of well-trained specialists in accounting rooms and at computer stations worked well in the short run; however, could they function as future decision-makers in management?

In effect, business leadership developed doubts about the future and criticized higher education for its unsatisfactory product.

On the academic side, fears about declining status and falling enrollments impelled humanists toward a broader view. New programs that demonstrated the values of the humanities in contexts of career, public policy, and personal life gained support. Programs linking the humanities to scientific/technological areas attained

considerable prominence--resulting in almost a boom industry for philosophers--and helped pave the way for other broad-based efforts. The projects later examined in this essay are part of this general change; so, too, were programs that sought new career opportunities for historians, philosophers, and other humanists outside their classrooms.

Pressure from practically minded adult students, who now represent a significant market in higher education, forced humanists to rethink the applicable values of their disciplines. Eloquent and persistent spokespersons for the humanities remained steadfast in their efforts, and the cumulative effect of articles, commissions, and conferences had noticeable impact. New definitions of liberal learning also developed that accommodated broader approaches by humanists. These definitions emphasized the "outcomes or characteristics" nurtured by liberal learning "rather than fields of study that are usually associated with it."[5]

Liberal learning, newly defined, is non-technical, broadly applicable, long-lived, and stresses individual reasoning, questioning, and critical judgments. The humanities form the basic foundation of liberal learning, but they must be taught and studied within this new definition. And the skills, attitudes, and understandings that result from liberal learning make an appealing package for tough-minded businesses and career-minded students. Indeed, liberal learning and the humanities comprise that often hidden dimension of education that makes for success beyond the entry-level. The new definition of liberal learning, and funding programs that incorporate it, have made business and business students more eager partners.

Changing attitudes, new definitions, and program initiative now make it possible to connect the humanities and business again. A fragile basis exists now to support more research and cooperative activities. It's foolish to imagine that a broad-based movement in higher education and business favors such bridge building; nor is it clear that current support will last beyond hard times in higher education. The background of activity now underway and, indeed, the roots of this present conference counsel caution. Nevertheless, the success of further efforts to link the humanities and business is possible if past mistakes are clearly understood.

Now, with apologies for this none too brief introduction and its speculations, let's survey several project models that combine the humanities and business.

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What are colleges and business doing at present to connect liberal learning, especially the humanities, with business careers? How can the humanities and business cooperate to mutual advantage? A survey of recent programs reveals several approaches that include: (1) executive-in-residence and executive institutes; (2) internships for students and faculty; (3) career exploration programs for students; (4) consultations with business professionals, mentoring networks, and updated advising on careers; (5) combined humanities/business majors, curriculum innovation; (6) comprehensive cooperative strategies; (7) corporate training and placement.

These approaches have worked successfully as evidenced by several projects across the country in each category. A survey of these projects reveals that internships, career exploration and career planning, curriculum innovations, and updated advising techniques are most common as strategies. The success of projects in other categories (such as industry hiring and placement, liberal learning programs with corporations, non-traditional programs) will multiply their use as strategies. These projects are critical to convincing academics and business that the skills, attitudes, and understandings common to the humanities have marketplace value. They also are essential in changing the attitudes of decision-makers, both in business and on campus with regard to study in the humanities. But more of this later.

In the profiles that follow, I will select a limited but prominent group of projects to demonstrate each strategy of bridge building. That process, unfortunately, leaves out several worthy projects in each category. When possible, I will comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the models and highlight their results.[6]

Executive-in-residence, Executive Institute Models

Birmingham-Southern College started an executive-in-residence program with a Kellogg Foundation grant.

Executives within the local business community take a two-week sabbatical on campus. In that time, they attend seminars and roundtable discussions on general themes of interest (such as "The Information Society"), work on individual research projects and study, and often teach and attend classes. Most of the thirty participants are on the vice-presidents' level in area corporations (such as South Central Bell, IBM, Birmingham News, Inc., Alabama By-Products). They are joined by executives from state and local government agencies. These executives extend their learning and their humanities study through the general themes selected each year, through lectures and panelists from the faculty, and through individual projects each participant undertakes. The program quietly highlights liberal learning by blending it with the practical, career concerns of participants.

