

PARENTS AND ADMISSIONS

WHAT PARENTS THINK ABOUT COLLEGE

Webinar on the *Inside Higher Ed*/Gallup survey
of parents of pre-college students, plus related results
from surveys of admissions directors and other college leaders
Monday, May 6 at 2 p.m. Eastern



Presenters

- Scott Jaschik, editor of *Inside Higher Ed*
- Jacques Steinberg , senior consultant at Say Yes to Education and until recently a higher education reporter at *The New York Times* and creator of "The Choice" blog.
- Lynda McGee, a counselor at the Downtown Magnets High School in Los Angeles and chair of the public school counselors group of the National Association for College Admission Counseling.

Methodology

- Polling conducted by Gallup during its nightly polls of the American public in September and October 2012.
- Interviews with 3,269 adults with at least one child in 5th through 12th grades.
- Interviews conducted in Spanish for those for whom Spanish is primary language.
- 95% confidence level that the results are accurate within two percentage points.

Myths and Reality (I)

Myth: Getting into college is next to impossible.

Harvard Joins Rivals Reporting Record Low Admission Rates

By Janet Lorin - Mar 29, 2013 12:00 AM ET



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[Harvard \(3252\)](#), Yale, Princeton and Columbia universities reported record-low freshman admission rates for the 2013-2014 academic year as applications climbed above or held near all-time highs.

Harvard offered seats to 2,029 students, or 5.8 percent of a record 35,023 applicants, the Cambridge, Massachusetts-based school said yesterday in a [statement](#). Yale accepted 6.7 percent, Princeton offered admission to 7.3 percent and Columbia accepted 6.89 percent, the schools said in statements.

Myths and Reality (II)

Reality:

- The average public four-year college admits 66 percent of applicants.
- The average private four-year college admits 63 percent of applicants.

*Source: National Association for College Admission
Counseling State of College Admissions report*

Myths and Reality (III)

Myth: Colleges are all outrageously expensive

America's Most Expensive Colleges

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The pitch to prospective students and their parents: individual attention through small, seminar-style classes, a faculty rated No. 1 in the country by the Princeton Review, and 40-plus wooded acres just a half-hour from [New York City](#). Of course there is the matter of the price tag: over 60 grand a year, all included.

The 10 Most Expensive U.S. Colleges, 2012



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Myths and Realities (IV)

Reality: Very few colleges charge \$60,000 a year and most students don't pay sticker price (Source: College Board)

Sector	2012-13 Tuition and Fees
Public two-year	\$3,131
Public four-year (in state)	\$8,655
Public four-year (out-of state)	\$21,706
Private, non-profit four-year	\$29,056
For-profit	\$15,172

Myths and Reality (V)

Myth: College isn't needed



Robert J. Samuelson

Opinion Writer

It's time to drop the college-for-all crusade

By Robert J. Samuelson, Published: May 27, 2012

The college-for-all crusade has outlived its usefulness. Time to ditch it. Like the crusade to make all Americans homeowners, it's now doing more harm than good. It looms as the largest mistake in educational policy since World War II, even though higher education's expansion also ranks as one of America's great postwar triumphs.

Consider. In 1940, fewer than 5 percent of Americans had a college degree. Going to college was "a privilege reserved for the brightest or the most affluent" high-school graduates, wrote Diane Ravitch in her history of U.S. education, "The Troubled Crusade." No more. At last count, roughly 40 percent of Americans had some sort of college degree: about 30 percent a bachelor's degree from a four-year institution; the rest associate degrees from community colleges.

Dropping out: Is college worth the cost?

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Myths and Reality (VI)

Reality: College has strong economic payoff – even in the recession.

New analysis from *The New York Times* of latest unemployment data:

- National unemployment rate is 7.5 percent. Rate for college graduates is 3.9 percent.
- Since start of economic downturn, number of college-educated graduates with jobs up 9.1% Number with high school diploma, but no college degree, is down 9%.

Sticker Price Still Matters – I

Will parents restrict choices, based on tuition rates?

