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# In College Admissions, Money Shouldn't Be Everything

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Inside Higher Ed released the results of a [recent survey](#) of admissions counselors Wednesday, and the collected data may drastically change the public's perception of what colleges and universities are looking for in prospective students. The survey's results prove that institutions of higher learning are prioritizing one aspect of applications above all else: money.

The source reports that a top goal for admissions directors is acquiring more students who can pay more. It was even noted that 10 percent of four-year colleges report that the full-pay students they are admitting have lower grades and test scores than do other admitted applicants.

Those who submitted survey responses were allowed to do so anonymously in order to maintain a level of accuracy and authenticity in their answers. Inside Higher Ed also reported that the total number of participants reached as high as 462 top admissions officials from nonprofit colleges and universities nationwide.

In no way is it morally acceptable for individuals to gain entrance into schools based on financial credentials over academic success in 2011--a decade and generation that is supposed to be a more modern and progressive society. Counselors might think that by recruiting students with the ability to pay tuition in full and seeking them out in admissions pools is necessary for their own school's survival, but they're creating and reinforcing a serious class issue in America's higher education system.

Where would the university system be today if students in need of financial aid were discriminated against? More importantly, where would we be as a country if we prioritized the ability to pay full tuition over academic credibility in the college admissions process?

A prospective student's ability, or lack there of, to afford either a public or private education is not determined by their own status in the world, but that of their parent's and familial origin. At the age of 18, when the majority of Americans apply to college, one's economic status is reflective of their social location as well as their family's. An individual's race, gender, sexuality, religion, and class all come into play when evaluating income level. It barely seems ethical to hold a student responsible for their financial status quo when, in reality, they played an insignificant role in shaping it.

They can, however, play a role in changing their status quo--if colleges and universities invest in a student's future by accepting them into their institutions. Americans can only overcome systems of oppression, and specifically the vicious cycle of poverty, by

breaking the cycle somewhere.

Admissions counselors are concerned with the financial needs of their schools and, in turn, perpetuate both oppression and poverty. If colleges don't give students in need of aid help and resources to attend college, they take away their ability to get a degree, find a better job, network with alumni. They not only prohibit the students' ability to break out of poverty, but also make it impossible for said student to give back to their communities and help others break the cycle of poverty as well. It's safe to assume that given the current economic climate, individual Americans and families are in much more need of financial assistance than major universities.

Instead of encouraging cycles of poverty and oppression, colleges should stimulate cycles of monetary resources, assistance, and success. Admissions counselors are making the conscious decision to focus on acquiring more students who are able to pay full tuition when they should really conduct a series of in-depth analyses of the ways in which they can either make college more affordable or cultivate more innovative ways to fund financial aid students.

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