

Occupy Colleges could become largest student protest in 40 years

Wednesday, 12 October 2011

Student Protest in Solidarity with Occupy Wall Street

When: Thursday 10/13/2011 4:30 EST

Thursday could see the biggest student protest on US soil since 1970.

Occupy Colleges has announced their next plan of action. A national student day of protest has been set for Thursday, October 13, as part of a nationwide walkout and student solidarity protest in support of Occupy Wall Street. Students at over 100 colleges are planning on participating.

Some are taking action sooner. Student protesters at UMASS have intentions of occupying a building on campus as we speak (at time of publishing: 2pm EST on Wednesday).

Similar events have been taking place over the last week. On Monday, students from multiple colleges in Boston gathered in the Boston Common for a protest and march to join the Occupy Boston camp in Dewey Square.

Photos from the protest at Occupy Boston:

Images: CampusGrotto CC Licensed

The movement continues to grow as more students join in the cause. These initial protests look to be a "beginning, not an end," according to Angus Johnston of Student Activism.

Not since the student strike of 1970 have so many students from so many colleges come together to protest in unity.

Occupy Colleges – How it started

Students staged a campus walkout in support of Occupy Wall Street on October 5th. Students from 100+ college campuses nationwide walked out of class in a show of solidarity and support for the movement.

Why Occupy Colleges?

As one student from Northeastern University put it:

"We pay hundreds of thousands of dollars to an education industry that continues to mimic the irresponsible, unaccountable, and unethical financial practices of Wall Street. University presidents make \$500,000 or more for doing so, campus workers are paid poverty wages and students graduate with outrageous amounts of student debt, in a hostile economic climate, with few job opportunities."

A big reason for the protest: the rising cost of higher education. Schools that were once considered affordable, like UCLA and Cal Berkeley, are now nearly making the top 100 list of most expensive colleges. Add to that the frustration over the economic downturn (lack of jobs), rising student loan debt and the fact that the big banks were bailed out where the majority feel the government was looking out for bankers rather than taxpayers.

Largest Student Protest

The largest student protest in American history occurred after the Kent State shootings in May of 1970. Over four million students protested and over 850 US colleges and universities shut down during the student strike. The impact of Kent State and the national student strike that followed soon after had a huge impact on American history. Perhaps the Occupy Colleges movement will as well.

Further Reading:

StudentActivism.net

OccupyColleges.org

Colleges Occupy Boston