

Book (article) review

Exploring Influence of covid-19 on higher education in all context throughout the courtiers' universities

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The outbreak of the coronavirus has become a major disruption to colleges and universities across the country, with most institutions canceling in-person classes and moving to online-only instruction. The pandemic also threatens to significantly alter nearly every aspect of college life, from admissions and enrollment to collegiate athletics. These concerns extend to the financial future of higher education institutions in a time of considerable financial instability, both in the form of unexpected costs and potential reductions in revenue. As the situation continues to develop, legislators are taking an active role in addressing both the immediate and long-term challenges related to the outbreak. As many colleges close on-campus housing and dining, legislators have introduced bills to ensure students receive refunds for room and board expenses. Other states are considering bills that would pause the collection of payments on state held student loans. Pending legislation also requires higher education institutions to develop and expand emergency preparedness and response plans. Legislators are also exploring strategies to address funding and appropriations for public colleges and universities.

Key words: covid-19, corona virus, higher institution, pandemic, universities and education

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INTRODUCTION

How is COVID-19 Shaping the Higher Education Sector?

The global higher education sector has been dramatically transformed as a result of the coronavirus. The following points are exclusive survey findings.

COVID-19 has created a new normal for the higher education sector, revolutionizing the online learning landscape, reshaping application processes, and refreshing crisis management strategies. This includes findings on how prospective international students are responding to the coronavirus. According to our analysts, 46% of respondents stated that the

coronavirus had impacted their plans to study abroad. Of these respondents, 47% had decided to defer their entry until next year, 13% now intend to study in a different country, and 8% no longer want to study abroad. In an accompanying survey of higher education institutions, respondents stated that the coronavirus had caused their institution to implement several measures, including:

- Switching some of their scheduled courses online (50%)
- Delaying the start dates for some of their courses until the following semester (19%)
- Changing application deadlines for their next intake (17%)
- Changing offer acceptance deadlines for their

next intake (16%)

- Deferring some of their 2020 offers to 2021 (13%)
- Starting to conduct their own English language tests (8%)

Additionally, the survey found that 50% of respondents believed that the coronavirus would have a detrimental impact on the number of student applications they received at their institution, while 26% thought they would stay the same.

Schools, skills, and learning: The impact of COVID-19 on education

The global lockdown of education institutions is going to cause major (and likely unequal) interruption in students' learning; disruptions in internal assessments; and the cancellation of public assessments for qualifications or their replacement by an inferior alternative. This column discusses what can be done to mitigate these negative impacts.

The COVID-19 pandemic is first and foremost a health crisis. Many countries have (rightly) decided to close schools, colleges and universities. The crisis crystallizes the dilemma policymakers are facing between closing schools (reducing contact and saving lives) and keeping them open (allowing workers to work and maintaining the economy). The severe short-term disruption is felt by many families around the world: home schooling is not only a massive shock to parents' productivity, but also to children's social life and learning. Teaching is moving online, on an untested and unprecedented scale. Student assessments are also moving online, with a lot of trial and error and uncertainty for everyone. Many assessments have simply been cancelled. Importantly, these interruptions will not just be a short-term issue, but can also have long-term consequences for the affected cohorts and are likely to increase inequality.

Impacts on education: Schools

Going to school is the best public policy tool available to raise skills. While school time can be fun and can rise social skills and social awareness, from an economic point of view the primary point of being in school is that it increases a child's ability. Even a relatively short time in school does this; even a relatively short period of missed school will have consequences for skill growth. But can we estimate how much the COVID-19 interruption will affect learning? Not very precisely, as we are in a new world; but we can use other studies to get an order of magnitude.

Two pieces of evidence are useful. Carlsson et al.

(2015) consider a situation in which young men in Sweden have differing number of days to prepare for important tests. These differences are conditionally random allowing the authors to estimate a causal effect of schooling on skills. The authors show that even just ten days of extra schooling significantly raises scores on tests of the use of knowledge ('crystallized intelligence') by 1% of a standard deviation.

As an extremely rough measure of the impact of the current school closures, if we were to simply extrapolate those numbers, twelve weeks less schooling (i.e. 60 school days) implies a loss of 6% of a standard deviation, which is non-trivial. They do not find a significant impact on problem-solving skills (an example of 'fluid intelligence').

A different way into this question comes from Lavy (2015), who estimates the impact on learning of differences in instructional time across countries. Perhaps surprisingly, there are very substantial differences between countries in hours of teaching. For example, Lavy shows that total weekly hours of instruction in mathematics, language and science is 55% higher in Denmark than in Austria. These differences matter, causing significant differences in test score outcomes: one more hour per week over the school year in the main subjects increases test scores by around 6% of a standard deviation. In our case, the loss of perhaps 3-4 hours per week teaching in math's for 12 weeks may be similar in magnitude to the loss of an hour per week for 30 weeks. So, rather bizarrely and surely coincidentally, we end up with an estimated loss of around 6% of a standard deviation again. Leaving the close similarity aside, these studies possibly suggest a likely effect no greater than 10% of a standard deviation but definitely above zero.

