

**Perspectives on Pillars in Higher Education**

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**Introduction:**

Universities have been considered the most predominant form of higher education in the U.S. since their inception; however, this is rapidly changing. Many in today's society are beginning to question the need for a formal education from a university, as they are looking towards examples such as Mark Zuckerberg, Steve Jobs and other entrepreneurs who have made a substantial living without a degree from a university. As much as society would like you to believe, a college degree is not the key to success. Life does not suddenly begin once you have a diploma in hand. That \$40,000 piece of paper will not make your dream job fall into your lap. (Stephens, 2011). This has become an increasingly popular opinion; however, we must realize that we could never apply this sentiment to a nurse, doctor or astronaut. The truth is that higher education shall always remain an essential part of society. Higher educational institutions serve as the foundation for an evolved society, even though there are components within higher education that must be challenged and improved. In this essay I will describe the intent of the four-year university and its pillars.

**Th Intent of Universities Explained:**

A public university is a four-year college where students can earn an undergraduate or bachelor's degree in a wide range of academic majors. Programs of study often follow traditional academic curricula where students can earn a bachelor's in arts or a bachelor's in science in many different majors that are offered in a several different areas of disciplines. Once a student completes a bachelor's degree within a certain discipline, they may move on to a graduate or

master's degree program and then onto a doctorate depending on the field of study or career they are working towards.

Even though there are many well-paying careers that do not require a 4-year degree, most of the employers in the U.S. still prefer candidates with a bachelor's degree from a university. There is also more earning potential within the workforce who have obtained a bachelor's degree. The Association of American Colleges and Universities conducted a study in 2018 and it showed that employers have more confidence in candidates who have obtained a college degree. 63% of executives and hiring managers have confidence in the knowledge that universities provide (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2018).

Universities also offer a more well-rounded learning experience due to all the exposure a student can experience from the different perspectives of professors or other students. This can be attributed to the academic freedom act which was enacted from universities to allow professors the freedom to teach what and how they see it will best fit their course (King, 2022). Some may consider the academic freedom act to have converted higher educational institutions as an intellectual experiment station, where new ideas may germinate. (Kidder, Sakaki, & Simmons, 2019) The academic freedom act gave universities the freedom of who may teach, which is important since this opens the doors for universities to employ a diverse group of instructors with varying points of view, knowledge, and skills to teach to their students. This type of exposure truly serves students educational needs.

Let us not forget about the symbolic and cultural frame that universities offer. There is much to experience outside of academia for students within a university. There is a chance to

meet many other students from around the world, and each university has its own unique culture to be experienced. Students can really broaden their horizons when attending a university due to human relations and cultural frames that make up universities.

Universities also have a very linear hierarchy with checks and balances that are meant to hold leadership accountable in the case of mis management or abuse of power. This system is not perfect, but universities across the country are working to improve the system.

### **Conclusion**

Universities are not perfect, but they are evolving and there is much needed improvement on the horizon of higher educational institutions. I strongly believe that universities will continue to re-invent itself and the value of education will continue to be held in high esteem.

## References

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