What Does It Mean to Be College and Career Ready?

Architecture for Implementing the Common Core Standards
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epic
Educational Policy
Improvement Center

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Liberal Education & America's Promise

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EXCELLENCE FOR EVERYONE AS A NATION GOES TO COLLEGE

"A COLLABORATION BETWEEN EDUCATORS, STUDENTS, POLICYMAKERS, AND EMPLOYERS"

CAMPUS ACTION and ADVOCACY

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Effort—Responds to New Reality:
The World is Demanding More

There is a demand for more **numbers** of college educated workers.

There is a demand for **engaged and informed citizens**, who are knowledgeable about themselves and the world around them

There is also a demand that those educated workers and citizens have higher levels of **learning and knowledge, and some new and different skills and abilities**.

Narrow Learning is Not Enough
The LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes

- *Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World*

  Focused on engagement with big questions, enduring and contemporary

- *Intellectual and Practical Skills*

  Practiced extensively across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance

- *Personal and Social Responsibility*

  Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

- *Integrative Learning*

  Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems

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National Surveys of Employers on College Learning and Graduates' Work Readiness

AAC&U commissioned Hart Research Associates (in 2006, 2007, and in late 2009) to interview employers (C-level suite executives and, in 2009 additional human resource professionals) whose companies report that hiring relatively large numbers of college graduates

Findings are summarized in the following reports:

How Should Colleges Prepare Students to Succeed in Today's Global Economy? (AAC&U, 2007)

How Should Colleges Assess and Improve Student Learning? Employers' Views on the Accountability Challenge (AAC&U, 2008)

Raising the Bar: Employers' Views on College Learning in the Wake of the Economic Downturn (AAC&U, 2010)

See: www.aacu.org/leap/public_opinion_research

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Raising The Bar

Employers' Views On College Learning
In The Wake Of The Economic Downturn

Key findings from survey among 302 employers
Conducted October 27 – November 17, 2009
for

Association of American Colleges and Universities

Employers' Expectations of Employees Have Increased

% who agree with each statement

Our company is asking employees to **take on more responsibilities** and to **use a broader set of skills** than in the past

91%

Employees are expected to **work harder to coordinate with other departments** than in the past

90%

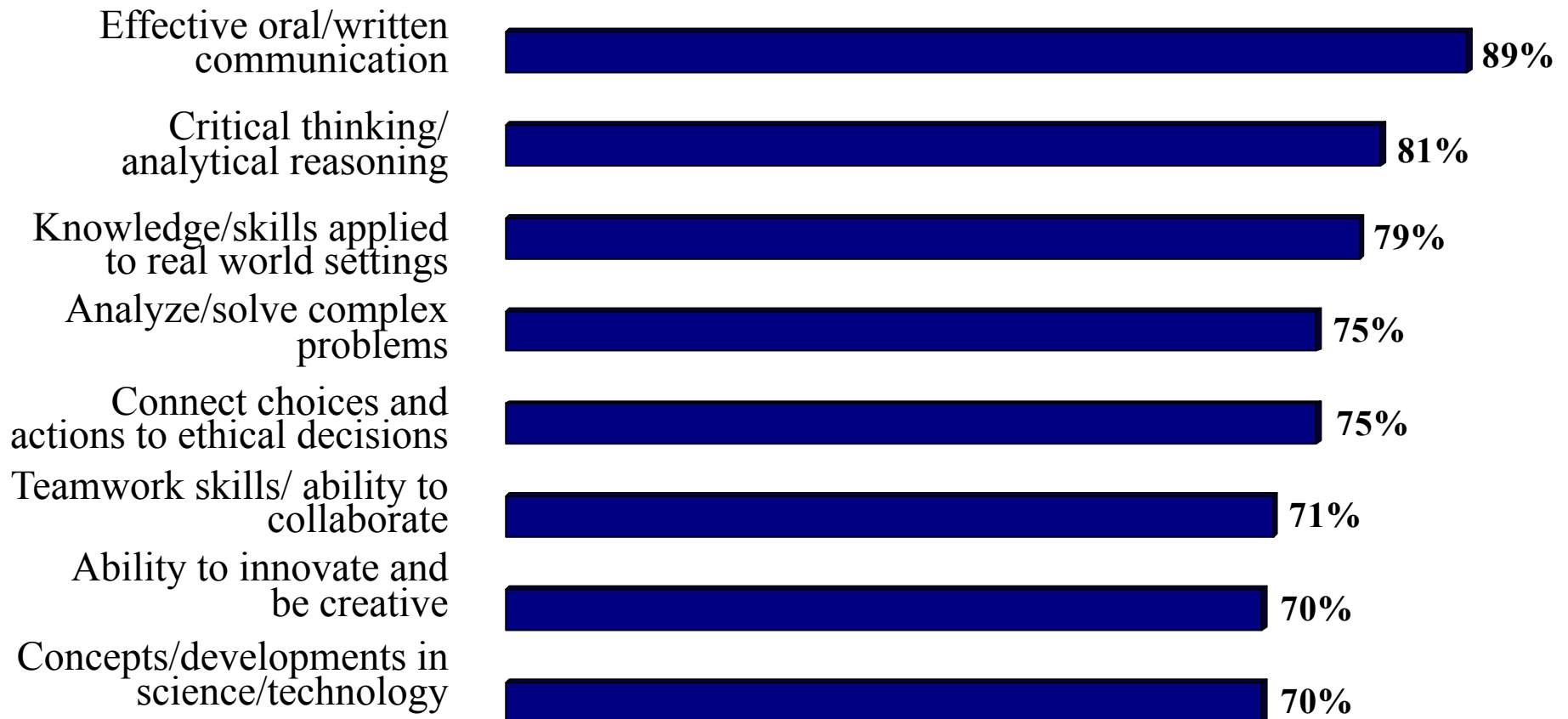The **challenges** employees face within our company are **more complex today** than they were in the past

