

Correcting Course:



How We Can Restore
the Ideals of Public
Higher Education in a
Market-Driven Era

The Futures Project:
Policy for Higher Education in a Changing World

February 2005

It is a sign of the times as symbolic—if not as striking—as IBM’s selling its PC division to a Chinese manufacturer.

This year, the University of Virginia and the College of William and Mary, two of the nation’s oldest public institutions of higher education, have asked the Virginia legislature to grant them status as “independent public entities” or “chartered universities” with the autonomy traditionally reserved for private institutions.

The two institutions, along with Virginia Tech, are seeking to reconstitute themselves by accepting a lower state appropriation in return for freedom from state regulations that they feel hamper their ability to compete for faculty members, students, and funding. This proposal follows on the transition of U.Va.’s School of Law and its Darden Graduate School of Business Administration to a private funding model.

Similar forays into privatization are becoming more common. In Colorado, new legislation funnels the state appropriation to students instead of directly to the public colleges and universities; the institutions can establish fee-for-service contracts with the state to enable them to carry out mission-specific functions. Texas and Oklahoma recently deregulated tuition-setting authority. And scores of other states—including Florida, Oregon, South Carolina, Washington, and Wisconsin—have engaged in similar conversations, involving talk of public corporations, charters, and contracts.

States and institutions contend that these reforms would enhance competitiveness in an increasingly aggressive market, while maintaining higher education’s commitment to serving the public and lightening the burden on taxpayers. However, these disconcerting steps in the direction of privatization indicate a much

greater crisis in higher education than the usual hand-wringing over budget cuts.

Colleges and universities are under growing pressure to cut costs, measure and report on performance, and compete ever more strenuously for students, grants, funding, and prestige. In order to survive in this changing environment, many institutions have been forced to risk their long-standing dedication to core functions—from providing students of all kinds with real opportunities for social and economic mobility, to conducting high-quality research and offering valuable services that advance the well-being of individuals, communities, states, and the nation.

The changes confronting higher education are altering the very climate in which higher education operates, making campuses dramatically more market-oriented. Institutions of all kinds have splurged on state-of-the-art computer labs, luxury dormitories, and sparkling new gymnasiums to lure the best, brightest, and most affluent students. Financial aid packages are increasingly used as a competitive tool, designed to reduce the sticker price for students with high test scores and GPAs, rather than to ease the burden for those with financial need. Meanwhile, the growth of private for-profit institutions—long regarded as marginal players in higher education—is adding to the pressures faced by traditional colleges and universities as the for-profits provide more options for students seeking alternative educational pathways.

Increasingly, state policies have come to favor an open market that has the potential to create the kind of unhealthy competition that does not necessarily lead to increased access, better instruction, lower costs, or greater efficiency. The outcome is that higher education is becoming much more competition-driven in many arenas. Today, many academic leaders feel compelled to chase revenues and rankings

rather than to focus their efforts on providing a high-quality education to an ever-expanding share of the population. Colleges and universities have intensified their competition for students, research dollars, donations, athletic championships, and prestige of all kinds. However, the new environment on campuses has created the superficial appearance of a consumer-oriented market, exacerbating the widening gap between what higher education preaches and practices.

Inadequate Financial Support for Low-Income Students

The baccalaureate degree (and the vastly increased earning potential that goes with it) is less and less an attainable goal for students without the means to easily finance a college education.

Today, economic barriers prevent roughly half of the nation's low-income, college-qualified high school graduates from attending a four-year college and almost half of those students from attending any college at all.

Further, those who do enroll in college, whatever the financial burden, receive less and less of the support they need to persist through graduation. The financial aid system—which increasingly favors students who meet dubious standards of “merit,” rather than helping students who demonstrate real financial need—leaves low-income students to cover an average of \$3,800 in college-related expenses per year at public four-year institutions, a sum that forces many young people to delay or abandon their studies.

Of those low-income students who begin college soon after high school, just seven percent graduate by age 24, and roughly one-third of African-American and Hispanic students

“I’m also intrigued by the changes made in Colorado recently. They’ll now send about two-thirds of their total state higher education appropriation directly to students rather than funding higher education institutions and bureaucracies. This will empower the customers—students and their parents—to make choices that best suit their needs.... Under this approach, colleges will need to be more accountable to their customers, more responsive to the marketplace, and more accountable for results to succeed.”

—Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty,
January 18, 2005, *State-of-the-State Address*

“In Florida and across the nation, most of the recent growth in financial aid is in the form of merit aid, money targeted at students with good grades or test scores, not the neediest. The richest quarter of students in the country now receives more aid than the poorest quarter, according to the College Board. At the same time, the buying power of the Pell Grant, the major federal program for low-income students, has drastically declined over a quarter century, from three-quarters of the cost of a typical public four-year college to just a third of the cost.”

—Miami Herald, November 14, 2004

“After three years of hikes, Cal State students should be used to paying more for school each year. But they’re still angry about it. Next year, undergraduates will pay \$2,520: that’s almost \$1,100 more than in 2001. ‘It’s really upsetting to me that the brunt of the budget crisis is put on poor students,’ said Angela Asbell, 28-year-old graduate student at Cal State San Bernardino. ‘It’s getting to the point where a lot of us cannot afford to go to school anymore.’”

—San Bernardino Sun, October 29, 2004

“When Kim Delfing graduated from Cleveland State University in 1980, annual tuition was \$1,044. Her son, Jason, a CSU senior, and daughter, Rachael, an entering freshman, each will pay about 2^{1/2} times as much in inflation-adjusted terms....

Weakened state support over the last few years has ignited statewide hikes in tuition—essentially the charge for instruction—sometimes with multiple increases in a single academic year. Over the fiscal year that began in mid-2001, average tuition and fees at state-assisted universities jumped 17 percent. Once it was the state that bore most of the burden for public higher education. But no more. Now families such as the Delfings, of North Olmsted, pick up the largest share.”

—*The Plain Dealer* (Cleveland, Ohio),
August 30, 2004

“The state university system has not received a funding increase from the state in two years. To help pay rising costs, the system has increased tuition by nearly 30 percent over that time.... University officials are planning budgets as if they will not receive more state funds this year—which could result in tuition rising by 14 percent more.”

—*Baltimore Sun*, November 9, 2004

“Could it be that this onslaught of higher tuition and fees will price many would-be students out of the public education arena? The laws of economics say that it must.”

—*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, December 9, 2004

leave college after just one year. And while some campus programs have succeeded in helping low-income students and students of color to earn a baccalaureate degree at the same rates as their more affluent and white counterparts, too few colleges or universities make serious efforts to replicate those programs or to invest in effective retention and achievement programs of their own.

Rising Costs, Unaffordable Tuition

Tuition and fee increases far outpaced inflation again in 2004, rising 10.5 percent at public four-year institutions, 8.7 percent at public community colleges, and six percent at private colleges and universities, according to the College Board. Newspaper coverage of students and families struggling or unable to pay for college proliferated as state after state digested the bad news about tuition.

Although state appropriations rose steadily in the decade preceding the recent economic downturn, the share of college and university budgets coming from the state has fallen as institutions cover costs through other sources such as tuition increases and private fundraising. Total costs are rising as institutions ramp up their technology infrastructure, compete for star professors, and engage in a “war of amenities.” New fitness centers, elaborate dorms, and “gourmet” cafeterias are all a part of the marketing package, used to entice students with comfort and convenience—perhaps at the expense of a top-notch educational experience. Honors colleges that offer special opportunities to top students drain resources from the general student body. The argument in defense of these practices is that they are often funded by private donors. However, the fact remains that leaders

are making choices about whether to request funding from a donor for a new stadium, or for a need-based aid program or an initiative to improve the student-faculty ratio.

Elusive Outcomes

Despite repeated calls for accountability from a variety of sources, including Congress, the higher education community has not found a satisfactory way to measure, report on, and improve performance. Several institutions have designed model assessments of learner outcomes, such as Evergreen State University and Alverno College, but most institutions insist that those initiatives cannot be replicated, or that educational outcomes cannot be measured. Although graduation rates remain unacceptably low for the most part, too many educators argue that such rates are not a valid measure of performance.

Moreover, even when students do graduate, many find themselves unprepared for what comes next. After decades of efforts to bring coherence and rigor to the undergraduate curriculum, most colleges and universities have failed to ask the right questions. Which skills and knowledge should students acquire? How do we assess whether they are learning them? For that reason, and as several national surveys have found, few employers view the college diploma as a legitimate symbol of readiness for employment. College graduates themselves often say that, while their degree may have helped them land a job, it did not prepare them for active work.

