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Remarks for General Education Video, delivered on August 2, 1999

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Consciousness, reason, and the ability to acquire and assimilate knowledge characterize us as human beings. For centuries those characteristics have led thinking people to an accumulation and expression of understanding and discoveries that make us what we are today. To understand ourselves and our experience, and the experience of others in the world, we need to do more than master one major field of study. We need a broader understanding of accumulated knowledge, and we need the skills to share our understanding, as well as to improve our ability to search for knowledge. We designed a General Education program so each of you will have that opportunity. Part of that curriculum will introduce you to fields that are highly important for a person who wants to be educated and skilled for life in the 21st Century. Another part will open a view on past understanding that are relevant to the way you understand yourself.

As you move into your major field of study you will begin to know how other academic areas enhance it and relate to it. So many graduates talk to me about a course that affected their lives and work even though it was not directly related to the field of study that led to their occupations. You will hear more about the General Education Program from those who helped design it and are deeply committed to it. Look upon it as your next adventure in learning, an adventure that will be more valuable to you as you move through it, an adventure that is likely to have added value as the years of your life accumulate. It has for me.