The COVID Crisis on Campuses: College Mission, Culture & Campus Life

Executive Summary

Yale School of Management, Evans Hall • January 26, 2021
Agenda

WELCOME
Jeffrey Sonnenfeld, Senior Associate Dean, Yale School of Management
Peter Salovey, 23rd President, Yale University
Kerwin Charles, Dean, Yale School of Management

Legend in Leadership Award: Andrew Hamilton, 16th President, New York University

PRESENTED BY
Peter Salovey, 23rd President, Yale University
Carol T. Christ, 11th Chancellor; University of California, Berkeley
Lawrence S. Bacow, 29th President, Harvard University

Suggestions for 12th Secretary of Education-designate, Miguel Cardona

OPENING COMMENTS
Sylvia Burwell, 22nd US Secretary of Health and Human Services; 15th President, American University
Janet Napolitano, 3rd US Secretary of Homeland Security; 20th President, University of California
John B. King Jr., 10th US Secretary of Education; President & CEO, The Education Trust
Tommy Thompson, 19th US Secretary of Health and Human Services; Interim President, University of Wisconsin System

RESPONDENTS
Peter Salovey, 23rd President, Yale University
Vincent Price, 10th President, Duke University
Mark P. Becker, 7th President, Georgia State University
Sean S. Buck, Superintendent, United States Naval Academy
Mary Schmidt Campbell, 10th President, Spelman College
John Comerford, 21st President, Otterbein University
W. Kent Fuchs, 12th President, University of Florida
John I. Jenkins, 17th President, University of Notre Dame
Hanseul Kang, Executive Director, The Broad Center at Yale School of Management
Liz McMillen, Executive Editor, The Chronicle of Higher Education
Anthony Munroe, President, Borough of Manhattan Community College
Eloy Ortiz Oakley, Chancellor, California Community Colleges
Kent D. Syverud, 12th Chancellor & President, Syracuse University
OPENING COMMENTS
Christina R. Cutlip, Senior Managing Director, TIAA
Scott Galloway, Professor of Marketing, NYU Stern School of Business
Ava Clayton Spencer, 8th President, Bates College
John C. Bravman, 17th President, Bucknell University
Brian W. Casey, 17th President, Colgate University
James E. Ryan, 9th President, University of Virginia
Roslyn Clark Artis, 14th President, Benedict College
Daniel Diermeier, 9th Chancellor, Vanderbilt University
Conrado Gempesaw, 17th President, St. John’s University
Stephen Spinelli Jr., 14th President, Babson College
Judy D. Olian, 9th President, Quinnipiac University

RESPONDENTS
Connie Ledoux Book, 9th President, Elon University
Ana Mari Cauce, 33rd President, University of Washington
Shirley M. Collado, 9th President, Ithaca College
Ronald A. Crutcher, 10th President, University of Richmond
James W. Dean Jr., 20th President, University of New Hampshire
Mary Dana Hinton, 13th President, Hollins University
Christopher B. Howard, 8th President, Robert Morris University
Rakesh Khurana, Dean of Harvard College, Harvard University
Richanne C. Mankey, 19th President, Defiance College
Mauri D. McInnis, 6th President, Stony Brook University
Mark C. Reed, 28th President, St. Joseph’s University
Christine M. Riordan, 10th President, Adelphi University
Havidan Rodriguez, 20th President, The University at Albany
Rodney K. Rogers, 12th President, Bowling Green State University
Lawrence Schovanec, 17th President, Texas Tech University
Michael J. Sorrell, 34th President, Paul Quinn College
Laura R. Walker, 11th President, Bennington College
Lori S. White, 21st President, DePauw University
Julie E. Wollman, 10th President, Widener University
Gregory S. Woodward, 6th President, University of Hartford
Adam C. Wright, President, Dallas Baptist University

