

NATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION  
*of* SCHOLARS



# Curriculum for Liberty

# Introduction

## America's Academic Decay

The National Association of Scholars (NAS) “uphold[s] the standards of a liberal arts education that fosters intellectual freedom, searches for the truth, and promotes virtuous citizenship.”<sup>1</sup> In 1987, when the NAS was formed, our founders sought to reclaim our colleges and universities from the harmful effects of a generation of radical academics and administrators. They feared that if these radicals maintained their control over higher education, they would do grave damage to the American republic. How could America survive if its institutions of higher education taught generations of students to despise their country and its liberty, to repress and exclude all but a radical fringe, to reject academic standards and rigor? The NAS dedicated itself to a higher-education curriculum of liberty both to redeem our universities and to ward off a grave peril to our country.

We were too few to succeed. Higher education's establishment became ever more radical, authoritarian, and incompetent—and they indeed have done grave damage to the republic as they educated an equally radical, authoritarian, and incompetent leadership for America's government and civil society. America in 2023, legatee of the global ascendancy established by its forefathers, has become a decaying empire. Academia's decay has become America's.

America was a land of tinkerers and engineers. Now American higher education fails to educate our young in the scientific and engineering disciplines whose technological fruit forms the modern sinews of power. Our university science departments and our laboratories have depended for generations on attracting foreigners, since we no longer produce native-born talent. The headlines tell the result: China, not America, is the new leader in vital technologies such as supercomputing, artificial intelligence, 5G communications, and hypersonic missiles.<sup>2</sup> America's science education cannot sustain our country against its global rivals.

America was a land of the self-reliant—the farmer, the businessman, the sturdy souls of private life. Now American higher education produces ever-increasing numbers of personnel for the managerial-therapeutic state—teachers and social workers, counselors and human resources staff, and all the bureaucrats who staff every private and public bureaucracy and whisper that we cannot pursue our happiness without their well-paid, professional

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1 “About Us,” National Association of Scholars, <https://www.nas.org/about-us>.

2 Graham Allison and Jonah Glick-Unterman, *The Great Military Rivalry: China vs the U.S.* (Cambridge: Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, 2021), [https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/files/publication/GreatMilitaryRivalry\\_ChinavsUS\\_211215\\_1.pdf](https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/files/publication/GreatMilitaryRivalry_ChinavsUS_211215_1.pdf).

guidance.<sup>3</sup> America's professional education mass-produces administrators who manufacture permanently dependent clients to justify their salaries.

America was a land of the free and the virtuous. Now American higher education inculcates tyranny, conformity, and depravity. It forms elites who are unconcerned with law or liberty and are confident that they should impose on their countrymen, by any means they possess, their perverse ideology of "liberation." It also teaches Americans who are less devoted to tyranny to yield in silence to the whims of the radical elites and to seek compensation for their servility in debauchery. Sexual license, personal expenditure, gluttony—American higher education urges Americans to satisfy every personal desire, so long as they bend their knees to the politics of the new regime. America's character education jointly eliminates self-control and self-rule.

I now write to propose the Curriculum of Liberty, in the spirit of the NAS's principles, which will educate American college students toward freedom, the pursuit of truth, and virtuous citizenship, with a double goal in mind. In the short term, Americans must learn the lessons of self-reliance, liberty, and virtue to make it possible for them to secure decent livelihoods under an indecent regime, to endure their corrupt elites, and to reclaim our nation. In the long term, Americans should equip themselves with the scientific education needed to sustain America in its competition with rivals such as China—now our technological peers, and soon our superiors, if the crippling policies of our elites continue in force. Our nation should be free, and it should be capable of greatness in the world.

I offer the Curriculum of Liberty keenly aware that it is only the latest of a great many sketches on how to redo higher education—many of them worthy, few of them influential. But the National Association of Scholars has been offering a great many policy reforms the last few years, and I think that it is worth articulating a basic vision of higher education, which I take to be in accordance with NAS principles, to provide a background for those proposed policy reforms. Then too, the new surge of successfully enacted education reform policies offers the possibility that a sketch of education reform principles may indeed have real-world effect.

The Curriculum of Liberty's vision is articulated as much in the Introduction's essayistic account of America's ideals and current national challenges as in the curricular details that follow. I hope that readers will find both halves of the Curriculum of Liberty to be useful as an orienting account of what American higher education has been, is, and should be.

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3 Paul Edward Gottfried, *After Liberalism: Mass Democracy in the Managerial State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

## Endurance and Redemption

Americans face a dramatic narrowing of their economic opportunities. Ever fewer Americans can maintain themselves in the middle class—and generally they must do so by having both parents in the family work and having the children take out crippling loans to attend college, where they acquire the education credential that has become the prerequisite for most well-paid jobs.<sup>4</sup> These remaining good jobs belong largely to the bureaucracies of governments (teachers, policemen, social workers) and corporations (human resources, managers, accountants). The narrowing economic opportunity for Americans breeds servility—and universities habituate students to this servility, providing ideological justifications such as *social justice* or *diversity, equity, and inclusion* to rationalize the increasingly authoritarian culture of the managerial-therapeutic regime.

Higher education must continue to qualify students for these bureaucratic positions. This is a devil's bargain, since the education credentials for administrative career tracks increasingly require indoctrination by such means as *social justice competencies* or *diversity rubrics*. Yet America's remaining middle class families will only support higher education if it continues to qualify students for these jobs.

American higher education must do so while also educating students to seek alternate employment, to make themselves economically self-reliant, to form a national counter-culture, and to form a network of new, national institutions, independent of our authoritarian and anti-American elites. American higher education must provide the spiritual, educational, and institutional framework for a rebirth of the American nation.

American higher education must teach a series of ideals to counter the siren calls of *diversity* and *social justice*. These must include not only affection for the ideals and institutions of the republic—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—but also affection for and identification with the American nation. The twenty-first century is indeed a global one, in which the acid of liquid modernity<sup>5</sup> has dissolved an extraordinary number of old affections and allegiances. It is precisely because the acid of globalism is so strong that American higher education should dedicate itself consciously to fostering an American national identity, to teaching students the achievements and principles of America so they can know what it means to be and act as Americans. Such Americanism also will counter the complementary acid of group identity politics. American students must be taught to identify themselves with their neighborhoods, their towns, and their states, and above all with the American nation, conceived in liberty. American higher education must foster American nationalism.

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4 Neetu Arnold, *Priced Out: What College Costs America* (New York: National Association of Scholars, 2021), <https://www.nas.org/reports/priced-out/full-report>.

5 Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000).

American higher education needs to educate an entire elite to staff new institutions dedicated to the American nation—businessmen and professors, doctors and lawyers, programmers and engineers, preachers and politicians. This elite must possess the character needed to sustain the American national movement. The current elite marshals not only outright censorship but also the softer shackles of disdain and social snobbery. American higher education must instill in these new elites the courage and self-confidence to speak boldly for the American nation and for liberty, to defy the elite consensus even if it is rude and *déclassé*. The survival of the American nation depends upon the creation of national institutions guided by courageous men and women who possess the qualities of leadership. American higher education animated by this vision will educate a new generation of Americans to endure their dispossession and to reclaim their land.

