

A Comparison of the U.S. Liberal Arts and Bologna Bachelor Degrees

Are We Talking About the Same Thing?

NAFSA 2015 Conference
Boston, Massachusetts

Presenters

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DAAD, New York
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Division, University of Limerick, Ireland
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The Bologna Process 2000 - 2015

1999 (Bologna Declaration - 30)

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria,
Czech Republic, Denmark,
Estonia, Finland, France,
Germany, Greece, Hungary,
Iceland, Ireland, Italy,
Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania,
Luxembourg, Malta,
Netherlands, Norway,
Poland, Portugal,
Romania, Slovak Republic,
Slovenia, Spain, Sweden,
Switzerland, United Kingdom

2001 - 33

Croatia, Cyprus, Turkey

2003 - 40

Albania, Andorra,
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Holy See,
FYR of Macedonia, Russia,
Serbia

2005 - 45

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia,
Moldova, Ukraine

2007 - 46)

Montenegro

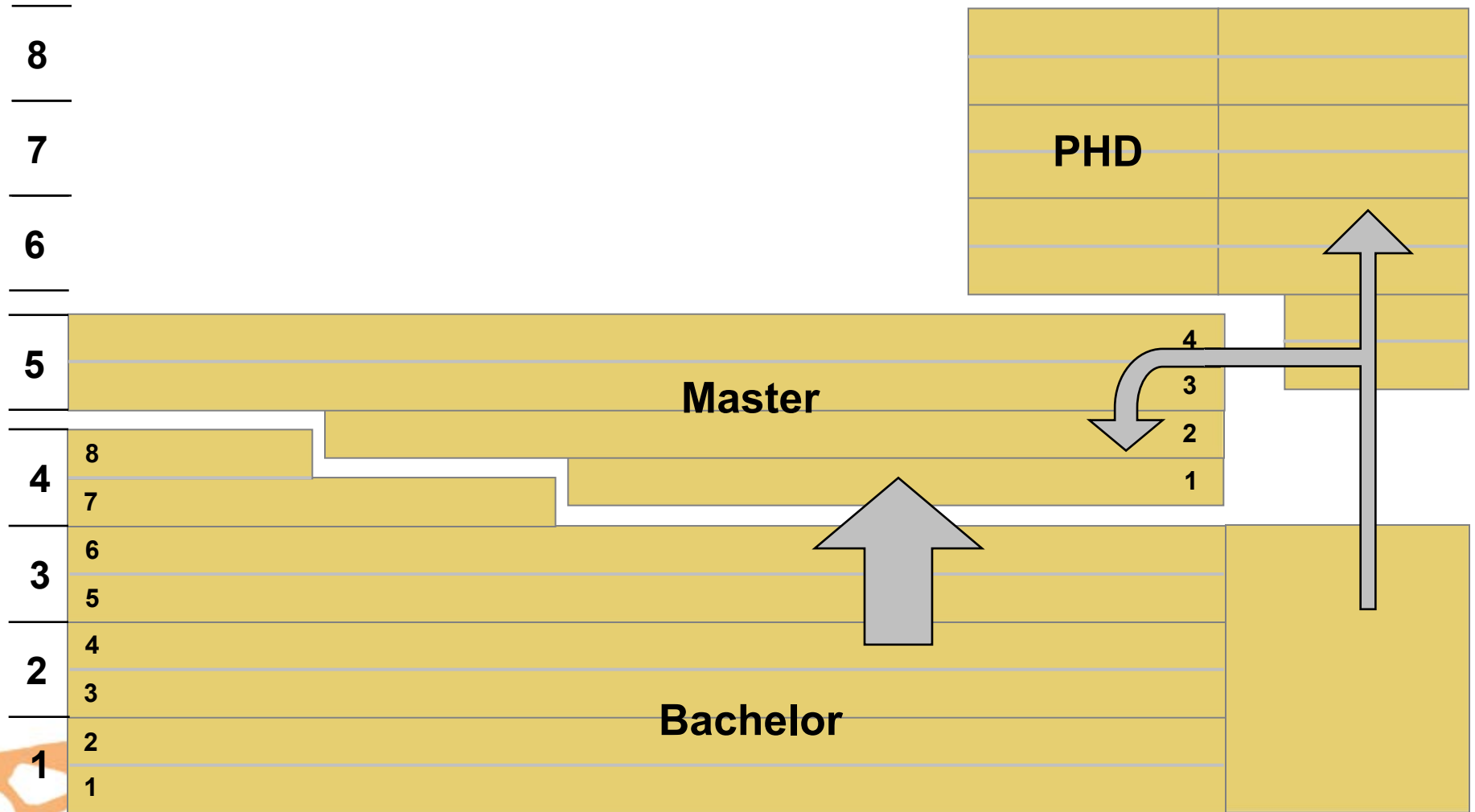
2010 -: 47

Kazakhstan

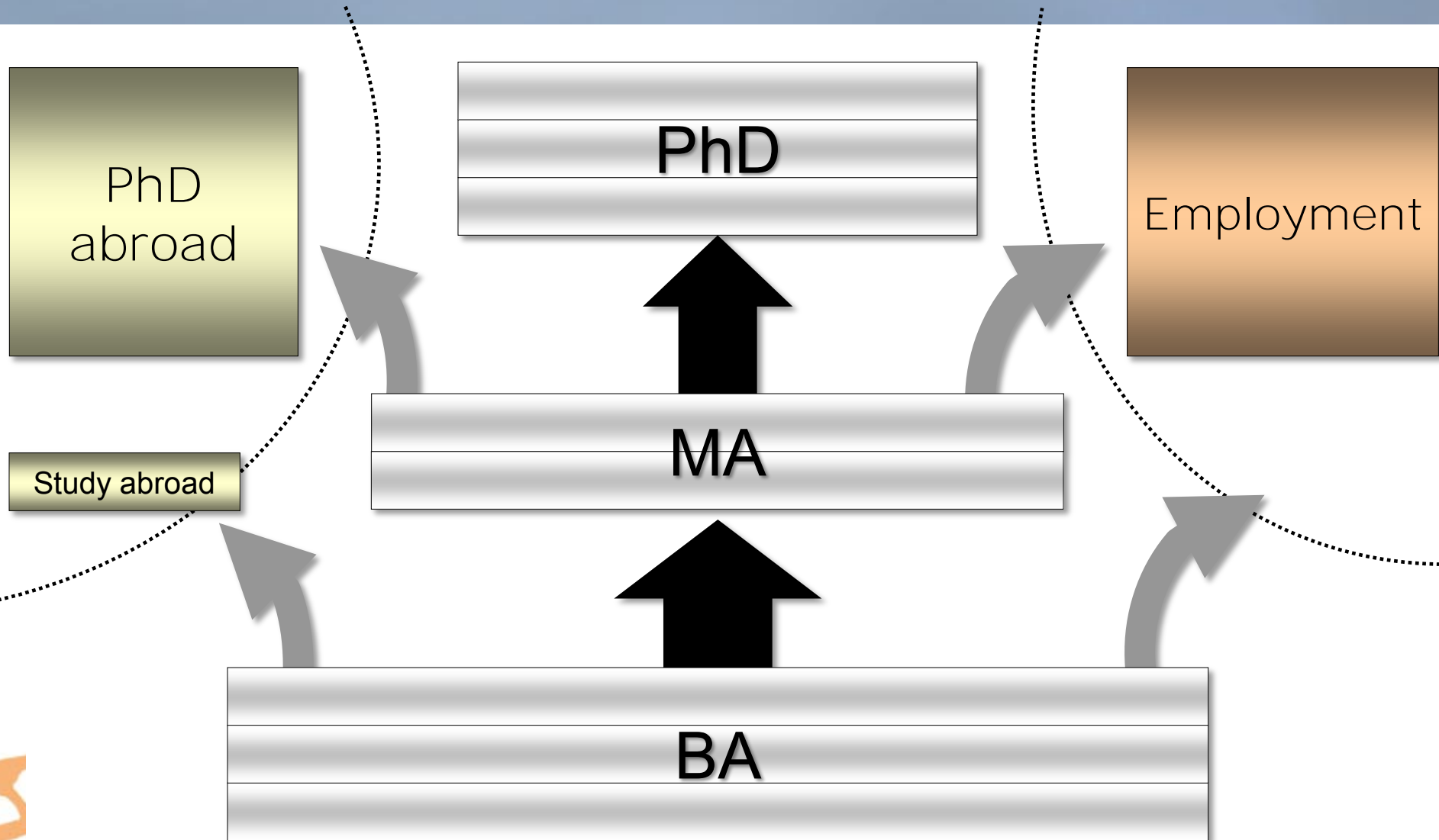


Bologna H.E. Area

Bologna: The 2 (3) cycle degree systems



The European Bologna Degree Structure



■ 392 Higher Education Institutions



- 110 universities
- 224 universities of applied sciences
- 58 colleges of art and music

Features of German universities

- Unity of research and teaching
- Broad range of subjects
- Theoretical orientation of research

Source: HRK (August, 2014)

Higher Education Institutions

■ Facts and Figures:

- **2.5 million students enrolled in German higher education institutions**
- **More than 280,000 international students (11.3 %) enrolled at German universities**
- **25,000 doctoral degrees awarded annually**
- **Almost 24,000 international doctoral students enrolled**