READINGS
TIAA and EY-Parthenon: Perspectives on Risk to Higher Education Institutions project (PDF)
Chronicle of Higher Education: How to Survive the Enrollment Bust
https://www.chronicle.com/article/how-to-navigate-the-demographcliff
Chronicle of Higher Education: The Year That Pushed Higher Ed to the Edge
https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-year-that-pushed-higher-ed-to-the-edge
NY Mag: The Coming Disruption
https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/05/scott-galloway-future-of-college.html
NYTimes: Colleges Slash Budgets in the Pandemic, With ‘Nothing Off-Limits’
NYTimes: High School Grades Could Be Worth $100,000. Time to Tell Your Child?
OPENING COMMENTS
Jonathan Law, Global Leader of Education Practice, McKinsey & Company
Andre Dua, Senior Partner, McKinsey & Company
Philip J. Hanlon, 18th President, Dartmouth College
David A. Greene, 20th President, Colby College
Anne F. Harris, 14th President, Grinnell College
Peter M. Donohue, 32nd President, Villanova University
Harold L. Martin Sr., 12th Chancellor, North Carolina A&T State University
Edward Wingenbach, President, Hampshire College
Meredith Woo, 13th President, Sweet Briar College

RESPONDENTS
Katherine E. Fleming, Provost, New York University
G. Gabrielle Starr, 10th President, Pomona College
Michael B. Alexander, President, Lasell University
Anne Doyle, President Lasell Village
Joe Bertolino, 12th President, Southern Connecticut State University
John R. Broderick, 8th President, Old Dominion University
Lori J. Carrell, Chancellor, University of Minnesota Rochester
Kimberly R. Cline, 10th President, Long Island University
David J. Cook, Vice Chancellor, University of Kansas
Gregory D. Hess, 16th President, Wabash College; President & CEO, IES Abroad
Robert S. Murley, Chairman, Educational Testing Service
M. Duane Nellis, 21st President, Ohio University
Michael G. Riley, President & Editor-in-Chief, The Chronicle of Higher Education
Joseph Savoie, 6th President, University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Leonard A. Schlesinger, 12th President, Babson College
Verne O. Sedlacek, President & CEO (2003-2015), Commonfund
Caryl M. Stern, Executive Director, Walton Family Foundation
Michael K. Thomas, President & CEO, New England Board of Higher Education
Stephen Joel Trachtenberg, 15th President, The George Washington University
Mark Weinberger, Past Global Chair & CEO, EY; Board of Trustees, Emory and Case Western Reserve Universities
Robert M. Zemsky, Chair, the Learning Alliance for Higher Education, University of Pennsylvania

READINGS
McKinsey: Reimagining Higher Education in the United States (PDF)
Chronicle of Higher Education: The Post Pandemic College (PDF)
Chronicle of Higher Education: When It Comes to Reopening, HBCUs Face a Common Dilemma — With Higher Stakes
Politico: Will the Pandemic Blow Up College in America?
Diverse Approaches to Managing Campus Diversity

OPENING COMMENTS
Lawrence S. Bacow, 29th President, Harvard University
Carol T. Christ, 11th Chancellor, University of California, Berkeley
Sean M. Decatur, 19th President, Kenyon College
William C. Dudley, 27th President, Washington and Lee University
Andrew D. Hamilton, 16th President, New York University
Paula A. Johnson, 14th President, Wellesley College
Mark S. Schlissel, President, University of Michigan
Michael S. Roth, 16th President, Wesleyan University
Kerwin Charles, Dean, Yale School of Management

RESPONDENTS
Thayne M. McCulloh, 34th President, Gonzaga University
Mary B. Marcy, 9th President, Dominican University of California
Patricia A. McGuire, 14th President, Trinity Washington University
Kevin O’Brien, 29th President, Santa Clara University
John A. Perez, Chair, Board of Regents, University of California
John Rice, Founder & CEO, Management Leadership for Tomorrow
Larry Robinson, 12th President, Florida A&M University
John D. Simon, 14th President, Lehigh University
Lynn Perry Wooten, 9th President, Simmons University
Anne Coyle, Higher Education Practice, Russell Reynolds Associates
Meredith Rosenberg, Digital Education & EdTech, Russell Reynolds Assoc.

