

Message Framework: Higher Education

Talking Points, Key Words and Phrases

Proof Point 1: Citizen Leaders

1. Learning how to think, e.g., the liberal arts model: critical, synthetic, integrative, ethical, and civic-minded.
2. Develops the capacity to learn. Instills value of lifelong learning and curiosity-based knowledge acquisition. Leadership development.
3. Generate leaders with the contextual knowledge to make wise decisions. Students develop an ethos, a way of understanding their roles in society. They have well-developed networks to draw on, both at Cornell and in society. Among them: mentors, peers, employers, alumni.
4. Graduates are comfortable and experienced with diversity (global perspective; cultural competency), and they are skilled at crossing disciplines to solve problems.
5. Education is more than information transfer; the maturation of the student is the real purpose of higher education. We are not training students for the first job, but for a lifetime of jobs.
6. The value of higher education for individuals goes beyond earning potential and return on investment; it's the combination of quality of life and quantity of financial security that need to be considered.
7. Universities produce happy people; people who experience job fulfillment and personal well-being.
8. We need to go beyond the political rhetoric of the value of higher education. Cornell can help craft the conversation in a the proper and fulsome sense. Current media stories focus on the outliers of the student experience; we need to create the alternative stories.

Proof Point 2: Collaborative Approach

1. Universities are knowledge generators; problem solvers. Sharing best practices helps people solve problems.
2. Cornell produces basic, translational, and applied research; we engage in knowledge production across many fields and disciplines.
3. Engaged Cornell will transform the way that students learn, faculty teach, and Cornell engages with community partners in local, regional, national, and global arenas.
4. Universities educate students who make contributions to the world; students make a mark on the world.
5. Knowledge increases in value when it is shared.
6. Economic lens/filter is the wrong way to judge education; we need to acknowledge affordability and access issues and transition to value/benefit of higher education to individuals, communities, and society.

Proof Point 3: Productive Society

1. Universities educate students who make contributions to the world; students make a mark on the world (see tp2).
2. Skilled, knowledgeable graduates engage with the world. They are aware of politics, business, and culture. They have a broad worldview.
3. The Land-Grant system is a delivery mechanism for solutions to real-world problems.
4. Universities have a social contract with society; they respond to social needs.
5. Universities have a role in crafting the conversation about the value of higher education. Cornell can provide a corrective to catastrophizing language and legislation about higher education. We have a role, an imperative in educating lawmakers, policymakers, general population.

6. Document the economic impact when we apply knowledge and research to societal questions; role of entrepreneurship.
7. Cornell students and faculty pathways (networks) for work and employment.
8. Democratic system of government relies on an educated populace.
9. Social benefits of higher education include: benefits to individuals (higher income, lower unemployment, better health); to communities (educated people vote and volunteer, they are more tolerant); and to society as whole (they convey and pass on these values to their children; impact communities in which they live, work, and serve).
10. Cornell has some of the most outstanding and important leaders in higher education. The recruitment of (new female president and outstanding dean of WCMC) speak to our innovation, creativity, and priorities.
11. Cornell is a leading institution with a culture of commitment to public engagement. Our land-grant mission extends beyond NYS to the globe and includes service, commitment, and fruitful engagement in society.