



Case Study

THE LIBERAL ARTS



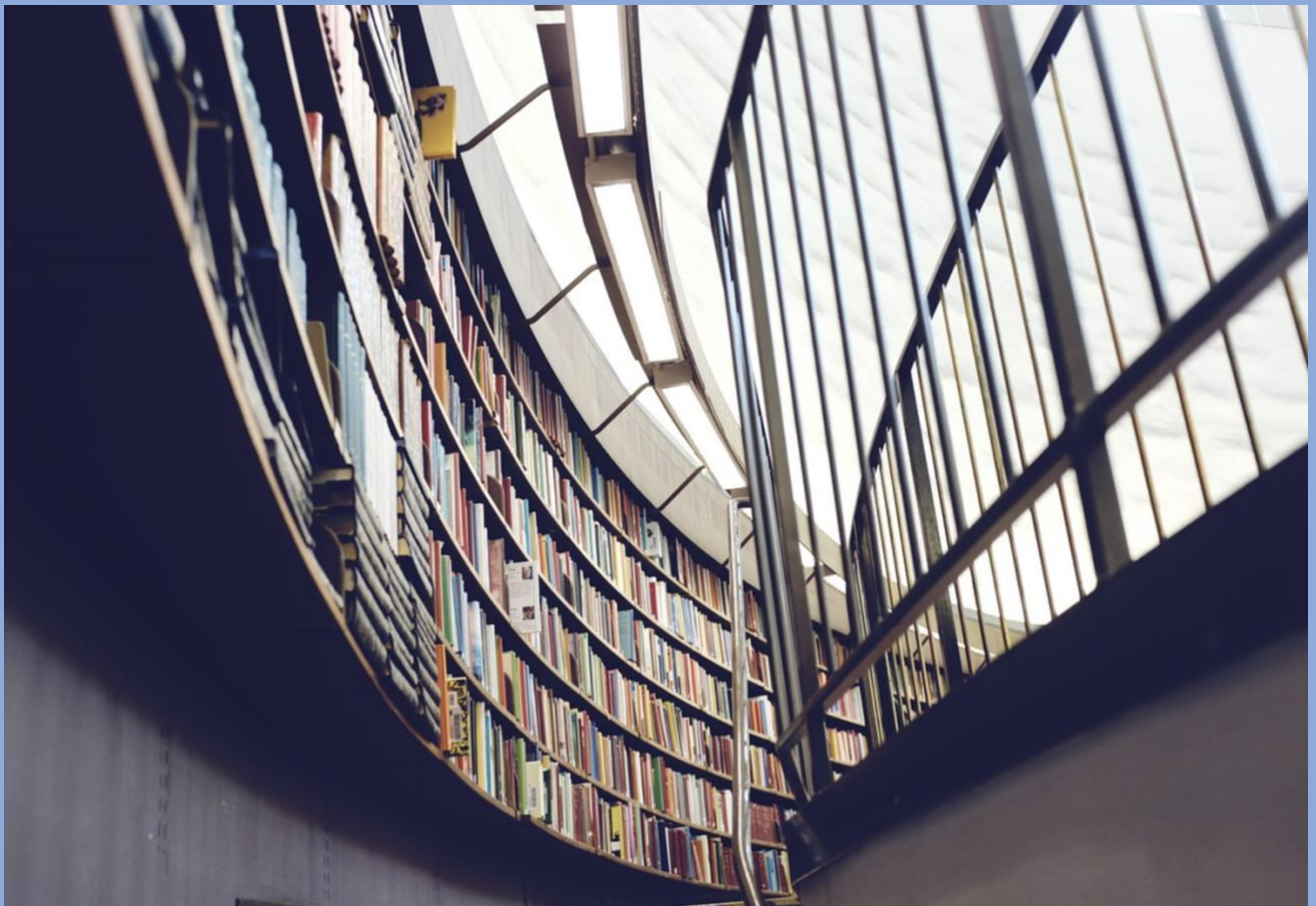
A typical liberal arts degree is interdisciplinary, covering topics within the humanities and social sciences as well as the natural and mathematical sciences. It may well include more creative areas organized around the theme of communication.



Most universities in the US require students to experience a Liberal Arts programme, including an extensive core curriculum, before they “declare their major” and begin to specialize.

Harvard justifies this approach as follows:

“before students can help change the world they need to understand it. The liberal arts & sciences offer a broad intellectual foundation for the tools to think critically, reason analytically and write clearly”.





Princeton explains its commitment to liberal arts in these terms:

“A liberal arts education challenges you to consider not only how to solve problems but also trains you to ask which problems to solve and why, preparing you for positions of leadership and a life of service... By exploring issues ideas and methods across the humanities and arts and the natural and social sciences you will learn to read critically, write cogently and think broadly... they will cultivate the tools necessary to allow you to navigate the world’s most complex issues”.

The Liberal Arts tradition is a main stay of US education both in the most famous private universities such as Harvard and Princeton and more importantly in the plethora of small undergraduate Liberal Arts colleges that prioritise teaching over research to be found in every state. Today many universities globally are offering a similiar broad based education, though it may go by a different name: BA Arts & Sciences in the UK for example.

