

Liberal Arts Skills at Work

Hanover's purpose is to provide its students an excellent education. Through the classroom, students develop a range of skills that have direct bearing on their future success in the workplace. Throughout their years at Hanover, students are required to develop increasing skill in writing, oral communication, and research, to integrate ideas, and to demonstrate an analytical approach to problem solving. All these skills are fundamental to most professional jobs.

Part of what distinguishes a liberal arts education is the breadth of exposure to different disciplines it requires. Students must conduct research on topics outside their expertise; they must write cogently and speak knowledgeably about subjects outside their interests. The ability to adapt to different environments, to understand and articulate disparate viewpoints, and to learn unfamiliar information quickly is important in many jobs and central to upward mobility in most.

Another advantage of a liberal arts education is that, because classes are small, students are assigned numerous projects requiring them to hone their writing, critical thinking, speaking, and research skills. Frequently Hanover students will have written 75 - 100 papers in their four years here. Their peers in larger institutions seldom have the luxury of giving in-class presentations, or even of receiving comments about the form and content of paper assignments. Likewise, in small classes students generally take essay tests, not computer-scannable tests, further developing the skill of formulating an argument and supporting it with evidence. Again, because classes are small, nearly all professors include individual participation in daily discussions as a course requirement, giving students ongoing practice in articulating their ideas.

It is important that Hanover students understand the value of their education and the extensiveness of their opportunity to develop fundamental skills so that they may sell these skills to potential employers. The following are some ways in which Hanover classes develops these skills and employers require them:

Writing Skills

Developed in class:

- term papers
- essay tests
- lab reports
- notebooks
- article summaries
- journals
- creative writing
- case reports
- internship essays
- peer reviews
- literature reviews

Used on the job: composing correspondence; writing reports, briefs or proposals; editing; proofreading; keeping records; writing copy for sales, advertising, or newspapers; developing brochures, or promotional materials

Speaking Skills

Developed in class:

- in-class presentations, reports
- classes that base grades on participation or that encourage participation in class discussions
- speeches
- theatre performances
- group projects
- study groups
- convocations
- good papers project
- internship presentations

Used on the job: interviewing, persuading, negotiating, selling, advising, answering questions, counseling, soliciting funds, supervising, representing organizations, surveying, working with public, making presentations

Research and Analysis

Developed in class:

- research papers
- field studies
- independent study
- independent grant research
- independent laboratory research
- internship essays
- literature reviews
- case studies
- journal article critiques
- analysis and critique of arguments during class and in papers

Used on the job: developing ideas, reasoning, preparing reports, evaluating, gathering information, analyzing and interpreting data, designing and conducting research, developing programming, planning, marketing, making decisions

These are just a few of the skills developed in the classroom. Hanover also provides myriad extracurricular activities for students to master skills useful on the job. To prepare for a career, students should:

- use the skills developed in one class to excel in the next; these are the same skills that are required on the job,
- inventory their skills and sell them to employers, and
- get summer jobs and internships in their career interest areas to round out their skills with practical experience.