Response	Child 5 th -8 th	Child 9 th -12 th	All
Not at all likely	17%	16%	16%
Not very likely	17%	13%	14%
Somewhat likely	31%	36%	34%
Very likely	33%	34%	34%

Sticker Price Still Matters -- II

- Survey by Art & Science Group and College Board (2012) found that 54 percent of potential students judge a college's expense *by sticker price alone* without considering aid that could be offered.
- Study by Hoxby and Avery found that a majority of students with low income and high academic ability do not apply to a single competitive college.

Why Might Parents Focus on Sticker Price?

- Concerns about debt
- Private loans
- “Gapping” (offering aid packages that don’t cover full need)

From *Inside Higher Ed* survey of admissions directors:

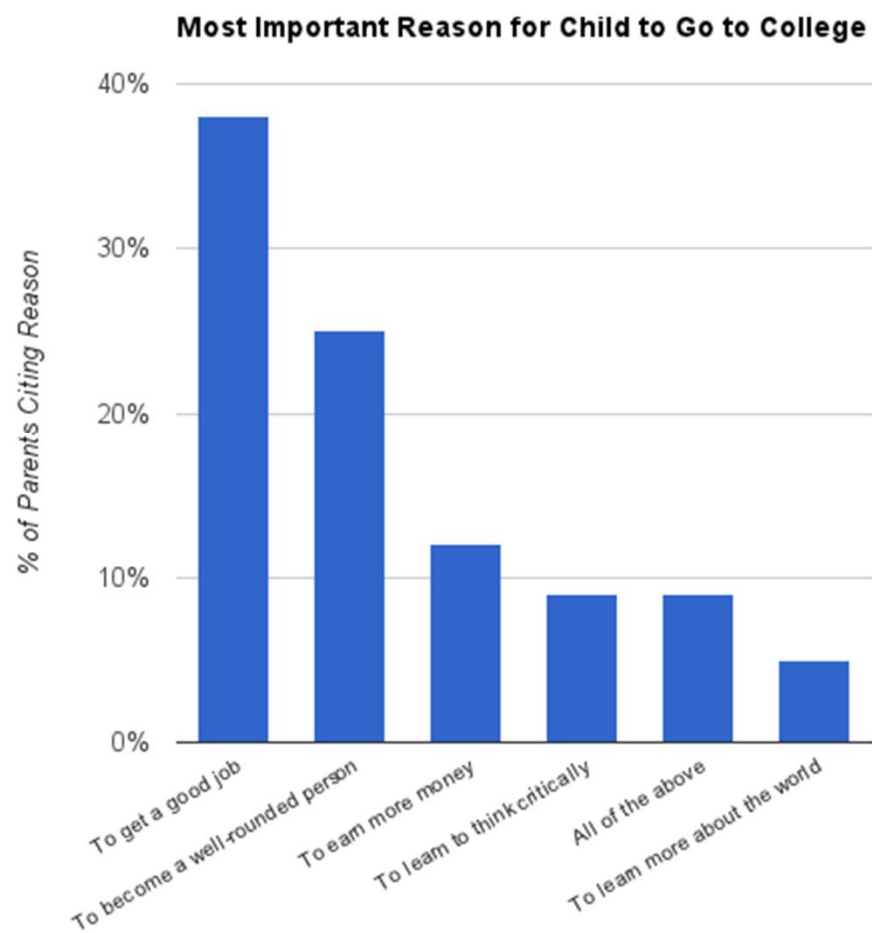
- 51% of colleges practice “gapping”
- At private colleges, figure is 64%

Do Colleges Expect Too Much Debt?

From survey of admissions directors?

What Admissions Directors Consider a Reasonable Debt Level for Four Years

Level	All	Community Colleges	Public 4-Year	Private 4-Year
No debt	2%	7%	0%	1%
<\$5,000	1%	5%	2%	0%
\$5,000 to <\$10,000	8%	19%	13%	2%
\$10,000 to <\$20,000	25%	26%	40%	18%
\$20,000 to <\$30,000	42%	32%	32%	50%
\$30,000 to <\$40,000	17%	11%	10%	21%
\$40,000 to <\$50,000	4%	0%	2%	5%
\$50,000 and up	1%	0%	0%	2%



