

## U. Miami Non-Undergraduate Survey: Values and Connotations

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*In this report, we analyzed a cluster of questions (Q38, Q39 and Q43) centered around non-undergraduates' perceptions of the values and connotations of the arts, the humanities, STEM, and social sciences.*

### I. Visualizations and Statistics

**Q38 - How would you define the value or purpose of the following? (Please check all that apply.)**

#### **Q38-1: A college education**

Total Respondents: 195 out of 236

Makes you a good person: 22%

Teaches marketable job skills: 50%

Gives you prestige: 50%

Gives you personal fulfillment/ allows you to follow your passion or explore your interests: 70%

Prepares you to contribute something positive to society and the world: 63%

No value: 0%

No answer: 17%

#### **Q38-2: The humanities in a college education**

Total Respondents: 194 out of 236

Makes you a good person: 29%

Teaches marketable job skills: 29%

Gives you prestige: 19%

Gives you personal fulfillment/ allows you to follow your passion or explore your interests: 65%

Prepares you to contribute something positive to society and the world: 62%

No value: 1%

No answer: 18%

**Q38-3: The arts in a college education**

Total Respondents: 192 out of 236

Makes you a good person: 22%

Teaches marketable job skills: 25%

Gives you prestige: 19%

Gives you personal fulfillment/ allows you to follow your passion or explore your interests: 66%

Prepares you to contribute something positive to society and the world: 56%

No value: 5%

No answer: 19%

**Q38-4: The social sciences in a college education**

Total Respondents: 194 out of 236

Makes you a good person: 23%

Teaches marketable job skills: 42%

Gives you prestige: 17%

Gives you personal fulfillment/ allows you to follow your passion or explore your interests: 63%

Prepares you to contribute something positive to society and the world: 63%

No value: 3%

No answer: 18%

**Q38-5: STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and math) in a college education**

Total Respondents: 195 out of 236

Makes you a good person: 13%

Teaches marketable job skills: 67%

Gives you prestige: 51%

Gives you personal fulfillment/ allows you to follow your passion or explore your interests: 60%

Prepares you to contribute something positive to society and the world: 65%

No value: 3%

No answer: 17%

**Q38-6: The humanities in a high school curriculum**

Total Respondents: 192 out of 236

- Makes you a good person: 28%
- Teaches marketable job skills: 22%
- Gives you prestige: 13%
- Gives you personal fulfillment/ allows you to follow your passion or explore your interests: 62%
- Prepares you to contribute something positive to society and the world: 56%
- No value: 4%
- No answer: 19%

**Q38-7: The arts in a high school curriculum**

Total Respondents: 191 out of 236

- Makes you a good person: 24%
- Teaches marketable job skills: 17%
- Gives you prestige: 14%
- Gives you personal fulfillment/ allows you to follow your passion or explore your interests: 69%
- Prepares you to contribute something positive to society and the world: 53%
- No value: 4%
- No answer: 19%