88%

To succeed in our company, employees need **higher levels of learning and knowledge** today than they did in the past

88%

Employers' Top Priorities For Student Learning Outcomes In College

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% saying two- and four-year colleges should place MORE emphasis on helping students develop these skills, qualities, capabilities, knowledge

Effective oral/written communication	89%
Critical thinking/ analytical reasoning	81%
Knowledge/skills applied to real world settings	79%
Analyze/solve complex problems	75%
Connect choices and actions to ethical decisions	75%
Teamwork skills/ ability to collaborate	71%
Ability to innovate and be creative	70%
Concepts/developments in science/technology	70%

Employers Evaluate College Graduates' Preparedness In Key Areas

	Mean rating*	Very well prepared (8-10 ratings)*	Not well prepared (1-5 ratings)*
Teamwork	7.0	39%	17%
Ethical judgment	6.9	38%	19%
Intercultural skills	6.9	38%	19%
Social responsibility	6.7	35%	21%
Quantitative reasoning	6.7	32%	23%
Oral communication	6.6	30%	23%
Self-knowledge	6.5	28%	26%
Adaptability	6.3	24%	30%
Critical thinking	6.3	22%	31%
Writing	6.1	26%	37%
Self-direction	5.9	23%	42%
Global knowledge	5.7	18%	46%

*ratings on 10-point scale: 10 = recent college graduates are extremely well prepared on each quality to succeed in entry level positions or be promoted/advance within the company

AAC&U Members On Trends In Learning Outcomes, General Education, and Assessment

Key findings from online survey among 433 Chief Academic Officers and other academic leaders at AAC&U member institutions
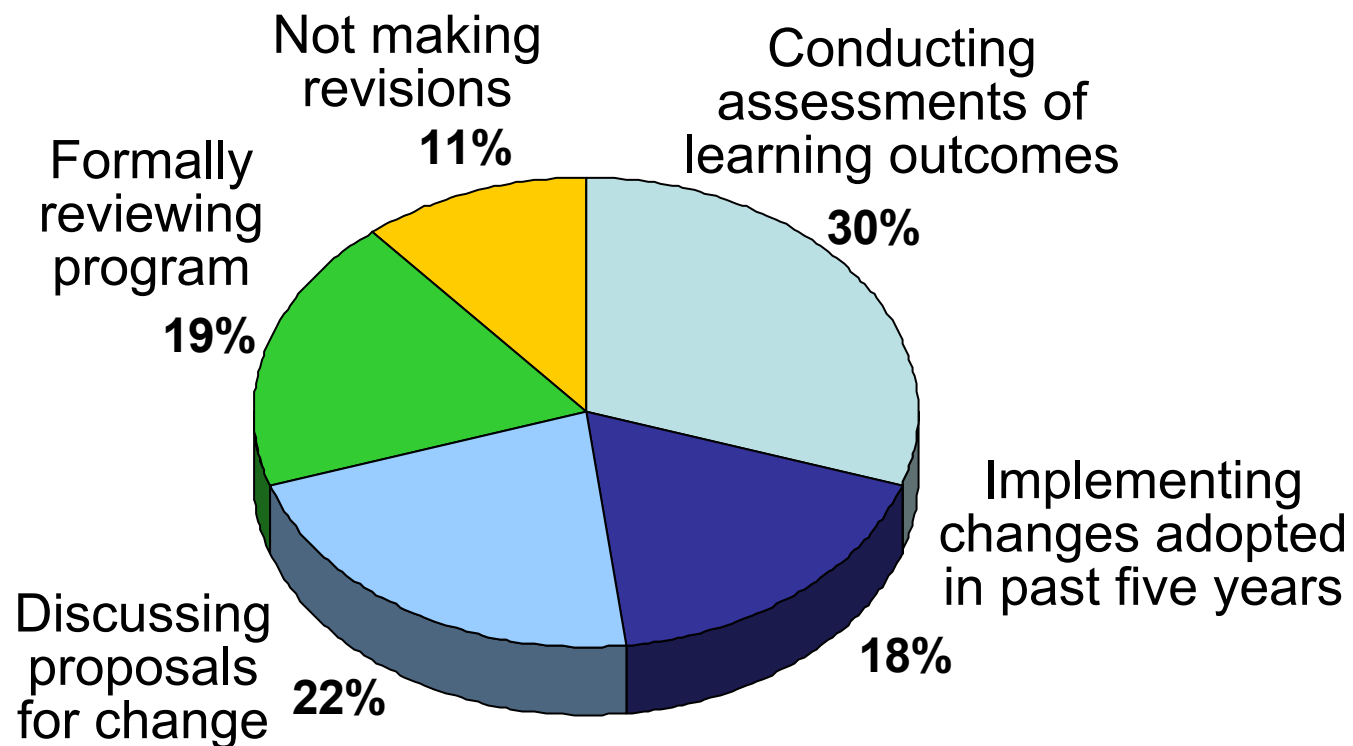
Conducted November 19, 2008 – February 16, 2009