READINGS
Russell Reynolds Associates: The Emergence of the Chief Diversity Officer Role in Higher Education (PDF)
Chronicle of Higher Education: How Racist Are Universities, Really?
https://www.chronicle.com/article/how-racist-are-universities-really
The Guardian: Republican accuses Harvard of ‘caving to the woke left’ after school cuts ties
Washington Post: Lehigh University rescinds honorary degree it gave President Trump
https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2021/01/08/lehigh-trump-honorary-degree/
Washington Post: More than 160 law deans denounce attempted insurrection and effort to decertify election — but don’t name names
NYTimes: Prominent Lawyers Want Giuliani’s Law License Suspended Over Trump Work
Forbes: Colleges Rescind Honorary Degrees Awarded To Trump, Giuliani Following Capitol Riot
Washington Post: Universities face pressure to vet ex-Trump officials before hiring them
https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2021/01/23/trump-appointees-universities/
The sixth Yale School of Management Higher Education Leadership Summit, led by Yale Professor Jeffrey Sonnenfeld, was held virtually on January 26, 2021. This Summit brought together college and university presidents, board chairs and trustees, administrators, faculty members, and experts on higher education. Participants discussed how they have pivoted because of the pandemic, offered suggestions to the incoming US Secretary of Education, described how they are reimagining higher education, and shared approaches to improving campus diversity.

New York University President Andrew Hamilton was presented the Legend in Leadership Award.

Legend in Leadership Award
Andrew Hamilton, 16th President, New York University

Andrew Hamilton was recognized as a renowned scientist and scientific leader who has led with great distinction three remarkably different universities. He was a professor and then provost at Yale, vice chancellor at Oxford University, and now president at NYU. He is a creative, resourceful, problem solver; is innovative and well liked; and has a global perspective. He has been incredibly successful in every role, including in the highly decentralized environment at Oxford, where all 38 colleges operate completely independently.

He reminded participants that even in turbulent times such as now, universities – particularly research institutions – have core missions and a constancy of purpose that matter greatly to the fabric of society.
Suggestions for 12th Secretary of Education-designate, Miguel Cardona

Overview

Former Cabinet secretaries and Summit participants want the incoming Secretary of Education to focus on COVID-19 relief, debt relief, support for low-income students, and addressing racial inequities. They also want him to use his bully pulpit to make the case for higher education.

Context

Several former Cabinet members and other Summit participants provided suggestions to the incoming US Secretary of Education, Miguel Cardona—who may have been listening to the Summit. Suggestions included policy suggestions, process ideas, and opportunities to use the bully pulpit afforded to the Secretary of Education.

Key Themes

Dealing with COVID-19 and its implications must be a top priority for the new Secretary.

Former Cabinet secretaries agreed that the top priority of the incoming Secretary must be getting COVID-19 under control, providing financial relief to students and institutions, and helping students deal with issues such as mental health.

Leaders from small private schools were emphatic that federal COVID-19 relief should include funding to support students at both public and private colleges. Most Summit participants agreed, though a smaller percentage of the general public agrees.

Former Cabinet secretaries suggest prioritizing access, affordability, and quality of higher education.

Under this umbrella of access, affordability, and quality are specific suggestions such as:

- Increasing Pell grant funding as a direct way to help low-income students get access to and succeed in college.
- Focusing on and supporting the completion agenda.
- Making a significant investment in institutions that serve minorities, particularly HBCUs.
- Enacting policies to provide some degree of student loan forgiveness.

