

Students Skeptical of Value of College Degrees

It's graduation season and many high school seniors are counting the hours until they can walk across the stage and turn the corner toward college and career.

But as a new survey out of the United Kingdom suggests, those graduates are likely to be less bright-eyed and full of hope than graduates before them.

Many of today's graduates believe that a college degree isn't the path to success they've been promised or worth the cost.

[The Guardian](#) explains:

"Less than half of students are confident that their university education will secure them a graduate-level job that will enable them to pay off their debts, according to new research. A survey of more than 2,000 students found that 48% were either confident or very confident that their education would pay for itself in the future, with 24% saying they were either unconfident or not confident at all."

...

Asked about paying higher fees at a more expensive university in the expectation of getting a better job afterwards, only 22% of students felt it would be worthwhile, and almost half of students surveyed disagreed entirely."

Such an attitude is likely not limited to U.K. students, for as the [BBC reports](#), college tuition fees in both Great Britain and the United States are quite comparable. American students may actually be paying more than their British counterparts due to the fact that a degree takes four years to complete in the U.S. and only three in the U.K.

Unfortunately, data seems to indicate that the loss of confidence in a college degree may be founded. As the [chart below](#) shows, median family income has remained relatively flat in the last 30 years, while tuition costs have skyrocketed over the same period.



For years students have been led to believe that the only path to future success lies in a college degree. But if the costs of college continue to rise beyond the point where students will ever be able to recoup their losses, are we actually directing them away from success if we steer them toward college? Is it time we explored alternative ways besides four years in a college classroom to train young people for their calling and career?

Image Credit: Penn State bit.ly/1eBd9Ks