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LOST CURRICULUM

Daily Policy Digest

EDUCATION /

Tuesday, August 10, 2004

Many college students graduate without taking core classes in subjects like literature, economics and American history, according to a study from the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA).

ACTA surveyed 50 well-known colleges and universities to find out if they require students to take courses in seven core areas (composition, literature, foreign language, American history, economics, math and natural or physical science). The study found:

- None of the 50 colleges require a general course in economics.
- Only 14 percent require students to take an American history or government class.
- None of the colleges require all 7 subjects; only Baylor University in Texas received an A for covering 6 of the 7 requirements.
- Some 48 percent of the schools received a D or F, meaning they require only one or two core classes.

The decline of the core curriculum is partially due to too many choices, says Barry Latzer, the study's author. Many colleges allow students to pick from dozens of course offerings to fulfill their requirements, even those with very narrow topics, like the "Ghosts, Demons and Monsters" class at Dartmouth College.

Source: "No Math, No Science, No Nothing," Inside Academe, American Council of Trustees and Alumni, Spring 2004.

For text <http://www.goacta.org/publications/reports.html>

For more on Curriculum <http://www.ncpa.org/iss/edu/>

Women in the Economy

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