

Lumina Foundation/Gallup Poll 2011

Higher Education

-- FINAL TOPLINE --

Results are based on findings from a quantitative survey research study that Gallup conducted on behalf of Lumina Foundation for Education. The overall objective of the study was to determine the perceptions of the general American population about several important issues pertaining to higher education, including access, quality, and modes of learning. The study measures public attitudes about higher education institutions, as well as additional topics related to degrees, certificates, and the value of higher education. To achieve these objectives, Gallup conducted 1,001 interviews with adults aged 18 years and older residing in landline-telephone households, cell-phone-only households, and cell-phone-user households.

Gallup conducted surveys in English only from May 17, 2011, through May, 29, 2011. Interviews are conducted with respondents on landline telephones and cellular phones. Up to three phone calls were made to each household to reach an eligible respondent.

The data set was statistically adjusted (weighted) using the following variables: race/ethnicity, gender, education, and age as defined by the most recent data from the Current Population Survey, conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. The final overall results are representative of the U.S. adult population.

The questionnaire was developed in consultation with representatives from Lumina Foundation and Gallup. All interviewing was supervised and conducted by Gallup's full-time interviewing staff. For results based on the total sample size of 1,001 adults, one can say with 95% confidence that the margin of error attributable to sampling and other random effects is ± 4 percentage points. For subgroups within this population, e.g., education level, gender, and income, the margin of error would be greater. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls. The following paper presents key findings of the survey. Reported frequencies may not add up to 100% due to rounding or the exclusion of "don't know" and refused results in some cases.

We'd like to ask you a series of questions about education beyond high school in the United States. By education beyond high school, we mean education available at colleges, universities, community colleges, online schools, technical/vocational schools, and any place you could earn college credits or an occupational certification.

First,

1. Do you think education beyond high school in this country is available to anyone who wants it?

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
71	28	<1

2. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the QUALITY of American colleges and universities?

<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
70	25	5

3. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the AFFORDABILITY of American colleges and universities?

<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
24	75	2

On a five-point scale, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements. You may use any number between 1 and 5.

Q.4A-4F ROTATED

4.A Colleges and universities in this country are committed to helping students finish college.

<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
20	26	33	14	7	<1

4.B Colleges and universities in this country care deeply about their students' overall wellbeing.

<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
13	24	35	19	9	<1

4.C College graduates in this country are well-prepared for success in the workforce.

<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
12	27	40	15	6	<1

4.D	College graduates in this country are extremely knowledgeable.					
	<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	13	29	37	16	4	1
4.E	Colleges and universities in this country are good at teaching what students need to know to succeed in life.					
	<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	15	26	36	16	7	<1
4.F	Colleges and universities in this country are committed to building the strengths of each student.					
	<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	16	28	34	15	6	1
5.	In this country, how important is having a college degree or occupational certificate to a person's financial security in the future?					
	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not very important</u>	<u>Not at all important</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>	
	71	24	4	1	<1	
6.	In this country, how important is having SOME education beyond high school to a person's financial security in the future, even if a degree or certificate is not earned?					
	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not very important</u>	<u>Not at all important</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>	
	67	28	3	2	<1	

Please tell me whether you think each of the following is doing a great deal, some, or only a little to help students pay for education beyond high school. How about...?

Q.7A-7D ROTATED

7.A	Colleges and universities			
	<u>A great deal</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Only a little</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	16	57	24	3
7.B	State government			
	<u>A great deal</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Only a little</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	16	50	32	2

7.C	Federal government			
	<u>A great deal</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Only a little</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	21	51	27	2
7.D	Private sources, for example, community-based scholarship organizations or companies that provide employee assistance, etc.			
	<u>A great deal</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Only a little</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	27	56	15	2
8.	Among the following, who do you think SHOULD BE MOST responsible for helping students pay for education beyond high school?			
	<u>Colleges and universities</u>	<u>State government</u>	<u>Federal government</u>	
	10	20	27	
	<u>Private sources, for example, community-based scholarship organizations or companies that provide employee assistance, etc.</u>			
	28			
	<u>All of the above</u>	<u>None of the above</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>	
	7	6	2	

On a five-point scale, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statement. You may use any number between 1 and 5.

Q.9A-9D ROTATED

9.A	Having a college degree is essential for getting a good job in this country.					
	<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	44	25	19	7	4	1
9.B	People who have a college degree have a good chance of finding a quality job.					
	<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	27	30	27	9	6	1
9.C	Employers should offer assistance for their employees to pursue college education.					
	<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	47	25	18	5	4	<1

9.D Generally speaking, the higher the tuition at a college or university, the better the quality of the education.

<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
10	14	29	24	22	1

I'm going to read you a list of possible reasons for getting education beyond high school. Please tell me whether each of these is a very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important reason for getting education beyond high school. How about...?