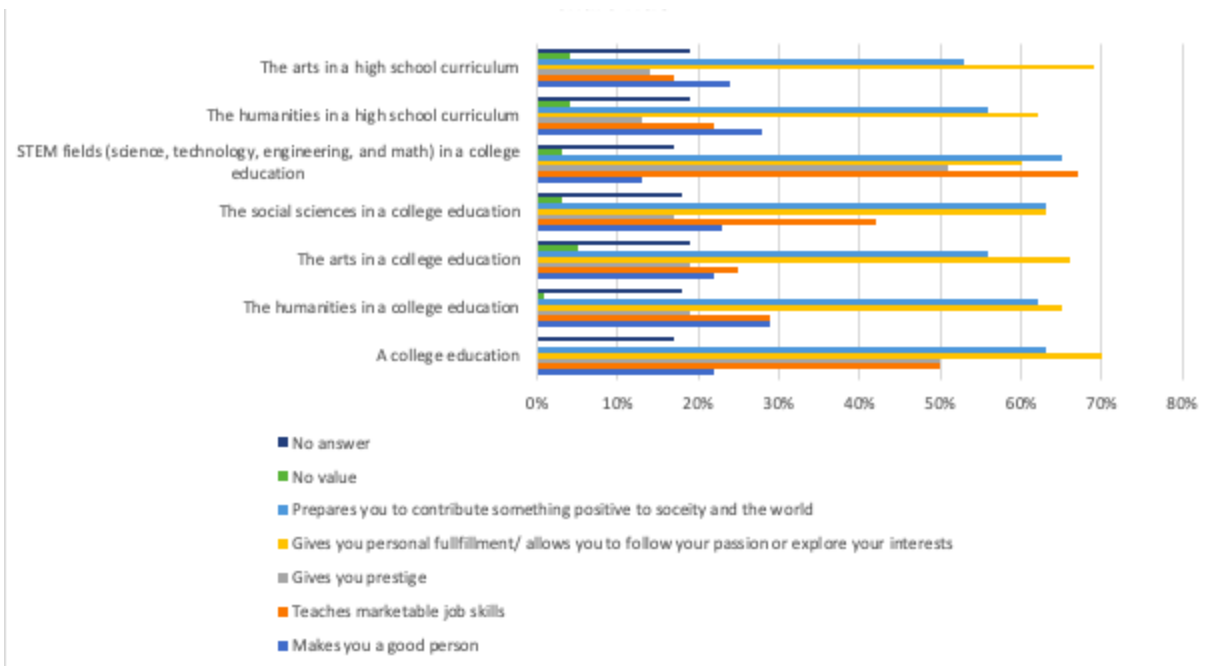


Fig. 1: Q38 results

**Q39 - How would you describe the connotations of the following terms? (Please check all that apply.)**

**Q39-1: Humanities**

Total Respondents: 196 out of 236

Positive: 69%

Negative: 8%

Prestigious: 19%

Accessible/Inclusive: 43%

Fun: 36%

Boring: 8%

Easy: 21%

Difficult: 11%

No answer: 17%

**Q39-2: Liberal Arts**

Total Respondents: 193 out of 236

Positive: 54%

Negative: 11%

Prestigious: 20%

Accessible/Inclusive: 35%

Fun: 34%

Boring: 10%

Easy: 20%

Difficult: 10%

No answer: 18%

**Q39-3: The Arts**

Total Respondents: 196 out of 236

- Positive: 61%
- Negative: 5%
- Prestigious: 26%
- Accessible/Inclusive: 33%
- Fun: 53%
- Boring: 5%
- Easy: 14%
- Difficult: 17%
- No answer: 17%

**Q39-4: Literature**

Total Respondents: 195 out of 236

- Positive: 59%
- Negative: 5%
- Prestigious: 37%
- Accessible/Inclusive: 25%
- Fun: 31%
- Boring: 20%
- Easy: 6%
- Difficult: 31%
- No answer: 17%

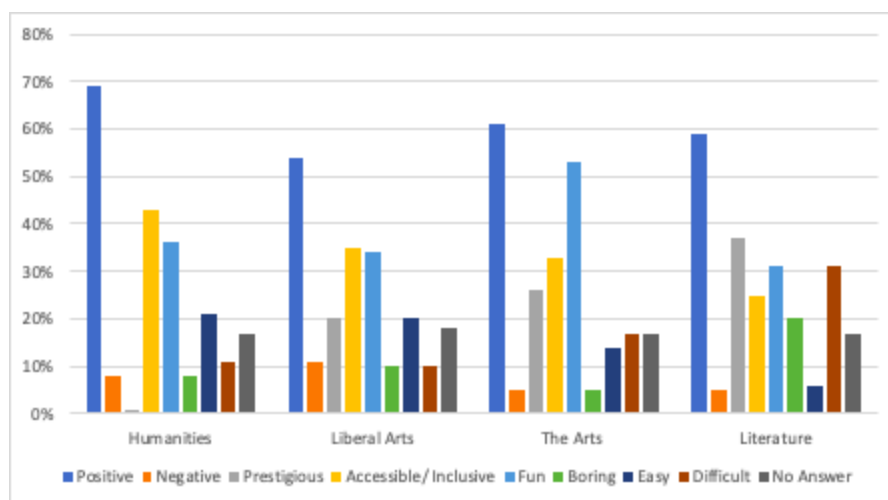


Fig. 2: Q39 results

**Q43 - How important do you consider the humanities to be in your life (either as an academic field or as individual subjects, like literature, history, etc)?**