Impacts on education: Families

Perhaps to the disappointment of some, children have not generally been sent home to play. The idea is that they continue their education at home, in the hope of not missing out too much.

Families are central to education and are widely agreed to provide major inputs into a child's learning, as described by Bjorklund and Salvanes (2011). The current global-scale expansion in home schooling might at first thought be seen quite positively, as likely to be effective. But typically, this role is seen as a complement to the input from school. Parents supplement a child's math's learning by practicing counting or highlighting simple math's problems in everyday life; or they illuminate history lessons with trips to important monuments or museums. Being the prime driver of learning, even in conjunction with online materials, is a different question; and while many parents round the world do successfully

school their children at home, this seems unlikely to generalize over the whole population.

So while global home schooling will surely produce some inspirational moments, some angry moments, some fun moments and some frustrated moments, it seems very unlikely that it will on average replace the learning lost from school. But the bigger point is this: there will likely be substantial disparities between families in the extent to which they can help their children learn. Key differences include (Oreopoulos et al. 2006) the amount of time available to devote to teaching, the non-cognitive skills of the parents, resources (for example, not everyone will have the kit to access the best online material), and also the amount of knowledge – it's hard to help your child learn something that you may not understand yourself. Consequently, this episode will lead to an increase in the inequality of human capital growth for the affected cohorts.

Assessments

The closure of schools, colleges and universities not only interrupts the teaching for students around the world; the closure also coincides with a key assessment period and many exams have been postponed or cancelled.

Internal assessments are perhaps thought to be less important and many have been simply cancelled. But their point is to give information about the child's progress for families and teachers. The loss of this information delays the recognition of both high potential and learning difficulties and can have harmful long-term consequences for the child. Andersen and Nielsen (2019) look at the consequence of a major IT crash in the testing system in Denmark. As a result of this, some children could not take the test. The authors find that participating in the test increased the score in a reading test two years later by 9% of a standard deviation, with similar effects in mathematics. These effects are largest for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Importantly, the lockdown of institutions not only affects internal assessments. In the UK, for example, all exams for the main public qualifications – GCSEs and A levels – have been cancelled for the entire cohort. Depending on the duration of the lockdown, we will likely observe similar actions around the world. One potential alternative for the cancelled assessments is to use 'predicted grades', but Murphy and Wyness (2020) show that these are often inaccurate, and that among high achieving students, the predicted grades for those from disadvantaged backgrounds are lower than those from more advantaged backgrounds. Another solution is to replace blind exams with teacher assessments. Evidence from various settings show systematic deviations between unblind and blind examinations, where the direction of the bias typically depends on whether the child belongs to a group

that usually performs well (Burgess and Greaves 2013, Rangvid 2015).

For example, if girls usually perform better in a subject, an unblind evaluation of a boy's performance is likely to be downward biased. Because such assessments are used as a key qualification to enter higher education, the move to unblind subjective assessments can have potential long-term consequences for the equality of opportunity.

It is also possible that some students' careers might benefit from the interruptions. For example, in Norway it has been decided that all 10th grade students will be awarded a high-school degree. And Maurin and McNally (2008) show that the 1968 abandoning of the normal examination procedures in France (following the student riots) led to positive long-term labour market consequences for the affected cohort.

In higher education many universities and colleges are replacing traditional exams with online assessment tools. This is a new area for both teachers and students, and assessments will likely have larger measurement error than usual. Research shows that employers use educational credentials such as degree classifications and grade point averages to sort applicants (Piopiunik et al. 2020). The increase in the noise of the applicants' signals will therefore potentially reduce the matching efficiency for new graduates on the labor market, who might experience slower earnings growth and higher job separation rates. This is costly both to the individual and also to society as a whole (Fredriksson et al. 2018).

Graduates

The careers of this year's university graduates may be severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. They have experienced major teaching interruptions in the final part of their studies, they are experiencing major interruptions in their assessments, and finally they are likely to graduate at the beginning of a major global recession. Evidence suggests that poor market conditions at labour market entry cause workers to accept lower paid jobs, and that this has permanent effects for the careers of some.

Oreopoulos et al. (2012) show that graduates from programmes with high predicted earnings can compensate for their poor starting point through both within- and across-firm earnings gains, but graduates from other programmes have been found to experience permanent earnings losses from graduating in a recession.

Solutions

The global lockdown of education institutions is going

to cause major (and likely unequal) interruption in students' learning; disruptions in internal assessments; and the cancellation of public assessments for qualifications or their replacement by an inferior alternative.

What can be done to mitigate these negative impacts? Schools need resources to rebuild the loss in learning, once they open again. How these resources are used, and how to target the children who were especially hard hit, is an open question. Given the evidence of the importance of assessments for learning, schools should also consider postponing rather than skipping internal assessments. For new graduates, policies should support their entry to the labor market to avoid longer unemployment periods.