Scholarship for Sale

Meanwhile, market pressures have begun to undermine the integrity of the academic schol-

arship on which the nation relies for its medical discoveries, technological breakthroughs, and other innovations. The country's university-based researchers have long been the envy of the world, renowned for their intellectual freedom and productivity. However, over the last several years, corporations have bought up hundreds of leading scholarly journals, pricing them beyond the means of many academic libraries and individual scholars. And as the corporate sponsorship of research grows, so do the demands to control both the research itself and the dissemination of results. Thus, a Tufts University study released several years ago reported that—out of almost 800 scientific papers—one-third of the time a chief author had a financial interest in the company sponsoring the research, and most of those interests were undisclosed.

With so much money at stake in academic research, universities themselves have begun to behave much like corporations, further inhibiting the flow of knowledge and scholarship. This trend began in earnest more than 30 years ago, as the University of Florida began selling the rights to a product developed by several of its professors and coaches, called Gatorade. Today, thanks to the research of two computer science graduate students developing new software technology with university funding, Stanford University could benefit from Google to the tune of \$250 million.

While the degree of success experienced by the University of Florida and Stanford is rare, these examples of institutions profiting from university-funded research are hardly isolated incidents. The practice has become a widespread phenomenon as over 300 universities—more than 12 times the number in 1980—have now spun off for-profit subsidiaries to create, patent, publish, and market not only scientific

breakthroughs but also intellectual property such as library holdings, art and design images, and even syllabi, course materials, and lectures.

Higher education's long-term commitment to meeting society's needs is in danger of disappearing in the quest for short-term gains. It is time to reverse course now, before drifting into a situation that would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to change later.

An Eroding Commitment

What we are seeing is nothing less than a great erosion of higher education's long-standing commitment to advancing public priorities. Already, state subsidies to higher education make up a smaller share of budgets, and colleges are turning to tuition increases to bolster revenue streams. Limited availability of grants in aid is forcing more low-income students to incur dangerous amounts of debt. It is not far-fetched to think that in the not-so-distant future:

- Access to higher education will be limited to those who can pay the cost of tuition.
- Success in higher education will be limited to those with the advantages of wealth, preparedness, and savvy, college-educated parents who can help navigate the process.
- The liberal arts curriculum will shrink, leading to the gradual decline of non-revenue-producing disciplines like philosophy and the classics.
- Flagship public colleges and universities will move toward privatization, reasoning that they can replace dwindling state subsidies by tapping into other revenue streams.
- Some institutions will have to close, particularly mid-tier institutions such as small private colleges and state comprehensive universities, which depend on tuition revenue to cover operating costs.

- The integrity of research results will be constantly called into question as the public increasingly assumes that researchers are beholden to corporations and other benefactors.

Yet, while higher education's capacity to fulfill its public purposes has begun to erode, and while policymakers have done little to shore it up, colleges and universities still have many of the material and human resources needed to meet their public commitments, and they still have the ability to restore much of what has been lost. The question is whether they have the will—and whether policymakers have a deep enough understanding of academe's core purposes—to reverse this erosion and to do so immediately.

Putting Higher Education on Track

Although many leaders from the political and the academic worlds have embraced market forces, their motivations differ. Governors and legislators see problems ranging from the failure to address steadily rising costs to a lack of assessment of learning; they want some mode of accountability. University and college presidents, on the other hand, do not consider those problems as serious; they want greater funding and autonomy.

We need a new compact between higher education and the public, negotiated by higher education officials and state policymakers. The compact would provide state control over the mission of public colleges and universities to ensure that the sum of institutional missions meets the state's economic, social, and democratic needs, while espousing a philosophy of greater operational autonomy for institutions to conduct daily functions.

What State Lawmakers Must Do:

1. Define the public and private benefits of higher education.

Within any given state, policymakers will have many different ideas as to the core purposes of higher education. That is why every state must create opportunities to debate those purposes, to prioritize them, and to decide the basic objectives on which all sides can agree. But several goals *must* rank near the top of any list.

Institutions have a responsibility to:

- Promote access and academic success for an ever-expanding share of the population, particularly for those currently underserved.
- Provide an environment that supports high-quality teaching and learning to ensure that students who graduate are prepared for work, citizenship, and further learning.
- Protect the public investment by providing higher education in an efficient and productive manner.
- Produce needed research in trustworthy and open ways and reach out to bring accumulated knowledge and skills into the public domain.
- Prompt *fully* open debate and discussion of critical, and often controversial, issues of importance to the community, with the emphasis on presenting evidence and analysis.
- Promote the development of high-quality elementary and secondary education through improved training of teachers and school leaders, assistance with school reform, and support for better research about education.