But a new American generation cannot be satisfied with regaining its country. A revived America will need to regain its primacy among a series of formidable rivals—above all, China.

## Greatness

Americans face not only a hostile elite but also increasingly effective strategic and economic competition from countries such as China, Russia, and India. We would face stiff competition simply from these rivals' effective pursuit of their national self-interest, but America's difficulties have been magnified by the decay of our system of higher education, which compounds longstanding frailties in our K-12 educational system and has rotted our ability to compete with foreign nations. America is falling behind its rivals economically, scientifically, technologically, and militarily.

One consequence is that a very large proportion of our graduate students and professors in the scientific and engineering disciplines are foreign born. A free and prosperous America could attract and absorb foreign-born scientific talent, but our increasingly authoritarian and stagnant America has already begun to cease attracting talent from abroad—and we have too few native substitutes available to replace them. Our scientific-industrial complex possesses a limited stock of home-grown human capital to sustain our national interest against foreign rivals.

American higher education must foster K-12 science education that prepares far more American students to take part in first-rate scientific and technological research. It must also directly provide the necessary advanced education. American higher education should prepare enough students for scientific and technological careers that we do not need foreign-born scientific talent to staff either our science education system or our technologically

advanced industries. America must be self-sufficient in the human capital it needs to compete with its foreign rivals.

America, in other words, must consciously adopt the modernization strategies that Brazil or Iran or Japan adopted in the postwar era as they sought to modernize their economies while establishing independence from Western companies and Western personnel. America's position is not identical to theirs. We have inherited a first-rate scientific infrastructure in our education system and our economy. Yet as these detach themselves from the American people, we are becoming functionally a colonized country, with no organic connection between our people and our scientific infrastructure. We must adopt policies that refill America's scientific infrastructure with native-born Americans whose affection for America inspires them to pursue America's national interest.

This should not be a difficult goal to achieve. It would astonish Americans of 1950, or even 1980, to discover that our nation of tinkerers, engineers, and researchers has so completely abandoned its scientific vocation. What Americans were in living memory, they can be again.

### Light in the Darkness

We also should preserve and continue the long conversation of Western civilization, especially as embodied in the liberal arts education of the university. The American tradition of liberty depends upon the defense of Western civilization, and we are scholars precisely because we love this conversation for its own sake. The radical elites seek to eradicate our Western heritage, the institutions of academic freedom, and the very ideal of disinterested inquiry to discover truth. These elites pose as grave a danger to Western civilization as they do to America and liberty.

Indeed, they may pose a worse danger to Western civilization. The radical elites have controlled the universities for longer than they have the commanding heights of America's government and civil society, and they have done worse damage in the academy. They also have contaminated universities abroad: academia worldwide is refashioning itself on the American model. America can be reformed; the world's universities almost certainly cannot.

America's universities, and the world's, confront a looming wall of darkness. The older liberal regime (*liberal* in the modern American sense) was rotten and biased, but it preserved a remnant sense of the importance of intellectual rigor, academic freedom, and the Western heritage. This thread snapped in the last generation. The rising generation of administrators and professors, activist barbarians who seek to destroy the very memory of Western civilization, has repudiated these ideals. The radical elites' seizure of the administrative choke-points of the academy means that this snapping is probably irreversible. The professoriate

that valued the old university has nearly departed the campus. Each retirement extinguishes another lamp dedicated to freedom and Western civilization. Soon none will remain.

Certainly American universities could undertake useful reforms. They should strengthen admissions requirements; re-adopt core curricula, including required instruction in American history and government; emphasize the teaching of advanced survey courses such as *Medieval European History* rather than the teaching of narrow specialty courses such as *The Gender History of Medieval Saints*; and devote themselves exclusively to classroom learning rather than experiential learning (e.g., service-learning, civic engagement, community learning). Entire institutions could adopt the Great Books model of St. John's College. I could add many more specific recommendations—and over the years the NAS has.<sup>6</sup> But detailed reform recommendations seem beside the point in the face of the stranglehold that the radical elites have established over the American university. They will not reform. Their policies guarantee its intellectual collapse.

Yet we must preserve our Western heritage and our ideals of disinterested inquiry. It may be idle to do so in terms of administrative reforms, but we may sketch the educational principles that will sustain the liberal arts. New colleges will spring forth on American soil, dedicated to free inquiry. The Curriculum of Liberty will allow them to build upon the best of Western heritage.

In so doing, we also should preserve higher education's American character.

## The American Character of Higher Education

Of course American higher education is as sprawling as America and as varied as Americans. Liberal arts education, shaped to educate the character, forms the core of our higher education system—but our colleges and universities also aim to prepare students for successful careers and to educate citizens capable of preserving the republic. As NAS President Peter Wood put it in *The Architecture of Intellectual Freedom*,

We rightly expect higher education to address four things: vocation, culture, truth, and character. ... Most institutions of higher education seek to weave these elements together. They seek some balance that will prepare each coming generation with the knowledge and skills to succeed in practical careers; endow each coming generation with a worthwhile knowledge of our own civilization and a lively understanding of the broader world; join each coming generation to the pursuit of truth; and shape the character of the individuals who make up that generation so that they become worthy and constructive citizens.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Report & Projects, National Association of Scholars, <https://www.nas.org/reports>.

<sup>7</sup> Peter Wood, *The Architecture of Intellectual Freedom* (New York: National Association of Scholars, 2016), <https://www>.

Vocational schools usually place greater emphasis on career training—as do schools that focus on pre-professional preparation, such as (just within New York City) the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Teachers College, the New York City College of Technology, and the SUNY College of Optometry. Schools such as St. John’s College or the University of Chicago place greater emphasis on a worthwhile knowledge of our own civilization. All American colleges combine, in varying proportions, these aspirations to teach vocation, culture, truth, and character.

American colleges and universities thereby have acquired a unique character within Western education. We Americans have emphasized the continuing importance of a general education, rather than an education that swiftly sorts students by academic promise into professional and vocational tracks, or which equally swiftly abandons general education for specialized education in tracks such as law, medicine, engineering, and history. We also have offered an unusually democratic college education. For much of the twentieth century, a far broader cohort of Americans went to college than did Europeans, and we reconceived the elite-forming aspects of college education into an egalitarian mode fit for a democratic republic. We also have fashioned a higher education system unusually open to second chances. America’s colleges welcome adults who seek to gain a college education for the first time, as well as adults who seek a new career. American higher education promotes the all-rounders and the late bloomers, as well as the man from the log cabin ambitious to rise in the world. Our excellences are not those of Oxford and the Sorbonne.