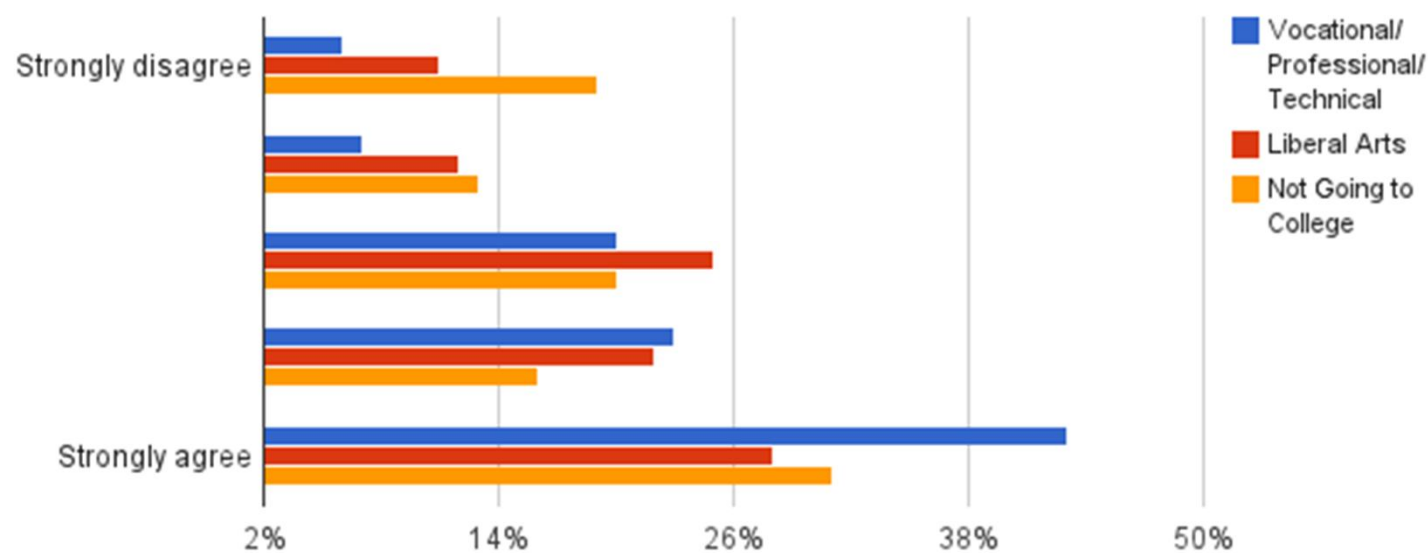
Why Admissions Directors Think College Matters

Most important reason to go to college:

- To get a good job: 30%
- To learn to think critically: 5%
- To become a well-rounded person: 3%
- To learn more about the world: 0%
- To earn more money: 5%
- All of the above: 55%
- None/other: 1%



Pathways to a Good Job



% of Parents Who Say Path Could Lead to Good Job

What Employers Say

From new survey of executives by Association of American Colleges & Universities:

--95% agree that: "Our company puts a priority on hiring people with the intellectual and interpersonal skills that will help them contribute to innovation in the workplace."

--93% agree that: "A candidate's demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems is more important than undergraduate major."

Admissions Directors on Job Issues

Statement	All	Community Colleges	Public 4-Year	Private 4-Year
Prospective students place high importance on the ability of degree programs to help them get a good job.	84%	79%	87%	84%
Parents of applicants place high importance on the ability of degree programs to help students get a good job.	96%	92%	99%	96%
My institution is increasing attention on the ability of our degree programs to help students get a good job.	80%	84%	74%	81%
To stay competitive, liberal arts programs must increase attention on their ability to help students get a good job.	88%	86%	86%	89%

Affirmative Action: The Stakes



Affirmative Action: Does My Kid Lose?

Parents on whether affirmative action hurts their children's chances of admission

View	All	White	Black	Latino
1 (strongly disagree)	27%	23%	53%	26%
2	15%	17%	9%	15%
3	23%	24%	15%	25%
4	13%	13%	7%	16%
5 (strongly agree)	20%	23%	16%	18%

What Colleges Might Do, Post-Affirmative Action?

Policy changes admissions directors said they would consider if Supreme Court limits their ability to consider race/ethnicity:

Policy	Public 4-Year	Private 4-Year
Drop standardized test requirements	10%	13%
Admit some top % from each high school in state	16%	8%
More consideration for socioeconomic status	20%	22%
More consideration for “first generation” status	30%	30%

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