Total Respondents: 197 out of 236

Very important: 48%

Somewhat important: 29%

Not important: 6%

No answer: 17%

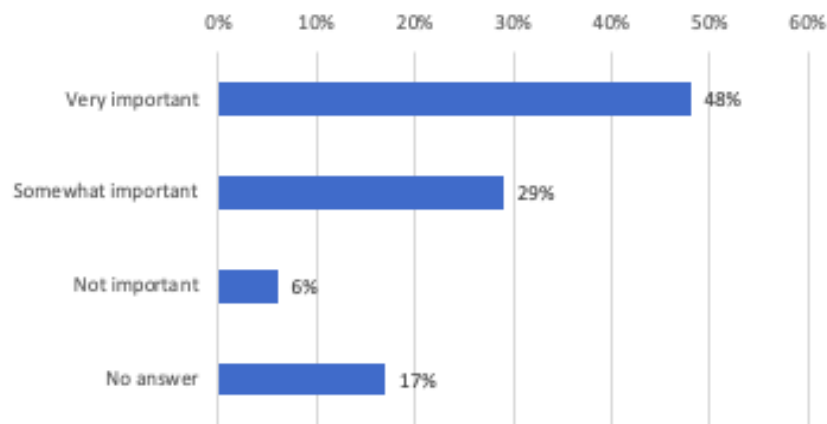


Fig. 3: Q43 results

## II: Observations

Overall, the responses to Q38 (asking to characterize education in different fields of knowledge) were similar to the corresponding undergraduate question ([MR-9-9](#)), marking a noteworthy stability in opinions about the value of these categories across ages and stages of life. This means that almost all of the observations in [MR-9-9](#) apply here. A few differences do, however, stand out:

- Undergraduates are more optimistic about the extent to which a college education in general connotes marketable job skills.
- A higher percentage of non-undergraduates connote the humanities with moral value, as well as an ability to teach marketable job skills. Further, non-undergraduates chose the option “gives you personal fulfillment” for the humanities more often than undergraduates (65% for non-undergraduates and 54% for undergraduates, respectively). Despite that, the percentage of non-undergraduates who consider the humanities prestigious is the same as undergraduates (19%).

For Q39, which asked respondents to characterize the terms humanities, liberal arts, the arts, and literature, the top-ranked adjectives stayed mostly consistent between undergraduates and non-undergraduates. “Positive,” “accessible,” and “fun” remained popular picks for the top half of the rankings, except for in responses for literature, where “prestigious” ousted “accessible” from its top-three slot. Overall, undergraduates are more convinced of the ease of the humanities, liberal arts, and arts than non-undergraduates. Non-undergraduates also chose the word “difficult” for the humanities at the same frequency as the undergraduates did, but for the liberal arts, the percentage of non-undergrads who chose “difficult” is twice as high (5% for undergraduates and 10% for non-undergraduates). There is no significant difference between the percentage of undergraduates and non-undergraduates who chose “difficult” for the arts, but the percentage of non-undergraduates who marked the arts as “easy” drops in favor of the percentage of those who selected “prestigious” and “positive.”

One notable difference is that non-undergraduates considered literature “fun” more frequently than “boring,” whereas the opposite was true for undergraduates.” Overall, as with undergraduates, positive words such as “positive,” “fun,” and “accessible/inclusive” have higher percentages than negative words.

Slightly more non-undergraduates than undergraduates describe literature as “difficult” (31%), while fewer see it as “boring” (20%). Perceptions of the humanities are similarly lower, with 11% rating it as “difficult,” and 8% rating it as “boring.” The frequency of “prestige” jumps up to 37% for literature, but only slightly more respondents higher than the undergraduates for the humanities (19%).

However, non-undergraduates are more keen to recognize the difficulties that humanities might present than undergraduates. As noted before, this could be because many of our non-undergraduate respondents work within the university system and therefore have some familiarity with professional humanities-based work; one might assume that they see examples of this work that does not feel like something they themselves could easily do.

Q43, which asks respondents to rate the importance of the humanities in their lives, both personal and professional, requires little elucidation; while the percentage of respondents who consider the humanities to be unimportant is quite low (6%), it is also important to note that less than half consider the field very important (48%).