Summit participants strongly favor extending the current interest-free suspended payment period on all student loans and like the idea of a new public service loan forgiveness program that forgives $10,000 a year up to five years; Summit participants showed stronger support for those ideas than did the general public. But Summit participants were mixed in their support for providing $10,000 in loan relief to all borrowers, with lower support for this idea than the public.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poll Question</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Should Congress include funding to support both public and private colleges &amp; universities in its COVID-19 relief package?*</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Real-time poll of Summit participants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Should Congress include funding in the COVID-19 relief bill to help low-income students regardless of whether they are currently attending public or private colleges and universities?**</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Poll conducted by Morning Consult among 1,597 US adults on January 25-26, 2021</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan Forgiveness Poll Questions</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you support the Biden administration extending the current interest-free suspended payment period on all student loans?*</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Real-time poll of Summit participants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extending the current interest-free suspended payment period on all student loans?**</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>**Poll conducted by Morning Consult among 1,597 US adults on January 25-26, 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you support the Biden administration providing $10,000 of student loan relief to all borrowers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?*</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>49%</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Real-time poll of Summit participants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing $10,000 of student loan relief to all borrowers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?**</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Poll conducted by Morning Consult among 1,597 US adults on January 25-26, 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you support the Biden administration providing a new public service loan forgiveness program that forgives $10,000 a year up to 5 years ($50k)?*</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Real-time poll of Summit participants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing a new public service loan forgiveness program that forgives $10,000 a year up to 5 years ($50k)?**</td>
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<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>**Poll conducted by Morning Consult among 1,597 US adults on January 25-26, 2021</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The former Cabinet secretaries and the majority of Summit participants strongly favor making it easier for international students to study in the US (supported by 98% of participants but only 42% of the public) and cracking down on for-profit colleges (supported by 83% of participants and 63% of the public).

Higher education leaders want to see greater focus on issues of race and equity.

On issues of racial justice, former Secretary of Education John King said that the actions of college leaders don’t match the statements that have been made, requiring greater action. This includes increased admission of students of color, greater faculty diversity, and increased funding for low-income minority students.

Sylvia Burwell, the former US Secretary of Health and Human Services, who is now the president of American University, encouraged Secretary of Education-designate, Miguel Cardona to outline specific goals for combating racism in education over the next four years, which isn’t a long period of time.

In reflecting on the agenda for the next Secretary of Education, Liz McMillen, executive editor of The Chronicle of Higher Education, believes that the current issues facing higher education are the same as before COVID-19, though things have worsened and accelerated. An important issue that has worsened is not only inequity for students, but also inequity among types of institutions.

“At this time of crisis for higher education, leaders want to see the new secretary use his bully pulpit to make the case for education.

A theme from previous Summits was the idea of declining public support for the value of higher education, despite overwhelming evidence of the value of education. Participants are in agreement that an important role of the incoming Secretary is to use his position to publicly and repeatedly make the case for the civic mission and value of higher education.

“Often, the poorest institutions are the ones who are educating the most disadvantaged students, and this doesn’t get talked about quite enough.”

Former Cabinet secretaries encouraged the incoming Secretary to focus on process.

Two former Cabinet secretaries went beyond policy comments to offer the newest Secretary of Education process advice. Secretary King suggested thinking about what can be done by the executive branch (the Department of Education and the President) in acting alone, what requires Congressional legislation, and what actions involve using the Secretary’s bully pulpit.

Secretary Burwell suggested developing a 30-day plan, a 100-day plan, and even a four-year plan. She advised the new Secretary to build a strong team and to invest in building relationships.

“There are some really important messages we need to hear about the value of higher ed. We’ve heard about declining support for higher ed and the partisan divide over higher ed. There’s an important case to be made for the role of higher ed and the civic mission of higher ed in preparing students to be good citizens.”
Pandemic Pivots in Higher Education

Overview
The pandemic has forced higher education leaders and institutions to pivot in multiple ways. These include delivering education online, engaging in frequent testing for COVID-19 among students and staff, rethinking student living arrangements, developing a new level of partnership with local communities, and more. Because each institution is different—with different students and challenges—the decision-making process is inevitably different.

Context
Higher education leaders described all of the ways they have had to pivot due to COVID-19 and shared thoughts on aspects of these changes that are likely to be long lasting.

Key Themes
Higher education has been forced to pivot in how education is delivered.
With a focus on the health of students, faculty, and staff, many schools have shifted the delivery of education to online classes or some form of a hybrid model. However, while seen as necessary in many situations, as shown in the polling results below, online learning is not believed to be as effective as in-person learning. Being largely online also has a detrimental impact on students’ mental health.

In general, how would you rate the effectiveness of learning in an online environment as compared to traditional in-person classes?