Measuring COVID-19's impact on higher education

- *The financial impact of the pandemic is being felt now by higher education institutions around the world*
- *As the pandemic continues this quarter, the effects are mounting in terms of both immediate budget impacts and forecasts for the coming year*
- *Most institutions are projecting declines in both domestic and international student numbers, with combined tuition shortfalls running into the tens of billions of dollars*

A new report from Moody's Investors Services highlights the financial impacts of the pandemic on higher education institutions around the world. "We expect rated universities in all of our current jurisdictions – US, Canada, UK, Australia, Singapore, and Mexico – to enroll fewer students for the next academic year than planned, due to the outbreak," said Jeanne Harrison, Vice President and Senior Analyst at Moody's. And this is the same all over the world.

"In addition, if campuses remain closed for part of the year, income from residence halls, catering, conferences and sporting events will be lower than budgeted. Endowment and gift income may also decline."

The Moody's analysis highlights that public institutions in jurisdictions where government funding has been cut – as is the case in the United States – will be especially vulnerable. As in all other education sectors, the scale of the impact on higher education will depend largely on the duration of the outbreak. "If university campuses can reopen in time for the next academic year, the effect on demand and budgets will be more manageable," adds Moody's. "International student flows will depend on the how the outbreak and policy response evolve in individual countries."

That passing reference to international enrolments nods at the combination of factors that will influence the

shape and volume of international mobility in the year ahead. When will travel restrictions and other public health measures ease? How will the timing and impact of the pandemic vary across major destinations and key sending markets? How quickly can the global economy rebound from the dizzying drops already recorded this year?

Regardless of how those questions will eventually be answered, the projected effects are already being measured in the tens of billions of dollars for the world's leading study destinations.

"Woefully inadequate"

In the United States, a US\$2 trillion emergency relief package passed in March includes US\$14 billion targeted to higher education. The American Council on Education (ACE) has pronounced that a "woefully inadequate" amount and is calling on Congress to earmark another US\$47 billion in emergency aid that "would be equally divided between students and institutions" and that could "at least partially mitigate the damage done by this pandemic."

"Perhaps the greatest question for colleges is fall enrolment," adds a related report from CBS_News. "It's a major concern for colleges that have come to rely on international students, especially those from China. At the University of Connecticut, which hosted nearly 3,000 students from China last fall, officials are bracing for international enrolment to drop by 25% to 75%, [and] a loss of up to US\$70 million next year."

In a 9 April letter to the US Congress, ACE projected an overall drop in college enrolment of 15% for fall 2020 – including a 25% decline in international student numbers – and an expected revenue loss for institutions of US\$23 billion.

Modeling 2020/21

On 10 April, Universities UK proposed a sweeping package of relief measures for British universities. The peak body for higher education estimates the financial impact of the pandemic has already reached £790 million for the country's institutions, including revenues lost in the form of "accommodation, catering and conference income as well as additional spend to support students learning online."

Looking ahead, UUK characterizes the potential impact as "extreme" with "universities projecting a significant fall in international students and a potential rise in undergraduate home student deferrals."

All told, the UUK proposal calls for billions of pounds in relief funding and a variety of policy measures aimed at easing the pandemic's impacts. This includes a proposal

for “additional flexibilities in the visa system to support international students planning to start courses this autumn including allowing those students already here to switch visa category in country (extending current arrangements beyond 31st May) and flexibility on English language and other requirements for visa applications, where these cannot be provided due to the closure of testing centers or disruption to examinations.”

Focus on domestic students

Earlier this month, the Australian government announced an emergency package for the country's universities that includes funding for new short retraining courses designed to help with re-skilling unemployed Australians, a funding guarantee of AUS\$18 billion for domestic enrolments (regardless of actual student numbers), and another AUS\$100 million in regulatory fee relief and deferrals.

Peak body Universities Australia, however, has warned that the package will not be enough to cover a projected revenue loss of between AUS\$3 billion and AUS\$4.6 billion that the sector is facing this year.

Given the timing of the pandemic – which began to take hold at the start of the current academic year in Australia – the country's universities have felt the immediate impact more sharply than have those in other leading destinations.

As the pandemic continues, Universities Australia Chief Executive Catriona Jackson said, “It is clear that there will be a significant decline in second semester international student enrolments due to the virus, Government support is more important than ever.” (Editor's note: the second academic semester begins in July for most Australian universities.)

“Universities estimate that more than 21,000 jobs are at risk in the next six months, and more after that,” adds Ms Jackson.

Looking to September

Meanwhile in Canada, government and university officials are trying to forecast the impact of COVID-19 on the international enrolments for the coming academic year. Combined tuition spending for foreign students at Canadian universities was roughly CDN\$6 billion in 2019, and institutions are now actively planning for a variety of scenarios, ranging from a modest downturn in numbers to more severe declines.

