



What Do People Think?

Results from an Illinois Public Opinion Survey

Appendix A

Full Results

Welcome to our survey about public colleges and universities in Illinois. *To begin with, we'd like to find out your opinion about Illinois and about higher education.*

Q1. Generally speaking, would you say things in Illinois are headed in the right direction, or are headed down the wrong track?

Right direction 46.3%
Wrong track 53.7%

Q2. How important do you think each of the following issues is to the State of Illinois?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important
a. Education	74.1%	20.9%	4.5%	0.5%
b. Health care	68.7%	25.1%	5.1%	1.1%
c. Environment	49.0%	41.2%	8.2%	1.6%
d. Defense	34.2%	39.8%	21.5%	4.5%
e. Terrorism	37.7%	40.8%	18.8%	2.7%
f. International relations	24.0%	40.1%	28.2%	7.7%
g. Taxes	75.5%	19.9%	3.5%	1.1%
h. Budget	72.4%	21.0%	4.0%	2.6%
i. Jobs	73.8%	19.9%	5.5%	0.8%
j. Prayer in school	22.0%	30.5%	27.5%	19.9%
k. Abortion	22.0%	39.4%	29.0%	9.6%
l. Gay rights	11.2%	33.2%	32.0%	23.5%

Q3. Where do you think Illinois stands in the national economy?

Better than the rest of the nation.....11.0%
Worse than the rest of the nation.....28.0%
About the same61.0%

Q4. How do you think the academic quality of Illinois public colleges and universities compares to colleges and universities across the nation?

Better than the rest of the nation.....15.2%
Worse than the rest of the nation.....8.0%
About the same.....76.8%

Q5. For a person to be successful in today's economy, how important is a college education?

Very important.....72.8%
Somewhat important.....24.8%
Not very important.....2.0%
Not at all important.....0.4%

Q6. Students learn a variety of things in a variety of ways in college. As you think about “the college experience,” how important are each of the following skills?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important
a. An ability to get along with people different from themselves	67.4%	29.6%	2.8%	0.2%
b. A greater sense of the responsibilities of citizenship, such as voting and volunteering	51.1%	40.1%	8.3%	0.6%
c. Communication skills such as writing and speaking	79.5%	19.1%	1.4%	0.0%
d. Problem-solving and analytical thinking	79.3%	18.7%	1.8%	0.2%
e. A sense of maturity	68.5%	27.7%	3.1%	0.7%
f. Skills to secure a job upon graduation	73.5%	24.0%	2.2%	0.4%
g. Learning high-tech skills, such as using computers and the internet	71.5%	25.8%	2.3%	0.4%

The next set of questions will focus on the cost or financing of college and universities.

Q7. Please read the following statements and mark if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the statement.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
a. Even though a college education can be expensive, it is worth the cost.	44.0%	46.1%	8.7%	1.2%
b. Regardless of family income, every Illinois student who is qualified should be able to go to college.	72.2%	22.8%	3.7%	1.3%
c. Students have to borrow too much to attend college.	66.6%	28.0%	4.3%	1.1%
d. Every student in Illinois who is motivated has the opportunity to go to college.	33.1%	31.9%	26.4%	8.6%
e. The price of a particular college is directly related to its quality.	9.9%	40.7%	38.5%	10.9%
f. College students are getting their money’s worth.	7.8%	55.8%	31.3%	5.2%

Q8. Tuition and fees at Illinois colleges and universities have increased in recent years. What do you think is the most important cause for that increase?

General inflation.....40.1%
 Cutbacks in state support.....30.1%
 Waste and mismanagement by campuses.....25.4%
 Other factors (specify).....4.4%

Q9. (Eliminated from the survey).

Q10. If the State of Illinois were to invest more in its colleges and universities, how important is each of the following investment priorities?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important
Lower tuition and fees	71.2%	26.7%	2.1%	0.1%
Hire more experienced, better qualified faculty	51.3%	41.8%	6.6%	0.4%
Expand program offerings	38.8%	46.1%	14.0%	1.1%
Offer more financial aid to needy students	61.5%	32.0%	5.7%	0.9%
Improve facilities such as classrooms, libraries and computer labs	40.7%	49.1%	9.6%	0.7%
Offer more attention to individual students	38.7%	49.9%	10.3%	1.0%
Funding more research that benefits local economic development	38.1%	48.0%	12.7%	1.2%
Building capacity to enroll more students	25.7%	46.1%	26.0%	2.3%
Improve program quality	58.8%	37.1%	3.4%	0.7%

Q11. Would you favor or oppose providing more state money to higher education even if that means spending less in other areas of state government?

Favor.....67.8%
 Oppose.....32.2%

Q12. Would you favor or oppose providing more state money to higher education even if that means raising taxes?

Favor.....40.2%
 Oppose.....59.8%

The next two questions inquire about the quality of colleges and universities.

Q13. Overall, how well do you think the *public four-year colleges and universities* in Illinois are doing?

Excellent.....10.6%
 Good.....67.5%
 Fair.....20.6%
 Poor.....1.4%

Q14. Overall, how well do you think your local community college is doing?

Excellent.....18.3%
 Good.....57.1%
 Fair.....22.8%
 Poor.....1.8%

Q15. In your estimation, how much is the average tuition for full-time in-state students (Illinois residents) at *public* colleges and universities in Illinois per year?

Median.....\$12,000

Q16. In your estimation, how much is the average tuition for full-time in-state students (Illinois residents) at public community colleges in Illinois?

Median.....\$5,000

Q17. How often do you get information about quality and costs of colleges and universities from the following sources?

	Regularly	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
a. Family and friends	8.9%	45.4%	23.1%	22.5%
b. Newspapers	6.4%	41.2%	25.8%	26.6%
c. Television news	7.0%	43.6%	30.2%	19.1%
d. News on the Internet	6.4%	26.9%	31.4%	35.2%
e. High school teachers and counselors	4.4%	23.3%	19.8%	52.5%
f. Representatives from colleges and universities	8.8%	21.7%	20.6%	48.9%

Q18. Are there any other sources where you receive information about higher education?

Lastly, we have a few questions for statistical purposes only.

Q19. Are you (or is anyone in your immediate family) currently enrolled in a

A public college or university in Illinois

Yes.....19.8%

No.....80.2%

A private college or university in Illinois

Yes.....5.1%

No.....94.9%

A public or private college or university outside Illinois

Yes.....6.1%

No.....93.9%

None of the above (Single Select)

Yes.....71.5%

No.....28.5%

Q20. (Eliminated from the survey).

Q21. Do you have any children who are 0-12 years old? 13 to 21 years old?

0-12 years old

Yes.....26.2%

No.....73.8%

13-21 years old

Yes.....17.4%

No.....82.6%

None of the Above

Yes.....62.3%

No.....37.7%