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Lawrence University TEDx Event Explores Future of Liberal Education

Eleven thought leaders share their insights and perspectives on the value and evolution of a liberal arts education in a rapidly changing world May 3 during a TEDx event at Lawrence University.

Featuring a line-up of intellectual leaders, pioneers and critics, TEDxLawrenceU — "Reimagining Liberal Education" — is designed to spark a national conversation on the future of liberal education, address some of the important issues that have sparked national debate and commentary and ultimately lead to constructive changes at liberal arts colleges.

Beginning at 9 a.m., the event will be broken into four separate sessions of approximately 90 minutes each.

Among the scheduled TEDxLawrenceU presenters are Lawrence President Jill Beck, Chronicle of Higher Education editor-at-large and author of the forthcoming (May 7 release) book "College (Un)Bound" Jeff Selingo and Daphne Koller, a Stanford University professor and co-founder of Coursera, an educational technology company that offers massive open online courses (MOOCs).

Through short presentations — no presenter is allowed to talk for more than 18 minutes — speakers will address such issues as:

• is online education a threat to liberal education or should it be

embraced as part of the solution?

• is the financial model of liberal arts colleges viable in the 21st century?

• can liberal arts colleges remain relevant in a changing society?

• do governance structure and the organizational model of liberal arts colleges need radical reform?

"TEDx events are about powerful and stimulating talks that spur thought and discussion, and ultimately action," said Adam Galambos, assistant professor of economics and a member of the event's organizing committee. "TEDxLawrenceU brings that spirit to tackling some of the most fundamental questions and challenges that liberal arts colleges are facing today. We have put together an exciting program that draws on a variety of perspectives. It will be an exciting day, but I'm confident the talks we will hear, whether live or via the webcast, will be topics of conversations for long after that."

In addition to the live presentations, three TEDTalk videos will be shown. In one, British author and visionary cultural leader Sir Ken Robinson argues we don't get the best of people because they are educated to become good workers, not creative thinkers. In another, Liz Coleman, president of Bennington College, proposes a truly cross-disciplinary educational model that dynamically combines all areas of study and bucks the trend toward increasingly narrow areas of study. The third will be chosen just before the event opens.

The presentations will be accessible to the public via a free live video feed in Lawrence's Warch Campus Center and all talks will be available on the TEDx YouTube channel shortly after the event.

About TEDx, x = independently organized event

In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TEDx is a program of local, self-organized events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience. At a TEDx event, TEDTalks video and live speakers combine to spark deep discussion and connection in a small group. These local, self-organized events are branded TEDx, where x = independently organized TED event. The TED Conference provides general guidance for the TEDx program, but individual TEDx events are self-organized.

[About](#) [TED](#)

TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) is a nonprofit organization devoted to Ideas Worth Spreading. Started as a conference in California 26 years ago, TED has grown to support those world-changing ideas with many initiatives.

At a TED conference, the world's leading thinkers and doers are asked to give the talk of their lives in 18 minutes or less. TED speakers have included Roger Ebert, Sheryl Sandberg, Bill Gates, Elizabeth Gilbert, Benoit Mandelbrot, Philippe Starck, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Brian Greene, Isabel Allende and former UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown. Three major TED events are held each year: The TED Conference takes place every spring in Vancouver, Canada, simultaneous with TEDActive, in Whistler, BC; and the TEDGlobal Conference takes place each summer in Edinburgh, Scotland.

On TED.com, talks from TED conferences are shared with the world for free as TED Talks videos. A new TED Talk is posted every weekday. Through the Open Translation Project, TED Talks are subtitled by volunteers worldwide into more than 90 languages. Through our distribution networks, TED Talks are shared on TV, radio, Netflix and many websites.

The TEDx initiative grants free licenses to people around the world

to organize TED-style events in their communities with TED Talks and live speakers. More than 5,000 TEDx events have been held, and selected talks from these events are also turned into TED Talks videos.

The annual TED Prize grants $1 million to an exceptional individual with a wish to change the world. The TED Fellows program helps world-changing innovators from around the globe to become part of the TED community and, with its help, amplify the impact of their remarkable projects and activities. TED-Ed creates short video lessons by pairing master teachers with animators, for use in classroom instruction or independent learning.