Neither are our failings. American colleges too often subordinate character education and knowledge of our civilization to career preparation. Character formation has decayed into the erection of the managerial-therapeutic state. American egalitarianism tends to erode any commitment to the idea of excellence and self-improvement,<sup>8</sup> and lately its enthusiasts have a sorry record of advocacy for the authoritarian *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion* regime. Our radical elites and their barbarous perversion of higher education are as characteristically American as our excellences and our ideals.

But for all their flaws, American colleges at their best offer a high road to the American dream.

## The American Promise of Higher Education

They do not offer the *only* road. Certainly the Puritans prized higher education; they founded Harvard College within a decade of the settlement of Massachusetts Bay. But scarcely any Americans went to college for centuries, and most prospered without its benefit. America honored its John Adamses and James Madisons—but Americans also expressed

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[nas.org/reports/the-architecture-of-intellectual-freedom/full-report](https://nas.org/reports/the-architecture-of-intellectual-freedom/full-report).

8 Anthony Kronman, *The Assault on American Excellence* (New York: Free Press, 2019).



a strong strain of suspicion and contempt for learned fools. Neither George Washington nor Abraham Lincoln were college graduates. The American dream has never *required* going to college.

Yet Americans have a strong sense of what college *should* provide, both to satisfy the soul and to make a good life for college graduates. These visions have grown stronger as higher education has assumed a larger role in American life. The Curriculum of Liberty grounds itself upon these dreams of the American promise of higher education.

One vision is of the poor small-town boy who uses college to raise himself to prosperity. James Garfield, who raised himself from rural Ohio poverty, to college education, to presidency of a small Ohio college, and ultimately to Congress and the Presidency, exemplifies one part of this vision. Booker T. Washington, who rose from slavery to the leadership of black America by way of seeking and promoting higher education, exemplifies another. College could give the ambitious boy from the log cabin a first-class ticket to the American elite.

Another vision is that college should sustain America's tapestry of religious pluralism. America is the nonpareil of the denominational college, established both to train clergy and to provide higher education within the tenets of each denomination's faith. Southern Methodist and Wesleyan, Loyola and Notre Dame, Calvin University and Grace College, Hebrew Union College and Yeshiva University—all were founded to forward denominational education, and many still do. America owes to Baptist denominational colleges the education both of Martin Luther King, Jr. (Morehouse) and Jerry Falwell (Baptist Bible).

Yet another vision is of college as the cradle of intellectual excellence. One part of this vision is that college should transmit Western civilization—the vision of Mortimer Adler, Allan Bloom, and every American who has cherished the excellent books that are the essential food for first-rate and creative minds. Another part is the vision of the postwar research university, with extraordinary resources and a cadre of professors capable of investigating anything in the universe—the vision of Fred Terman seeding Silicon Valley from Stanford University and thereby changing the world. Most importantly, this vision embraces college as a venue to spark free-wheeling debate and fierce ambition—the vision of the City College lunchroom where Irving Kristol argued with Irving Howe, Daniel Bell, and Nathan Glazer, and by their arguments set the intellectual agenda for postwar America.

The American people must know how to be virtuous and free, how to prosper and be self-reliant. They must know enough of science and technology for their country to flourish, and enough of their own history and government to grasp the nature of the republic they seek to maintain. They also should know how to participate in and perpetuate the long conversation of Western civilization. Why else struggle for the survival of American liberty and the prosperity of Americans?

This knowledge should be available for all Americans. A passing glance at the history of the world teaches that the poorest and humblest of mankind have blazed up with joy at the chance to learn these liberal arts.<sup>9</sup> They also have contributed with genius. The chemist Humphry Davy was the son of a woodcarver, the poet Robert Burns the son of a tenant farmer, and the philosopher Epictetus was born a slave. All American college students should acquire their birthright of a liberal education.

This vision of American higher education draws on these elements of the continually vital American tradition—that the poorest students can use college to achieve their wildest ambitions, that college should sustain America’s religious pluralism, that college should teach students to think and argue well, and that college should pass on to our posterity America’s inheritance of Western civilization and liberal learning.

### American Higher Education’s New Mission

The present task of American higher education is more difficult than it has been in any previous generation. The universities no longer seek to educate students to seek excellence, liberty, and truth. The governmental and corporate elites no longer prize the American people’s liberty, security, prosperity, happiness, or republic. Interlocking public and private bureaucracies have seized the commanding heights of America’s institutions, where they preach submission to the elites’ authoritarian imposition of a cultural revolution. American elites and institutions seek with diligence to destroy America’s exceptional liberty; to make Americans ashamed of their nation and its history; to create a workforce of submissive, underpaid workers divided by identity politics; and to propagandize the nation’s youth to acquiesce in the loss of their liberty and their nation. American elites and institutions have abandoned America.

American universities also seek to educate students badly mis-educated in the K-12 schools. This is a terrible Catch-22: we have to reform our universities to reform our K-12 schools, not least by educating a new cadre of teachers for the K-12 schools, but we have to reform the K-12 schools to provide students capable of rigorous university education. Education reform must proceed at all levels; the Curriculum of Liberty requires a K-12 counterpart. I do not provide that counterpart here, but I know one is needed.

The advocates of American higher education must continue to support the nation and the republic, but from a position of exile from its institutions—above all, from its colleges and universities. American higher education must provide Americans the ability to endure this regime and the tools to reclaim the republic and make it great once more.

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<sup>9</sup> Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, 3rd ed. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2021).

I phrase these recommendations in terms of broad principles. I know that the current universities are rotten and that they will not accept these recommendations. These are the principles of higher education for the American people, to guide them as they found new institutions or as they reclaim old institutions and reform them root and branch.

I also phrase these recommendations in terms of general liberal education—what every American college graduate should learn to educate his character and serve the republic. I include education appropriate for careers, above all scientific ones, not least to serve the republic and its restoration. But I do not emphasize career preparation, even though every American should be prepared for a good job. Each career requires a different preparation, while the education for character and to serve the republic applies equally and universally to all college students. Moreover, a college education fundamentally is *for* educating character and serving the republic. I write here about that fundamental purpose.

I articulate these recommendations in terms of Education Structure and nine educational sequences. The nine sequences are each subdivided into four individual components. I realize that no college is likely to include everything I recommend. If each recommendation were embodied as a stand-alone course, it would scarcely leave room for an advanced education. Individual colleges should select from these nine sequences to fit their own programs of education—as any student should select from them to educate himself. These sequences are meant to articulate educational priorities rather than to prescribe an educational program.

I also provide a brief Appendix of survey courses that would forward the Curriculum of Liberty (see **Appendix 1: Survey Courses**). I provide this to give a sense of how a college might integrate the Curriculum of Liberty into its instruction as individual courses—above all, as the mid-level survey courses appropriate for undergraduates who have already taken introductory courses such as *Western Civilization I*.

The Curriculum of Liberty will educate Americans to reclaim their liberty and their greatness.

## The Curriculum of Liberty

I have divided the Curriculum of Liberty into ten sections.