- **Public expenditure for institutions of higher education: 23.5 billion euros (2011)**

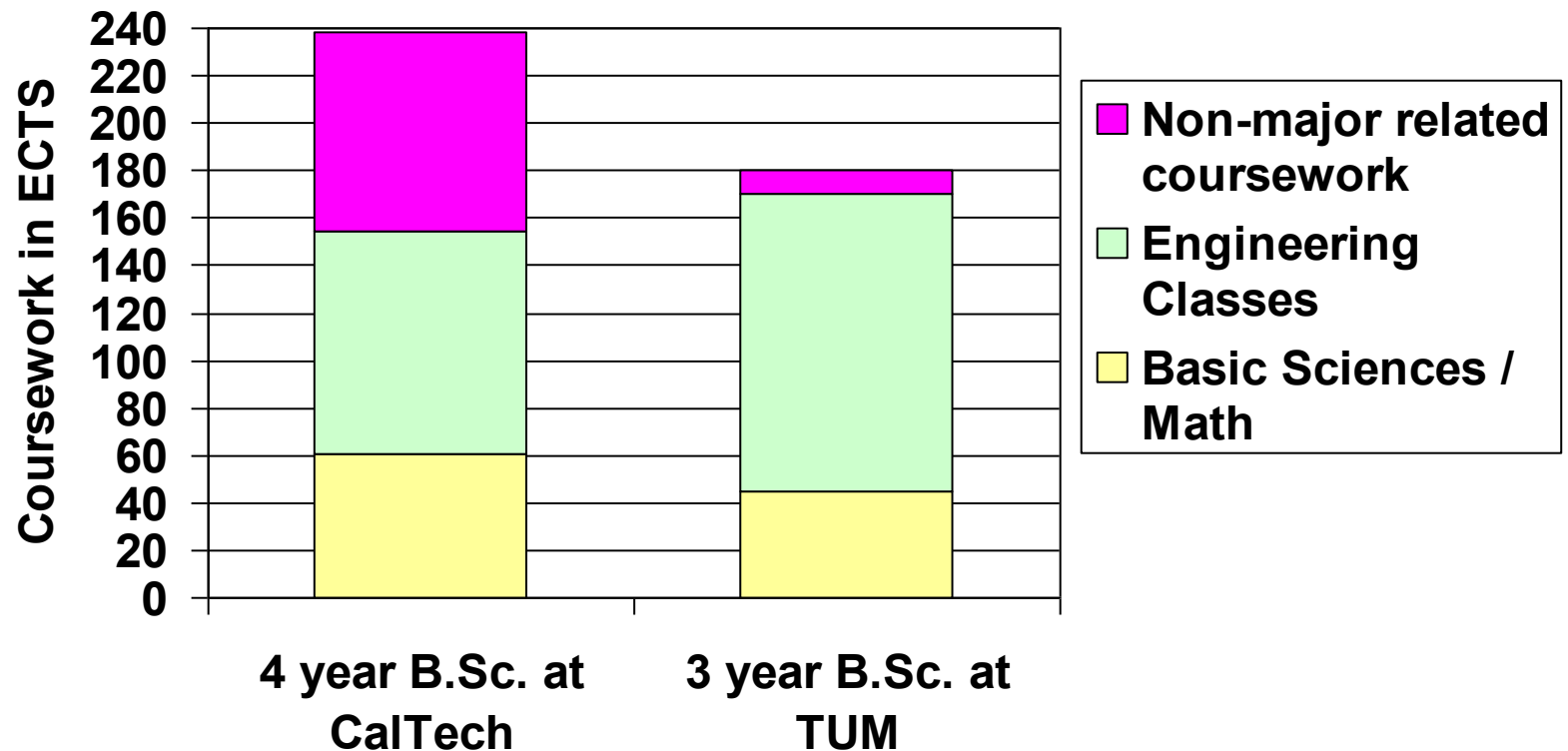
Secondary School Leaving Qualifications: Germany



How is the New German Bachelor Structured?

- In most cases 3 years, in some cases 3.5 or 4 years
- 3 years = 180 ECTS credits, almost two thirds of them in the major, 20 percent in the minor, some electives and some key skills like scientific writing
- An alternative are Bachelors with two majors, e.g. required for future teachers
- No “liberal arts” component, liberal arts are supposed to have been covered in the Gymnasium (High School, college prep. branch). BUT: there are universities trying to introduce an American-style Liberal Arts Bachelor’s (University of Freiburg, University of Lüneburg)
- Typically somebody with a German 3-year Bachelor in chemistry has more chemistry than somebody majoring in chemistry in the US

A Comparison: Engineering at TU Munich and Cal Tech



Outcomes and Expectations in Germany



Is the new German Bachelor's successful?

- **Successful graduates graduate after 6.7 semesters, much faster than for the old degrees**
- **The dropout rate is 25%. This is not good, but better than in the US where 50% have not finished a four-year degree even after 6 years**
- **The labor market accepts the new degree, only 4% (universities) or 6% (universities of applied science) are unemployed**
- **BUT: Two thirds of the Bachelor graduates from universities and roughly half from Fachhochschulen go on with a Master's right after their first degree – big difference from the US**
- **Background: undergraduate and graduate education is basically free...**

Dual Education System: Vocational Training and Cooperative Education

- Pairs hands-on learning with classroom learning
- Apprenticeship versus internship
- Certification versus Bachelor's (with the ability to pursue a Master's)
- 450,000 available trainee positions in 2013 – 70,000 unfilled!