Out of necessity schools have had to pivot to administer COVID-19 tests at scale.
Frequent testing of thousands of students and staff has become a necessity to maintain safe campuses and high levels of confidence among students and communities.

Former US Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson, who is currently serving as interim president of the University of Wisconsin System, said the Wisconsin System has developed a testing protocol and tested over 500,000 students, which has been an enormous undertaking. Other schools have faced similar undertakings, as most institutions have had to become testing centers.

An important area of pivot has been addressing student housing.
To keep students safe, institutions have had to change housing policies and at times institute mandatory quarantines. At Colgate, upon arriving at school in the fall, all students had to quarantine in their dorm rooms for 14 days. At the start of the second semester in January, students again had to quarantine, this time for 10 days. On both occasions, university president Brian Casey quarantined in a dorm room (shown below) to convey to students that he was in it with them.

Higher education leaders have pivoted in how they communicate with students.
During the pandemic, leaders have adopted new ways of communicating with students and staff, including online videos, mobile apps, and push notices. Most believe these methods have worked fairly well and they plan to continue to use them.
In pivoting, each institution is taking its own measured approach.

Michael Sorrell, president of Paul Quinn College in Dallas, said, “There is no 100% right answer . . . there are circumstances which necessitate a nuanced approach.” At institutions that serve a high number of students on Pell grants and students who work 40 hours a week, the pandemic has created enormous health and financial challenges. Some institutions have raised funds to support students and have allowed students to live on campus, even if learning takes place online, because the campus is the best place for students.

“In of our students, 85% are on Pell grants and 90% were working 40 hours a week or more. That’s an extraordinarily difficult environment for students to continue their education. . . . Sometimes being on a college campus is the best place for them, the safest place for them against the realities of a virus.”

**Poll Question**

**Your video addresses for the student body in town hall forums were:**

- Effective: 71%
- Not very effective: 29%

**Poll Question**

- In the throes of the pandemic, we saw a great need for communicating with students and staff using mobile apps and features like ‘push notices’ and group text messaging. How did that work at your institution?
- Effective: 97%
- Not very effective: 0%

**Poll Question**

- Will you be more dependent on things like mobile apps and ‘push notices’ in the future?
- Yes: 86%
- No: 14%

**Institutions are pivoting by addressing their historical context.**

As one university president said, “All universities have a historical context.” Addressing this context might mean challenging established traditions, such as the name of a building or a school’s football cheer.
• In this time of crisis, institutions have shifted to more centralized decision making. This occurred because decisions had to be made quickly. Perhaps this remains the case longer term.

• Future higher education models may shift. There is likely to be an emphasis on alternative pathways.

TIAA Institute also found a silver lining in that the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on students of color and low-income backgrounds, in combination with the nation’s racial reckoning, has elevated leaders’ commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

“In almost every conversation we had with campus leaders, D&I objectives were a top priority.”

To assist institutions, TIAA Institute developed a framework that starts with the core mission, focuses on the organizational structure and decision-making process, and encompasses the key elements of institutional capital including human capital, financial capital, physical capital, and reputational capital.
The COVID Crisis on Campuses: College Mission, Culture & Campus Life

Overview
The challenges faced by students and higher education institutions have only been amplified by the pandemic. These challenges include dealing with the high costs of education, increasing diversity and inclusion, increasing the use of technology to broaden access and decrease costs, and linking education to jobs – now and in the future. While responding to the pandemic’s immediate challenges, education leaders understand the need to rethink their institution’s fundamental value proposition.

Context
McKinsey’s Jonathan Law summarized the firm’s research on key higher education trends amplified by COVID-19 and strategic questions that higher ed leaders are asking to reimagine higher education. Several higher ed leaders shared their thoughts on challenges and efforts to change higher education.

Key Themes
With a high degree of emphasis on cost, higher education leaders feel compelled to focus on value. When asked about the most important features considered by applicants to their university, Summit participants answered: 1) academic prestige; and 2) cost. Data from Morning Consult shows that cost is a very or somewhat important consideration to 92% of students.

