

Why go to College?

You hear about it all the time, the millionaires who succeeded despite not having a college education, or dropping out of school. It makes one wonder: Is going to College worth it?

For some, going to school can be an excuse for failing, thinking they can answer the question of "What are you doing now days?" with a "I'm going to School" answer. Which sounds better at the time than, "Just working at [insert shitty job here]".

It almost seems sometimes as if a College degree will just get you stuck in an office job for the rest of your life (and this is fine to some people). Granted in most cases you will earn more money with a College degree, but what other benefits are there? Whether it does or not, going to College is definitely worth the experience in itself.

And, why not go to College? A student loan is one of the easiest loans to get now days and is seen as a good investment and good debt.

The cost of an education has been skyrocketing over 6% per year for the past decade (other sources say 3% because the average inflation rate of 3%/year is factored in). Just check out our report of the most expensive Colleges for 2007-2008. As the cost of receiving a college education continues to rise every year you have to ask yourself whether a college education is necessary and what are the benefits of actually getting that degree.

Consider the question of attending College like an investment. Calculate your ROI (Return on Investment) of going to College. Unless you're some daring entrepreneur with a great idea, or a star basketball player with a wicked jump shot, signs will almost always point you to getting a College degree.

The question then comes up...

What's more important, the degree or the knowledge, or the whole College experience?

Just look at all the universities making their lectures freely available to anyone with an internet connection. Now, no one has the time to view all the free courses online and it's hard to say if people actually will when it's not required of them. Even those students who are in those classes have a hard time attending, paying attention and staying motivated. What's sad is I can view lectures from places like MIT (which is a known university to open source their course lectures) without paying a dime, unlike the students in those actual classes who are paying up the ying-yang to go to school there.

But, with all these free courses online, is it worth paying/going to College? When it comes down to it, all that really matters is that piece of paper showing you earned that degree, because any hermit can stay at home at watch MIT lectures, and while they may learn just as much from those lectures, they won't hold the proper credentials to prove that. It's not like a job candidate can list "watching YouTube Lectures" or YouTube U. on their job resume. On another note, it is hard to follow some of these online lectures, with the professor writing on the white board with his/her back to the camera.

I still believe just the College experience alone tops all other reasons for going to College. No, this is not the same as night class, distance learning, or online courses that are fit for those stay at home types or business types. A student can not have a true feeling of academia without being on a traditional College campus in the flesh, brick and Ivy. Actually going to the school and attending, unlike a distance course, a student will feel more a part of the school and have some sense of belonging to something with heritage and history. Living on campus also gives access to Sporting events and intramural sports, which psychologists say is a factor in feeling sense of community and involvement among students.

The whole College experience is vital to many students. Just ask all the married couples now who met their significant other while in College. Do you think that would have happened at an online or extended learning class?

What about all the parties. Living on campus is an experience in itself and allows you to be more social.

The one time it may be OK to skip out on the whole College experience is if you are already in a decent job and are going for your MBA and are taking night classes or online courses to advance your career.

Other reasons for not going to a 4-year university include costs. Some students now days are taking their first two years of classes and getting their prereqs out of the way at local community colleges. Here the student can still live at home, attend classes for cheap, and earn money with a part time job. With living at home and keeping expenses low, the student can easily save up money to pay for College, whatever financial aid and parents contributions can't cover.