1. *Education Structure*, which includes Admissions Requirements, Pedagogy, and Exit Requirements.
2. *Human Sciences*, which includes History, Anthropology, Economics, and Military Science.
3. *Liberty*, the pendant of Human Sciences, which includes European History, American History, Western Political Philosophy, and American Government.

4. *Scientific Reasoning*, which includes Mathematical Reasoning, Scientific Methods, Experimental Design, and Engineering.
5. *Scientific Knowledge*, the pendant of Scientific Reasoning, which includes Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Computer Science.
6. *Humanities Reasoning*, which includes Philosophy, Poetics, Iconography, and Musicology.
7. *Humanities Knowledge*, the pendant of Humanities Reasoning, which includes Western Humanities, British Humanities, American Humanities, and Eastern Humanities.
8. *Language*, the complement to Human Sciences and Humanities Reasoning, which includes History of English, Foreign Language, Linguistics, and Philology.
9. *Self-Reliance*, the complement of Liberty, which includes Law, Business, Nursing, and Self-Defense.
10. *Virtue*, the complement of Liberty and Self-Reliance, which includes Bourgeois Virtues, Noble Virtues, Civic Virtues, and Spiritual Virtues.

## Educational Structure

### Admission Requirements

American colleges have been crippled by the collapse of admission requirements. A large proportion of matriculating students arrive at college unable to read or write at a collegiate level and without the mathematics needed for college-level work in the sciences and engineering. They also arrive ignorant of the general secondary-school subject knowledge that they need for collegiate study, but their lack of basic knowledge of the Three Rs of Reading, 'Riting, and 'Rithmetic makes a true collegiate education impossible. Far too many college classes are exercises in remedial learning, and virtually all have been dumbed down to accommodate students who lack the basic preparation for college.

American colleges cannot serve their students or their nation adequately unless they possess rigorous admission requirements, keyed to individual merit rather than to identity-group "equity." No student should be admitted to college who needs to take a remedial course; no course should be simplified to the requirements of half-educated students. At a minimum, matriculating students should be able to

1. read 200 pages a week in an English literature course,
2. write an intellectually and stylistically sophisticated 10-page paper with perfect command of English spelling and grammar, and
3. take rigorous introductory courses in calculus and statistical methods.

American colleges also should adopt standardized means to allow matriculating students to place out of introductory college courses. The College Board used to provide this

means with its advanced placement examinations, but they no longer serve this function, since they now only test for *college readiness*. American colleges should commission a new assessment provider to create the examinations the College Board no longer provides.

### Pedagogy

The Curriculum for Liberty could be translated as either a core curriculum or a series of general education requirements. I recommend that colleges teach it as a core curriculum. Shared knowledge multiplies its effectiveness, not least because it gives students an *esprit de corps*.

Colleges generally should make sure that they teach an integrated sequence of introductory courses, advanced survey courses, and advanced specialized courses—taking particular care to provide a sufficient number of advanced survey courses, which are necessary to provide the combination of breadth and depth that should characterize liberal arts education.<sup>10</sup> (See **Appendix 1: Survey Courses**.)

Colleges should focus on disciplinary instruction. They should exclude all so-called classes that really teach propaganda and activism—all “studies,” all “interdisciplinary learning,” all *experiential learning*, *service learning*, and *action civics*.<sup>11</sup> No putatively academic study devoted to partisan activism or identity-group formation belongs in an American university.

Colleges should make sure classes are difficult enough that students have no time to do anything else. A full-time student should not have a part-time job, much less a full one. Students should have no time for activism—a college with a cadre of student activists is a college that is not assigning enough homework. Idle minds are the devil’s tools.

### Exit Requirements

American colleges too often function as daycare centers that do nothing but keep students off the official unemployment statistics for four years. A comprehensive standardized exit exam might allow a crude assessment of how much students actually learn at college. More informally, colleges could assign students to read, understand, and explain within one hour a ten-page article on any subject they have taken in college—without being told in advance which subject the article will be on. But there can be no substitute for an administration and a faculty which demand that students study and learn in each class. Exit requirements are unnecessary where these exist, and ineffective where they do not.

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10 Peter Wood and Michael Toscano, *What Does Bowdoin Teach? How a Contemporary Liberal Arts College Shapes Students* (New York: National Association of Scholars, 2013), <https://www.nas.org/reports/the-bowdoin-project>.

11 David Randall, *Making Citizens: How American Universities Teach Civics* (New York: National Association of Scholars, 2017), <https://www.nas.org/reports/making-citizens-how-american-universities-teach-civics>; David Randall, *Social Justice Education in America* (New York: National Association of Scholars, 2019), <https://www.nas.org/reports/social-justice-education-in-america>.

## Human Sciences

American students should learn the human sciences, those domains of study that pertain to mankind but aspire to greater rigor than the humanities. These are sometimes also called the *moral sciences* or the *social sciences*. They should learn both those modes that emphasize human similarity and those that emphasize human difference so they can understand both what unites all human beings and how extraordinarily they can vary. They also should learn both the peaceful and the warlike natures of mankind. Colleges should provide sequences of instruction in *History*, *Anthropology*, *Economics*, and *Military Science*.

*History:* Students should learn the principles, practices, and philosophy of historical research, from Herodotus and Thucydides to Edward Gibbon, Leopold von Ranke, and Herbert Butterfield. They should learn about archives, databases, primary sources, and the philosophy of historical comprehension, which both emphasizes historical particularity and human variation and aspires toward universal history. Above all, this sequence should teach students the insights of Leonardo Bruni, Lord Acton, and Benedetto Croce: that the history of liberty is the keystone of all history and that the study of history is meant to sustain liberty in the present and the future.

*Anthropology:* Students should learn a variety of anthropological studies, including biological, archaeological, social, cultural, and linguistic anthropology. They should learn the variation of human culture and how different humans can be from modern Westerners—while at the same time learning that Western disciplines of analysis, such as anthropology itself, are sufficient to understand patterns and variations in human societies and cultures. Students should be prepared for further study in disciplines such as sociology and psychology, which also subject the patterns and variations of human nature to rigorous analysis. This sequence should teach students how to complement historical study with a more scientific analysis of human behavior.

*Economics:* Students should learn how humans behave economically. They should learn how the model of self-interested *homo economicus* emerged as a sufficient abstraction of universal human behavior and how economists further abstracted human behavior into increasingly intricate models and economic laws. Students also should learn the major theories of economics, including the classic economics of Adam Smith and David Ricardo, the Marxist challenge, the school of John Maynard Keynes, and the revived defense of free markets, Austrian and monetarist, in Karl Popper, Friedrich Hayek, and Milton Friedman. This sequence should

teach students how to reason economically and to discern which aspects of human nature are beyond economic calculation.

*Military Science:* Students should learn the different ways humans fought and fight. They should learn the history of modes of warfare, from prehistory to the present; theories of war, such as Clausewitz's *On War*; and the grammar of combat, including fortifications, information war, intelligence, logistics, maps, military law, ordnance, strategy, terrain, and tactics. Students also should undergo basic combat training themselves. This sequence should teach students enough of military science to be able to judge military arguments and to serve in the armed forces.

