



Career Development Office

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Liberal Arts Skills

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Liberal arts skills are transferable, functional abilities that are required in many different problem-solving and task-oriented situations. Through your classed and co-curricular activities, students have had the opportunity to develop a number of these skills. Go through the list and think of which of these skills are strengths of yours. Think back to how you gained these skills. Through which experiences did you develop the ones you have chosen?

Information Management Skills: ability to.....

- Sort data and objects
- Compile and rank information
- Apply information creatively to specific problems or tasks
- Synthesize and use organizing Principles
- Understand and use organizing principles
- Evaluate information against appropriate standards

Valuing Skills: ability to.....

- Asses a course of action in terms of its long-range effects on the general human welfare
- Make decisions that will maximize both individual and collective good
- Appreciate the contributions of art, literature, science, and technology to contemporary society
- Identify one's own values
- Assess one's values in relation to important life decisions

Communication Skills: ability to.....

- Listen with objectivity and paraphrase the content of a message
- Use various forms and styles of written communication
- Speak effectively to individuals and groups
- Use media formats to present ideas imaginatively
- Express one's needs, wants, opinions, and preferences without offending the sensitivities of others
- Identify and communicate value judgments effectively
- Describe objects or events with a minimum of factual errors
- Convey a positive self-image to others

Research and Investigation Skills: ability to...

- Use a variety of sources on information
- Apply a variety of methods to test the validity of data
- Identify problems and needs
- Design and experiment plan, or model that systematically defines a problem
- Identify information sources appropriate to special needs or problems
- Formulate questions relevant to clarifying a particular problem, topic, or issue

Critical Thinking Skills: ability to.....

- Identify quickly and accurately the critical issues when making a decision or solving a problem
- Identify a general principle that explains interrelated experiences for factual data
- Define the parameters of a problem
- Identify reasonable criteria for assessing the value or appropriateness of an action or behavior
- Adapt one's concepts and behavior to Changing conventions and norms
- Apply appropriate criteria to strategies and action plans
- Take given premises and reason t their conclusion
- Create innovative solutions to complex problems
- Analyze the interrelationships of events and ideas from several perspectives

Design and Planning Skills: ability to.....

- Identify alternative courses to action
- Set realistic goals
- Follow through with a plan or decision
- Manage time effectively
- Predict future trends and patterns
- Accommodate multiple demands for commitment of time, energy and resources
- Assess needs
- Make and keep a schedule
- Set priorities

Management and Administration Skills: ability to....

- Analyze tasks
- Identify or a problem or task
- Identify resource materials useful in the solutions of a problem
- Delegate responsibility for completion of a task
- Motivate and lead people
- Organize people and tasks to achieve specific goals

Human Relations and Interpersonal Skills: ability to.....

- Keep a group “on track” and moving toward the achievement of a common goal
- Maintain group cooperation and support
- Delegate tasks and responsibility
- Interact effectively with peers, superiors and subordinates
- Express one’ feelings appropriately
- Understand the feelings of others
- Use argumentative techniques to persuade others
- Make commitments to persons
- Be willing to take risks
- Teach a skill, concept or principle to others
- Analyze behavior of self and other in group situations
- Demonstrate effective social behavior in a variety of settings and under different circumstances
- Work under time and environmental pressures

Personal/Career Development Skill: ability to.....

- Analyze and learn from life experiences both one’s own and others
- Relate the skills developed in one environment (e.g. school) to the requirements of another environment (e.g. work)
- Match knowledge about one’s own characteristics and abilities in information about job or career opportunities
- Identify, describe and assess the relative importance of one’s needs, values, interest, strengths and weaknesses
- Develop personal growth goals that are motivating
- Identify and describe skills acquired through formal education and general life experience
- Accept and learn from negative criticism
- Persist with a project when faced with failure unless it is clear that the project cannot be carried out or is not worth the time or effort needed to complete it
- Recognize when a project cannot be carried out or is not worth the time or effort required to complete it
- Generate trust and confidence in others
- Take risks
- Accept the consequences of one’s actions
- “Market” oneself to prospective employers

This section is taken from Liberal Arts Skills by Paul Breen and Urban Whitaker.