



Seek Educational Quality to Manage AI Uncertainty
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All across Indiana, college-bound high school seniors are wrestling with difficult questions as their search process concludes. Where will I fit in and succeed? Which school provides the best match to my educational and developmental goals? What college experience will set me up for a good life? On top of these questions, a new issue has emerged in the final moments of a stressful senior year. How will the artificial intelligence revolution impact my college experience and my career plans?

Like most issues involving college search, strongly held views are circulating in the media and on social media. These range from “AI is overhyped and should be ignored” to “AI changes everything, so don’t waste your time and money on higher education.”

We reject both extreme positions, yet we cannot know the world of work that awaits young people when they graduate from college in 2030. Even those who build and invest in AI-powered companies can’t reliably predict the roles that will be transformed and those that will emerge.

We favor a humble approach to predicting specifics of the future of work, well aware that only a few short years ago the loudest voices shouted that everyone must learn to code. Today, data from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York shows computer science as one of the majors with the highest unemployment rate among new graduates. We have seen this play out across the job market. From early-stage startups to Fortune 500 companies, the pattern is consistent: job candidates who excel are those who demonstrate adaptability, creativity, intellectual curiosity, and the capacity to learn quickly.

Our advice stems from our decades-long experience in higher education and technology. The most important aspect of a college education is the development of durable skills such as critical thinking, leadership, and the ability to work productively with others. Whether in early career experiences or the boardroom, we have seen these durable skills separate the professionals who thrive from those who flounder regardless of their technical background.

The good news is that our nation and our state have colleges and universities that emphasize the development of these durable skills as part of a holistic education. The bad news is that the college search process often puts too little emphasis on the quality of the education and too much weight on exclusivity – the mistaken notion that the best schools are expensive and hard to get into.

Last fall, *The New York Times* [published an essay](#) urging students not to “fall for the rigged college game.” The author, Jeff Selingo, provided data from Indiana University’s National Survey of Student Engagement, a project that evaluates the experience of thousands of college students – from the most elite institutions to schools with open enrollment. The summary: higher institutional selectivity and cost do not yield greater gains in critical thinking, leadership experiences, quantitative reasoning, or collaboration with peers.



That study resonates with what we observe beyond the campus. The most successful professionals we encounter, whether they are leading product teams, closing enterprise deals, or navigating complex organizational change, come from a wide range of institutions. What unites them is not the prestige of their alma maters but the depth, quality, and rigor of their education and experiences. These graduates are, we believe, imbued with the habits of mind that will lead to success in an AI world.

We are already seeing that AI does not replace people who think well—it amplifies them. The professionals who can frame the right questions, exercise creativity and judgment in ambiguous situations, and communicate effectively across teams are more valuable, not less.

Students and parents evaluating colleges this spring should look past rankings and instead ask a more fundamental question: will this institution challenge me to grow as a thinker, a leader, and a person? That, more than any specific technical training, is what will matter most in the decades ahead.

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