These sequences of instruction should teach students the similarities and differences of human beings, in peace and in war.

## Liberty

American colleges should educate their students about the nature of America's ideals and institutions. They also should teach their students about how their forefathers fought to establish and preserve these ideals and institutions. Colleges therefore should provide students a complementary sequence of instruction in *European History*, *American History*, *Western Political Philosophy*, and *American Government*.

*European History:* Students should learn the political narratives that illustrate how individual decisions have created, preserved, or doomed free regimes, such as the fall of the Roman Republic, the triumphs and fall of the Florentine Republic, the Glorious Revolution, and Winston Churchill's rallying of Britain in 1940.<sup>12</sup> This sequence also should include analyses of the cultural, social, and economic preconditions for liberty, such as a free press, armed militias, prosperous middle classes, common law, Puritan ecclesiology, and universities devoted to intellectual liberty. The European History sequence should include sustained attention to the history of Britain, which provides the hinge between the histories of Europe and America.

*American History:* Students should learn both the history of the American nation, from its roots in Jamestown and Plymouth, and of the American republic, from its foundations in 1776 and 1787. The American History sequence should continue the focus of the European History sequence on liberty's political narratives and its cultural, social, and economic preconditions. It also should include substantial material on the formation and expansion of a unified American nation based upon shared history, shared culture, and mutual affection.

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12 John Lukacs, *Five Days in London, May 1940* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

*Western Political Philosophy:* Students should learn the moral and political philosophy that informed the work of the American Founders. Students should learn about the intellectual conversation of philosophers and theologians from Ancient Greece to modern America that produced such key terms as conscience, democracy, free markets, happiness, justice, law, liberty, moderation, natural law, natural rights, privacy, republicanism, self-interest, society, toleration, and virtue. This sequence should teach students the intellectual presuppositions of the American republic.

*American Government:* Students should learn the rationales and the mechanics of our Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, federalism, mixed government, self-reliance, and separation of powers; the roles of the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary; and the intrusion of the administrative state into our Constitution. Students also should learn key texts that have informed Americans' understanding of the Constitution, including *The Federalist*, speeches by Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King, Jr., and Supreme Court decisions. This sequence should teach students how and why they should work as citizens to extend their liberties, act with moderation and respect toward their fellow citizens, and dedicate themselves to preserving the republic.

These sequences of instruction generally should be keyed to teach students the theory, the history, and the practice of liberty, from Athens and Jerusalem, to early modern England, to the establishment and preservation of the American republic.

## Scientific Reasoning

American students should learn how to think about science. Students who go on to professional careers should know the modes of thought needed to succeed in the scientific and technological professions. All students should learn enough of these modes of thought to assess and critique the claims of scientific 'experts,' especially so they can tell when these 'experts' make policy arguments based on insufficient scientific evidence. Colleges should provide sequences of instruction in *Mathematical Reasoning*, *Scientific Methods*, *Experimental Design*, and *Engineering*.

*Mathematical Reasoning:* Students should learn the different modes of mathematical reasoning, including introductions to calculus, probability and statistics, and logic, and should be prepared for further study in fields such as linear algebra, topology, and multivariable analysis. These sequences should be taught with sufficient rigor to prepare students for a career in the sciences—and students who do not pursue scientific careers should learn enough mathematics that they can articulate mathematical truths about the world that cannot be expressed in words. This



sequence should teach students how to reason mathematically and how to assess and critique mathematical and statistical arguments.

*Scientific Methods:* Students should learn the scientific method, its application in different disciplines, and the history and philosophy of scientific reasoning, from Aristotle to Francis Bacon to Karl Popper. The theory of science should include the principle of reproducibility and the nature of the modern irreproducibility crisis,<sup>13</sup> the principle of falsifiability, the advantages and disadvantages of “big data,” and the distinct natures of experimental science and observational science. This sequence should teach students how to reason scientifically and how to recognize when scientists fail to do so.

*Experimental Design:* Students should learn the principles and practice of experimental design so that they know both how an experiment should be carried out and how to conduct one themselves. Students should particularly learn how to formulate precise hypotheses, how to establish experimental controls, how to distinguish between independent and dependent variables, how to select sample populations, how to collect data and report it transparently, and how to perform an experiment once these preconditions have been achieved. This sequence should teach students how to design an experiment and how to assess and critique the experimental design of scientific research.

*Engineering:* Students should learn the fundamentals of engineering so that they know how to design and build machines, buildings, and other objects, and they should be prepared for further study in fields such as chemical engineering, civil engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, and systems engineering. Students should particularly learn how to create and understand graphs, drawings, and sketches; comprehend and use basic engineering terminology; understand the principles of energy, force, and work; and create simple functioning machines. This sequence should teach students how to design and build and how to recognize good and bad engineering.

These sequences of instruction should teach students how to think about the world mathematically and scientifically, and how to judge experts in these fields. American colleges should prepare their students to recognize and reject specious claims framed in the languages of mathematics and science.

## Scientific Knowledge

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13 David Randall and Christopher Welser, *The Irreproducibility Crisis of Modern Science: Causes, Consequences, and the Road to Reform* (New York: National Association of Scholars, 2018), <https://www.nas.org/reports/the-irreproducibility-crisis-of-modern-science>.

American students should learn substantial subject knowledge in core scientific disciplines. Students who go on to scientific careers should know the fundamentals of the natural world, and all students should possess basic scientific competence. Students should learn the traditional three disciplines of *Physics*, *Chemistry*, and *Biology*. They also should learn *Computer Science*, since so much of modern economics, society, and science depends on computers. Colleges should teach these sequences as self-contained introductions to each discipline, but with the larger aim of providing a coherent introduction to the sciences as a whole.

*Physics:* Students should learn the fundamentals of matter, motion, and energy, including introductions to mechanics, gravitation, thermodynamics, optics, electromagnetism, atomic physics, and subatomic physics. Students planning further study should be prepared for work in fields such as nuclear physics, particle physics, chemical physics, condensed matter physics, astrophysics, and applied physics. This sequence should teach students the principles that govern all matter and energy in the universe.

*Chemistry:* Students should learn the fundamentals of the properties and behaviors of the different elements and compounds, including introductions to analytical chemistry, biochemistry, geology, inorganic chemistry, organic chemistry, pharmacology, and physical chemistry. Students planning further study should be prepared for work in fields such as materials chemistry, neurochemistry, nuclear chemistry, and theoretical chemistry. This sequence should teach students the principles that govern the universe's varying substances.

*Biology:* Students should learn the fundamentals of biology, including introductions to molecular biology, cellular biology, botany, zoology, genetics, evolution, and ecology. Students planning further study should be prepared for work in fields such as biotechnology, forensic pathology, and medicine. This sequence should teach students the principles that govern the world's living organisms.