A Comparison of the U.S. and Bologna Bachelor's Degrees

The Case of France

Campus France USA and the Higher Education Department of
the Embassy of France in the United States



I- Requirements to access French higher education

High
School



Gateway towards higher education



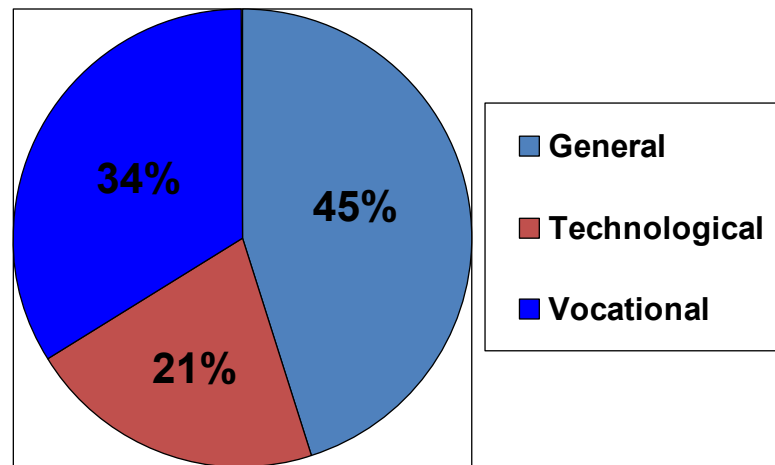
1st university degree

Admissions

- Central on-line application system: *Admission post bac*
- No standardized exams : competitive institutions examine the high-school track-record
- Admission to a specific major
- Selection on academic criteria

II- French Secondary Education - Lycée

- **3 years** : Seconde, Première and Terminale.
- **3 tracks** : General, Technological and vocational



II- French Secondary Education – 3 Tracks

General



General Baccalauréat leading to « Classes Préparatoires » or University

Technological



Technological Baccalauréat leading to specialized higher education (short cycles)

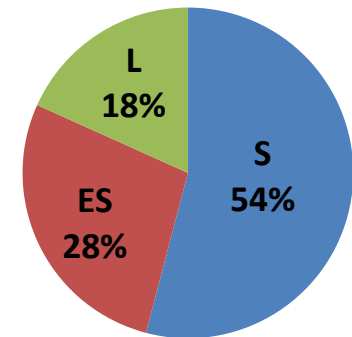
Vocational



Professional Baccalauréat leading to higher ed short cycles or directly to the labor market

II- French Secondary Education – Bac Général

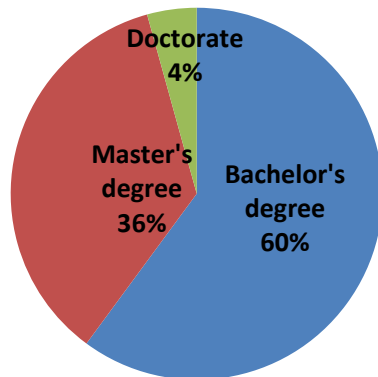
- **Early specialization** : 2 years before the Bac Exam.
- **3 *Séries*** : Science (S), Economics (ES), Literacy and languages (L).
 - » Access to culture in the largest sense
 - » Philosophy is taught in Terminale for all sections: French high school students are exposed to the liberal arts approach in high school.
- **Focus on academic skills vs. holistic skills.**



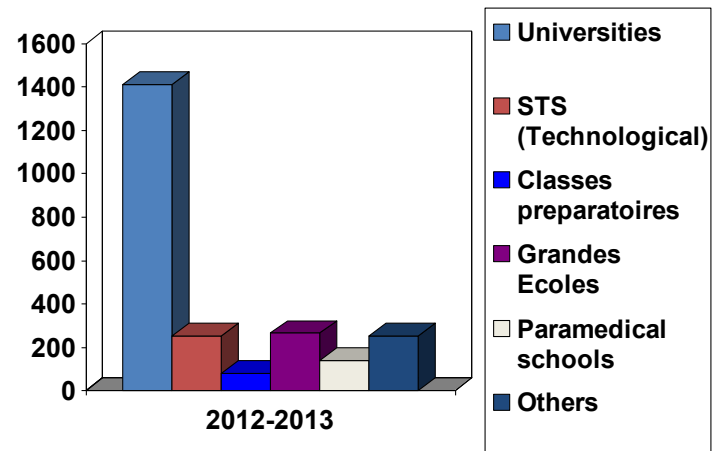
III - French Higher Education

- » **2,387 million students**
- » 77 public universities, 445 « grandes écoles », 80 schools of art and architecture

Distribution by level of studies



Number of students in Higher Education



III - French Higher Education

	France	USA
Specialization	Early	Late
Approach	Academic	Holistic
Most important	Diploma	Notoriety of the school
Transfer	Little	Easy
Bachelor	180 ECTS in 3 years	120 credits in 4 years
Liberal arts component	No (lycée)	Yes

– Bologna impact in France

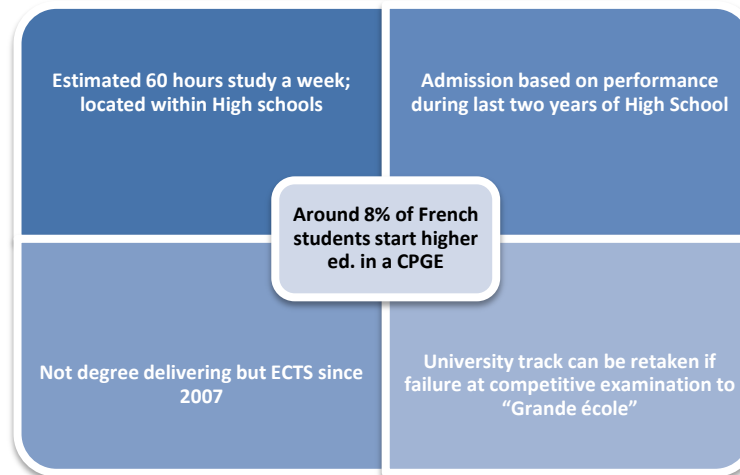
- » LMD System
- » Implementation of ECTS
- » Quality insurance: harmonization of all courses by type, specialties and technicality

III - French Higher Education

- 1) **Universities:** specialized majors; only first semester for general orientation
- 2) **The Grandes Ecoles**
 - » The « elite » track
 - » Schools of engineering, schools of management, Ecoles Normales Supérieures, Veterinary Schools, Instituts d'études politiques
 - » 2 years of intensive preparation for the selective entrance exam
 - « Prepa » in Economics and business studies
 - « Prepa » in Arts and Humanities
 - « Prepa » in Sciences

III - French Higher Education

Understanding the « classes préparatoires »



Content of studies :

