

# Top Learning Outcomes for All College Students



## ★ Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2015</u>
• Humanities	92%	92%
• Sciences	91%	92%
• Social Sciences	90%	89%
• Global/World Cultures	87%	89%
• Mathematics	87%	92%
• Diversity in the United States	73%	73%

## ★ Intellectual and Practical Skills

• Writing Skills	99%	99%
• Critical Thinking	95%	98%
• Quantitative Reasoning	91%	94%
• Oral Communication	88%	82%
• Intercultural Skills	79%*	79%*
• Information Literacy	76%	76%
• Research Skills	65%	75%

## ★ Personal and Social Responsibility

• Intercultural Skills	79%*	79%*
• Ethical Reasoning	75%	75%
• Civic Engagement	68%	63%

## ★ Integrative Learning

• Application of Learning	66%	65%
• Integration of Learning	63%	68%

Note: In 2015, 85% of AAC&U member institutions surveyed reported that they had a common set of learning outcomes for all students. This percentage was up from 78% who reported this in the earlier 2009 study. Percentages cited above include those outcomes for which 2/3 or more of those with campus-wide goals report that this outcome is one of the learning goals they have for all students.

The four categories of learning outcomes correspond to a set of "Essential Learning Outcomes" developed as part of AAC&U's LEAP initiative. See [www.aacu.org/leap](http://www.aacu.org/leap). For 2009 findings, see *Learning and Assessment: Trends in Undergraduate Education—A Survey Among Members of the Association of American Colleges and Universities* (AAC&U and Hart Research Associates, 2009). For 2015 findings, see *National Trends in General Education Design, Learning Outcomes, and Teaching Approaches* (AAC&U and Hart Research Associates, forthcoming January 2016). AAC&U's 1350 institutional members represent the entire spectrum of regionally accredited postsecondary institutions. Member institutions are half public, half private, and include two-year and four-year institutions, liberal arts colleges, comprehensive institutions, and research universities, both public and private.

\* The starred items are shown in two learning outcome categories because they apply to both.

# Employer Priorities for Most Important College Learning Outcomes



## ★ Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World

- Broad knowledge in the liberal arts and sciences 78% ■
- Knowledge and understanding of democratic institutions and values 87% ■
- Intercultural skills and understanding of societies and cultures outside the US 78% ■

## ★ Intellectual and Practical Skills

- Oral communication 85% ♦
- Teamwork skills in diverse groups 83% ♦
- Written communication 82% ♦
- Critical thinking and analytic reasoning 81% ♦
- Complex problem solving 70% ♦
- Information literacy 68% ♦
- Innovation and creativity 65% ♦
- Technological skills 60% ♦
- Quantitative reasoning 56% ♦

## ★ Personal and Social Responsibility

- Problem solving in diverse settings 96% ■
- Civic knowledge, skills, and judgment essential for contributing to the community and to our democratic society 86% ■
- Ethical judgment and decision making 81% ♦

## ★ Integrative and Applied Learning

- Applied knowledge in real-world settings 80% ♦

**Note:** These data are taken from *Falling Short? College Learning and Career Success*, a 2015 report on findings from a survey of employers and a survey of college students conducted for AAC&U by Hart Research Associates. For a full report on this survey and earlier reports on employer views, see [www.aacu.org/leap](http://www.aacu.org/leap).

■ indicates percentage of employers who “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that, “regardless of a student’s chosen field of study,” every student should attain this area of knowledge or skill.

♦ indicates percentage of employers who rate this outcome as very important (8-10 on a 10 point scale) for recent graduates entering the job market.