*Computer Science:* Students should learn the fundamentals of computer science, including introductions to computer programming, programming languages, operating systems, data structures and algorithms, machine learning, and human-computer interactions. Students planning further study should be prepared for work in fields such as artificial intelligence, computer graphics, computational theory, computer security, and complex systems. This sequence should teach students the principles that govern how computers work.

These sequences of instruction should teach students the fundamentals of scientific thought about the nature of the universe, the substances of matter, and living organisms, as well as the basics of how computers work. American colleges should prepare all their

students to comprehend the basics of scientific knowledge and should prepare future scientists to continue America's tradition of first-class scientific research.

## Humanities Reasoning

American schools should teach students the humanities' distinct modes of analysis. They should learn the rigors of pure philosophy, as well as how to understand poetry, the visual arts, and music. Colleges should provide sequences of instruction in *Philosophy*, *Poetics*, *Iconography*, and *Musicology*.

*Philosophy*: Students should learn philosophy, the most abstract of the humanities, which puts at a premium the precise, logical examination of human universals. Students should learn how to conduct arguments about metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics, as well as to understand the procession from the broad field of philosophy to political philosophy, philosophy of science, philosophy of religion, aesthetics, philosophy of language, and philosophy of mind. This sequence should teach students to question claims about what we know and how we know it and to articulate at least provisional answers to these questions.

*Poetics*: Students should learn how to analyze a poem independent of historicizing crutches such as biographical knowledge of the poet or knowledge of the time and place it was produced. Students also should learn *prosody*—how precisely poets convey meaning by crafting units of sound such as rhyme, meter, rhythm, and diction. They also should learn standards of literary beauty and ways to assess how well an individual work meets these standards. Students should be prepared to expand this knowledge of poetics to analyses of drama, prose fiction, and prose non-fiction. This sequence should teach students the tools and ends of literary creation.

*Iconography*: Students should learn the iconography of the Western artistic tradition, above all the iconography of Greco-Roman paganism and Christian imagery as it developed in antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance. Students also should learn the complementary vocabulary of anatomy, brushwork, color, composition, form, light, line, perspective, and sculptural technique. This sequence should teach students the tools, symbols, and ends of creation in the visual arts.

*Musicology*: Students should learn how to analyze music by studying the grammar of Western music, the ways composers use the components of music for artistic ends, the historical outline of the Western musical tradition, and characteristic forms such as concertos, madrigals, masses, operas, and symphonies. Colleges also should teach musical notation and concepts such as counterpoint, harmony, polyphony, rhythm, tempo, and tonality, as well as the distinctive textures of the human

voice, woodwinds, strings, brasses, and percussion. This sequence should teach students the tools and ends of musical creation.

These sequences of instruction should teach students how to think as philosophers, poets, visual artists, and musicians, and how to assess the truth of philosophy and the beauty of poetry, art, and music.

## Humanities Knowledge

American students should acquire substantial knowledge about the civilization from which their nation was formed. They also should acquire basic knowledge of the other civilizations of the world, particularly those of the most powerful non-Western powers. Colleges should provide sequences of instruction in *Western Humanities*, *British Humanities*, *American Humanities*, and *Eastern Humanities*.

*Western Humanities:* Students should learn the characteristic forms and best examples of Western civilization. Subjects should include Hebrew theology, Greek drama, Roman speeches, French essays, Italian opera and sculpture, German symphonies, Dutch paintings, and Russian novels. Colleges should teach the Western Humanities as a coherent, chronological narrative, which emphasizes how each generation has meditated on and innovated upon the works of its predecessors. This sequence should equip students to take part in the continuous conversation of Western civilization.

*British Humanities:* Students should learn the characteristic forms and best examples of British civilization, from which American civilization was drawn. Subjects should include poetry (*Beowulf*, Chaucer, Yeats), novels (Austen, Woolf, Tolkien), visual arts (Hogarth, Turner, Hitchcock), architecture (Salisbury Cathedral, Inigo Jones, Crystal Palace), gardens (Kent, Capability Brown), music (Byrd, Sullivan, Vaughan Williams), drama (Shakespeare, Shaw, Stoppard), and civil engineering (Smeaton, Telford, Brunel). This sequence should teach students the British hinge between Western Humanities and American Humanities.

*American Humanities:* Students should learn the characteristic forms and best examples of American civilization. Subjects should include poetry (Longfellow, Frost, Bishop), novels (Melville, Faulkner, Cather), visual arts (Borlum, John Ford, Pollock), drama (O'Neill, Williams, Sondheim), and music (Foster, Gershwin, Miles Davis). This sequence should teach students their birthright: the common American culture.

*Eastern Humanities:* Students should learn the characteristic forms and best examples of non-Western civilization, but above all the humanities of the Islamic,

Indic, and Sinic civilizations. Subjects should include Murasaki's *Tale of Genji*, *Journey to the West* (attributed to Wu Cheng'en), Kalidasa's *Shakuntala*, Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*, Tagore's *The Home and the World*, Lu Xun's short stories, Kawabata's *Snow Country*, Chaudhuri's *Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*, Mizoguchi's *Sansho the Bailiff*, Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, and Satyajit Ray's *Pather Panchali*. This sequence should teach students to know non-Western civilizations' aesthetic standards and to be acquainted with and appreciate their triumphs.

These sequences of instruction should teach students the Western and British origins of American civilization, the contours of American civilization itself, and the greatest works of non-Western civilization, which American civilization can profitably emulate.

## Language

American schools should teach students to understand the fabric of language. Students should explore the history and range of our own language, the conceptual range of another language, the principles of linguistic study, and the way we can use close examination of language to understand history and culture. Colleges should provide sequences of instruction in *History of English*, *Foreign Language*, *Linguistics*, and *Philology*.

*History of English*: Students should learn the history of their own language, not only to understand English literature but also to understand America's history and culture. Students should know that a *betrothal* is a pledge of truth, a *vanguard* the foremost part of an army, and a *robot* a drudge who performs forced labor. They should learn how our nation has defined itself by such Americanisms as *backwoods*, *barbecue*, *boondoggle*, *bootlegger*, *boss*, *cool*, *copacetic*, *dude*, *filibuster*, *gerrymander*, *hot dog*, *maverick*, *moxie*, *rubberneck*, *skedaddle*, *trigger man*, and *whoopee*. This sequence should teach students the history of our nation in the history of our language.

*Foreign Language*: Students should learn foreign languages for economic advantage, for national security purposes, and for greater understanding of the civilizations of the world in their own words. Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, the millennial languages of Western faith and civilization, deserve priority. Of the modern European languages, colleges should focus on French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Russian. Beyond the Western world, students should learn the languages of the great civilizations and rising powers—Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, Hindi, Chinese, and Japanese. This sequence should teach students the basic ability to speak, read, and write in a foreign language.