for

Association of American Colleges and Universities

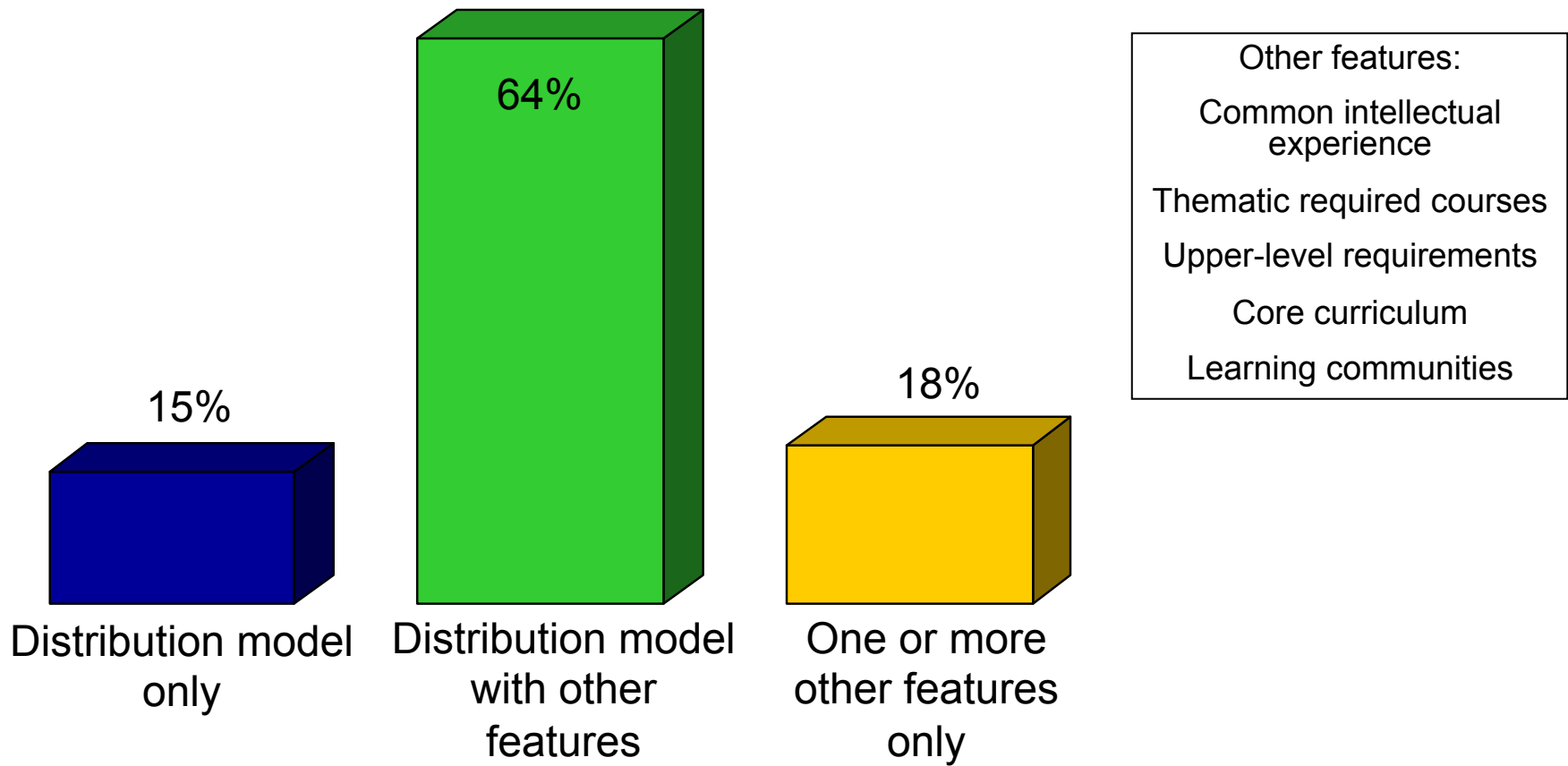Margin of sampling error ±4.7 percentage points