2. Create accountability systems that recognize institutional diversity. States should not only renew their com-

pact with higher education overall but also negotiate a separate agreement with each institution, defining: the unique public mission played by that campus; the procedural autonomy it requires in order to accomplish its larger goals and mission and to compete effectively in a partially regulated environment; and the goals for which that institution should be held accountable, given its particular mission. In short, higher education and policymakers must work out a productive division of autonomy and accountability, one that both higher education and state leadership should be able to accept. The idea is to grant colleges and universities a healthy amount of operating autonomy so long as they come to an agreement with the state that spells out the specific mission of the institution, what the institution should be held accountable for, and how the institution will measure and report its performance.

3. Demand performance in access, student learning, and attainment.

Ensuring student access, learning, and attainment are essential to fulfilling the public purposes of any institution. In addition to opening the doors for first-generation students and low-income students and students of color, colleges and universities need to take responsibility and be held accountable for graduation and transfer rates as well. There is no silver bullet; policy should remove unintended obstacles and create a “Navigable Process”—a system that is transparent, easy to understand, and supportive of all students. In order to ensure that all students are prepared to grapple with the complex issues they will face in this global society and are able to contribute to the work force and their communities, policymakers need to encourage institutions to:

- Recruit, retain, and graduate more low-income students by broadening the pipeline, expanding the availability of need-based financial aid, and creating more welcoming campus environments for college students from a diverse array of backgrounds.
- Align the preschool, elementary, secondary, and higher education systems through P-16 programs and support remedial programs to fill the gaps in student learning.
- Improve policies for transfer and articulation between two-year and four-year institutions and across state institutions.
- Mandate the use of effective and comparative student assessment to drive decision-making on improving teaching practices and ensuring student success.
- Publicly report student outcomes in a manner that is transparent and easy to understand for students, parents, and policymakers, and begin to benchmark student learning in order to assess value added.
- Participate in national assessments that capture student engagement and value added, such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), or the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA).

4. Acknowledge that higher education is not a business. While higher education may benefit from some of industry’s managerial and accounting techniques, it cannot be forced to behave like a business and still preserve that which makes it distinct and valuable in the first place. Critics of higher education often accuse it of inefficiency and waste, and some of those criticisms are justified. At the same time, however, state policymakers must recognize that the purposes and values of

academe differ in important ways from the purposes and values of industry, and colleges and universities do not respond to precisely the same set of incentives that motivate businesses. Competition and profit-making may have some place in higher education, but so do the disinterested pursuit of truth, the upholding of intellectual standards, and the commitment to free and open inquiry. College administrators and faculty members must be given a greater amount and different kind of autonomy than one would grant to corporate employees, and to do so is not merely to give them a concession; it is fundamental to the quality of the institution and the benefit it provides to individual students and the larger public.

5. Provide the funding necessary to serve both private and public interests. Even in times of fiscal constraint, states can be proactive in ensuring that their funding streams are fairly allocated. At present, for example, state and federal college aid programs are far too slanted in favor of middle-income students, with merit-based assistance squeezing out need-based aid for lower-income individuals. Likewise, states can support low-income and minority students—i.e., those students who are being disproportionately affected by fiscal downturns—by supplementing federal outreach programs such as TRIO and GEAR-UP. States also can provide more consistent funding for academic advising and tutoring and for programs that guide first-time college students through the complexities of college applications, entrance examinations, registration, financing, and course selection. Indeed, such spending can be a priority no matter how tight the state budget, in that it pays for itself through increased college retention and graduation.

What Colleges and Universities Must Do:

1. Measure what is valued. It is often quipped that higher education “values what is measured” rather than “measures what is valued.” Without good, hard data about real performance, improvements are unlikely if not impossible. Academic leaders should know how many students are graduating; how effective their remedial courses are; who is being helped by outreach programs; which of their courses have high dropout rates; and which have good learner outcomes. If higher education as an enterprise begins to measure that which is valued—learning, retention, graduation, work force and civic outcomes—strategic choices can be made and performance can become transparent.