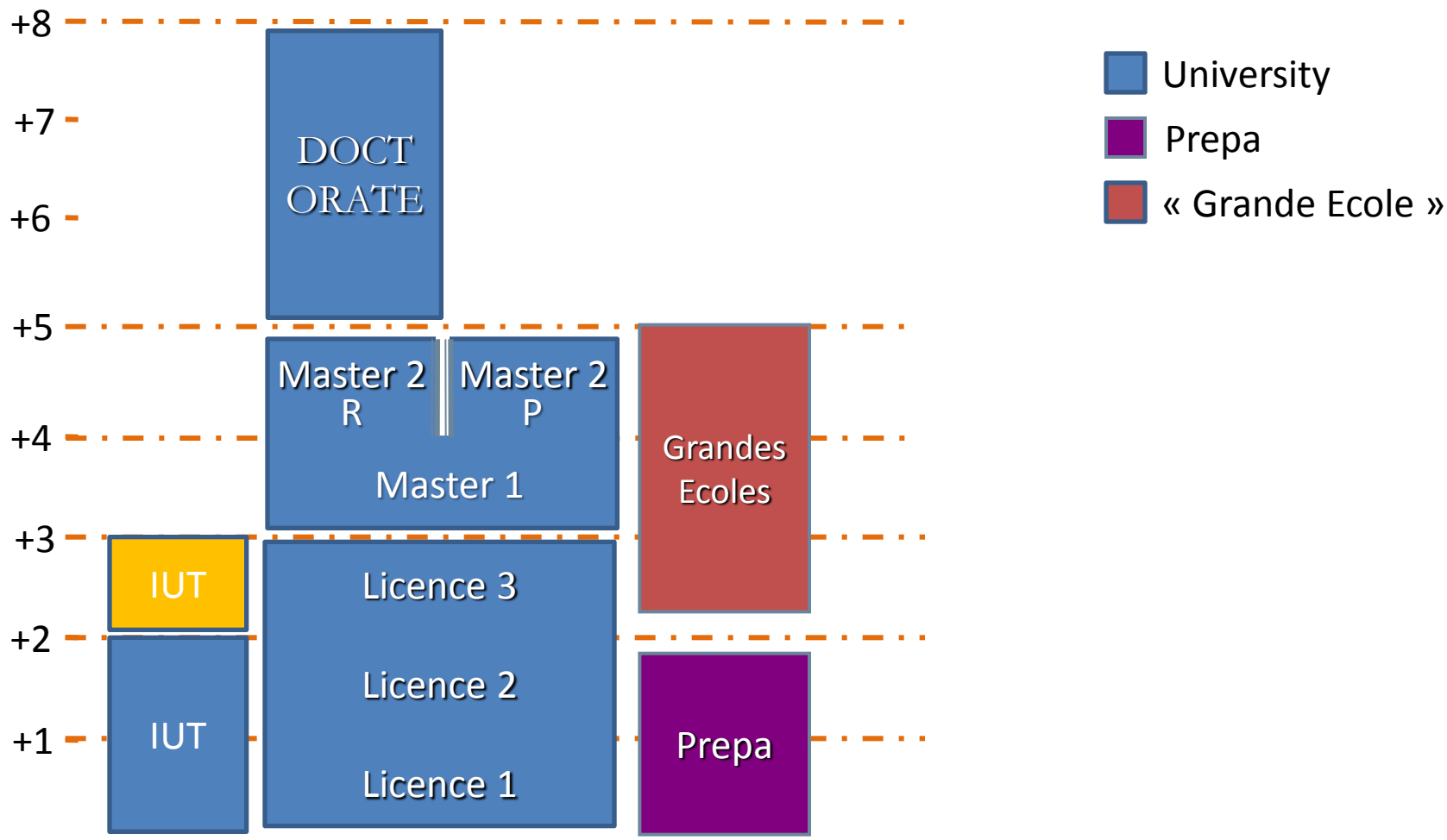
- fundamental knowledge
- foreign languages and foreign cultures
- optional courses
- broad-based studies : multidisciplinary approach, acquisition of working methods
- permanent faculty members guaranteeing the efficiency of training
- integrated and flexible pedagogical methods : lectures, work groups, tutoring

III - French Higher Education

3) Instituts Universitaires et Technologiques: professional schools

- » 115 in France, some attached to universities
- » One third of IUT professors are from other professional sectors, not academics
- » 2 year degree = « Diplôme universitaire de technologie »
- » 3 year degree = « Licence professionnelle »
 - Strong link with local business environment
 - Emphasis on applicable skills
 - Around 10 % of total number of students

Three tracks – different outcomes



IV - Outcomes

- 7 students out of 10 in the final year of the bachelor's degree **obtained their degree on first attempt (180 ECTS)**
- In 2012-2013, out of 2.4 million students in France => 110 000 in Engineering “grandes ecoles” and 133 800 in Business “Grandes écoles”
- 3 students out of 4 **continue their studies for a master's degree (300 ECTS)**
→ More than 80% of them continue in the same field
- **78% of success in the 2nd year of master's degree**

V - Questions

- How can the Bologna system help better understand national specificities?
- Recognition and transparency of degrees, diploma supplement, quality-assurance, towards a North American Bologna system?

Merci!

Sources

- French Ministry of Higher Education and Research
- Foreign Affairs and International Development Ministry
- University Cooperation Department of the Embassy of France in the USA





EDUCATION IN IRELAND

WORLD-CLASS STANDARDS
WARMEST OF WELCOMES

Liberal Arts Degree; Ireland and the USA

Josephine Page

Director

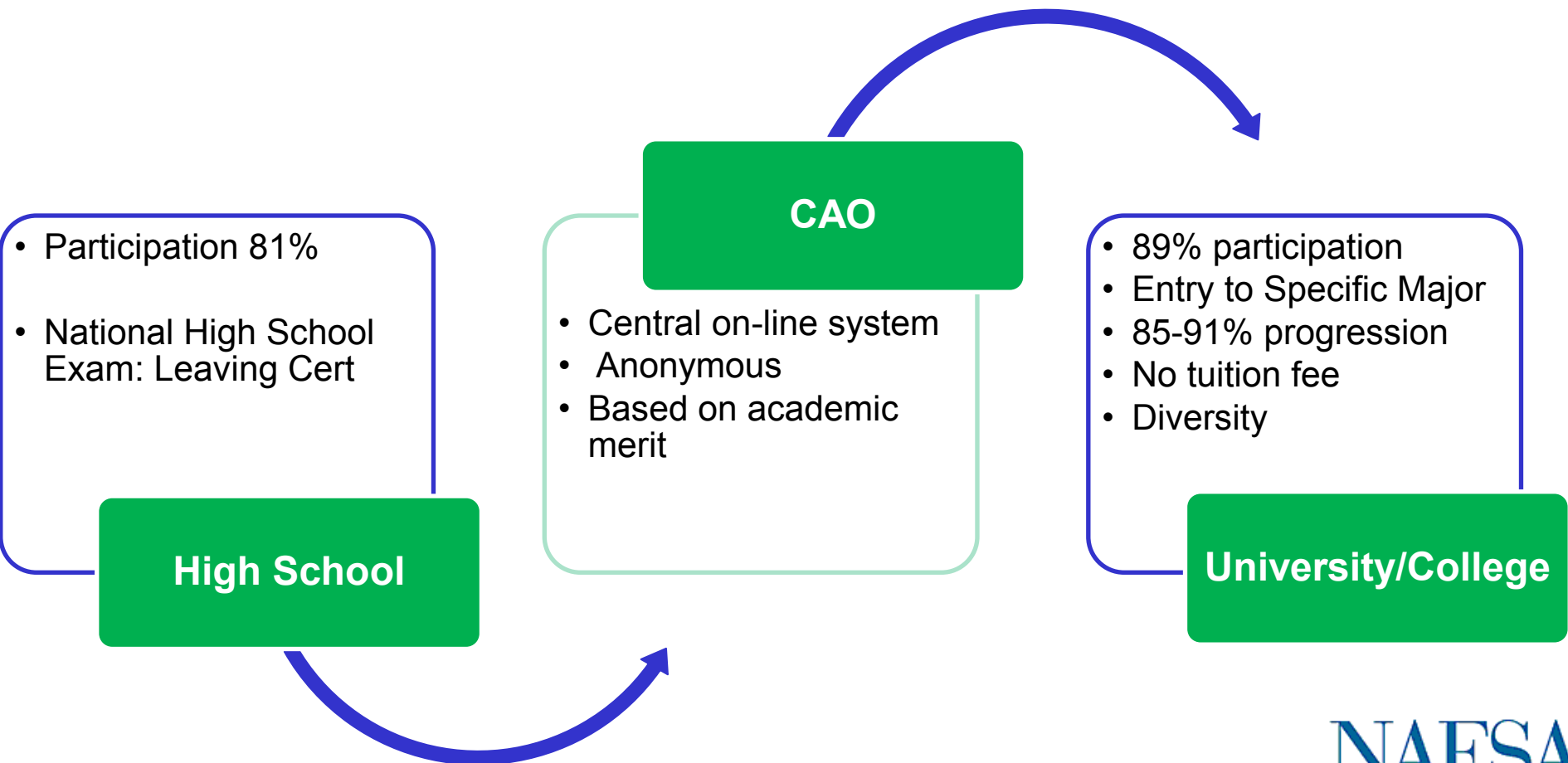
International Education Division
University of Limerick, Ireland

Presentation will cover:

- Entry to Higher Education
- UG Degree structure
- Bologna Impact in Ireland
- Current Issues



Entry to Higher Education



Entry Process

- How does it work?