A majority of institutions are in the process of assessing or modifying their general education program.

Status of Institutions' General Education Program

The majority of institutions uses a distribution model with additional integrative features.

Which of these features are part of your institution's general education program?

64%

15%

18%

Distribution model only

Distribution model with other features

One or more other features only

Other features:

Common intellectual experience

Thematic required courses

Upper-level requirements

Core curriculum

Learning communities

Implications for Common Core Implementation

- Success post college graduation will depend on broader set of skills and abilities that must begin before college and extend beyond just ELA and Mathematics

- Integration, Inquiry, Innovative Capacities All Essential

- College curricula for which standards must prepare students are changing—more integration; more applied learning

- We mustn't assume that college is preparing students well for career readiness either. Standards need to increase across the spectrum.

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Implications for Common Core Implementation

- The more the standards and assessment thereof focus on inquiry, research, analysis, reflection, and **integration of skills and knowledge,** the more support they will garner within higher education—and the better aligned they will be with where higher education is going, not where it has been.

- Assessments have to be aligned with these integrative and inquiry capacities, not just knowledge and skill acquisition.

- Data is needed about exactly what students are required to do, not just what scores they get on tests.

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Assessments' Usefulness In Helping Employers Evaluate College Graduates' Potential

| ■ Very useful | ■ Fairly useful |

Faculty supervisor's assessment of applicant's student internship/ community-based project applying college learning in real-world setting

40% — 67%

Sample of applicant's student senior project and overview of faculty assessment of the project

30% — 61%

Electronic portfolio of applicant's college work, including accomplishments in key skill areas and faculty assessments

30% — 56%

Applicant's score on essay test to evaluate level of problem-solving, writing, and analytical-thinking skills

23% — 54%

Applicant college's score showing how the college compares to others in advancing students' critical-thinking skills

14% — 36%

Applicant's score on multiple-choice test of general content knowledge

6% — 29%

Source: *How Should Colleges Assess and Improve College Learning?* (AAC&U and Hart Research, 2008)

Where is the Higher Education Dialogue Today?—
Potential Roadblocks, Opportunities, Bridges to be Built?

- Focus on cost, completion, efficiency, is destructively pulling attention away from quality, 21st century standards and outcomes, and high-impact practices.

- Student course-taking patterns working against integration and purposeful pathways.

- Roadmaps exist, but only certain students getting what they need.

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Where is Higher Education Dialogue?— Potential Roadblocks, Opportunities, Bridges to be Built?

- Emerging new focus on integrative, inquiry-based, civic-minded, applied curricula

- Emerging attention to more sophisticated forms of assessing, documenting, tracking demonstrated achievement (e.g. common rubrics, e-portfolios)

- Clear connections between higher education priorities (outcomes, practices) and standards (e.g. focus on research projects, information literacy, analysis, reflection, research, sustained writing)

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Applied Learning

Broad, Integrative Knowledge

Specialized Knowledge

Intellectual Skills

Civic Learning

The Degree Qualifications Profile

Defining degrees: A new direction for American higher education to be tested and developed in partnership with faculty, students, leaders and stakeholders

Lumina™
FOUNDATION

Lumina Degree Profile

- **Provides a Template of Competencies Required for the Award of Degrees (AA, BA, MA levels)**

- **Focused on demonstration of achievement at key moments across educational career (makes it ripe for alignment with Common Core Standards)**

- **Shifts attention to what students actually do— research, projects, papers, performances, creative work**

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