Leaders are reimagining higher education and rethinking their institutions’ value proposition.
McKinsey’s Jonathan Law identified nine trends in higher education that have been amplified by COVID-19. These are:
1. The demographic cliff, as 2026 will bring a peak in high school graduates followed by an aggressive decline.
2. The diversity and inclusion imperative, as universities struggle to close achievement gaps. The next decade will bring increasingly diverse undergraduate classes.
3. Misunderstanding of affordability and value with a slightly higher cost to attend, but rising debt levels, lower repayment rates, and stagnating completion levels.
4. Increasing recognition of students’ mental health needs, which rose prior to COVID-19 but have increased sharply during the pandemic.
5. Higher education going remote overnight, as COVID-19 forced adoption of remote learning within weeks. Remote and online learning is expected to increase and accelerate.
6. EdTech bringing new enablers and competitors as tech has gained traction.
7. The future of work is now, which is complicated as roughly 30% of tasks in 60% of roles will be automated. Graduates will be searching for jobs in what could be the largest economic downturn since WWII.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How important, if at all, were each of the following considerations when your child(ren) were deciding where to attend college?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost of attendance</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Student housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic prestige</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location (weather, urban or rural, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual class size</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closeness to home</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campus social environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diversity of student body (race, income, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Size of student body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student dining</td>
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<tr>
<td>Things to do off-campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious affiliation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Athletic teams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Morning Consult
8. **Interdisciplinary research becoming the norm** in the academic battle for funding.

9. **Financial instability bringing consolidation and stressors**, with declines in state funding for education adding financial pressure.

“**It means a significant increase in demand for technology skills, but also, more importantly, an increase in demand for social and emotional skills and higher cognitive skills.**”

In light of these trends, McKinsey sees six key strategic questions for higher education leaders to consider in reimagining higher education:

1. What is our unique value proposition? What are we known for?
2. What are new ways to address age-old challenges in building a diverse and inclusive institution?
3. Through which delivery models will we provide our core services?
4. What are potential new business models?
5. What is the essential set of services that we should provide for students?
6. What approach to governance will best enable us to navigate this and future moments of destabilization?

Some critics question higher ed’s commitment to access, affordability, and value.

Previous Yale Higher Education Summits have wrestled with the growing level of public skepticism about the value of higher education. At this Summit, NYU Professor Scott Galloway criticized higher education for being a luxury brand that educates the children of the country’s top 1% but doesn’t provide affordable access to higher education for the unremarkable students from the other 99% of society. Galloway argued that American higher education has changed from when he was an unremarkable son of a single immigrant mother in California. He was able to attend UCLA, which accepted 60% of students, and completed undergraduate and graduate degrees for $7,000.

“**America has fallen out of love with the unremarkable . . . as evidenced by the approach of elite universities. Their national priority is to take the 1% and the children of the rich people and the freakishly remarkable low- and middle-income kids to use as lipstick on this cancer. The objective is to take the 1% and turn them into billionaires as opposed to what higher ed used to be, which was giving the other 99% of us the opportunity to be in that 1%.”**

Galloway argued that higher ed leaders need to embrace the idea of being public servants, not luxury brands, and need to embrace technology to increase the access to higher education and lower the costs.

Several Summit participants countered that Galloway’s assertions only apply to a small number of exclusive, elite institutions, not the majority of institutions that are educating large numbers of lower-income, minority students. And even elite institutions are taking concrete steps to increase their diversity by providing free and low-cost tuition to students from lower-income families.
The majority of Summit participants believe standardized admissions test should be optional.

Among Summit participants, 79% believe standardized admissions tests (SAT/ACT) should be optional. One argument is that these tests have implicit biases and don’t add enough value to the admissions decision to justify their use.

Robert Murley, Chairman of Education Testing Service, provided a different perspective. He explained that standardized tests were originally conceived to level the playing field and give everyone, regardless of their socioeconomic status and ethnic background, an ability to compete at a national level. For many years standardized tests did serve that purpose, but the playing field has become tilted by teaching to the test and for those who can afford tutoring. That said, even though students of privilege have advantages with standardized tests, the absence of standardized tests complicates the admissions process. It makes the admissions process more subjective, places more emphasis on grades (in an era of grade inflation), and gives more latitude to admissions office. It is not clear that elimination of standardized tests improves the admissions process.