This blending process makes Birmingham-Southern College's program one that attracts full enrollments. The opportunity to study an individual interest or company issue also stimulates participation. The relatively compact time period of residence should be noted as well. Two weeks, perhaps, would mark the maximum time available to most busy executives for a residency.

The executives who have completed the residence--over 100 to date--express "more appreciation" for liberal learning as a result of their experiences. Their understanding of liberal learning outcomes in relation to business careers is sharpened through individual research and discussions with faculty. Although most participants come with a "built-in favorable bias" toward liberal learning, their individual projects and discussions with faculty also increase their understanding of possible career applications. The program boasts additional dividends in terms of student internships, employment contacts, and enhanced relationships between the College and local corporations.

The general model of executive-in-residence has merit for many colleges. However, such programs must take into account the time burdens on executives, desires to combine general discussion with business problem-solving, and high expectations of quality learning experiences. Finally, if faculty are not involved in the planning and activities of the residency programs, student and faculty learning are less likely to benefit. In effect, the executive-in-resident model should not be separated from the whole curriculum and faculty development.

Internships for Students and Faculty

The Humanities Internship Program at Scripps College integrates the world of work with on-campus study for humanities majors. This internship program is distinguished by its humanities base and its mixture of study in the humanities with internship experience.

Students are selected for the program based on academic performance records, potential to benefit the internship system, and faculty recommendations. Once selected, these students are placed in internships that match their job skills and career interests. Added to internship activities, students attend weekly seminars in which they study contemporary and traditional humanities works (such as Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn, Sir Thomas More's Utopia, Studs Terkel's Working, Franz Kafka's The Castle) and examine topics such as women and work, capitalism and socialism, and work ethics. Faculty members from a variety of academic fields--history, literature, philosophy, and political science--team teach the seminar. The first half of each seminar is devoted to the discussion of readings; in the last hour, students compare their working experiences to ideas discovered in their readings. Weekly journals and a final report on internship learning are required for all participating students.

The humanities base and the special seminars that accompany it help focus the learning experiences for students at Scripps; also, on-the-job skills and training are put into a larger framework. The comparative dimension--academic study and workplace learning--would be difficult for student interns to ignore, providing that this dimension is stressed in both environments. Another benefit of this approach is its availability early in a student's academic career. In fact, starting such an internship process as sophomores may better motivate students and improve their classroom learning experience.

On the faculty side, the Bridges Project at St. Olaf College (Minnesota) aims at a key issue for liberal arts institutions: "the need to involve faculty more actively as advisors." The project starts with the assumption that faculty must and do counsel students about careers. Faculty provide students with information about the work world and help them make career choices both in formal classroom settings and through informal contacts. The Bridges Project attempts to

give liberal arts faculty at St. Olaf a better view of current occupations and an informed glimpse of future career trends. As a result, faculty can better advocate a balanced blend of liberal learning and career study to help their students.

Six faculty from St. Olaf have participated in summer internships to date, with another three faculty internships scheduled for next summer. Faculty have generally selected corporations in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, and commute from St. Olaf. Faculty participate in interviews and site visits prior to their internship participation. Their internship proposals must match the needs of the corporations that sponsor them.

Faculty interns from humanities disciplines can offer assistance to corporations in several categories; for example,

1. legislative history and analysis;

2. discussion of ethical issues related to company policies;

3. evaluation and translation of foreign language documents;

4. marketing issues;

5. research projects; and

6. review and critique of written documents.

Faculty interns can also help clarify the specific abilties liberal arts students can offer to future employers.

The faculty internship strategy promises several benefits to colleges--such as working examples of how liberal learning skills and understandings can be applied in business settings, experiential learning for faculty, better informed student advising, new relationships between liberal arts colleges and business; however, St. Olaf has experienced difficulty in fully implementing their program.

Cost is a major inhibiting factor for faculty internships. Unless a grant pays for the cost of faculty replacements, either the college or the sponsoring business must pay a participant's salary. The St. Olaf project asks the internship sponsor to pay a summer's

salary for the faculty member. Hard economic times have made it difficult to locate a wide range of sponsors in the business community. As a result, only a few interns can be placed from St. Olaf; and those interns are all from the social sciences and natural sciences. In addition, an on-campus coordinator is necessary to develop contacts with business sponsors and to assist faculty interns in developing proposals. These costs can make a successful faculty internship project an expensive proposition.