2. Take responsibility for teaching and learning. In the publish-or-perish climate of academe, teaching often receives the lowest priority and the least prestige. But it is time to elevate the status of teaching—certainly to the level of research—and it is time to bring teaching and learning out of the shadows, making them less private and more transparent endeavors, so that students can choose their college and their courses on the basis of the quality of the learning experience, and not on the basis of dubious college “ranking” schemes.

3. Move beyond access to promoting attainment. Over its long history, American higher education has steadily expanded its commitment to providing opportunity for an ever larger share of the population. Higher education has today become the essential pathway to the middle class. Recently, however, the expansion of access to higher education has stalled at the same time that economic

mobility has become harder to attain. To reverse the growing income disparity between America’s wealthiest and poorest, more Americans need not just access to higher education, but also concrete support for their academic efforts, to ensure that they develop the knowledge and skills to graduate. Colleges and universities must recognize that their social responsibilities extend beyond mailing out letters of admission, to creating a culture of attainment.

4. Address problems of efficiency and productivity. As stewards of the public trust and investment, state colleges and universities are obligated to spend public funds in a way that most effectively responds to public needs. Private universities and colleges are similarly obligated to their donors, to their students, and to a public that accords them many subsidies and exemption from taxes. This requires turning an eye to cost and efficiency.

Recent studies have demonstrated that substantial cost savings can be achieved through inter-institutional and inter-departmental collaboration in purchasing, library materials, technology infrastructure, and more. Similarly, savings are made possible by expanding the use of outsourcing beyond the bookstore and food service to such tasks as maintenance of technology infrastructure. Yet, very few colleges or universities have attempted such cost-saving measures, and most institutions have done precious little to analyze their cost structures.

5. Support elementary and secondary education. Not only has higher education paid too little attention to its own effectiveness in teaching and learning, but it has been only sporadically involved in the great, two-decade effort to reform American elementary and secondary education. In this area,

higher education has an array of responsibilities, such as educating teachers and school leaders, contributing useful research, and lending support to school reforms. In teacher education, especially, disenchantment with university-based programs and the failure of universities to adjust those programs to the conditions that teachers now face has led to a growing number of school districts moving toward training their own teachers or administrators. New York City, for example, has created its own Leadership Academy to train principals and superintendents. Ideally, such high-profile moves will awaken higher education to the fact that it has a clear self-interest in upgrading its programs and taking the lead on school improvement.

6. Reduce conflicts of interest. The trustworthiness of university research is a crucial foundation of American success. The lure of corporate sponsorship of research cannot be allowed to supersede the integrity of scholarship. Higher education must turn to full disclosure of all financial interests held by researchers and institutions, and universities must maintain control over publication and review rights. Once lost, trust in university-based research will be difficult to recover.

7. Provide constructive criticism of societal trends and values.

There was a time, not too long ago, when the nation's colleges and universities were a principal source of debate about important social and political trends. Communities turned to these institutions for new ideas, fresh perspectives, and objective research on the problems of the day. Indeed, academic freedom was designed precisely to protect that very function, so as to ensure that academics would be free to teach and speak on controversial topics and that cam-

pus would tolerate—even encourage—debate that helped illuminate critical social issues. But there has been a marked change in the amount and type of debate taking place on campus.

Incidents involving campus speech codes often make headlines, but much larger problems loom. For instance, higher education's growing dependence on private fundraising has led to questions as to whether faculty and administrators are truly free to speak their minds, or whether they are pressured into de facto self-censorship, so as to avoid offending potential donors.

8. Rebuild political involvement to sustain democracy. Higher education's role in society extends beyond building work force skills to include helping students understand their role as citizens and community members. Higher education has the ability and the responsibility to promote greater understanding of and appreciation for the nation's political system. What could be more important?

Yet, getting universities and their faculties to address this subject has never been easy. And within the fastest-growing sector of higher education (for-profit institutions) there seems to be even less interest in making civic education a priority. The question is, how will the traditional colleges and universities be led to reaffirm this core aspect of their public mission, and how will the for-profit providers be persuaded that civic engagement is in fact one of the American business community's proudest virtues?

