University of California Making Their Very Expensive College Degrees Worthless

June 23, 2020 - If you are the parent of a high school student thinking about attending one of the University of California campuses for college, you should probably reconsider that decision very quickly. That's especially true if you are taking out loans to fund that college education. Last week, the Board of Regents for the University of California system voted unanimously to eliminate SAT and ACT entrance exams for most majors. That's a decision with wide reaching consequences and it is very likely to have a direct impact on the value of any degree issued by a public university within the State of California. At the same time, it is likely to lead to a lot of people acquiring large college debts without ever attaining that coveted degree.

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College admission tests are no fun. To do well on them, students need to prepare and practice for months on end. That requires discipline and determination, and for anyone who doesn't do well on standardized tests, it still doesn't guarantee a good score. But these tests do serve a real purpose. They are specifically designed to identify students who will succeed in college and beyond. After all, it doesn't do anyone any good to take out college loans and attend school, only to flunk out without getting a degree.

It is worth noting here that the tests aren't the only thing that colleges look at for admissions. If you have someone who is a straight "A" student but who doesn't do well on the admissions test, that student may still get in. That's because universities normally evaluate a number of factors during the admissions process, including the test scores, prior to accepting students for admission. But there is no doubt that doing poorly on the SAT can keep you out of the college you want to attend. The tests are hard. They are supposed to be hard. That's because college isn't exactly a cake-walk either. It also requires discipline and determination in a setting where there are a lot of outside distractions.

While many high school students will probably breath a sigh of relief at the California announcement, that sigh may turn into a gasp once the ramifications of the decision are explained.

Colleges and universities are rated on a number of factors. One of those factorsâ€¦ and it is a big oneâ€¦ is their graduation rate. No school wants to be known for a low graduation rate. With the elimination of admissions test (which we previously mentioned as being designed to weed out students who won't succeed) the UC system is going to have to make college easier if they don't want their drop-out rate to soar. That's inevitable. It is also something that employers are going to figure out pretty quickly.

As someone who has done employment recruiting in the past (both for my own business and for clients) I can tell you

that it is fairly common for employers to say that they don't want to see resumes from people who attended certain schools; sometimes for particular majors and sometimes regardless of major. In my opinion, this decision by the UC Board of Regents is likely to lead to that for California public colleges. If other states follow suit, the same thing is likely to happen there.

This won't just impact current students either. If you are someone who already has a degree from the UC system, you could be impacted because it won't take long for employers to forget when this decision was made. Again, just an opinion but it is quite likely that just a few years from now you'll have employers saying they don't want to see resumes from people who graduated from one of these schools, regardless of when they graduated.

Parents with college bound students would be very wise to insist that their children still take an admissions test. If nothing else, it will give them some indication of their child's preparedness for college. If your child doesn't do well, then send them to community college for couple of years before spending any money on a university. And if you child does do well, find a school that still requires admission testing. Don't send them to a UC campus.

Anyone who isn't prepared for a test to be difficult, shouldn't be in college. Anyone who isn't willing to study and prepare for a test, shouldn't be in college. And colleges that eliminate testing because it is difficult have no business telling anyone that they can teach anything. If you are going to eliminate the SAT and ACT, you might as well eliminate all of the other testing that colleges and universities do. Just hand out degrees reading University of California to anyone willing to pay one, no questions asked. They won't be worth the paper they're written on, or the money you paid, but at least everyone will be able to feel good about themselves. It will be like getting the trophy for being the most congenial person on the losing team. Good luck finding a job though.
by Jim Malmberg
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