Career Exploration Programs for Students

Closely related to student internships are the several campus-based programs for career exploration. Strategies that serve liberal arts students in this general category include career/life planning courses and workshops, alumni employment surveys, and specialized placement office activities.

Career/life planning is a nationwide industry that involves most college campuses and could be an important bridging mechanism. The majority of career/life planning courses and materials, however, do not specifically serve liberal arts students or consciously link the humanities to business careers. Career/life planning has incorporated some material from the humanities, and campus programs are working more directly with the liberal arts major who must prepare for a business career. But much work remains to be done. College career centers must work closely with faculty to develop materials for liberal arts students and faculty advising.

Miami University (Ohio) helps its students explore careers through the Baccalaureate Graduate Placement Survey. The College of Arts and Sciences has surveyed over 1,000 of its graduates about their post-graduation activities. The survey data give current students a picture of which career opportunities are open to specific liberal arts majors. Survey results are presented to students when they first enter the university and are available through faculty advisors. Students thus gain a general idea by occupational trends and, more specifically, they can examine how major fields of study apply to possible future careers.

Indiana University operates a specialized placement office for Arts and Sciences students. The office

opened in 1978 because of faculty concern about declining employment opportunities for students--and matching declines in enrollments. The Arts and Sciences Placement Office offers several services: workshops and job search strategies, resume writing and interviewing, individual counseling, and outreach programs for special groups and majors within the Arts and Sciences area. In addition, the Office has developed a book for the liberal arts student (For Your Action: A Practical Guide For the Liberal Arts Student) that includes self-assessment techniques, evaluation and employment opportunities, and background on the placement process. Students can also take credit courses in career development and placement.

Consultations with Business Professionals, Mentoring Networks, and Updated Advising on Careers

Consultations with working professionals in business allow students to get information on careers, clarify career goals and matching educational strategies, and receive critical judgments on educational planning. Moreover, the consultation process can perhaps best convince students about the value of liberal learning in business careers. The University of Cincinnati has an alumni consultation and advising program that serves over 800 students in a year. Some 600 alumni representing 75 occupations have participated as consultants. Miami University, in addition to its graduate career survey, has a videotape project that examines the connection between liberal learning and business success. These videotape interviews are conducted with prominent alumni who have found liberal learning of value to their careers and personal lives. Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania follows a similar approach in its Alumni Career Tape Program. Taped interviews of Gettysburg alumni at their workplaces concentrate on the issues that liberal arts students face in making career decisions.

Alumni are also central to the mentoring networks that several liberal arts colleges have constructed. These mentoring networks provide similar information to consultations but establish more lengthy contacts for students. Swarthmore College students spend spring breaks working with alumni. This begins a mentoring process in which students can weigh their tentative career choices with a working professional. At Wheaton

College (Massachusetts) juniors are paired with alumni and other professionals to discuss career plans, appraise career opportunities, and examine possible pitfalls. Finally, the Alumni Contact System at Alverno College (Wisconsin) contains a network of professionals interested in the career decision-making of students. This system features a series of videotapes that reveals issues and problems facing women entering the professions.

Several colleges have updated their advising programs for faculty and students in the liberal arts. Faculty advisors at Carleton College in Minnesota are now more directly involved in career advising. Carleton's project, "Balancing Career Planning and Liberal Learning," trains one member from each academic department as a career advisor. Each career advisor is responsible for advising departmental majors on careers, gathering career information for the department, and developing the career awareness of other faculty members. Part of the training process involves alumni from various career fields and liberal arts majors. Another Minnesota college, Gustavus Adolphus, has developed a videotape project that helps students identify liberal learning skills useful to careers. The videotape also includes a major job interview between a liberal arts student and a business employer. The Dayton-Hudson Corporation supplies production assistance as well as participation by an executive officer.

Combined Humanities/Business Majors, Curriculum Innovation

Projects in this category are like those in other areas of curriculum development: expensive to initiate, difficult to develop across departmental and campus divisions, and impossible to sustain without campuswide support from faculty, students, and administration. Despite these difficulties, or perhaps because of them, successful projects that combine the humanities with business study and more closely link the two through curriculum innovation are notable. They involve key groups (such as faculty, business schools, executives) that must help connect the humanities with business; also, the projects set a basic standard within higher education about the necessary learning blend of the humanities and career study. In this category, the University of Kansas School of Business, Rice University, Penn State University, and Tougaloo College (Mississippi) are leading examples.

