

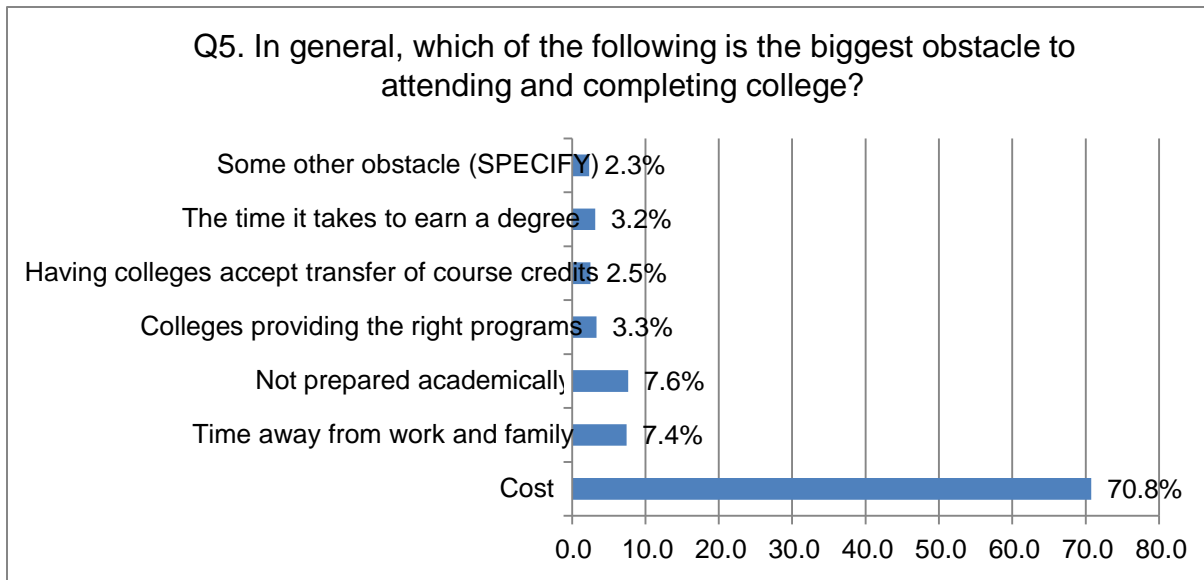
Stockton Poll: NJ Colleges and Universities Seen as High Quality, But Cost Is Major Barrier

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"Cost is seen as a major barrier, and citizens expect state and college leaders to make needed reforms to boost college affordability and completion," said Dr. Darryl Greer, Ph.D., Senior Fellow at the Hughes Center and Director of the Higher Education Strategic Information and Governance Center. The poll is part of a larger project on higher education policy reform, "Building Public Trust in an Era of Change."



New Jerseyans are somewhat split over the affordability of college, with 47 percent describing college in New Jersey as affordable, while 40 percent say flatly that college is not affordable. A majority (54 percent) also believes it is unlikely that student financial aid will be available to them or their families.

Citizens see state funding cuts, salary increases, and the cost of facilities and technology as factors driving college costs.

"College hiring practices and state-negotiated salary and benefit packages greatly influence cost," Greer said. "Clearly both parties need to partner on reform in this critical area."

Citizens take a balanced view of responsibility for state and college reforms to improve college affordability and completion rates, with about 42 percent indicating that more state funding or more student financial aid is needed. Almost an equal number (45 percent) say that better college cost control and tighter reins on tuition, such as tying tuition to the rate of inflation, would help families afford college.

Poll Continued/ From Page 2

“Among possible reforms to improve affordability and completion, it seems as if the public expects state and college leaders to stick to basics and not get lost in the policy weeds of reforms that only marginally help with college opportunity and completion,” Greer said.

Regarding new modes of delivering college courses, it appears that the public has not fully

Weighted Frequencies
NJ statewide higher education poll

Q1 screened for adult respondents.

Q4.

Q5. In general, which of the following is the biggest obstacle to attending and completing college?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Cost	725	70.8	70.8	70.8
Time away from work and family	76	7.4	7.4	78.2
Not prepared academically	78	7.6	7.6	85.8
Colleges providing the right programs	34	3.3	3.3	89.2
Having colleges accept transfer of course credits	26	2.5	2.5	91.7
The time it takes to earn a degree	32	3.2	3.2	94.9
Or some other obstacle (SPECIFY)	24	2.3	2.3	97.2
NOT SURE/DON'T KNOW	28	2.7	2.7	99.9
REFUSE	1	.1	.1	100.0
Total	1024			

Q7.

Q9. If anyone in your household were to attend a New Jersey college, how likely do you think it would be for your family to receive financial aid other than loans?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very likely	122	11.9	11.9	11.9
Somewhat likely	280	27.3	27.3	39.2
Somewhat unlikely	220	21.4	21.4	60.7
Valid Or very unlikely	338	33.0	33.0	93.7
NOT SURE/DON'T KNOW	56	5.5	5.5	99.2
REFUSE	8	.8	.8	100.0
Total	1024	100.0	100.0	

Q10. I'm going to read three options to improve college affordability. Please select the three most important options.

Q13. Would you say that the value and benefits of that college experience made it a good investment of time and money?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	YES	322	31.4	79.8	79.8
	NO	49	4.8	12.2	92.0
	NOT SURE/DON'T KNOW	32	3.2	8.0	100.0
	Total	404	39.4	100.0	
Missing	System	621	60.6		
Total		1024	100.0		

Q14. In which area do you think New Jersey colleges help the state the most?

Q15.