Q.10A-10E ROTATED

10.A To get a good job

<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not very important</u>	<u>Not at all important</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
68	28	3	1	1

10.B To learn to think critically

<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not very important</u>	<u>Not at all important</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
56	34	5	3	1

10.C To become a well-rounded person

<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not very important</u>	<u>Not at all important</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
48	42	6	4	<1

10.D To learn more about the world

<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not very important</u>	<u>Not at all important</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
45	41	11	3	<1

10.E To earn more money

<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not very important</u>	<u>Not at all important</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
64	32	2	1	1

11. In your opinion, which ONE of the following is the MAIN reason why students get education beyond high school?

<u>To get a good job</u>	<u>To learn to think critically</u>	<u>To become a well-rounded person</u>
33	1	5
<u>To learn more about the world</u>	<u>To earn more money</u>	
3	53	
<u>All of the above</u>	<u>None of the above</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
3	1	1

Next, I'd like to ask your opinion on different types of college degrees.

An associate's degree is a college degree which typically takes two years of full-time study to complete in a traditional program. Using a five-point scale, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about associate's degrees. You may use any number between 1 and 5.

Q.12A-12C ROTATED

12.A An associate's degree is a valuable degree to have.

<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
32	27	28	9	3	1

12.B Earning an associate's degree is worth the money it costs to complete.

<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
32	22	29	10	5	2

12.C Earning an associate's degree is worth the time it takes to complete.

<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
38	29	22	6	4	1

A bachelor's degree is a college degree which typically takes four years of full-time study to complete in a traditional program. Using the same five-point scale, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about bachelor's degrees.

Q.13A-13D ROTATED

13.A	A bachelor's degree is a valuable degree to have.					
	<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	56	28	12	2	1	1
13.B	Earning a bachelor's degree is worth the money it costs to complete.					
	<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	30	29	27	8	4	1
13.C	Earning a bachelor's degree is worth the time it takes to complete.					
	<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	50	29	16	3	2	1
13.D	The cost of earning a bachelor's degree is about right.					
	<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	17	22	35	16	8	2

Now, we'd like to ask you about different types of schools that offer college degrees or occupational certifications.

On a five-point scale, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements. You may use any number between 1 and 5.

Q.14A-14C ROTATED

14.A	Online colleges and universities offer high quality education.					
	<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	10	20	35	21	10	4
14.B	Community colleges in this country offer high quality education.					
	<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	23	35	31	8	3	1
14.C	Traditional colleges and universities in this country offer high quality education.					
	<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	30	41	23	4	2	1

[Form A displays Q.15 then Q.16. Form B displays Q.16 then Q.15.]

Q.15 Which of the following do you think produces HIGHER quality education?

<u>Private online schools</u>	<u>Public online schools</u>	<u>Both</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
47	39	2	4	8

Q.16 Which of the following do you think produces HIGHER quality education?

<u>Private traditional colleges and universities</u>	<u>Public colleges and universities</u>	<u>Both</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
			55	37
4	1	3		

Please tell me if it is very easy, somewhat easy, somewhat difficult, or very difficult to find information about each of the following. How about...?

Q.17A-17C READ

17.A College degree programs

<u>Very easy</u>	<u>Somewhat easy</u>	<u>Somewhat difficult</u>	<u>Very difficult</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
48	35	13	2	2

17.B Financial assistance for college education

<u>Very easy</u>	<u>Somewhat easy</u>	<u>Somewhat difficult</u>	<u>Very difficult</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
19	37	31	12	2

17.C The QUALITY of college degree programs

<u>Very easy</u>	<u>Somewhat easy</u>	<u>Somewhat difficult</u>	<u>Very difficult</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
17	44	31	6	2

Please tell me if each of the following factors are very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important to the overall QUALITY of a college or university. How about...?

Q.18A-18C ROTATED

18.A The percentage of graduates who are able to get a good job

<u>Very easy</u>	<u>Somewhat easy</u>	<u>Somewhat difficult</u>	<u>Very difficult</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
70	25	3	1	1

18.B The percentage of students who graduate from the college or university

<u>Very easy</u>	<u>Somewhat easy</u>	<u>Somewhat difficult</u>	<u>Very difficult</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
57	37	4	1	1

18.C The price of the college or university degree

<u>Very easy</u>	<u>Somewhat easy</u>	<u>Somewhat difficult</u>	<u>Very difficult</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
46	39	10	3	1

19. Do you think most adults who go back to college have a good chance of success?

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
88	11	1

Next, we'd like to ask you some questions about your own educational experiences.

20. Have you ever taken a college class online?

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
20	80	1

21. *(Asked of those who have never taken a higher education course online.)* Would you ever consider taking a college class online?

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
47	51	1

22. Are you currently enrolled in a college degree or certificate program?

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
12	87	1

23. EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR SCREENING PURPOSES.

24. *(Asked of those enrolled in a higher education certificate or degree program.)* Are you attending an online college/university, community college, vocational/technical school; traditional college/university; some other kind of school? [Insufficient sample to report.]