The University of Kansas School of Business encourages its students to design a humanities concentration through their elective credits. With support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the business college and liberal arts faculty have cooperated in curriculum development. The result is six humanities sequences for future managers: Business and Philosophy, Business and History, Business and English, Language and Foreign Area Studies, Junior-Senior Honors Seminars, and Co-Communications Clinic for Business Majors. One of the Junior-Senior Honors Seminars concentrates on business for humanities majors.

Another aspect of the project at Kansas is Professors-in-Residence. To reduce barriers between business and liberal learning, humanities and business professors exchange colleges to audit courses and lecture, meet with faculty for discussions, and serve as resource persons. After the residences, these faculty members continue to serve as liaisons between the two areas. Unlike too many grant projects, Kansas plans to make its efforts permanent and to further build on them. This decision reflects the university-wide support necessary for such projects to succeed.

Rice University, as part of a larger project for humanities students, offers a six-week summer institute for graduating humanities majors. Sponsored by the School of Administration, this summer institute deals with business enterprise, principal elements of the business environment, and basic management tools. The institute helps explain why business operates as it does and, at the same time, concentrates on those skills most essential for successful managers. Students participate in the institute following an internship experience of approximately 12 weeks.

Students in the Rice University project can build on their internship experiences, gain important perspectives from business administration fields, and prepare more exactly for employment interviews. In addition, area corporations are encouraged to interview humanities majors as part of regular campus recruiting efforts.

Since 1968, Tougaloo College has offered an interdisciplinary humanities program that combines the traditional liberal arts, concentration in a humanities discipline, and specialization in a career area. This comprehensive approach includes specially designed

courses in career areas and the humanities, team teaching, and internships. Penn State University has a non-major that combines business and liberal arts study, aimed at integrated understanding of the relationship and the application of liberal learning to the business world. Students can add this option to any major sequence, and a certificate accompanies the student's transcripts attesting to the learning experiences. This program grew from student demand within the liberal arts college. It allows students to complete their liberal arts majors while documenting a coherent course of study in business--a tactic that personnel directors recommend to the non-business student. Cooperation between liberal arts and business faculty once again has influenced the success of this program.

University of Iowa students can combine career skills development and liberal learning within academic career clusters. Career clusters contain specific courses from liberal arts departments at Iowa that develop skills for a variety of occupations. The career cluster project uses existing courses to integrate career skills and liberal learning. The approach assists students who have already selected majors and those who are still undecided. It pinpoints skills requisite to certain careers, leads students in their career selection search, and identifies the preparation and credentials prospective employers seek.

Students and faculty at Iowa use a Clusters Source Book that lists academic clusters defined by occupation (such as corporate communications, human resource management, publishing, international affairs). The volume also identifies competencies associated with each occupational category and recommends specific coursework for students.

Working professionals are often invited to campus as seminar participants and discussion leaders. These off-campus professionals also review and update the source book. Students strongly support the project, and the advantages of the cluster concept--use of existing courses, integration of career and liberal learning, focus on career planning, faculty involvement, and advising from career professionals--make it an attractive alternative for other colleges.

Comprehensive Cooperative Strategies

Metropolitan State University (Minneapolis) and Spelman College (Atlanta)--to cite two interesting examples among several--combine most strategies previously discussed into comprehensive systems. Each institution uses internships, career/educational planning, business advisory resources, and specialized curriculum design to link liberal learning and business career preparation. Cooperation between campus and business is essential to these educational systems. In each case, integration of the humanities with career planning, college study, and career preparation is a major objective.

The Metro U system is worth detailing because the majority of students are headed for business careers. Indeed, most Metro U students interested in business careers are already employed and want to advance into management positions. The Metro U upper-division system does not depend on distribution and course requirements; students plan individualized degree studies. Initially, the humanities are a low priority for these career-minded students. They must be persuaded that the humanities have value for their careers and life goals. And it's here that cooperative strategies linking the university with the business community assist and refine student decision-making.