In a recent survey of nearly 3,000 students intending to study in Canada, QS found that more than half (54%) were planning to defer their admission for a year. Another 15% have changed their plans and are no longer planning to come to Canada.

Speaking to the *Globe & Mail*, Trent University President Leo Groarke said, “If international students don't come to Canadian universities, there is going to be a significant budget issue. One option would be that the government could step in and provide us with funding in the short term to manage that. I would think, in the end, we will get back to our normal levels of international students.”

Amid all of that uncertainty, all forecasters would agree that time is running short to firm up enrolment for the fall semester, and especially for incoming international students that require additional time for qualifying tests, visa processing, and travel and settlement planning.

The Canadian government has taken a step in allowing more flexibility for students that were planning to come to Canada this spring to begin their programmes online, but there has not yet been a determination as to how this approach might apply for fall commencements.

Immediate Challenges and Responses

Closures & Move to Online Instruction

Campus Closures

On March 6, the University of Washington became the first major university to cancel in-person classes and exams. By the middle of March, colleges across the country had followed suit and more than 1,100 colleges and universities in all 50 states have cancelled in-person classes or shifted to online-only instruction.

As colleges maintain bans on large gatherings, many spring graduation ceremonies have been cancelled or postponed. Some schools, such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard, have announced plans to hold online or virtual commencement ceremonies.

Several schools including Arizona State University, University of Alabama, the University of North Carolina system and Texas Tech University have announced plans to reopen campuses in the fall, with various social distancing approaches in place to protect student and faculty health.

Online Instruction

As colleges move to online-only classes for instruction, additional concerns arise about the quality of educational instruction that can be provided remotely. Previous studies have warned that student performance, particularly for students who are already academically struggling, can seriously suffer in online courses.

Other research has found that up to 20% of college students have issues accessing effective technology

including working laptops and reliable high-speed internet.

Some colleges have also announced plans to help students who might lack access to an internet connection, including opening university libraries on a limited basis and distributing mobile hotspots to students. Southern New Hampshire University, an online university, published a guide with tips and resources to help other schools manage and improve online instruction.

The shift to online courses has also prompted many colleges to reconsider grading systems to try and accommodate and support students in transition. More than a dozen schools have announced plans to shift to pass/fail grading instead of standard letter grades. While this transition could help students in the short-term, switching courses to pass/fail could create potential complications for student credit transfer and graduate schools.

Immediate Financial Challenges

In the short-term, colleges and universities face a number of unexpected expenses from the outbreak, including:

- Pro-rated refunds issued to students for room and board- These refunds will impact institutions differently, but for many schools with high numbers of students living on campus, the refunds will amount to a substantial unexpected cost. For example, the University of Wisconsin system, which includes 13 campuses, estimates that it will issue about \$78 million in refunds.
- Dorm cleaning operations- Many schools had to spend additional money to clean dorms and other facilities after students left.
- Increased technology costs associated with moving to online courses.

Several colleges and universities have also announced hiring freezes for faculty and pay cuts or furloughs for staff. Concerns about adjunct and part-time faculty, who make up more than 40% of faculty nationwide, have also emerged. Nearly all adjunct faculty lack paid sick leave and few receive health insurance from their college.

Admissions & Enrollment

Bans on large gatherings on campus have forced many colleges to postpone campus tours and admissions events. A survey of enrollment officials from EAB found that 36% of campuses are experiencing a decline in admissions visit requests. Several schools have begun

planning and using virtual webinars and tours to support prospective students in the admissions process. The EAB survey found that 62% of campuses are adding video conferences and 46% are adding social media platform live events.

Many colleges typically send acceptance and financial aid notification letters in the spring, and May 1 is National College Decision Day, typically the deadline for students to declare their intent to attend a school and reserve a spot for the fall. Given the uncertainty around admissions and limitations on travel, more than 300 schools have extended this deadline to June 1 according to ACCEPT Group, a non-profit which is tracking admission deadline changes. Some institutions have extended deadlines even further. The University of Hawaii system said it would consider applications until August 1, 2020.

The outbreak has also disrupted the admissions process related to testing. Scheduled nationwide tests of both the ACT and SAT have been cancelled. The College Board which administers the SAT, announced that it will offer additional weekend administrations of the test beginning in August and will offer the test in many schools this fall. The College Board is also preparing an at-home digital version of the exam, which could be used if schools remain closed in the fall. The ACT postponed its April 4 test date to June 13, although it is unclear if that exam will still be administered. The College Board has also announced plans to allow students to take Advanced Placement (AP) tests from home. Educational Testing Service (ETS), which administers the GRE, has also announced an at-home version of the exam will be available to students who wish to take the test for graduate and professional schools. International Baccalaureate (IB) exams in May were also cancelled. Because of disruptions in testing, several schools have announced plans to remove ACT/SAT requirements for admissions and become test-optional.