25. *(Asked of those enrolled in a higher education certificate or degree program.)* What type of degree or certificate are you currently seeking? (Read 1-4) [Insufficient sample to report.]

26. *(Asked of those enrolled in a higher education certificate or degree program.)* Using a five-point scale, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: My college or university has given me the skills I need to be successful. [Insufficient sample to report.]

27. Item not included in final questionnaire.
28. Do you have a family member or close friend, age 25 or older, who is currently enrolled in college courses or in a college degree or certificate program?

Yes, family member/friend is enrolled in college courses

12

Yes, family member/friend is enrolled in a college certificate program

4

Yes, family member/friend is enrolled in a college degree program

31

No, family member/friend is not enrolled in college courses or a college degree or certificate program

50

Don't Know/Refused

3

29. *(Asked of those who have a family member or close friend attending a higher education institution.)* Is this family member or close friend attending an online college/university, a community college, a vocational/technical school, a traditional college/university, or some other kind of school?

<u>Online college/university</u>	<u>Community college</u>	<u>Vocational/technical school</u>
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17

21

5

<u>Traditional college/university</u>	<u>Some other kind of school</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
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51

6

1

30. *(Asked of those who have a family member or close friend attending a higher education institution.)* What type of degree or certificate are they seeking?

<u>Occupational certificate or credential</u>	<u>Associate's degree</u>	<u>Bachelor's degree</u>
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18

9

33

<u>Graduate or professional degree</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
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31

9

31. *(Asked of those who have a family member or close friend attending a higher education institution.)* Using a five-point scale, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree, please indicate your

level of agreement with the following statement: My close friend or family member's college or university is giving them the tools they need to be successful in their classes.

<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
43	37	13	4	1	1

Q.32 EDUCATION LEVEL FOR SCREENING PURPOSES.

33. *(Asked of those with no higher education certificate or degree.)* Would you consider taking classes at a community college?

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
56	43	1

34. *(Asked of those with no higher education certificate or degree.)* In the last 12 months, have you thought about going back to school to earn a college degree or certificate?

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
35	64	1

35. *(Asked of those with no higher education certificate or degree.)* How likely are you to go back to school to earn a college degree or certificate?

<u>Very likely</u>	<u>Somewhat likely</u>	<u>Not very likely</u>	<u>Not at all likely</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
15	23	21	40	1

Please tell me if each of the following is a MAJOR reason, a MINOR reason, or NOT A REASON why you think you are not very likely or not at all likely to get a college degree or certificate?

Q.36A-Q36H ROTATED *(Asked of those with no higher education certificate or degree who are not likely to go back to school to earn one.)*

36.A You don't need a college degree or certificate.

<u>Major reason</u>	<u>Minor reason</u>	<u>Not a reason</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
45	16	38	<1

36.B You can't afford to get a college degree or certificate.

	<u>Major reason</u>	<u>Minor reason</u>	<u>Not a reason</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	36	22	42	<1

36.C You don't want a college degree or certificate.

	<u>Major reason</u>	<u>Minor reason</u>	<u>Not a reason</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	30	25	43	2

36.D You don't have time to get a college degree or certificate.

	<u>Major reason</u>	<u>Minor reason</u>	<u>Not a reason</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	38	20	41	2

36.E There are no colleges nearby.

	<u>Major reason</u>	<u>Minor reason</u>	<u>Not a reason</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	7	22	70	<1

36.F You are too old to go to college.

	<u>Major reason</u>	<u>Minor reason</u>	<u>Not a reason</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	41	19	39	<1

36.G You don't have the skills to go to college.

	<u>Major reason</u>	<u>Minor reason</u>	<u>Not a reason</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	17	21	62	<1

36.H You did not graduate from high school.

	<u>Major reason</u>	<u>Minor reason</u>	<u>Not a reason</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
	9	13	74	4

37. *(Asked of those with no higher education certificate or degree who are likely to go back to school to earn one.)* Do you plan to go back to school to get a college degree or certification in the next five years?
[Insufficient sample to report.]

On a five-point scale, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements. How about...?

Q.38A-38C ROTATED *(Asked of those with no higher education certificate or degree.)*

38.A If I had a college degree, I would feel more secure in my job.

<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
33	9	15	10	31	2

38.B If I had a college degree, I would feel more secure in my financial future.

<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
40	13	13	9	24	1

38.C If I decided to take college classes, there is someone I'm close to who would support my decision.

<u>5(Strongly Agree)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1(Strongly Disagree)</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
64	16	6	4	7	2

Q.39-Q.42 QUESTIONS FOR SCREENING PURPOSES.

43. To what extent is your employer supportive of employees who would like to get more education?

<u>Very supportive</u>	<u>Somewhat supportive</u>	<u>Not very supportive</u>
47	31	11
<u>Not supportive at all</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>	
11	1	

Q.42-Q.54 QUESTIONS FOR SCREENING PURPOSES.