Each student completes an educational planning course as a prerequisite to degree candidacy. This course includes research on liberal learning, careers, and the concept of an educated person; it also involves readings in a specially designed book on the humanities. The readings book helps define the disciplines commonly associated with the humanities, reviews how humanists approach study in those disciplines, identifies possible approaches to learning in the humanities (such as courses, independent study, internships, community-based learning), and examines how study in the humanities has value for careers, public policy decisions, and individual development.

The planning course also demands that students consult with a working professional about their intended degree studies. These consultants (over three hundred), drawn from the professional community and representing a wide variety of expertise, primarily advise students on career preparation and study. However, they also provide students with working examples of how liberal

learning and the humanities positively influence careers. Consultants receive special training from the university faculty and are encouraged to accept a key role on behalf of humanities study.

Finally, a system of content reviews for student degree plans and faculty advising emphasizes the importance of the humanities to career success beyond the entry-level. Content reviews examine student degree plans for appropriate study in the humanities and make specific suggestions for students to discuss with their advisors. Faculty advisors regularly discuss issues related to liberal learning and career study as part of their advising training. The university has recently developed a book of readings on liberal learning and business careers.

Spelman College's comprehensive approach forms close working ties among faculty, alumni, business executives, student counselors and other administrative personnel. The result of this wide-ranging cooperation is an enrichment and support program that includes

1. mentoring programs for first year students;
2. faculty and administrative corporate internships;
3. student internships;
4. student-alumni externships;
5. black executive exchanges;
6. executives-in-residence;
7. lecture series;
8. a computer-based career guidance and information system, and
9. seminars and workshops on career development.

The Spelman College program promotes activities in a variety of campus settings outside classrooms and includes corporate sites throughout the United States.

Corporate Training and Placement

Few corporations have launched ambitious, specialized hiring and placement programs for liberal arts graduates. Despite the success of the general management training program at American Can Company, the project to recruit liberal arts graduates at General Motors, and the documented sudies of liberal arts majors in AT&T Bell System management, corporations have continued hiring policies geared primarily to technically trained students and business school graduates. Corporate hiring continues at odds with the liberal learning rhetoric of top executives, and complaints about poor writing, analytic, and communication skills are rarely accompanied by new personnel decision-making techniques.

American Can Company's general management training program grants liberal arts graduates a rare career development chance. The program started at the initiative of top executives. These individuals identified a company need to expand the future management pool in terms of educational and professional backgrounds. As American Can described the decision: "The standard hiring policies of our corporation and many others usually concentrate on the selection of individuals with specific technical or business skills for entry-level positions." The company decided to reverse that practice and include among its hiring, "individuals with more general skills and the potential for long-range contributions."

Participants in what is titled the General Associates Program receive a broad exposure to business areas of the company. As "general associates," program participants from various liberal arts backgrounds are not required to select a specialty area immediately. Rather, they are assigned line and staff capacities in five or six departments. Once completing these assignments and gaining an overview of company operations, the general associates are better prepared to select an interest area and a starting position.

The training period for general associates lasts 9-15 months. During that time, assignments are individualized so that the general associates have "significant control over the mix and duration of assignments." These assignments are usually completed at Corporate Headquarters in Greenwich, Connecticut--though one assignment is targeted for a field location. The general associates can choose from the following categories:

business research, communications, creative design services, data processing, human resources, internal audit, international, marketing, logistics, sales, and quality assurance. Some of these departments engage the general associates in ongoing work, while others call for a series of short-term tasks.

Once the general associates have finished the training program, they are qualified to assume a permanent position in the company. The information gathering and the contacts made through training assignments facilitate the choice of a permanent assignment. General associates have achieved positions of significant authority within the company, and they have generally proven the value of applied liberal learning skills.

The importance of programs like that initiated at American Can Company merits summarizing. First, these programs give individuals with liberal learning backgrounds the chance to demonstrate the applicable values of their educations, and theories about the career value of liberal learning and the humanities are verified. Second, business gains the opportunity to reexamine some of its personnel decision-making with case studies and reasonable evidence. More programs like the General Associates project at American Can Company--and success by individuals selcted to participate--may directly influence business hiring as well as stimulate projects in higher education. The direct and indirect influence of business on higher educaticn is clear; and those who support the humanities and liberal learning should include that reality in long-term planning.

