



Fraud in Higher Education

This year's education scandal saw parents shelling out megabucks to gain college admittance for their children. Federal prosecutors have charged more than 50 people with participating in a scheme to get their children into colleges by cheating on entrance exams or bribing athletic coaches. They paid William Singer, a college-prep professional, more than \$25 million to bribe coaches and university administrators and to change test scores on college admittance exams such as the SAT and ACT. As disgusting as this grossly dishonest behavior is, it is only the tiny tip of fraud in higher education.



According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2016, only 37% of white high school graduates tested as college-ready, but colleges admitted 70% of them. Roughly 17% of black high school graduates tested as college-ready, but colleges admitted 58% of them. A 2018 Hechinger Report found, "More than four in 10 college students end up in developmental math and English classes at an annual cost of approximately \$7 billion, and many of them have a worse chance of eventually graduating than if they went straight into college-level classes."

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, "when considering all first-time undergraduates, studies have found anywhere from 28 percent to 40 percent of students enroll in at least one remedial course. When looking at only community college students, several studies have found remediation rates surpassing 50 percent." Only 25% of students who took the ACT in 2012 met the test's readiness benchmarks in all four subjects (English, reading, math and science).

It's clear that high schools confer diplomas that attest that a student can read, write and do math at a 12th-grade level when, in fact, most cannot. That means most high school diplomas represent fraudulent documents. But when high school graduates enter college, what happens? To get a hint, we can turn to an article by Craig E. Klafter, "Good Grieve! America's Grade Inflation Culture," published in the Fall 2019 edition of *Academic Questions*. In 1940, only 15% of all grades awarded were A's. By 2018, the average grade point average at some of the nation's leading colleges was A-minus. For example, the average GPA at Brown University (3.75), Stanford (3.68), Harvard College (3.63), Yale University (3.63), Columbia University (3.6), University of California, Berkeley (3.59).

The falling standards witnessed at our primary and secondary levels are becoming increasingly the case at tertiary levels. "Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses" is a study conducted by Professors Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa. They found that 45% of 2,300 students at 24 colleges showed no significant improvement in "critical thinking, complex reasoning and writing by the end of their sophomore years."

An article in *News Forum for Lawyers* titled "Study Finds College Students Remarkably Incompetent" cites a study done by the American Institutes for Research that revealed that over 75% of two-year



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college students and 50% of four-year college students were incapable of completing everyday tasks. About 20% of four-year college students demonstrated only basic mathematical ability, while a steeper 30% of two-year college students could not progress past elementary arithmetic. NBC News reported that Fortune 500 companies spend about \$3 billion annually to train employees in “basic English.”

Here is a list of some other actual college courses that have been taught at U.S. colleges in recent years: “What If Harry Potter Is Real?” “Lady Gaga and the Sociology of Fame,” “Philosophy and Star Trek,” “Learning from YouTube,” “How To Watch Television,” and “Oh, Look, a Chicken!” The questions that immediately come to mind are these: What kind of professor would teach such courses, and what kind of student would spend his time taking such courses? Most importantly, what kind of college president and board of trustees would permit classes in such nonsense?

The fact that unscrupulous parents paid millions for special favors from college administrators to enroll their children pales in comparison to the poor educational outcomes, not to mention the gross indoctrination of young people by leftist professors.

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