

How Should Liberal Arts Education be Transformed? Perspectives and Responses from North America, East Asia and Western Europe

Project Description:

This project sets its objectives as exploring the ideal or transformed liberal arts education curriculum and patterns in the new contexts of mass higher education, knowledge societies and globalization. Specifically, it aims to address the fundamental questions and issues around the vital role of liberal arts education in preparing students to tackle society's most pressing problems; respond critically and constructively to the rapid change occurring in contemporary political, economic, and cultural life; realize their ethical responsibilities; and become active and engaged citizens in local, national, and international affairs. This project will be implemented via a research network connecting the partners in North America, East Asia and Western Europe where liberal arts education is being conceptualized under different traditions and tackled with distinctive strategies.

Student Roles:

This position is to support a partnership project that involves universities and organizations in North America (Canada and the US), East Asia (China, Hong Kong and Japan) and Western Europe (Germany and Netherlands). It requires conducting the comparative analysis that includes developing case studies of different liberal arts education models around the world, identifying key elements at the institutional level such as policies and practices related to curriculum development, disciplinary and pedagogical focus, quality assurance procedures, source and numbers of enrollments, governance and administrative structures, funding mechanisms, scholarships, etc. Specifically, it involves reviewing published studies relating to existing liberal arts education models and curriculum delivery modes in universities in North America, East Asia and Western Europe; assisting in comparative analysis of specific dimensions related to liberal arts education models and practices across the regions; aiding with identifying potential partners (researchers, universities and organizations) with respect to new initiatives for transforming liberal arts education in universities.

Project location: York University - Toronto

Preferred start date: 2021-06-14 (start is flexible)

Faculty supervisor: Qiang Zha