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College Affordability

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College Affordability

The 5th Student Research Symposium

May 10, 2017

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ABSTRACT

College affordability in the U.S. has been an issue that has existed for many decades now. These days three quarters of the fast growing jobs require a person to have an education beyond just an ordinary high school diploma. However around half of college students who start their college careers here in America don't finish in six years. College tuition also keeps rising which makes it harder for families in the upper middle class to attend college. To battle this problem of rising tuition cost we Americans must take action. I have worked with a few other Portland State students and have finished a project that addresses our current situation and answers questions regarding college affordability. I researched through the existing literature and also gathered information by conducting interviews with students. I would like to present my research to this student research symposium.

Overview

- Introduction
- Research Methods
- Interview Findings
- Tuition Costs for 4 year public universities in America
- Portland State University's Tuition Cost
- Why it's a problem
- What we can do to help
- References

Introduction

- College affordability has been an issue that has existed for many decades now
- In the last past three decades, tuition at four-year colleges has more than doubled
- Between 1992 and 2012, the average debt owed by a typical student loan borrower who graduated with a bachelor's degree more than doubled to a total of nearly \$27,000
- Even after the remarkable investments by the Obama Administration, the maximum Pell Grant in 2015 covered only about 30 percent of the cost of a four-year public college education
- This is the lowest proportion in history and less than half of what it covered in 1980
- Far too many potential college students feel as though they are simply priced out of the education they need to set themselves up for future success

Research Methods

- I have worked with a few other Portland State students and have finished a project that addresses our current situation and answers questions regarding college affordability
- I researched online websites and was able to find several things from literature that can be done to lower the tuition costs and make college more affordable
- I also gathered information by conducting interviews with students

Interview Findings

- What can parents, college staff, or anyone who cares about college students do to solve this problem of college in-affordability?
 - Oregonians can pay taxes
- Why are courses at 4-year colleges more expensive than they are at community colleges?
 - 4-year universities have more recognition than community colleges
- What factors determine the eligibility of a student for scholarships?
 - Parents' income, financial reasons, ethnicity
- What can students do to keep up with the high tuition for college?
 - Students can work, apply for scholarships and financial aid

Tuition Costs for 4 year Public Universities

- According to the College Board, the average cost of tuition and fees for the 2016–2017 school year was \$9,650 for state residents, and \$24,930 for out-of-state residents attending public universities
- The College Board reports that the average cost of room and board in 2016–2017 ranged from \$10,440 at four-year public schools

Portland State University's Tuition Cost

- Portland State University has its own specific cost for its students

Portland State University

Portland, OR

Overview	Admission	Money Matters	Academics	Campus Life	Students
TUITION AND EXPENSES					
Cost of Attendance		In-state: \$23,010 Out-of-state: \$39,525			
Tuition and Fees		In-state: \$8,337 Out-of-state: \$24,852			
Room and Board		\$10,353			
Books and Supplies		\$1,263			
Other Expenses		\$3,057			
Payment Plans		Credit card, installment plan			

Why it is a Problem

- Today, college remains the greatest cause of socioeconomic mobility in America
- Around half of college students who start their college careers here in America don't finish in six years
- College tuition also keeps rising which makes it harder for families in the upper middle class to attend college
- Now if we don't do more to keep it within reach for middle class families and those striving to get into the middle class, it could have the opposite effect
- It could serve as a barrier instead of a ticket to the American Dream
- I believe that each qualified student deserves access to an affordable, high-quality degree or credential that allows them to put their talent to work

Conclusion: What We Can Do to Help

- To battle this problem of rising tuition cost we Americans must take action
- We must encourage students to graduate faster. This means directing them to complete their degrees with fewer terms and taking no more courses and credits than what is required of them
- We must have our institutions to redesign their models of teaching and learning to reduce instruction costs
- This can be done with online tutorials and exercises that give students the practice, support, assessments, feedback they need to succeed

What We Can Do to Help (Cont'd.)

- We should recognize learning outside the classroom. We should give students credit for their past work experiences
 - It will reduce the time it will take them less time to finish a degree
 - These work skills will benefit them in their professional careers
- We should slim down non-instructional costs. Introducing leaner processes and shared services is one promising way to shrink the cost, student services, academic support services, and plant operations
- We should offer more Financial Aid
 - This means having full tax-exempt employer tuition assistance
 - To get this we must protest and vote for this to the state

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