

SHOULD COLLEGES STOP GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS?



Leeann Aguirre
Editor

YES

So starting out in our educational lives, most of us begin just learning about colors, shapes and such. Next, we begin to learn about letters and how to put them together in order to express ourselves through words. So forth we continue to climb the educational ladder. Twelve years of general education.

After being taught, molded and prepared for the real world, students are sent out to begin making a living for themselves. For this reason, I believe that College Education should focus on educating students according to their trade. Unfortunately, after High School we are expected to attend another two years of school focused on general education.

Why is general education part of the college curriculum? In the final years of our schooling, we're required to continue what we "graduated" from. Why not study specifically for the trade we will become involved in? By concentrating solely on our trades, would we not be better prepared for work in life?

There are Trade Schools students can attend ... for a price. Sadly, in order to focus on what you want to do in life, you must pay the extra fee. In economic times such as these, scholarships are the primary concerns of students trying to get into college. What happens if you don't get a scholarship? You are left scavenging your wallet until you can afford the basic education. If trade school education were provided to students, perhaps we would have an even greater number of professionals in the working field.

It takes a lot of enthusiasm and dedication to complete your education, especially college education seeing as it's not mandatory, just highly necessary. Students become blasé about general education eventually, due to the time length of our study in the subject. With the excitement of graduation, students are more eager to become "adults" and be more independent. Going to college and having to review the curriculum you have already learned can diminish your excitement for the present circumstances.

Students who are better prepared in their working field are likely to succeed when they actually become an employee. Trade education in college helps students further prepare for their specialty rather than education in subjects that may or may not be used in their field. And by preparing for what they are going to do in the future, students are making it certain that they are going to work in that field which means they will do anything they can in order to achieve their goal. This is means for a more secure future for students.

A chef, for example, would rather learn about different ingredients and mixtures perhaps, instead of learning about the Pythagorean Theorem. In order to be a great employee someday, we must all learn as much as we can and apply ourselves one- hundred percent to the career we are going to be involved in. In order to do so, we must be thoroughly educated in the field to beat out the competitors and possible employees. With working competition stronger than ever, finding a job takes a well- qualified, prepared person who will do the job better than their fellow employees could. For in this economy, employers are more selective and judgmental than ever. A college education is mandatory in the sense that there aren't many careers you can go into without having that level of education.

In concentrating on trade knowledge, colleges will be serving an enthusiastic, eager audience which in turn becomes a class of willing and dedicated students. With a class that is excited to learn about their curriculum, there is more of a chance that they will work harder toward their goal because it is personalized for them. When students are learning about something that hits their particular interest, they are motivated to do well.



Xander Thompson
(9)

"No, if you overspecialize, and it doesn't work out, you have knowledge to fall back on."

Lizbeth Lopez
(10)

"I think it's a waste of time if you've already learned it."

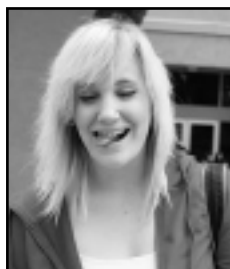


Jasmine Kyi (11)

"If you want to be one thing, you shouldn't have to learn about everything else."

Alyssa Wade (12)

"We should be able to choose which general education classes we take."

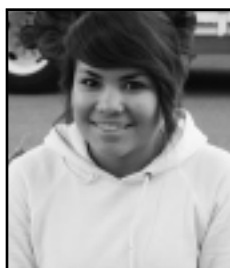


Brian Child (9)

"To start a career quickly, general education isn't necessary."

Daniela Bucio
(10)

"People who don't know what they want will have more opportunities."



Sandra Aguirre
(12)

"12 years of school is enough."

Mr. Rodriguez

"Not everyone knows what they want to do their first two years."



Sarah Rafiqi
Editor

NO



College students in America are forced, by the set educational system, to endure two years of general education. Many students find this an injustice and, frankly, redundant. They feel that after thirteen years of grade school, there is no longer any point to taking general education. After all, what more can you gain from taking general education in college?