The Public's Role

The public also has an important role to play. As taxpayers who have made a significant investment in their higher education systems,

they too must ensure that colleges and universities are addressing key social and economic goals and advancing long-term community interests. Do students feel they are getting a high-quality education relevant to their needs? Do all parents feel that there is sufficient access to a college education for their children? Are students able to manage the increasing debt burden of paying for college? Are local businesses benefiting from faculty research? Are the elementary and secondary schools well-supported by surrounding postsecondary institutions? Are local hospitals benefiting from cutting-edge university medical research?

The public has raised concern about escalating costs of college tuition, but its voice has been largely missing in crucial discussions about the extent to which state policy and institutions are serving state priorities. Educators, civic and business leaders, parents, and students themselves must play an integral role in articulating which public purposes are most important, putting pressure on policymakers and college leaders to sort out priorities and then to address their concerns about how well state institutions are meeting the state's needs.

There are several concrete steps the public can take. Individuals can:

- Request good information about the performance of their institutions. Call the president's office and ask about the institution's graduation rates, placement rates, and participation in national assessments that measure the true learning experience on campus, such as the National Survey of Student Engagement or the Community College Survey of Student Engagement.
- Encourage state legislators and board members to demand transparent and comparable data about institutional performance from each college and university in the state.
- Use institutions as a resource for local and regional concerns by calling on their institutions to get involved in local business research, to play an active role in community service activities, and to invite experts and speakers to campus who can comment on local concerns.
- Engage in the cultural, academic, and athletic activities offered by local institutions and become a part of the community.
- Participate in conversations with higher education leaders and policymakers to identify what the state and its citizens want for the future, what is expected from the state higher education system, and what taxpayers are willing to support.

A Vision of the Future

By creating this new compact in which lawmakers grant greater autonomy to higher education institutions to meet their approved missions in exchange for greater accountability for performance, colleges and universities can begin to use their resources more effectively, directing their efforts toward fulfilling their specific missions. Given clear performance goals, and given operational autonomy, academic leaders can begin to measure learner outcomes, assess the quality of their programs, and take real steps to improve teaching and learning.

This focus on accountability is necessary for lawmakers to continue to support higher education's special role by providing state appropriations, granting tax exemptions, and protecting academic freedom. Accountability for performance will also encourage lawmakers to trust institutions and grant greater autonomy, loosening unnecessary regulations and allowing for entrepreneurial behavior.

The movement toward building this new compact is occurring, in fits and starts, nationwide. Illinois offers an interesting example of what can happen when state and academic leaders work together to create an environment that is committed to “determining what students know and are able to do as a result of completing a unique program of study.” The goal is to furnish meaningful evidence of the quality of student learning, while also providing feedback to improve the quality assurance process and accountability. To this end, in February 2003 the Illinois Board of Higher Education approved mandatory assessments, designed by the institutions, at the end of the sophomore and senior years. The assessments are not high-stakes and can take the form of portfolios, tests, lab work, internship, or some combination. The main thrust is to assess the level at which students are learning and, where necessary, improve on the depth of learning taking place.

Illinois also serves as a reminder that the issue is not, “Are students learning?” The question is, “Are they learning as much as they should be, could be, and need to be, and are they acquiring the right skills and knowledge?” Given the demands of individual states for the skills to meet the needs of their economy and the skills needed for full participation in society, a broader set of learning goals is required.

So far, we have seen some promising but scattered efforts among individual institutions to address the challenge of balancing accountability and autonomy. However, these initiatives remain largely isolated. A statewide effort that addresses all of higher education’s public purposes—from strengthening research to guaranteeing the availability of need-based financial aid—would be a first step toward creating a broader understanding of, and commitment to, higher education’s contributions to society. It will

require the combined energies of all those called on in this paper—state lawmakers, college and university administrators, faculty and staff, and the public—to ensure that the public purposes of higher education are defined and upheld.

The authors: Lara Couturier is interim principal investigator and Jamie Scurry is research associate of the Futures Project: Policy for Higher Education in a Changing World. Based at Brown University, the Futures Project was founded in 1999 by the late Frank Newman to study the increasing role of market forces in higher education in order to help fashion appropriate policy initiatives and institutional strategies to respond to these changes and to preserve the public mission that has long been central to academe. This paper is derived in part from the Project’s final report, The Future of Higher Education: Rhetoric, Reality, and the Risks of the Market (Jossey-Bass, 2004). It is available at www.josseybass.com or 800-956-7739.

More about the Futures Project: Policy for Higher Education in a Changing World, including a full list of publications, can be found at www.futuresproject.org.

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