Another significant project--that duplicates the positive results of corporate training and placement programs--developed through cooperation between Dana Corporation, Denison University, and Hillsdale College. For the past seven years, students and faculty from area colleges have participated in a three-week seminar on business topics (that includes on-site case studies at Dana Corporation headquarters in Toledo, Ohio).

Students and faculty spend the first week viewing business activities in a broad framework including a review of economics, a functional description of management, and an examination of the corporation in society. Following the first week's preparation, participants travel to Dana Corporation for case studies with business personnel. These on-site case studies examine

topics such as finance and control, planning and acquisitions, government relations, labor negotiations, and managing a plant. In the final seminar week, students and faculty compare the experience at Dana Corporation with their theoretical classroom learning.

The Dana Corporation-Denison-Hillsdale model and other projects in which business sponsors liberal arts study for its employees have great promise for changing attitudes and providing valuable learning experiences. Funds for such projects remain difficult to secure, however, both for business and higher education. And the tuition reimbursement policies of most corporations and businesses are rooted in technical, career-related studies. Few personnel departments across the country are willing to sponsor cooperative, in-house liberal learning opportunities for their employees; nor are they prepared to underwrite study in the humanities for the same group.[7] Employed students are thus forced into technical training and business administration study.

This rough summary of cooperative projects that connect higher education and business covers many strategies now in use. Though incomplete, the summary does have value; it

1. corrects much of the dreary prophecy now attached to the humanities;

2. demonstrates the success of joint ventures between the humanities and the business world;

3. suggests that humanists, in small but influential number, have rediscovered their greater educational mission and have constructed strategies to help achieve it, and

4. reveals that business, in part, has recognized anew the long term, market value of liberal learning skills, attitudes, and understandings.

But what are the next steps? Which current projects have earned priority for the coming years? Which items in the "old business" file should be resolved? What new directions can humanities and business now explore?

Before new directions can be explored, current projects should be reviewed, and effective projects--both in terms of cost and educational results--should be retained and expanded. The review process should consider these questions: How strongly does a project connect the humanities to business careers? How much impact does a project have on learning by students, faculty, and the business community? Does a project change attitudes and promote further support for humanities study? Is a project economically feasible? Can it be sustained past initial grant funding? How many participants does a project attract? In other words, money is short and greater numbers of students, faculty, and businesspersons must be reached than at present. Some strategies now in use may fail this review process because they can't deliver cost-effective results and reach significant audiences. Further, much evidence supports the idea that small grants to motivated, interested groups are quite effective. Large funding opportunities are nice, of course, but they tend to get bogged down in campus bureaucracy and infighting. Those major grants are perhaps best saved for curriculum innovations that, in most cases, require considerable financial support. In the area of cooperative projects, grants of $5,000 and under can be distributed wisely, include greater numbers, and have strong impact.

One current strategy, that costs more than others but has tremendous effect, deserves increased attention; that is, corporate training and placement. This strategy documents to doubters the worth of the humanities in the "real world." No amount of rhetoric can beat this proof. Studies of the relationship between college major and business success should be expanded with support by colleges and corporations. Colleges should also document the business career paths of their alumni more carefully and develop their alumni mentoring and consultation possibilities. Further research by colleges and business should examine the relationship between long-term and short-term hiring efficiencies; also, the gap between corporate rhetoric on liberal learning and the actual hiring process should be analyzed.

Some matters of old business must be resolved if current projects are to be successfully expanded and new ones initiated. In particular, the breach between business schools and liberal arts programs must be closed. The two sides should explore means by which to combine resources and to pursue more unified educational goals. On the one side, liberal arts programs don't

encourage students to gain the general knowledge and preliminary experiences necessary for business careers; on the other side, business programs don't offer students the full range of skills, understandings, and attitudes necessary for career success beyond the entry level. Job applicants from both areas often are too specialized, lacking first-hand knowledge of their intended business career areas, and start careers without mastery of basic process skills (such as communications, analysis, research). Liberal learning and business study should be reconnected in higher education through curriculum projects, faculty exchanges, and increased communication. Students shouldn't have to pay a price for bickering between the liberal arts and business faculty. The natural links between liberal learning and business study should be restored.

