The Humanities Provide a Reliable Foundation for a Future of Rapid Change

In a fast-paced world of constant technological innovation, members of the future workforce will need to be ready for anything. Experts observe that the humanities foster skills that provide a reliable foundation for an uncertain future, preparing students to learn, grow, and adapt to changing realities throughout their careers. These observations counter the widespread narrative that STEM is the only way to prepare for a successful future.

The skills liberal arts graduates learned in their programs will continue to serve them well. For when it comes to the future of work, there will be a need for more learners who know how to think on their toes—who can problem solve in the most uncertain and ambiguous of situations. As technologies or entire jobs become obsolete, workers who can adapt and learn how to solve new problems in the market will thrive.

Today’s students need to be prepared to be flexible and adaptable in their careers

“...developing agility, resilience, and flexibility will be important at a time when everybody’s job is likely to change to some degree.”

—McKinsey Global Institute, 2017

“...During the past decade, many jobs for which people were educated and trained have changed significantly... Millennials are using technology that didn’t even exist when they began their careers.”

—The Deloitte Global Millennial Survey, 2019

“The ability to learn new things, collaborate, communicate and adapt to changing environments may become the most important skills for long-term employability.”

—Microsoft Corporation, 2018

Humanities graduates have the skills to adapt to a variety of careers

Workers with high levels of specific skills are less likely to move jobs laterally across industries, and would be unlikely to command the same wage, because their specializations are of little use outside their own niche sector ... Workers with strengths in general skills tend to have greater freedom to roam.


Transferability Score*

*This score measures the breadth of job titles a graduate could have. Above 1.82 is considered a wide range of career options.

Source: PayScale.com, 2019