Addressing Student Supports & Resources

Campus Housing and Dining

As increasing numbers of colleges limit in-person courses and services, some have noted the serious challenges these closures create for students. Many students depend on college dorms, dining halls and work-study programs for their housing, food and income. As schools limit these programs, students could struggle to access these resources. Additionally, the abrupt closure of campuses could impose serious and unplanned financial burdens on students who need to leave campus on short notice. Several colleges have created emergency relief funds, often with private donations to help students with expenses related to

campus closures and disruptions.

Many schools are offering to refund students' room and board charges on a pro-rated basis. Despite some student-led petitions, schools are not offering to reduce tuition as the outbreak shifts programs to online-only courses. Several lawmakers have expressed concern and announced plans to introduce legislation to ensure colleges offer refunds for room and board fees.

Student Financial Aid & Affordability

The unprecedented closures of higher education campuses, as well as disruptions to K-12 schools, have significant impacts on both current and future students' ability to receive and manage financial aid. The Department of Education issued additional guidance to provide flexibility to students and institutions that have had to close due to the outbreak.

As changes in high schools impact graduating seniors, state-run scholarships and higher education programs may be impacted as well. The Missouri Department of Higher Education issued revised guidance regarding scholarship eligibility. This guidance includes temporary changes to allow students who might be unable to meet certain requirements such as tutoring/mentoring hours to still be scholarship eligible. The changes also modify GPA requirements since schools are moving to an online-only model.

Student Loans

On March 20, Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos announced that all borrowers with federally held student loans will automatically have their interest rates set to 0% for a period of at least 60 days. In addition, each of these borrowers will have the option to suspend their payments for at least two months. Secretary DeVos also directed all federal student loan servicers to grant an administrative forbearance to any borrower with a federally held loan who requests one. The forbearance will be in effect for a period of at least 60 days, beginning on March 13, 2020.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) stimulus package includes the following provisions related to student loans:

- Automatically defers payments and waives interest on federally-held student loans through September 30, 2020.
- Suspends collection actions and penalties for borrowers with defaulted federal loans through September 30, 2020.
- Allows companies to pay up to \$5,250 of employee's student loan payments on a tax-free basis through December 31, 2020.

- Waives consecutive service requirement for Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program.
- Waives requirement that students repay entire portion of federal student loan if they withdraw from courses due to COVID-19 emergency.

For more information about this federal stimulus visit this page.

On March 17, New York governor Andrew Cuomo announced that the state will temporarily halt the collection of some debts, including student debt owed to the state of New York, for at least 30 days. This action also suspends interest accrual on state held student loan debt. Cuomo also announced that the New York Department of Financial Services reached an agreement with private loan servicers to expand loan relief to private student loans. The agreement includes servicers who hold approximately 90% of private student loan debt in New York.

Student Work-Study

Roughly 700,000 undergraduate students receive Federal Work-Study subsidies each year. As college campuses close, many students who work on campus may be unable to report to work. The Department of Education has issued guidance to allow institutions to continue paying students Federal Work-Study wages during campus closures due to coronavirus, under certain circumstances. However, the decision to continue to pay students for work-study will also be up to the institution.

On March 16, Texas Governor Greg Abbott waived state regulations to allow college work-study students to continue receiving funding for work-study jobs. This waiver did not include additional funding, but it will allow institutions to continue paying students for hours they would have been able to work before the outbreak.

Students Abroad & International Students

Study Abroad

Many universities have shut down their study abroad programs and cancelled school-sanctioned trips, especially to hard-hit countries such as China and Italy. Data from the Institute of International Education found that nearly 50,000 students travel abroad to Italy and China each year. Students who return from these regions can present additional challenges for university officials, as students might have been exposed to coronavirus while abroad. Several schools, including Duke University, have requested that students delay travel over spring break. The Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention (CDC) has urged returning students who might have been exposed to avoid the public and monitor their symptoms for up to two weeks

International Students

According to the Institute for International Education, there were more than 1 million international students studying in the U.S. in 2019, an all-time high. Guidance from the Department of Homeland Security has allowed international students to maintain their visa statuses, even if a college has shifted to online-only classes.

However, the American Council of Education and several other higher education advocacy groups have submitted a letter to the Department of State seeking additional clarity on the status of international students. These concerns include the status of students who attend schools that completely close for a temporary period and the outlook for students who are unable to return to their home country given travel restrictions and health advisories.

Collegiate Athletics

After originally planning to host the men's and women's basketball tournaments without fans in attendance, the NCAA announced that it would cancel both tournaments. The NCAA also announced the cancellation of all winter and spring championships. The NCAA announced that it will cut distributions to Division I schools by up to \$375 million due to the cancellations of the tournaments. Division I schools had been expecting to receive just under \$600 million in revenue through early June.