- Clear and fair system
- Points Race
- Generic Entry

Irish Institutions: 7 universities - enrolling a total of 117,000 students



7 Universities – 117,000 students
Affiliated specialist colleges

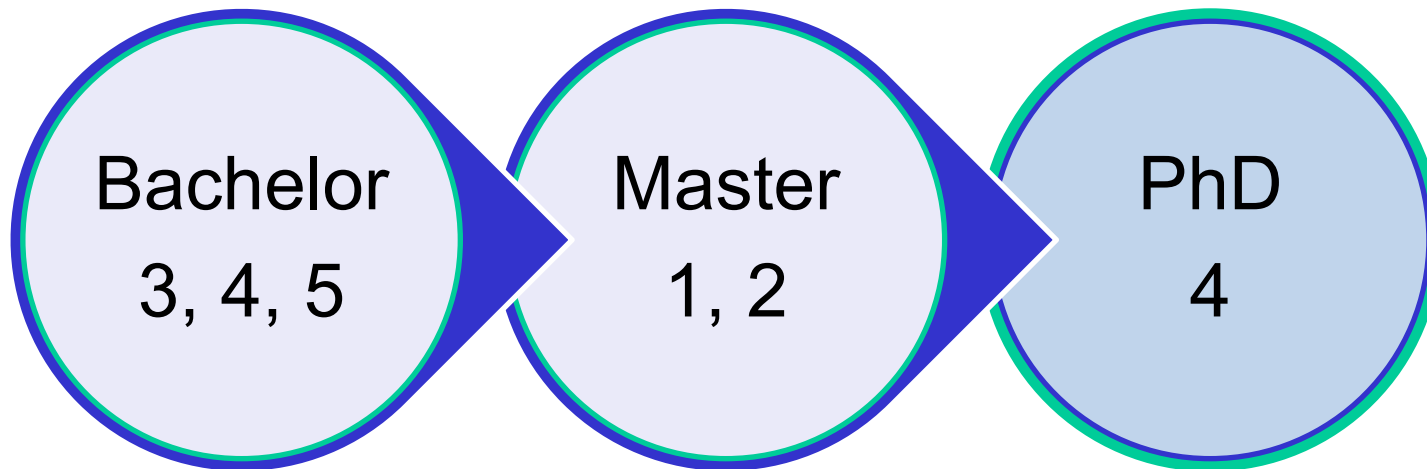
Institutes of Technology
14 set up from 1970

A total of 76,000
students enrolled



Also a small number of
private colleges

Degree Structure



Degree structure

Ireland

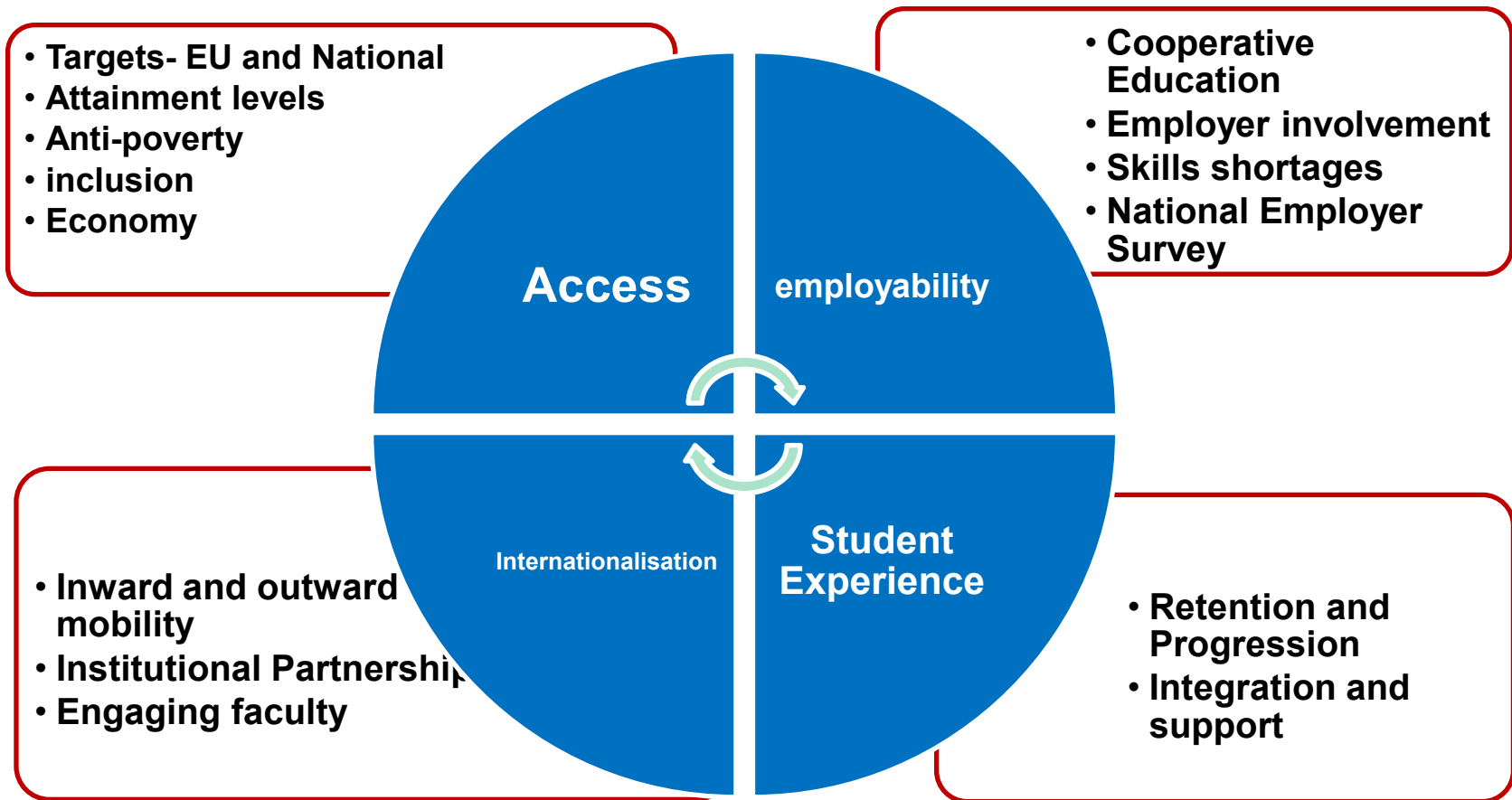
- ☐ Early Specialisation
- ☐ Academic Focus
- ☐ Little no transfer
- ☐ Good international mobility
- ☐ 180-240 ECTS credits