Well, as it turns out, you can actually gain a lot. Students often disregard the importance of general education in college because they are far too busy worrying about their chosen masters programs. However, there is no guarantee these plans will pan out as primarily expected by those students. Statistics show that eighty percent of college bound students, the majority of high school seniors, are still undecided. Now, just because these students are not exactly sure what they are going to do yet, does not mean they should just skip out on college. Those extra two years of general education in college can provide these students extra time to figure out what they want to do. Besides, even for those people who have decided on what they are majoring in, there is no guarantee they will remain in that major forever. Dr. Fritz Grupe, founder of MyMajors.com, relays that a full fifty percent of students who have declared their majors change their decision at some point in time. Many do so two or three times during their college years. This simple indecision can prove to be very costly, let alone a waste of time. What happens is that as students restart course sequences and transfer schools, they continually lose credits. Hence, many students take over four years to complete college. In fact, roughly forty percent of those students who have started a four-year program still have not finished earning their degree after year six. This can prove burdensome for those with tight budgets, as, currently, the average tuition for a year at a public university is \$13,833. Now, try counting up all the years worth of lost credits and imagine how much additional money that would cost. Honestly, how many people in today's economy can really afford that?

All of this is a sad reality for many college students and a possible future for many college-bound students, but what does all of this have to do with general education? The point is that no one can be absolutely certain of their major, so why shouldn't we go for gaining extra leverage in other subjects that we may, one day, be needing? Just imagine how much more difficult it would be to alter majors if you hadn't taken a certain subject, necessary for your new major, in years.

On top of all this, is the fact that we are living in the real world. What that means is that had we been born with ideal lives, there would have been some subjects we would never have had to encounter. For those people with an abhorrence for math, they would never have had to see another equation again. Persons void of tact in writing would never have had to suffer through another essay. For those who could care less about history, in the ideal world, they would never again have had to utter Louis XIV's name. However, the actuality is that we are all living in the real world, not a fantasy. Whether we like it or not, some things will carry with us all through our lives. Not only will an assortment of things we learned in high school randomly come back to reunite with us in college, but in the rest of our lives, as well. Sometimes, these subjects will come right out of the blue, seemingly to unfairly test our memory and intellectual tact. We never know when something will pop up out of nowhere and hit us in the face, so why not diversify our knowledge as best we can while we are still in a learning environment? After all, isn't it always better to be prepared?

How Much Homework is Too Much?

By: Shannon Hsu
Editor

A typical high school student is burdened with a large load of homework which is magnified by additional factors such as AP and IB testing, SATs, and the actual difficulty of the classes themselves. Much of the time, these factors added together can cause extremely stressful situations, which leads to the question – how much homework is too much?

Most students attend school for seven hours a day, not including zero periods, seventh periods, or even both, plus after-school activities and other obligations. On top of the long day, many students go home carrying the weight of a full night's worth of homework. Students who involved in heavier, more rigorous classes often do not have time to do anything when they return home, other than the homework assigned by multiple classes. This means many students are working from the moment they arrive at school, all the way until they finally complete their homework and can go to sleep.

While it is true that homework helps to reinforce material learned during the day and to prepare for future tests, quizzes, and other exams, too much homework can create a harmful cycle – many students are forced to stay up until the wee hours of the morning to complete assignments. After only an hour or two of sleep, they must then wake up again to go to school, feeling exhausted. The student is tired during much

of the school day and is unable to function at peak performance. The ability for students to absorb and retain information given in class is then reduced, and when the school day ends, the cycle starts over. This creates extreme stress and pressure which, combined with lack of sleep, can be harmful to one's health. Doctors and scientists recommend that one gets seven to eight hours of sleep per night in order to achieve maximum alertness and well-being. For many students, seven to eight hours of sleep per night is a rare occasion which oftentimes only occurs on weekends or vacation days. Even though many students' lack of time management is at fault for their troubles, many other hardworking students really do struggle with the amount of homework they are assigned.

