



INDIANA COMMISSION *for*
HIGHER EDUCATION

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Gallup-Indiana Survey shows graduates believe college is worth it; student engagement, career-relevant learning experiences matter

(INDIANAPOLIS) – About 86 percent of graduates from 10 Indiana public and private colleges say they were satisfied or extremely satisfied with the education they received, according to the results of the [2020 Gallup-Indiana Graduate Satisfaction Survey](#) released today by the [Indiana Commission for Higher Education](#). More than three-quarters of alumni surveyed (81 percent) agree or strongly agree that their higher education was worth the cost. For those with student loans, 74 percent agree college was worth it.

In addition to graduate satisfaction, the survey measured Indiana alumni responses regarding six critical college experiences that increase the odds of workplace engagement and lifelong well-being. Results showed that while many Indiana graduates reported having these experiences, more work can be done to make sure they are the norm for every student.

“The third Gallup-Indiana Survey shows, once again, that higher education is worth it and provides insights we can use to improve the postsecondary experience for all Hoosier students,” said Indiana Commissioner for Higher Education Teresa Lubbers. “This year’s results especially highlight that caring, engaging professors and experiential learning opportunities, like internships, have long-term positive effects for students.”

Indiana graduate responses regarding emotional support and experiential learning:

- 39 percent had a professor who cared about them as a person
- 69 percent had at least one professor who made them excited about learning
- 30 percent had a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams
- 58 percent had an internship or job that allowed them to apply what they were learning in the classroom
- 30 percent worked on a project that took a semester or more to complete
- 21 percent were extremely active in extracurricular activities and organizations

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education is taking steps to boost emotional support and experiential learning experiences for Hoosier students. Indiana’s new [College Scholar Success Program](#) outlines activities Indiana’s 21st Century Scholars must complete each year in college to continue receiving their scholarships. Annual required activities include identifying a mentor, completing at least one college engagement activity and completing at least one career preparation activity.

Additionally, as part of its new strategic plan for higher education, [Reaching Higher in a State of Change](#), the Commission calls for all undergraduate programs to require a student engagement experience that has career relevance. Experiential learning is also a key aspect of one of the Commission’s strategic priorities—talent—focusing on making sure learners have the skills and competencies they need to be successful on the job today and tomorrow.

Other statewide findings

- **Greater well-being:** Indiana's college graduates continue to thrive at higher rates than graduates surveyed nationally in all five elements measured: sense of purpose, social well-being, financial well-being, community well-being and physical well-being.
- **Educational decisions:** When asked "if they could do it all over again," 97 percent of Indiana's college graduates indicated they would still have obtained a bachelor's degree, 72 percent would still study the same major in their bachelor's degree program, and 88 percent would still attend the same institution to obtain their degree.
- **Prepared for life:** 70 percent of surveyed graduates agree or strongly agree they were well prepared for life outside of college.
- **Career services:** 74 percent of graduates surveyed visited their college's career services office at least once.
- **Lifelong learning:** Nearly half of graduates indicate that their current employer offers tuition assistance for additional education and training. Over a third of graduates (35 percent) say they are likely or very likely to enroll in more education or training in the next five years. More graduates indicate that they are likely to enroll through their current employer (41 percent) than through a university (29 percent).

With funding support from Strada Education Network, Gallup and the Commission, the survey reached out to nearly 15,000 college graduates from participating Indiana colleges. The following 10 colleges participated in the 2020 survey administration: Ball State University, Calumet College of St. Joseph, Grace College, Indiana University Southeast, Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne, Ivy Tech Community College, Marian University, Purdue University Northwest, Vincennes University and WGU Indiana. [See results for all participating colleges online here.](#)

The Gallup-Indiana Survey was inspired by the [Gallup-Purdue Index](#). This partnership between Gallup and Purdue University surveyed thousands of college graduates to measure the relationship between a college degree and long-term graduate well-being and workplace engagement.

The Gallup-Indiana Survey results play an important part in Indiana's [College Value Report](#). The report provides a comprehensive look at the value of higher education by pulling together the Commission's existing data on college readiness, college completion, student debt, employment, average earnings and this qualitative data on graduate satisfaction.

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About the Indiana Commission for Higher Education

Created in 1971, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education plans, coordinates and defines Indiana's postsecondary education system to align higher learning with the needs of students and the state. The Commission also administers Indiana's financial aid programs, including the [21st Century Scholars](#) early college promise scholarship, which celebrates 30 years in 2020. Learn more about the Commission's *Reaching Higher in a State of Change* strategic plan at www.in.gov/che.