USA

- ☐ Late Specialisation
- ☐ Holistic approach
- ☐ Transfer easy
- ☐ Some international Mobility
- ☐ 120 Credits



Current Focus in Ireland



Liberal Arts v Specialist Degree

- Broad education essential, but where?
 - Liberal Arts Education at Secondary School
- Degree Structure – Liberal arts + graduate specialisation or Bachelor specialisation
- Cost and economy
- Ability to solve modern problems
- Agility in an evolving employment market

U.S. Bachelor's Degrees

Admission

High School

- High School Diploma or equivalent
- States can mandate an exit exam

Admissions

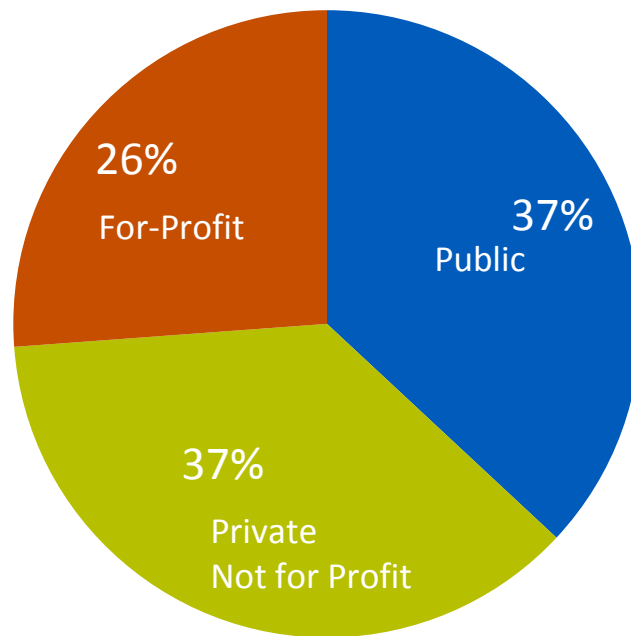
- Competitive application and financial aid processes
- Standardized exams required for competitive institutions and/or honors programs at all institutions
- Academics, tests scores, references, activities and community service
- Apply to multiple institutions
- Receive many offers; consider affordability

University College

- Frequently 'undeclared major'
- Change majors
- Transfer institutions

KEY FACTS

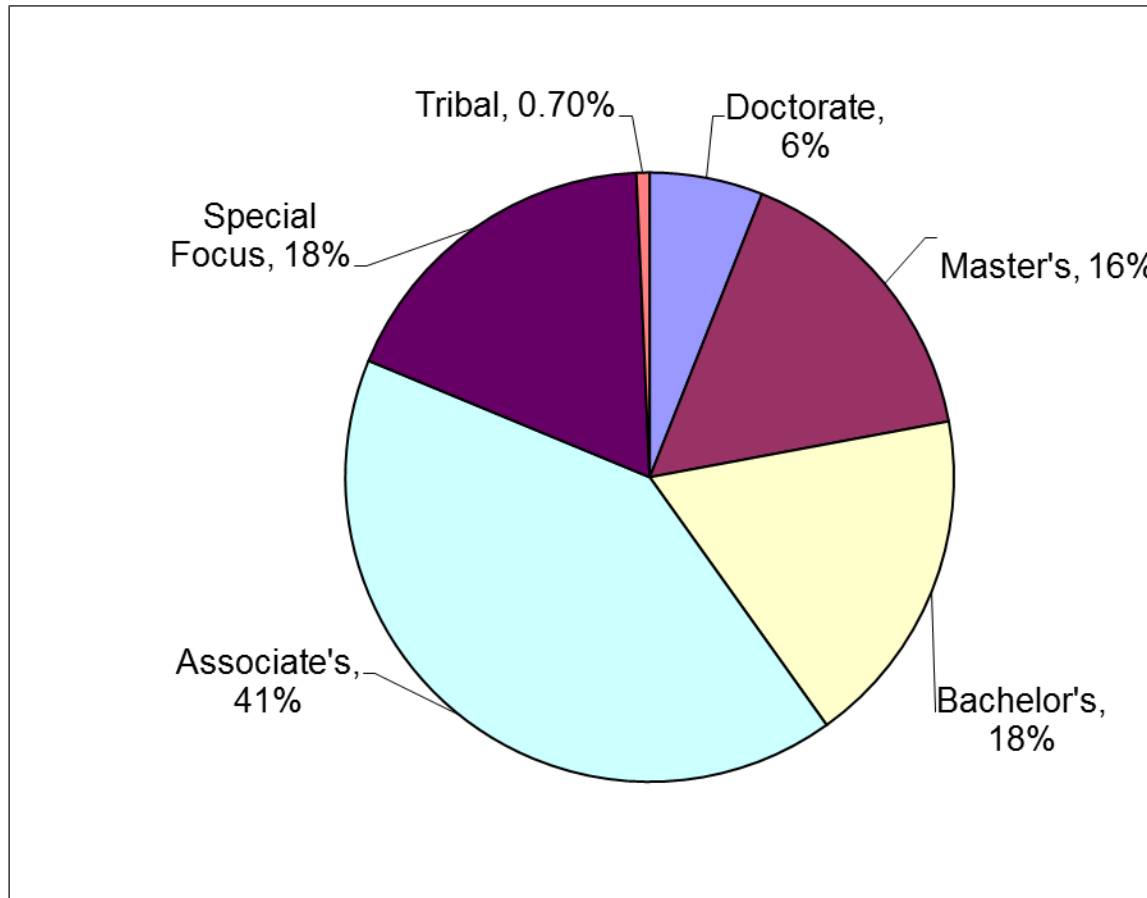
4,635 Accredited Degree-Granting Institutions



Sources: 2015 Carnegie Classification

Breakdown by Carnegie Classification

Percentage of Institutions



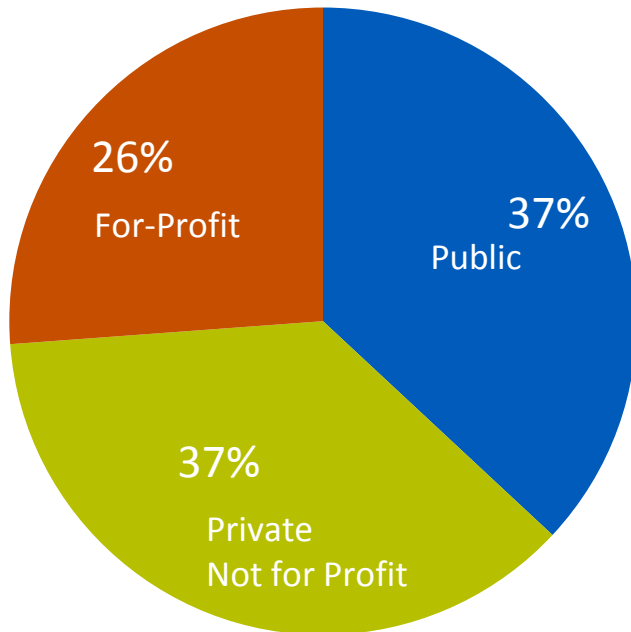
Number of Institutions

Doctorate	297
Master's	724
Baccalaureate	810
Associate's	1,919
Special Focus	853
Tribal	32

Source: 2015 Carnegie Classification
<http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu>