A concrete step to increase the value of higher education is to focus on jobs.

Benedict College President Roslyn Clark Arts offered the blunt assessment that most people of color in the US do not have the luxury to pursue education for education’s sake. The reason they pursue higher education is to get a job. For this reason Arts has taken the somewhat unpopular position of sunsetting majors in areas such as religion, philosophy, sociology, and political science that don’t directly lead to jobs. Students can still take courses in these areas but they can no longer pursue majors in these fields. Arts believes this will improve the value of a Benedict College education.

“The reality for kids of color in this country is we do not pursue education for education’s sake; we pursue education to get a job. Their communities and their families are depending on them . . . they have to be able to be employed.”

Roslyn Clark Arts, 14th President, Benedict College
Diverse Approaches to Managing Campus Diversity

Overview
The subject of race and diversity permeated all discussions at this Summit. Increasing diversity and improving opportunities is a federal priority and a priority of most colleges and universities. While already a priority, the events of the past year have further amplified the need to increase the urgency and focus on diversity and racial justice.

Context
Higher education leaders described different approaches their institutions are taking to address and improve diversity.

Key Themes
At Spelman College, the focus is on pathways and opportunities for high performers.
Mary Schmidt Campbell, president of Spelman College, believes that too much of the discussion around diversity emphasizes corrective actions and closing gaps. Her energy is focused on creating opportunities and pathways for high-potential, high-performing students, especially those from low- and moderate-income families. Creating these opportunities requires identifying outstanding students and making investments so that these students can develop the same competencies and skills as anybody else.

“What we have tried to do is identify high-performing students and make a pathway for them. . . . That’s where I think we need to be focusing more attention. Perhaps a little bit less on trying to correct attitudes and points of view and more on the proactive steps that we can take.”

At many elite colleges, there is increased focus on greater racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity.
An example is Colby College in Maine, which as President David Greene explained has embarked on a diversification strategy. Historically, Colby’s student population has been composed mainly of wealthy white kids from the Northeast. Colby concluded that focusing on this demographic is not a desirable or a sustainable strategy.
As part of its diversification strategy, Colby decided that any student from a family with income of $65,000 or under pays zero and any student from a family with income of $150,000 or under pays just $15,000 to attend Colby, which is 85% of the country. Since embarking on this strategy of diversification, Colby has 50% more students of color on campus and is attracting a very different demographic.

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Bates College, another small liberal arts college in Maine, has pursued a similar diversification strategy. In a short period, Bates has gone from 60% of students coming from New England to 40% and is spending as much money on financial aid as any liberal arts college. At the same time, as part of Bates’ social contract with the local community, it is committed to having 10% of its students come from the state of Maine. Of these students, 75% are on financial aid and most receive significant aid.

One way Quinnipiac University is addressing diversity is giving students a greater voice.
Students at Quinnipiac have organized a series of conversations—in a barbershop-like environment—that are recorded and made available to the entire university community. President Judy Olian explained, “We try to create experiences that provide for as much of a direct voice as possible . . . I don’t know if we can ever have enough of these special experiences to advance inclusive excellence.”

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Some schools are taking a very scientific, evidence-based view of race.

Paula Johnson, President of Wellesley College, explained the importance of understanding the issue of race from a scientific, sociological, historical, and anthropological perspective. This thorough understanding is necessary to get at the root of the problems and to dispel myths. Looking into racial disparities related to COVID-19 is another opportunity to understand the impact of race and to take an evidence-based approach.

Manhattan Community College is using philanthropy to support its completion agenda.