Tuition reimbursement policies for working adult students also remain a stumbling block. Tuition reimbursement policies that narrowly define career-related study make it difficult to promote liberal learning and the humanities. Restricted tuition reimbursement policies limit opportunity and career development for adult students; those policies also undercut the force of arguments that promote liberal learning and the humanities.

Several strategies should be explored as future cooperative projects.

First, business and higher education should better define what makes a successful manager. Most students don't understand that career success beyond the entry level involves more than specialized business knowledge, even though these same students will undoubtedly aspire to managerial positions. It's hard to imagine that definitions of a successful manager will ignore skills, attitudes, and understanding acquired in the liberal arts, and specifically, the humanities. Curriculum development, faculty advising, career planning, and industry education programs would be greatly enhanced by continued research on the question: What makes a successful manager?

Second, students in the humanities and liberal arts must learn how to articulate their learning in terms of skills, attitudes, and understandings directly relevant to business careers. This means that humanists must pay more attention to the career context of humanities

study; they must also teach liberal learning outcomes in their disciplines along with specialized content. Humanities students can't expect that personnel interviewers and others in business will automatically know or appreciate what the study of history, philosophy, or literature means for career success.

Third, colleges and business should encourage projects that detail career options for humanities students within local areas. These local guides to career options in business should be available to students early in their college careers. They would be an important complement to internship programs, consultations, career planning and exploration, combined study options, and career advising projects such as the University of Iowa's career cluster.

Fourth, the continuing education of business personnel in the humanities should be cooperatively explored. Why should in-house training and development be restricted to technical information and management techniques?

Employee development projects led by humanists using approaches and materials from their disciplines could focus on the development of critical thinking skills, concept clarification, research techniques and analysis, communications, and so on. It's obvious that many issues facing American business today require the philosopher and the historian; it's equally obvious that many favored management techniques and organizational plans need the critical analysis that humanists can provide.

Fifth, those who support the link between humanities and business must realize that high schools and parents must be re-educated. High school systems seldom send students into higher education and the professions with any idea of what the humanities are, much less what they offer for business study and business careers. Parents of college-bound students also suffer from misinformation and ill-conceived ideas regarding the humanities--and their attitudes are critical to their children's academic choices. Informed parents could help reverse skepticism about the humanities and liberal learning. Convincing parents that the humanities are not contrary to post-graduation employment and career success would accomplish much. The investment/return fears that parents and students share about the

humanities are considerable. And these fears complicate the educational goals of college-level study before classes begin.

The cooperative projects reviewed already and those just suggested might be items for a future agenda. This conference can determine their value and pinpoint other possibilities. Whichever projects this conference finally recommends as new or continuing activities will proceed from a strong base of support. The humanities and business know how to cooperate on successful learning ventures that promote study in the humanities. Current cooperative projects are widespread and effective; their success in combining the humanities and business for a common goal must be extended. Perhaps the recovery of the humanities as a whole enterprise will be the welcome result.

Footnotes

1. Report of the Commission on the Humanities, The Humanities in American Life (Berkeley, 1980), p. 3.

2. Alston Chase, The Humanities as Group Memory (St. Paul, 1979), p. 3.

3. Association of American Colleges, Conference Report, Building Bridges Between Business and Campus (April 23-24, 1981), p. 2.

4. A more detailed examination of the link between liberal learning and business careers, drawn from a conference including CEOs, personnel directors, and others is found in Thomas B. Jones, ed., Liberal Learning and Business Careers (St. Paul, 1981).

   The values of liberal learning are not always guaranteed by liberal arts coursework; nor is liberal learning always restricted to the liberal arts curriculum.

5. Association of American Colleges, Statement on Liberal Learning.

6. My summaries of these projects are drawn from various sources. See particularly various publications from the Association of American Colleges including Liberal Learning and Careers, Conference Reports (December 3-4, 1981, Philadelphia; April 1-2, 1982, Chicago; November 18-19, 1982, New Orleans); The Forum for Liberal Education, Volume III, Number II (November, 1980) and Volume IV, Number 6 (May/June, 1982). I have also conducted in-person and telephone interviews with several project directors.

7. A significant exception and a model for future development is found in the joint Associate of Arts/Bachelor of Arts program undertaken by INA and the University of Pennsylvania. All classes are held at INA headquarters in Philadelphia and INA pays tuition and fees directly to the university.