KEY FACTS

**4,635 Accredited
Degree-Granting
Institutions**



Sources: 2015 Carnegie Classification

Students

- ✚ Over 21 million estimated in 2013-2014 academic year
 - 43% male & 57% female
 - 4.2% international
 - 866,000
 - 72% enroll in public institutions
- ✚ 87% undergraduate level
 - 7.6 million associate's
 - 10.6 million bachelor's
- ✚ 13% graduate level
 - 2.9 million graduate

--U.S. Department of Education
Institute of Education Services

National Center for Educational Statistics
Digest of Education Statistics – 2014

--Open Doors- Report on International Education Exchange
2014

U.S. Bachelor's Degree

120 credits

Intended to be
completed in
four years

Bachelor's of
Arts and
Bachelor's of
Sciences most
common
degrees

Combination of
credits taken in
major field, in
minor and
electives

Definitions

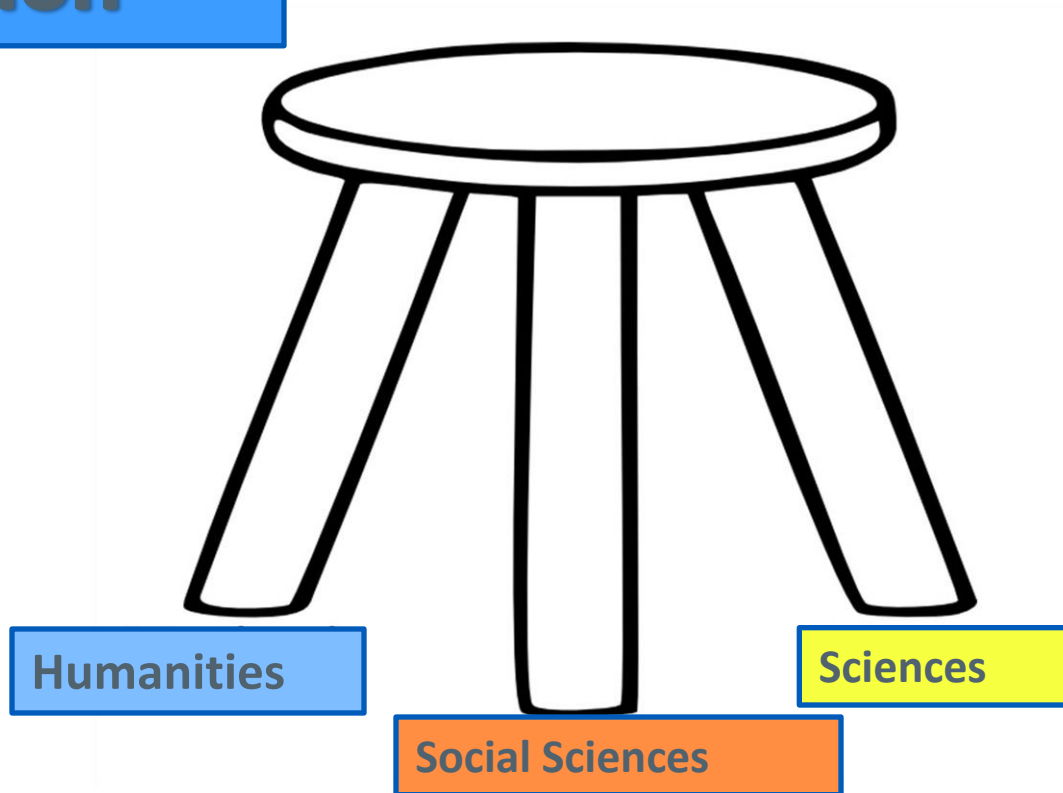
Liberal Arts

- Discipline
- Subject areas including literature, languages, philosophy, history, etc.
- Excludes professional, technical, and vocational

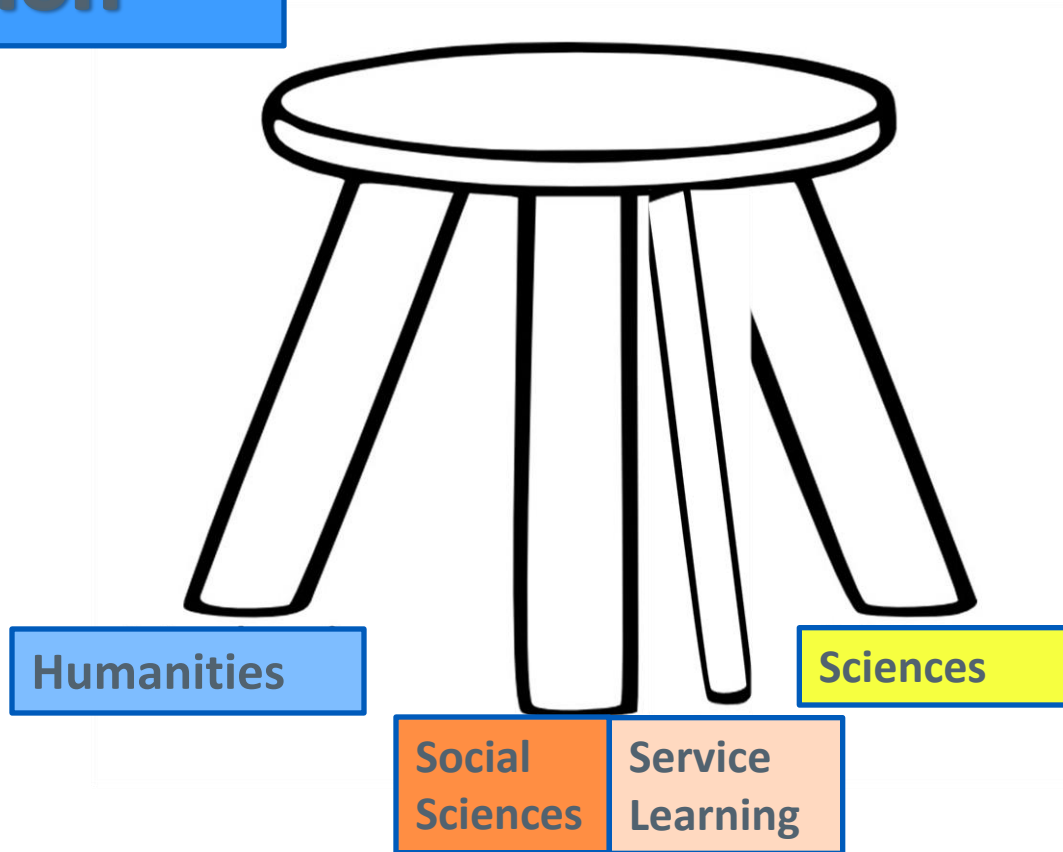
Liberal Education

- Content: broad-based, holistic
- Pedagogy: student-centered, participatory, independent thinking
- Outcomes: preparation for citizenship, adaptable skills set, agility in employment

