



# American Liberal Arts Education and Its Development in Taiwan

Tsung Chi  
Professor of Politics  
Occidental College  
Master  
Residential College of  
International Development  
National Chengchi University



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# I. Rankings of Liberal Arts Colleges: US News & World Report vs. Forbes

US News (08/17/2010)

National Comprehensive Universities

1. **Harvard**
2. Princeton
3. Yale
4. Columbia
5. Stanford

National Liberal Arts Colleges

1. **Williams**
2. Amherst
3. Swarthmore
4. Middlebury
5. Wellesley

Forbes (08/11/2010)

Combined Ranking

1. **Williams**
2. Princeton
3. Amherst
4. US Military Academy
5. MIT
6. Stanford
7. Swarthmore
8. **Harvard**
9. Claremont McKenna
10. Yale

## **II. Origin and Evolution of American Higher Education: From Liberal Arts to Professional Education**

Liberal Arts College  
( )

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# Two Historical Events that Challenged Liberal Arts Education in America



- Reconstruction Era after the Civil War (1861-65) from 1865 to 1877
- Great Depression from 1929 to the late 1930s (or early 1940s)
- Now with the global recession and the rise of China?

# Evolution: Becoming Liberal Arts Colleges and Comprehensive Universities

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Liberal Arts Education vs.  
Professional Education  
vs.

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# Liberal Arts Education vs. General Education VS.

- The two are similar in that both are opposed to professional ( ), vocational ( ), technical ( ) and practical ( ) education, but they are not the same in that general education is part of or a more visible framework ( ) of liberal arts education ( ).
- While general education is a knowledge-based process of broad exposure to various general disciplines ( ) which, understandably, can be somewhat measured both qualitatively and quantitatively, liberal arts education, on the other hand, is a personality-oriented process of self-identification and self-realization (“ ” ” ” ) that can hardly be measured in any way.
- Therefore, a good liberal arts college must have a solid general education ( ), but a school even with a general education is not necessarily a provider of liberal arts education ( ).



# Its Faculty Members

However, the very essence of liberal arts education goes much beyond a simple set of courses which can be “mechanically” offered; rather, it embraces a set of orientations, values, beliefs, and norms that require “human touches” by the faculty, such as, ideally, near unselfish devotion and commitment to liberal arts education.



Liberal arts education blows like a wind

III.



# 1. Learn how to learn

First and foremost goals:

- Critically (with a discerning eye on **standard of evidence** )  
“Education must enable one to sift and weigh evidence, to discern the true from the false, the real from the unreal, and the facts from the fiction.” (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., 1947, at age of 18)
- Logically  
Therefore, to learn how to make logical arguments, both verbally and in writing, with strong evidence.

Secondary goals

- Cross-culturally (global literacy/awareness)
- Inter-disciplinarily
- Civil engagement and community-based learning

## 2. Learn to be enlightened and audacious

- High School Education: Ordinary Person with Common Sense
- College Education: Educated Person with Knowledge
- General Education: Informed Person with Information
- **Liberal Arts Education: Enlightened Person with Vision**
- **Be an Audacious Person with Audacity**



# What does it take to be **audacious**?

## Taking actions

“The hottest places in hell are reserved for those who in the times of great moral crisis maintain neutrality.” Dante (1265 -1321)

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### 3. Develop a “life-long love for learning”

Since learning is more **procedural** than substantial (learn how to learn rather than learn something substantial), and learning is **action-oriented**, learning will become a life-long experience.

# IV. Performances of Liberal Arts College Graduates

Although liberal arts college graduates are very small in number when compared to those of larger public universities, they are disproportionately represented among leaders in many spheres of American society.

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The same study of 1998 also suggests that liberal arts college graduates are disproportionately represented in the American scientific community. These colleges have produced nearly **twice** as many students who earn a **Ph.D. in science** as other institutions. Nearly **20 percent** of the scientists elected to the **National Academy of Sciences** in a recent two-year period were alumni of a liberal arts college.

# **V. Four Models of Liberal Arts Education**



## VI. Residential Colleges in China, Hong Kong and Macao

- Beijing University:  
Nanjing University:  
Fudan University:  
Zhejiang University:  
Sun Yat-sen University:  
Xian Jiaotong University:  
... ..
- Honk Kong Chinese University:
- University of Macao:



# VII. Development of Residential Colleges in Taiwan

(similar to the UCSD Model of residential colleges)

- National Chengchi University: (2008)
- National Tsinghua University: (2008)
- Tunghai University: (2008)
- National Chungcheng university: (2009)
- Asia University: (2009)
- Chung Hua University: (2010)
- ... ..

# **VIII. Singapore Model (similar to Williams/Harvard Model)**

**Yale-Nus College**

# Yale-NUS College



## **IX. Suggestions & Conclusions**

**Taiwan should establish its own  
“National Taiwan Liberal Arts College”.**



# **A Well Structured Liberal Arts College: 3 colleges and 14 majors with 100 faculty members and 1,000 students**

- Arts and Humanities: Literature, History, Philosophy, Arts, and Music
- Sciences: Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Psychology
- Social Sciences: Politics, Sociology, Anthropology, and Economics

**Q & A**