The NCAA announced that all three divisions would consider eligibility relief for student-athletes, potentially allowing seniors who participated in spring sports to play for another season. On March 30, the Division I Council announced it would extend eligibility for an additional year to all spring-sport student-athletes. The eligibility relief does not extend to winter sport athletes whose postseason tournaments were canceled. Winter sports include basketball, wrestling, and gymnastics. Individual schools will have to work to determine student scholarship eligibility. Division III officials approved an additional semester and season of eligibility for all student-athletes participating in spring sports.

Long-Term Concerns

Financial Uncertainty

The long-term financial strains of the outbreak will be felt in the potential for declining retention and lower fall enrollments. Early examples from admissions offices

suggest schools are raising acceptance rates to try and boost fall enrollment numbers in a period of uncertainty, but recent surveys and new projections suggest fall enrollments will be disrupted:

- A national survey from the Art and Science Group found that nearly two-thirds of prospective students are concerned they may not be able to attend their first-choice postsecondary institution. The survey found the largest reason for concern is that the school may no longer be affordable, but worries about the admissions process were also considerable.
- Another survey found that nearly 70% of high school seniors believe their financial ability to attend college will be impacted by the pandemic.
- According to data from the National College Attainment Network, Free Application Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completions for the 2020-21 school year are down 2.6% compared to the prior year.
- Estimates from the American Council on Education forecast that enrollments for the next academic year will drop by 15%, including a 25% decline in the number of international students.

The enrollment of international students, who tend to pay more in tuition, could be seriously limited, should travel bans remain in place. China, which sends more international students to the US than any other country, has seen significant disruption to its testing and foreign application process. A survey from the Beijing Overseas Study Service found that 36% of Chinese students are changing their plans to study abroad because of the outbreak.

State Legislation

Access the COVID-19: Education Bill Tracking Database to stay up-to-date on education-related state action regarding the outbreak. For a complete list of state legislation related to COVID-19, please see NCSL's State Action on Coronavirus (COVID-19) page.

Refunds & Reimbursement

As colleges close on-campus dining and housing, legislators are introducing legislation to ensure that students receive refunds for their room and board expenses.

- New York SB 8107 - Requires SUNY and CUNY schools to refund students for housing credits and boarding charges used or charged for the period of time when such schools are closed or shut down due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Emergency Preparedness & Management

Legislators are also requiring higher education institutions and governing boards to address the emergency situation created by the pandemic.

- Louisiana SB 481 - Requires postsecondary education management boards to adopt policies to address the negative impacts on postsecondary students, faculty, and other employees by the public health emergency declared by the governor in response to the novel coronavirus, COVID -19.
- Maryland HB 187—Requires public institutions of higher education to submit an outbreak response plan to the Maryland Department of Health on or before August 1 each year, beginning in 2021; requiring a public institution of higher education to implement the outbreak response plan under certain circumstances; requiring the outbreak response plan to include certain processes and the provision of certain staff.

Funding & Appropriations

Given the significant financial uncertainty and challenges facing universities, states are also considering legislation to provide additional funding to higher education institutions.

- Massachusetts HD 4936—Would establish Emergency Fund for Public Higher Education Institutions. The fund would include grants to help institutions cover the loss of revenue and unexpected expenses associated with the outbreak. Funds could also be used to cover employee's lost wages, expanded sick time costs and other employment related expenses. As introduced, the bill would provide \$125 million in funding.
- Washington HB 2965- Includes provisions for institutions of higher education to separately identify state spending by the appropriations in this act and for other unanticipated spending in response to the coronavirus outbreak funded by appropriations in the omnibus operating appropriations act.

Student Loans

While federal student loan borrowers have received some relief from the CARES Act, states are considering additional measures to provide additional support.

- Massachusetts HD 4961 – Would suspend payment and collection of student loan payments on student loans issued by the Commonwealth for the duration of the State of Emergency and 360 days after the Emergency Order has expired. Also provides that interest will not accrue, and fees will not be imposed.

Federal Action

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) provide an estimated \$2 trillion stimulus package to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The package includes \$14.25 billion for emergency relief for Institutions of Higher Education to respond to the coronavirus.

- Education Department Releases Application for Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund
- Higher Education Provisions in CARES Act
- CARES Act Student Loan Fact Sheet

How will higher education have changed after COVID-19?

The Random House Dictionary of the English Language defines residual as that which remains.

This is not an article about the 300 million people worldwide who are not in workplaces or classrooms because of COVID-19. This is not an article about locked down cities, overwhelmed medical facilities, and stock market declines, travel plans in tatters or cancelled conferences, festivals, sporting and concerts. This is an article that will attempt to calculate what the worldwide economic and higher education landscape will look like after the threat of COVID-19 has dissipated; what remains.