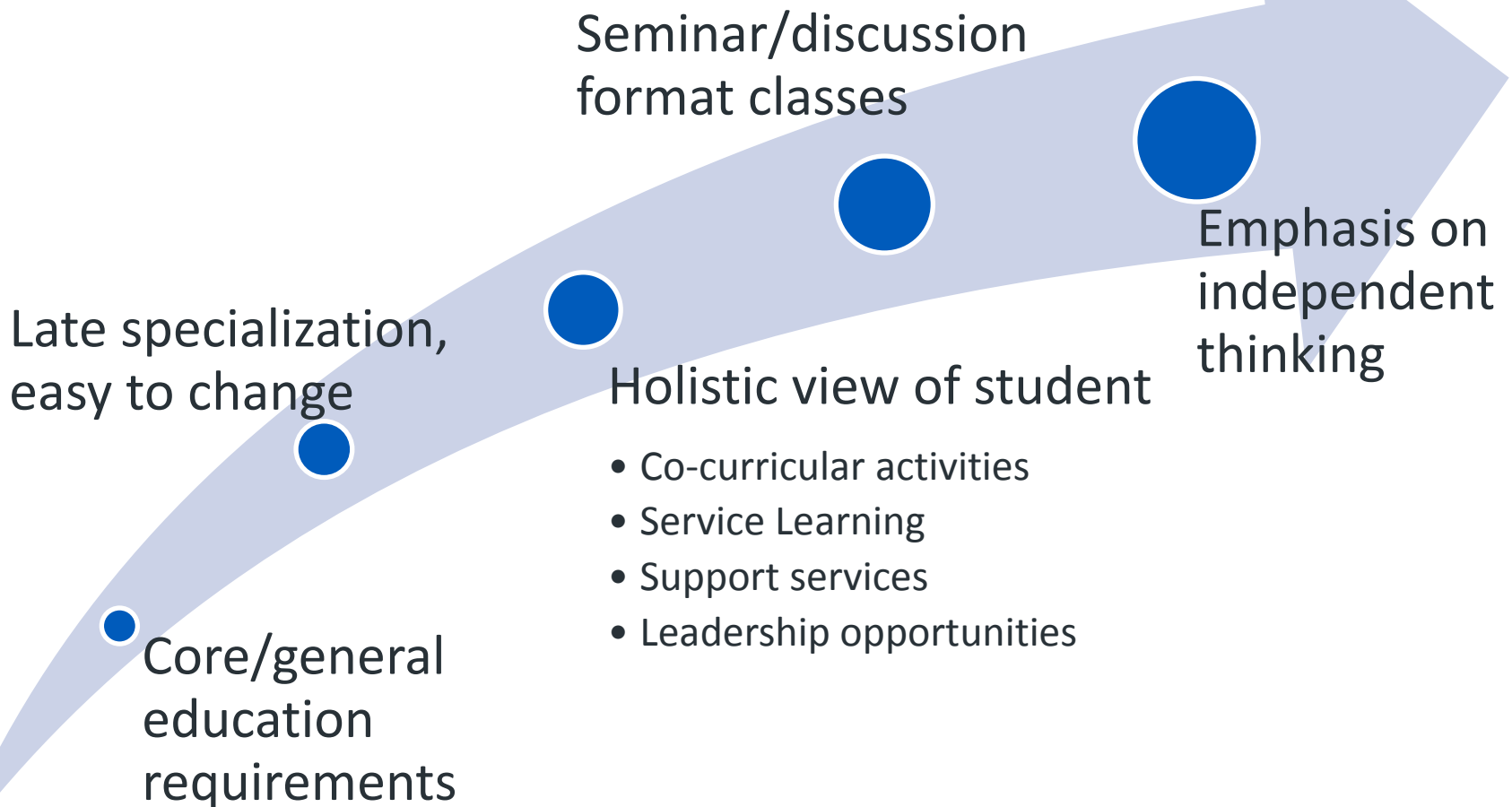
General Education



General Education



U.S. Undergraduate Degree



U.S. Undergraduate Outcomes

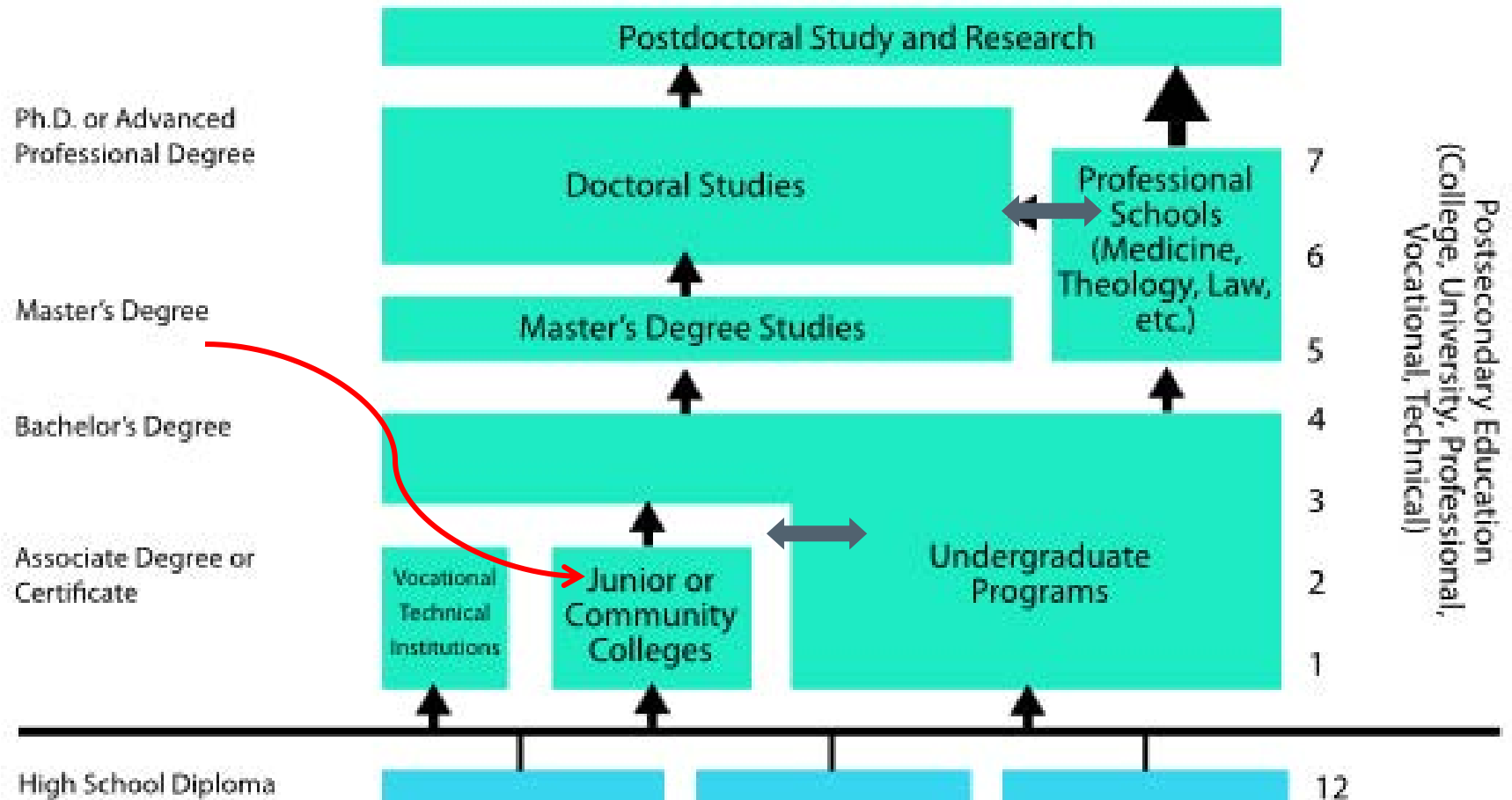


Degree Structure



Structure of U.S. Higher Education

Adapted from U.S. Department of Education Source, National Center for Education Statistics



Questions for Today

- Are there any lessons from Bologna for the US system of higher education (“tuning of curricula”, outcome orientation, credit transfer, three year bachelor’s)?
- Are there any lessons from the U.S. system for European higher education?
- Can Bologna Declaration inspired changes help to facilitate recruitment from European universities (more Europeans in US master’s programs) and vice-versa (US to Europe- more Americans in EU master’s; more programs in English)?

