# What College Catalogs Don't Reveal

Apr. 2, 2003

Google Ads are provided by Google and are not selected or endorsed by Eagle Forum

The catalogs and magazines from colleges and universities are impressive: slick paper, full color, attractive layout, lots to read. But several items of useful information are usually missing.
Getting a bachelor's degree now takes five or six years instead of the traditional four. That drives up the already exorbitant cost another 25 or 50 percent more than you may have budgeted, but your degree isn't worth a penny more.

Only 31 percent of students at state institutions and 65 percent at private institutions graduate in four years. The primary reason for this slow-down is the easy flow of taxpayers' money for grants and loans that make the extended stay pleasant for students and profitable for the institutions.

Don't count on the college counselors to guide you to the courses that will enable you to graduate in four years. The counselors are working for the college, not the students, and they know which side their bread is buttered on.

In addition to the out-of-pocket costs of tuition and housing, be sure to count the cost of lost employment for a couple of years. A University of Texas administrator estimates that each additional year costs students $50,000 in extra college costs and lost income.

When Pennsylvania last year promised $6-million bonuses to colleges that graduate at least 40 percent of their in-state students within four years, not a single state institution qualified. Some colleges have tried various inducements to increase their four-year- graduation rate, but none can match the attraction of having tuition paid by the taxpayers.

According to General Accounting Office figures, 64 percent of college students graduate with student-loan debt, and the average student-loan debt is $19,400. After they join the workforce, their monthly payments take at least 8 percent of their income.

This burden is really even higher because more than half of student borrowers take out the more expensive unsubsidized loans. Surveys show that students often underestimate the total cost of their loans, forgetting about the interest, which over time can almost double the amount of the loan.

The prevalent use of credit cards by mostly-unemployed college students is another current phenomenon. The average credit-card debt of undergraduate students is $2,748, and of graduate students is $4,776. The average student is carrying three credit cards, and 32 percent have four or more.

Some colleges give the credit-card companies access to lists of students and then get a kickback of a percentage of charges on the cards. It should come as no surprise that bankruptcy filings have reached a record high and the fastest growing group of filers are those younger than age 25.

College publications brag about their women's studies departments, but they fail to warn students that there are not many job opportunities for those with a degree or a concentration in women's studies except at the declining feminist organizations and their non- profit bureaucracies.

The Independent Women's Forum surveyed 89 women's studies majors and discovered that all but 18 were earning under $30,000, and 8 reported no personal income at all. In interviews with prospective employers, many found it useful to conceal or de-emphasize their women's studies majors.

Maybe women's-studies majors didn't really expect to get a good job because they've been taught to approach life as a whining victim who will never get equal treatment. Women's studies courses openly teach the warped ideology that American women are oppressed by a male- dominated society and that the road to liberation is abortion, divorce, the rejection of marriage and motherhood, and non-marital sex of all varieties.

The career feminists, however, have achieved some successes in their agenda to punish the men whom they disdain as the oppressor class. Feminists in the Clinton Administration misused Title IX to force universities to abolish 171 college wrestling teams and hundreds of other men's teams in gymnastics, swimming, golf, and even football.

Another fact of campus life that college publications don't reveal is the large number of students who are not capable of college work and are enrolled in high-school-level remedial courses, although that word doesn't appear in the catalog. An astounding 29 percent of current freshmen at four-year colleges are taking at least one remedial reading, writing or math class; at two-year colleges, the figure is 41 percent.

What IS in college catalogs can be even more deceptive. Courses may have traditional titles (such as English 101) but the content of the course is better described as Oppression Studies.

Courses listed in college catalogs may be actually taught only once in ten years. Colleges brag about their famous tenured professors, but they usually duck the large-enrollment courses, which are often taught by recent hires or graduate students.

It's time for overpriced colleges to give students some truth in labeling so they can spend their college dollar wisely. It's time to show students the option of getting a bachelor's degree in just three years (as I and two of my sons did at top-rated universities).