*Linguistics*: Students should learn the formal analysis of language—a study that may claim to be a science, for historical linguists have predicted the forms of

languages and been corroborated by actual textual discoveries.<sup>14</sup> This study should include phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and historical linguistics, and should teach students how to analyze the history and structure of language with scientific rigor.

*Philology:* Students should learn philology, the combination of textual criticism, literary criticism, etymology, and linguistics used to explore history and culture. They should particularly learn how philology enabled the rigorous scholarly examination of the classical world and how it expanded to include study of the Germanic North, Sanskrit, and the decipherment of the languages of the Ancient Near East and Pre-Columbian America. This sequence should teach students how to examine the fossilized record of words to bring the past to life.

These sequences of instruction should teach students how to study language and how to use language to understand history and culture—our own, and that of other civilizations.

## Self-Reliance

American schools should teach self-reliance. Americans once knew how to grow their own food and build their own barns, and Americans should still know how to cook and to sew, to paint and to carpenter, to darn and to mend. They should know something of the jobs of an electrician, a plumber, and a mason. Some ability to repair a car and fix electronic circuitry also would help. So too would financial literacy—enough, for example, to know whether it makes sense to borrow money to go to college.

American self-reliance now includes a grimmer necessity. Americans face a rapacious, officious elite, which is determined to render the mass of Americans dependent and helpless, forwarding crazed ideology in the name of *expertise*. Americans must be educated to do without the services of their hostile elites. The Curriculum of Liberty will equip them to teach their own children and enable them to do without the fanatics produced by the education schools. Higher education also should focus on sequences of instruction in *Law*, *Business*, *Nursing*, and *Self-Defense*.

*Law:* Students should learn how to navigate the legal system and prepare themselves for professional legal studies. Americans should know the basics of property law, business law, bankruptcy law, consumer law, criminal law, family law, health care law, administrative law, tax law, and employment law, including familiarity with contracts, torts, and wills. This sequence should teach students how to defend themselves at law from the state, nonprofit organizations, corporations, and their

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<sup>14</sup> David W. Anthony, *The Horse, the Wheel, and Language: How Bronze-Age Riders from the Eurasian Steppes Shaped the Modern World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), pp. 31–32.

neighbors, without needing to rely on the all-too-extortionate aid of professional lawyers.

*Business:* Students should learn how to start and run a small business. Americans should know the basics of economics, budgeting and accounting, marketing, website creation, supply chains, and personnel management. They also must learn how to navigate the vast system of governmental regulation, as well as the rules established by high-tech quasi-monopolies such as Amazon, Google, and Facebook. This sequence should teach students how to make themselves economically independent.

*Nursing:* Students should learn how to keep themselves in good health. Americans should know the basics of nutrition, proper exercise, and pharmacology. They should also learn how to use a needle, bandage a small wound, and deal with burns; how to care for the young, the infirm, and the old; and how to treat and endure all minor complaints without fuss. This sequence should teach students how to avoid the *wellness* regime that requires perpetual dependence on doctors, nurses, therapists, and counselors.

*Self-Defense:* Students should know how to defend themselves from criminal assault. Americans should receive training in situational awareness, verbal techniques, physical self-defense, martial arts, knife use, firearm use, gun safety, and self-defense law. This sequence should teach students how to endure elites who refuse to provide effective police protection from criminals.

These sequences of instruction should teach students how to be their own lawyers, businessmen, nurses, and policemen. American colleges should prepare students to make themselves prosperous while fending off the dangers of law, sickness, and criminal assault.

## Virtue

American colleges can and should seek to shape the character of their students—to teach virtue. Colleges that formally abandon this mission still do so *sub rosa*; the Woke Revolution is in part a Cultural Marxist variation on virtue education. Students hunger to learn how to be good: if they are not offered wholesome instruction, they will swallow Woke poison. Colleges should offer character instruction in the broad range of Western virtues. These can be referred to collectively as *republican virtues*, but they include *Bourgeois Virtues*, *Noble Virtues*, *Civic Virtues*, and *Spiritual Virtues*.

*Bourgeois Virtues:* Students should learn to prize cleanliness, industry, initiative, perseverance, prudence, self-control, self-reliance, temperance, thrift, and trustworthiness—the virtues exemplified by Benjamin Franklin, which emphasize doing well by doing good. These are the virtues that made Quakers and Connecticut Yankees into thriving businessmen and made America into a commercial and

industrial colossus. In a world of algorithms, big data, and impersonal devotion to the bottom line, education in the bourgeois virtues will provide students a comparative advantage in the modern workplace—and ground the character they need as citizens of the republic.

*Noble Virtues:* Students should learn to prize ambition, courage, courtesy, fidelity, fortitude, gallantry, generosity, honor, hospitality, independence of mind, loyalty, and mercy—the virtues exemplified by George Washington, which have provided a necessary aristocratic leaven in our democratic republic. These are the virtues that inspired Americans to treat their defeated enemies with dignity and clemency, whether Confederates, Navajos, or Japanese. In a world where the very words *courage*, *honor*, and *fidelity* have fallen out of fashion, students should learn to be aristocrats of the soul.

*Civic Virtues:* Students should learn to prize fortitude, justice, temperance, and prudence, along with love of country, love of their fellow Americans, gratitude to their forebears, willingness to serve and sacrifice for their country, and respect for the Constitution and the rule of law—the virtues exemplified by Abraham Lincoln, which dedicate our personal character to the service of the republic. These are the virtues that have animated a great number of American office holders in our nation's history, from school board members to presidents, and should animate every office holder and every citizen.

*Spiritual Virtues:* Students should learn to prize charity, compassion, discretion, faith, forbearance, forgiveness, friendship, gentleness, gratitude, hope, humility, innocence, joy, patience, repentance, and reverence—the virtues exemplified by Thomas Merton, which dedicate our lives to the disinterested love of God and man. While sectarian institutions will integrate this instruction with lessons in doctrine, all colleges should teach the pure love that seeks no worldly good. The American republic is worth preserving only so long as Americans practice the spiritual virtues that pertain to the republic of heaven.

These virtues cannot be taught in a course, the way one teaches quadratic equations or metrical analysis of poetry. American colleges rather should infuse this character education throughout the instruction they provide their students.

## Conclusion

America's colleges and universities should seek to provide each student an education that prepares him for a decent life even as it habituates him to the joy of freely seeking to know the truth. American higher education also should seek to sustain the American nation



and the American republic—to support the American people’s desire for liberty, security, prosperity, and the choice of their own happiness, and to sustain the republic that provides the constitutional framework within which the American people pursue these goals. It also should prepare Americans to continue the long conversation of Western civilization, which has formulated America’s ideals.

America’s colleges and universities will not do this soon. They have been corrupted beyond hope of easy reform. New colleges and universities must arise from the American nation, or the old ones must be so scoured as functionally to be new. I give these recommendations to the invisible colleges formed by private conversations, and to the quiet Americans planning a new system of higher education.