This brings us back to the original question of how much homework is necessary before it becomes excessive. Ideally, work assigned should be narrowed down to only assignments of value that will truly help students learn and retain information, and busywork should be filtered out and eliminated to ease the burden. Additionally, if the homework assigned for one class outweighs and overshadows other classes, then it is probably a good indication that "too much" homework is being assigned in that subject. As long as students are able to balance out the work for each class in a reasonable amount of time that allows for a little bit of leisure and relaxation time, as well as ample time for a proper sleep, then the goal of effective yet not excessive homework has been achieved.



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TWO COUNTRIES IN NEED OF HOPE

By: Nathaly Romanes
Reporter

Since the beginning of 2010, the earth has been rattling like never before. On January 12, 2010, Haiti experienced a 7.0 magnitude earthquake that devastated the entire population. Thousands of people could have been saved if their country was better prepared for natural disasters. Just recently, Chile was shaken by an 8.8 magnitude earthquake that caused three massive waves devastating coastal cities and taking more lives. The loss could have been lessened by warning the people along coastal areas of possible tsunami waves.

Haiti is a third world country compared to industrialized Chile, which is also much more politically stable, so can we really compare the two country's situations at the same level? It is true that both incidents were tragic and we can't argue

about the innocent lives taken; but the severity of both doesn't exactly stand at the same heights.

Chile was offered helped by the world as well, but they didn't need that as assistance since they are economically and politically stable. Yes, Chile suffered a much stronger earthquake, but which country ended up with the higher death rate? It's true that that Chile has suffered through terrible devastation but Haiti's death rates and injuries seem to be substantially more noticeable.

Two horrible nightmares; and my comparing them seems to be almost unethical, but as a world we should balance our help out to where it is needed most. It is sad that Chile and Haiti have been struck in such a horrible manner and all the suffering the people have gone through, but at least it seems reassuring that Chile will stand up and continue a strong country, although Haiti is going to have to continue to struggle for some more time before it can become stable.

SILENCE IS GOLDEN... OR SO THEY TELL ME

By: BEN CERCEA
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Due to lack of fund, newspaper will cut back on their yearly spending by not paying me. Let us begin this rant now.

Taxing is now a weapon—for obesity. Researchers proposed, in the Journal Archives of Internal Medicine, that by increasing the tax on America's pride and glory, pizza and soda, they will reduce the average weight of an American by 5 pounds a year. They plan to increase the tax by 18%. I don't think this will help our obesity problem because this just depresses me and now I want to eat something. Pizza Hut anyone?

Board games are now becoming "hip." Hasbro recently released "Monopoly: Revolution Edition", a slick, rounded-board game along with debit cards and an ATM instead of paper money. Will the banks have a bailout system if you happen to loose. Included in the game are popular songs such as: Rihanna's "Umbrella," Daniel Powter's "Bad Day," and Beyonce's "Crazy in Love" that play after certain actions. Who chose the music, a 14 year old crazed teenager? On a bright side, if it rains, we can all cuddle "under my umbrella" and play some Monopoly...get it?

One would believe that a tangible child if far more important than a virtual baby right? Well, not to a South Korean family who supported their virtual child rather than nurturing their three-month-old daughter. This is an example of plain out stupidity. Yes, during the depression people went to movies to escape from their problems, but this is an extreme. There is a line between reality and virtuality—and they clearly have crossed it. If only there was a virtual prison for these two nut-cases.

A 37-year-old woman was arrested for letting her 14-year-old drive because she was too drunk to drive. In Nebraska the legal age to receive a School Learner's Permit is 14. I think it was an extreme to have the woman arrested because technically, though he didn't have his permit, he most likely drove a lot safer than his drunk mother. The crime shouldn't of been unpunished, but I think jail time was too far—maybe her license suspended would of sufficed.

Well as always, don't do anything I haven't done. Keep studying and remember, three lefts make a right.



In Response to the *Definition of Tagging* article we had last issue, Preston Treadwell (12) responded: "Art comes in many forms, tagging being one of them, and I feel that people always stereotype taggers, as well as the art they produce, in such a negative manner. Me, along with other "taggers", are artists, and the world is our canvas."