Manhattan Community College (MCC) is the largest college in the City of New York system and is focused on racial equity and completion. MCC recently received $30 million from MacKenzie Scott. These funds are being used to assist students who have significant grit, but also have economic and other social issues, complete their education at MCC and move on to a four-year education.
Participants

Michael B. Alexander, President, Lasell University
Roslyn Clark Artis, 14th President, Benedict College
Lawrence S. Bacow, 29th President, Harvard University
Mark P. Becker, 7th President, Georgia State University
Joe Bertolino, 12th President, Southern Connecticut State University
Connie Ledoux Book, 9th President, Elon University
John C. Bravman, 17th President, Bucknell University
John R. Broderick, 8th President, Old Dominion University
Sean S. Buck, Superintendent, United States Naval Academy
Sylvia Burwell, 22nd US Secretary of Health and Human Services; 15th President, American University
Kai Bynum, 109th Head of School, Hopkins School
Mary Schmidt Campbell, 10th President, Spelman College
Lori J. Carrell, Chancellor, University of Minnesota Rochester
Brian W. Casey, 17th President, Colgate University
Ana Mari Cauce, 33rd President, University of Washington
Kerwin Charles, Dean, Yale School of Management
Carol T. Christ, 11th Chancellor, University of California, Berkeley
Kimberly R. Cline, 10th President, Long Island University
Shirley M. Collado, 9th President, Ithaca College
John Comerford, 21st President, Otterbein University
David J. Cook, Vice Chancellor, University of Kansas
Anne Coyle, Higher Education Practice, Russell Reynolds Associates
Ronald A. Crutcher, 10th President, University of Richmond
Christina R. Cutlip, Senior Managing Director, TIAA
James W. Dean Jr., 20th President, University of New Hampshire
Sean M. Decatur, 19th President, Kenyon College
Daniel Diermeier, 9th Chancellor, Vanderbilt University
Richard Doherty, President, Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
Peter M. Donohue, 32nd President, Villanova University
Anne Doyle, President, Lasell Village
Andre Dua, Senior Partner, McKinsey & Company
William C. Dudley, 27th President, Washington and Lee University
Katherine E. Fleming, Provost, New York University
W. Kent Fuchs, 12th President, University of Florida
Scott Galloway, Professor of Marketing, NYU Stern School of Business
Stanley J. Garstka, Professor Emeritus, Yale School of Management
Conrado Gempesaw, 17th President, St. John’s University
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Philip J. Hanlon, 18th President, Dartmouth College
David R. Harris, 19th President, Union College
Derek Heaslip, Regional General Manager, TIAA
Christine Heitz, Associate Partner, McKinsey & Company
Gregory D. Hess, 16th President, Wabash College; President & CEO, IES Abroad
Mary Dana Hinton, 13th President, Hollins University
Christopher B. Howard, 8th President, Robert Morris University
John I. Jenkins, 17th President, University of Notre Dame
Paula A. Johnson, 14th President, Wellesley College
Hanseul Kang, Executive Director, The Broad Center at Yale School of Management
Rakesh Khurana, Dean of Harvard College, Harvard University
John B. King Jr., 10th US Secretary of Education; President & CEO, The Education Trust
Charag Krishnan, Partner, McKinsey & Company
Anne F. Harris, 14th President, Grinnell College
Jonathan K. Law, Senior Partner & Global Leader of Education Practice, McKinsey & Company
Richanne C. Mankey, 19th President, Defiance College
Mary B. Marcy, 9th President, Dominican University of California
Harold L. Martin Sr., 12th Chancellor, North Carolina A&T State University
Thayne M. McCullough, 34th President, Gonzaga University
Patricia A. McGuire, 14th President, Trinity Washington University
Mauri D. McInnis, 6th President, Stony Brook University
Judith Block McLaughlin, Senior Lecturer on Education, Harvard University
Liz McMillen, Executive Editor, The Chronicle of Higher Education
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Elizabeth Morse, Managing Director, TIAA
Anthony Munroe, President, Borough of Manhattan Community College
Robert S. Murley, Chairman, Educational Testing Service
Janet Napolitano, 3rd US Secretary of Homeland Security; 20th President, University of California
M. Duane Nellis, 21st President, Ohio University
Eloy Ortiz Oakley, Chancellor, California Community Colleges
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