The lens through which I look is cloudy, at best. Disruptions and upheavals are not the usual companions of logic and reason. And the dark alchemy of fear and unpredictability walk the halls of corporations and universities alike, making it difficult, no impossible, to predict with precision what remains. Recognizing that it is unwise to make predictions about the future, I nevertheless believe there are at least five residuals that will remain after COVID-19 is no longer a major threat to human life and an economic and education disruptor.

1. Diversifying supply away from China: Supply chains of both goods and the internationally mobile students have been disrupted and will require diversification in the future. About five million companies

worldwide have Chinese suppliers, according to the data company Dun & Bradstreet. COVID-19 has exposed the fragility of overreliance on Chinese suppliers. Apple, Amazon and Microsoft, as well as many Japanese companies, are actively seeking to diversify their supply chain away from China to other countries.

The COVID-19 virus has taught the world hard lessons about a China-only supply chain. Colleges and universities worldwide, especially those heavily dependent on Chinese student enrolments, such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States, can no longer expect Chinese students to enroll in the numbers they have for decades.

According to the Institute of International Education, three-quarters of American colleges and universities have reported the negative impact of COVID-19 on recruitment this year. It is important to keep in mind those 370,000 students, or 33.7% of America's total international students, are from China. Decreased enrolment of Chinese students has already impacted the economies of Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

The COVID-19 virus has taught the higher education community hard lessons about a Chinese-dependent student supply chain. Conversely, the Chinese master plan to become the #1 importer of international students is in question. University deans and recruiters will be hard pressed to recommend, without reservation, future exchange programmes on Chinese campuses. In a survey of more than 2,000 students from Africa, Asia and Australia, conducted by QS, nearly three in 10 said their plans had changed due to the virus.

2. A wider role for online learning: The list is too long and changes daily of the number of colleges and universities worldwide that have suspended, or ended, in-person instruction and replaced it with online teaching. The wisdom and necessity of increased online and MOOC learning options can no longer be denied. Presidents, vice-chancellors, provosts and academic deans will be forced to reconsider what part of their educational delivery will be offered in person and what part will be offered online.

3. Embracing online recruitment methods: Recruitment and admission practices will change. Across Asia, entrance examinations have been delayed, which will eventually affect the 2020 autumn intake of first-year students. For instance, China's cancellation of SAT, TOEFL, GRE and GMAT examinations will impact future undergraduate and graduate school enrolment in the United States for the fall semester.

Admission deans and recruiters in the future will embrace online outreach to prospective students. Flexible application deadlines and a review of qualifying credentials will require re-evaluation of current

recruitment and admission practices.

Prior algorithms, attempting to calculate expected yields of accepted students, may no longer be valid. College fairs may no longer be valid. Accepted student receptions and traditional orientation programmes may also no longer be valid. Nunzio Quacquarelli, QS's CEO, stated: "The global higher education sector should aim to be flexible on application deadlines and delayed start dates."

4. Rise of teleconferencing: Most companies and colleges and universities have banned all non-essential travel for employees. Teleconferencing opportunities will partially replace long distance travel as both faculty and administrators re-evaluate recruitment travel and attendance at academic conferences.

5. More will study closer to home: Specific cohorts of students will opt to study closer to home. According to a report published by QS, prospective Asian students may increasingly look to intra-regional universities for tertiary study. Spencer Hawkes, director of special projects at BMI, told *The PIE News*: "I think there is a clear trend that more Asian students will look to study in Asia. This is happening already." Currently, Malaysia is the leading study destination in Asia. Simon Emmett, CEO of IDP Connect, told *The PIE News* that a significant number of students are exploring study options in Malaysia, South Korea and Singapore.

More residuals: We live in a world where norms are constantly unraveling around the edges. At the intersection of disruption and unpredictability will emerge a new model for the world's economy and for higher education? COVID-19 has created a new world order requiring a shift in perspective and necessitating thinking in different ways. For heads of state and corporate global leaders, as well as higher education administrators, a shifting perspective will hopefully encourage different perspectives and eventually encourage re-alignment of markets and students.

There are several opportunities that will also be residuals from COVID-19. But that's another article with a different lens. "In 1665, Cambridge University closed because of the plague. Isaac Newton decided to work from home. He discovered calculus and the laws of motion. Just saying," said Paddy Cosgrave, chief executive of Web Summit.

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COVID-19 poses a serious threat to higher education

The outbreak of the novel coronavirus pandemic in China became primetime news in Africa as the plight of its international students in Wuhan – where it began – took centre stage. At the time of the outbreak, Hubei, the province where Wuhan is located, hosted around 5,000 of the nearly 82,000 African students in China. In the early days of the crisis, concerns in the Global North focused primarily on the disruption that the pandemic would bring to student flows from China and its economic impact on their higher education systems. Efforts to prevent the spread of the virus ranged from extending or postponing academic terms to banning incoming students.

Most of Africa's initial response focused on repatriating students stranded in Wuhan or providing assistance from afar. Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, as well as Algeria and its North African neighbors, succeeded in repatriating their students – an achievement that was much celebrated. Other countries lacking the readiness and the resources to do the same had to assume a low profile against public opinion, which favored repatriation.

