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The Benefits of a Liberal Arts Education

Manchester College provides students with an opportunity to become well-rounded individuals. Here students are offered a wide variety of classes to expand their knowledge in areas other than their field of study. Being a liberal arts college, students are required to take a variety of general education requirements such as: Experiencing the Arts, Philosophy, and a form of Cultural Connection, just to name a few. These classes enrich student minds and introduce them to new areas of thinking.

Experiencing the Arts is a class that is often dreaded by most of the student body, but once completing the class students often have a newfound appreciation for art, or at least I did. This humanities course examines art, cinema, music, and theatre from different time periods. This class introduced me to composers such as: Vivaldi, Bach, and Mozart, and artists like Picasso and Van Gogh. I not only learned their masterpieces, but the hard work that goes into them. Through this class I learned that dedication and imagination can create beautiful things. I will take this knowledge with me into the classroom as I become an educator, by dedicating myself to my students and using my imagination to make learning fun.

Philosophy is another course that has benefits for the future. It requires deeper thinking; students are asked questions of being, knowledge, and action. During this course I was encouraged to step out of the small box I knew and look at a much broader

picture. Questions were raised that could not be answered; we were left to ponder ideas of what is, what was, and what will be. I was asked to think critically about topics that I thought I already knew the answers to and to find new meaning to different issues. Through this class I learned not to settle; questions are important. I also learned that sometimes answers cannot be found; there are just some things that we do not know. As a teacher I can take this knowledge and yearning for answers to the classroom. I will encourage my students to think critically and ask questions.

Human Conflict, a cultural connection, was a great course; during this class both interpersonal and intrapersonal conflict were examined. I learned a variety of ways to deal with conflict as well as different types of conflict. This can be very useful information in a classroom. Most all classrooms will run into conflict and through this class I have learned of ways to resolve it. I will be able to trouble shoot conflict and give students ideas on how to solve their problems themselves. I have also learned that it is essential to get to know your students, by knowing your students you can help reduce conflict in the classroom.

In preparing to be an educator I have found that a liberal arts education is very helpful. It has allowed me to see things from a different point of view. I grew up in a small town in southern Indiana with little diversity; Manchester College has opened my eyes to a whole other world. I have been given the opportunity to expand my knowledge on art, religion, and even other cultures. I am confident that through my liberal arts education I have become a more well rounded individual.

