PPIC Statewide Survey: Californians and Higher Education

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November 2010
Outline

- PPIC Statewide Surveys
- Perceptions of Higher Education
- Attitudes and Policy Preferences
- Conclusions
PPIC Statewide Survey Mission

- Provide timely, relevant, nonpartisan data on political, social, and economic opinions
- Inform and improve state policymaking, raise awareness, encourage discussion
- Provide a voice for all Californians in important state policy debates
  - 236,000+ Californians since 1998
  - 100+ general, issue, and regional surveys
Californians and Higher Education

- Series funded by The Hewlett Foundation
- State funding, budget situation, raising revenues, affordability, future outlook
- Importance of college, approval ratings, ratings of three higher ed systems, parental expectations
- Telephone interviews, October 19–November 2
  - 2,502 adults; 1,551 likely voters; 947 parents of children 18 or younger
- ± 2.5% margin of error for adults
- ± 3.2% for likely voters
- ± 4.1% for parents
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Current Level of State Funding

Do you think the current level of state funding for California’s public colleges and universities is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?

- More than enough
- Just enough
- Not enough

Oct 2007:
- More than enough: 7%
- Just enough: 28%
- Not enough: 57%

Nov 2010:
- More than enough: 6%
- Just enough: 15%
- Not enough: 74%
Priority for State Spending

Given the state’s current budget situation, what priority should be given to spending for California’s public colleges and universities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>High priority</th>
<th>Very high priority</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All adults</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>45</td>
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<td>Rep</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ind</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Likely voters</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage distribution.
Do you favor or oppose the state government spending more money on public colleges and universities, even if it means less money for other state programs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Favor</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All adults</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely voters</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Concerns about State Funding

There are a number of ways California’s public colleges and universities have dealt with decreased funding. Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned about...

- Increasing tuition and fees for students: 65%
- Admitting fewer college students: 62%
- Offering fewer college classes: 59%
- Reducing pay/hours for faculty/staff: 46%

% saying very concerned
Paying Higher Taxes

What if the state said it needed more money just to maintain current funding for public colleges and universities. Would you be willing to pay higher taxes for this purpose, or not?

Nov 2009: 41% Yes, 56% No
Nov 2010: 49% Yes, 49% No
Raising Revenues

What if the state said it needed more money just to maintain current funding for public colleges and universities. Would you be willing to...

% saying yes

- Pay higher taxes
- Increase student fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Rep</th>
<th>Ind</th>
<th>Likely voters</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>47</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Admitting More Out-of-State Students

What if the state said it needed more money just to maintain current funding for public colleges and universities. Would you be willing to admit more out-of-state students paying higher tuition for this purpose, or not? (if yes: Would you still support this even if it meant admitting fewer in-state students?)

- Yes, but not if fewer in-state
- Yes, even if fewer in-state

<table>
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<th>Rep</th>
<th>Ind</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>31</td>
<td>26</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Government Policies

There are several ways that the federal and state governments can make California’s higher education system more affordable to students...

- Increase funding for work-study: 88%
- Increase funding for grants: 84%
- Have a sliding scale for tuition: 72%
Higher Education and the Future

In general, how important is California’s higher education system to the quality of life and economic vitality of the state over the next 20 years?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All adults</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely voters</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Confidence in State Government

How much confidence do you have in the state government’s ability to plan for the future of California’s higher education system?

- Great deal/some
- Very little/none

Oct 2007: 42%
Nov 2008: 45%
Nov 2009: 41%
Nov 2010: 40%

Oct 2007: 57%
Nov 2008: 52%
Nov 2009: 57%
Nov 2010: 57%
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Importance of a College Education

How important is a college education today?

United States*

- Very important: 75%
- Fairly important: 21%
- Not too important: 4%

California

- Very important: 86%
- Fairly important: 11%
- Not too important: 2%

*Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup poll, June 2010
Necessity of a College Education

Do you think that a college education is necessary for a person to be successful in today’s work world, or do you think that there are many ways to succeed in today’s work world without a college education?

- All adults: 63% Necessary, 35% Many ways to succeed
- Asians: 71% Necessary, 27% Many ways to succeed
- Blacks: 76% Necessary, 22% Many ways to succeed
- Latinos: 80% Necessary, 18% Many ways to succeed
- Whites: 50% Necessary, 47% Many ways to succeed
Universal Access

Do you think that all Californians who are qualified to attend college should have the opportunity to enroll in one of the state’s public colleges or universities, or should college student admissions be restricted because of the cost to the state?

- 85% All should have opportunity
- 12% Admissions should be restricted
- 3% Don't know

All adults
Overall Conditions

How about the overall ... in California’s public colleges and universities today?

% saying big problem

- Quality of education: 22%
- Affordability for students: 60%
- State budget situation: 74%
Approval Ratings: Job Overall

Governor Schwarzenegger
California Legislature

Oct 2007 | 51 | 33
Nov 2008 | 40 | 24
Nov 2009 | 28 | 18
Nov 2010 | 25 | 14
Approval Ratings: Higher Education

Governor Schwarzenegger
California Legislature

---|---|---|---
34 | 27 | 21 | 19
29 | 23 | 16 | 15
Overall, is the ... system doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job?

% saying excellent/good

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California Community College</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California State University</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of California</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Accessibility to Higher Education

Do you think that currently, the vast majority of people who are qualified to go to college have the opportunity to do so, or do you think there are many people who are qualified to go but don’t have the opportunity to do so?

- **All adults**: 71% believe the majority have the opportunity, 26% believe many do not.
- **Under $40,000**: 81% believe the majority have the opportunity, 17% believe many do not.
- **$40,000 to under $80,000**: 75% believe the majority have the opportunity, 23% believe many do not.
- **$80,000 or more**: 60% believe the majority have the opportunity, 37% believe many do not.
- **Parents**: 72% believe the majority have the opportunity, 25% believe many do not.
The price of a college education keeps students who are qualified and motivated to go to college from doing so.
Financial Aid and Loans

% who agree

- Almost anyone can get loans or financial aid
- Students have to borrow too much money

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>55%</td>
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<td>58%</td>
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<td>Blacks</td>
<td>43%</td>
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<td>Latinos</td>
<td>64%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>53%</td>
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</table>
Importance of Student Diversity

How important do you think it is for public colleges and universities to have a...
California’s community colleges have several important goals. From among the following, which do you think is the most important goal?

- Preparing students to transfer: 41%
- Providing career technical education: 25%
- Providing courses for lifelong learning: 15%
- Providing associate's degrees: 8%
- Providing basic skills/remedial education: 5%
Concerns about Affording College

How worried are you about being able to afford a college education for your youngest child?

Parents of children 18 or younger

- Very worried
- Not too/not at all worried

Oct 2007: 43%, 25%
Nov 2008: 46%, 27%
Nov 2009: 50%, 23%
Nov 2010: 57%, 17%

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- Growing belief that state funding is not enough
- Support for paying higher taxes—although divided—is higher than last year; Californians continue to oppose raising student fees
- Higher education system perceived as very important to state’s future; little confidence in state to plan accordingly
- Californians consider a college education to be very important, overwhelmingly support universal access, but believe many lack opportunity
- Low approval for governor and legislature on higher education, but institutional ratings remain high
- Parents increasingly worried about college costs
Upcoming PPIC Statewide Surveys

- **December**
  - *Californians and Their Government* (post-election survey with voters)

- **January**
  - *Californians and Their Government* (state budget)

- **February**
  - *Californians and Healthy Communities*
Notes on the use of these slides

These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

Mark Baldassare or Sonja Petek: surveys@ppic.org

Thank you for your interest in this work.

November 2010