Responses

Africa has taken the coronavirus pandemic seriously only in the last few weeks, following the confirmation of its first cases. Initial responses included the closure of schools and universities beginning in mid-March. Increasingly, universities across the continent are setting up institution-wide task forces to mitigate the impact of the pandemic. Some are striving to participate in high-end research towards finding a cure for the virus. Many are attempting to shift to online teaching and learning through institutional, national, continental and international initiatives.

Most plans are only at their initial stages of implementation and call for ramping up current efforts, forging wider cooperation and sharing experiences and resources across the whole continent. Two major issues that hold serious implications in the fight against the pandemic are online teaching, which is now championed as an alternative form of educational delivery, and the economic impact of the pandemic on African higher education.

Online delivery: According to UNESCO, 9.8 million African students are experiencing disruption in their studies due to the closure of higher education institutions. The danger of contamination has triggered institutions to move their courses online. However, going online is not that simple on a continent where only 24% of the population has access to the internet, and poor connectivity, exorbitant costs and frequent power interruptions are serious challenges. Increasingly,

universities are partnering with internet providers and governments to overcome this critical challenge by negotiating zero-rated access to specific educational and information websites, as in the case of Rwanda, South Africa and Tunisia. At the institutional level, a number of universities, such as the public University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa and private universities such as Ashesi University in Ghana, are offering data bundles to their students and staff. Going digital effectively requires substantial coordination with, and swift support from, institutional and national service providers, regional entities, international partners, NGOs, the private sector and ICT providers to rally behind such tools and platforms at little or no cost.

It is imperative to seriously seek alternative means and approaches in order not to leave behind students with little or no access to electronic communication. The painful reality of the digital divide on the continent has to be strategically and systematically managed: reaching out to millions of 'marginalized' students must become a national priority in this time of crisis. While this is taking shape, institutions need to develop a comprehensive plan and a rigorous follow-up scheme to ensure that academics and students make proper use of digital platforms. This task cannot be left solely to the discretion of individual actors.

Impact on economy and higher education: Prolonged civil wars, Africa's economic downturn in the 1970s, structural adjustment programmes in the 1980s and the debacle of the flawed rate-of-return discourse are just a few of the challenges that have impacted higher education in Africa. In the past decade, though, many economies have been booming. Half of the fastest growing economies on the globe are currently located on the continent. Africa's growth performance (3.4% in 2019) was expected to increase to 3.9% in 2020.

- With an average of 5% of national gross domestic product (GDP) dedicated to education (one of the largest globally), the African region was beginning to witness a revitalization of its higher education sector prior to the onset of the crisis.

Most of Africa's 54 countries now have confirmed cases and fatalities due to COVID-19. Many have closed their borders and banned international flights. Trade is declining at an alarming rate. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, South Africa and Tunisia have announced complete lockdowns. Recent economic forecasts show that Africa's economy could experience a loss of between US\$90 billion and US\$200 billion in 2020, with the GDP shrinking by three to eight points. In South Africa, growth is expected to contract by 1.5% in the first two months of the outbreak, due to its effect on key economic sectors, such as mining and tourism. Ethiopia's recent request for assistance, on behalf of the African nations to the G20 forum, for US\$150 billion

emergency financing, the freezing of interest rates on loans and the cancellation of debts is an indication of the massive threat to the economies.

Apprehensions and opportunities: The continent's meager institutional and national capacities, weak healthcare systems and gregarious way of life may prove catastrophic should the virus continue to spread at the same rate and intensity as in other critically affected countries. The impact of such a calamitous scenario is easy to imagine and frightening to predict. The effects of the pandemic on Africa's nearly 2,000 higher education institutions cannot be over emphasised. If the crisis persists, it may seriously impact the commitment of governments toward higher education in the face of competing demands from the healthcare, business and other priority sectors serving vulnerable segments of society. Further, global support to higher education, research collaborations and partnership schemes, most often directed at critical areas such as strengthening PhD programmes, could be massively scaled back. African higher education institutions are expected to do more in the months ahead while concurrently battling across many fronts. This includes addressing the more immediate challenges of the threat of COVID-19, seeking improved mechanisms for online delivery and planning to address the long-term effects of the pandemic on institutional capacity.

- In the aftermath of the pandemic, cost recovery through financial contribution from beneficiaries in the form of fees or loan repayments will not be easy, since economies will have seriously declined – if they indeed survive a total collapse. The expansion of public universities will be abruptly frozen. Private providers, which are dependent on tuition and other fees, will also be hard hit, with many facing downsizing or even closure, as they receive little or no support from governments. On a positive note, this threat – and the approaches to overcome it – may be catalytic for long-lasting changes in African higher education. Among others, diversified means of educational delivery, in particular a non-residential model, may become more mainstream, more acceptable and more respectable.

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