Much of the substance of our recommendations is not new—and of course it should not be. America’s colleges and universities at their height did so much right that I could not be entirely original without embracing folly. If the Curriculum of Liberty evokes echoes of Benjamin Franklin and John Witherspoon, of Charles William Eliot and Nicholas Murray Butler, of Robert Hutchins and Vannevar Bush, that is all to the good. Their vision of the American university should be passed down to posterity.

The context of these recommendations, alas, is new. I make these recommendations at a time when America’s elites have perverted higher education, along with most of the commanding heights of government and civil society. I recommend a coherent and rigorous Education Structure when most colleges reject it on principle. I recommend Self-Reliance and Virtue to fortify the American people against the malfeasance of our elites. I recommend Liberty and Humanities Knowledge so the American people can remember the glories and ideals their leaders would rather they forget—and I recommend Human Sciences, Humanities Reasoning, and Language so they can truly understand their inheritance of Liberty and Humanities Knowledge. When the American people have redeemed their country, they will need to compete to prosper in the world, so I recommend to them Scientific Reasoning and Scientific Knowledge. I recommend this vision of American higher education to sustain the American people through a long bondage.

But it is not just waybread for the road. It is a vision of what American universities should teach when they are redeemed. It is a vision of what future generations of Americans should know and love to make their nation once more a light to the world, great and free. *To thine own self be true* is the old saw, and the Curriculum of Liberty is an education to restore Americans to their best and truest selves. Or, more simply, *know thyself*; these courses of instruction will help us gain that knowledge.

The Curriculum of Liberty is also the Curriculum of America.

## Appendix 1: Survey Courses

I have not formulated our Educational Sequences as lists of courses. Colleges naturally will vary how they integrate the Curriculum of Liberty into their instruction. Yet I should give some sense of how the Curriculum of Liberty might be taught.

Above all, I wish to give some sense of the *advanced survey courses* that can and should be used to provide instruction in the Curriculum of Liberty. The NAS has emphasized for some time that a liberal arts education requires not only a core curriculum to provide a preliminary outline of knowledge but also advanced, complementary survey courses to provide deeper instruction in every area of liberal arts education.<sup>15</sup> Colleges need to hire capable professors willing to teach these advanced survey courses and to integrate them into their general education and departmental requirements.

In this Appendix, I briefly list 72 survey courses, divided into eight categories, with each category subdivided into three triads of courses. I focus on courses on history and the humanities—core components of a liberal arts education. No college student can take all these courses, but college students should have the *opportunity* to take all these courses.

Courses about non-English literatures are meant to provide study in English of translated works.

Many of these courses easily could be divided into two—*Ancient Roman History*, for example, easily could become a one-year sequence, as could *Western Art* and *Western Music*. While some such divisions probably would be useful, I caution that the Curriculum of Liberty needs *broad* survey courses.

### Classical Civilization

Students should have the opportunity to learn extensively about classical civilization. A History sequence should offer courses in *Ancient Near Eastern History*, *Ancient Greek History*, and *Ancient Roman History*. A Literature sequence should offer courses in *Epics*, *Poetry*, and *Drama*. A Humanities sequence should offer courses in *Histories*, *Rhetoric*, and *The Visual Arts*. These final two sequences should provide roughly equal coverage of Greek and Roman contributions.

### English Literature and Its Sources

Students should learn the broad range of English literature, as well as the post-Classical literatures that most strongly influenced its development. An English Literature sequence should offer courses in *History of the English Language*, *English Literature I* (to Shakespeare), and *English Literature II* (from Donne). An Anglophone Literature sequence should include

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<sup>15</sup> Wood and Toscano, *What Does Bowdoin Teach?*

*American Literature I* (to Melville), *American Literature II* (from Twain), and *Anglophone Literature* (including Indian, African, Australasian, Canadian, and Caribbean literature). An Influential Foreign Literatures sequence should offer courses in *Medieval and Renaissance Latin Literature*, *Italian Literature*, and *French Literature*. This last sequence should emphasize those authors who have had the greatest effect on English literature, such as Chrétien de Troyes, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Erasmus, Tasso, Montaigne, and Baudelaire.

### World Literatures

Students should learn the broad range of World literature, with an emphasis on the most influential literary traditions. An Asian Literature sequence should offer courses in *Chinese Literature*, *Japanese Literature*, and *Sanskrit Literature*. A European Literature sequence should offer courses in *Spanish Literature* (including Spanish America), *German Literature*, and *Russian Literature*. A World Literature sequence should offer courses in *Arabic Literature*, *Persian Literature*, and *African Literature* (including works originally written in Afrikaans, Arabic, French, Ge'ez, Portuguese, and Yoruba and works from the African New World diaspora).

### Fine Arts

Students should learn the Western, American, and Eastern traditions of the Fine Arts. An Arts sequence should offer courses in *Western Art*, *American Art*, and *Eastern Art*. An Architecture sequence should offer courses in *Western Architecture*, *American Architecture*, and *Eastern Architecture*. A Music sequence should offer courses in *Western Music*, *American Music*, and *Eastern Music*. The Eastern courses should focus on the Sinic, Indic, and Islamic fine arts.

### Western History

Students should learn extensively about postclassical Western history. A European History sequence should offer courses in *Medieval Europe*, *Early Modern Europe*, and *Modern Europe*. An American History sequence should offer courses in *Colonial and Revolutionary American History*, *Nineteenth Century American History*, and *Twentieth and Twenty-First Century American History*. A Western Intellectual History sequence should offer courses in *History of Science and Technology*, *History of Military Theory*, and *History of Economic Theory*.

### World History

Students should learn extensively about World history. An East Asian sequence should offer courses in *China*, *Japan*, and *Southeast Asia* (especially Indonesia). A South Eurasian sequence should offer courses in *India*, *The Muslim World*, and *Sub-Saharan Africa*. An American

sequence should offer courses in *Pre-Columbian Latin America* (to 1492), *Latin America* (from 1492), and *Pre-Columbian North America*.

### Liberty

Students should learn the Western intellectual traditions that have created fearless minds, theories of liberty, and institutions of free government. A Philosophy sequence should offer courses in *Ancient Philosophy*, *Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy* (to Descartes and Hobbes), and *Modern Philosophy* (from Spinoza and Locke). A Political Thought sequence should offer courses in *Ancient and Medieval Political Philosophy*, *Modern Political Philosophy*, and *American Political Thought*. A Law sequence should offer courses in *History of Western Law*, *Constitutional History of England*, and *Constitutional History of America*.

### Faiths

Students should learn about the religions that for millennia have articulated the highest aspirations of mankind. A Near Eastern sequence should offer courses in *Zoroastrianism*, *Judaism*, and *Islam*. A Christianity sequence should offer courses in *Catholicism*, *Protestantism*, and *Eastern Orthodoxy*. An East Asian sequence should offer courses in *Hinduism*, *Buddhism*, and *Confucianism*—the last an ethic so influential that it requires coverage here, even if it is technically a philosophy rather than a faith.