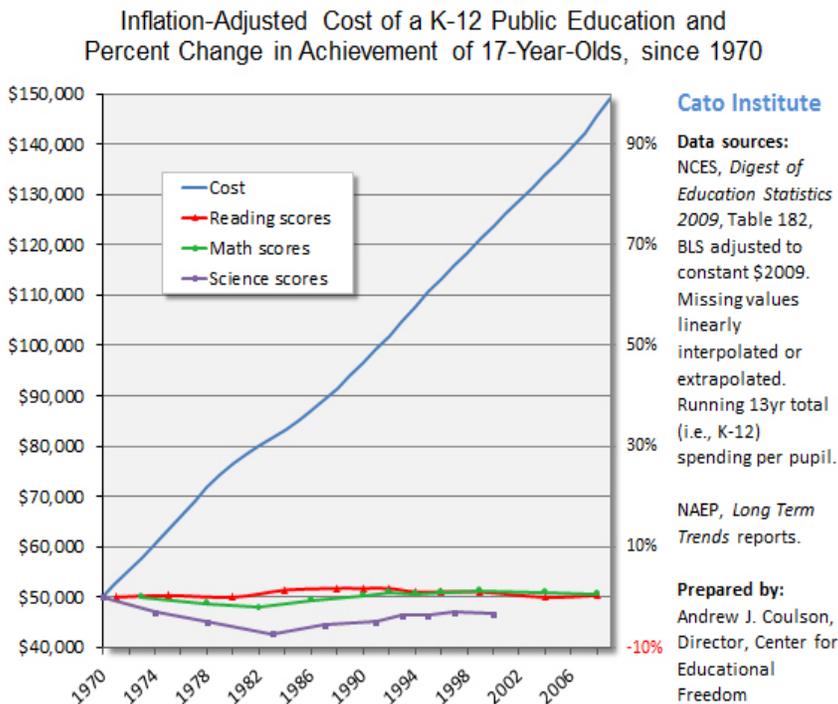


1. Name at least three trends in education that you believe to be the most important influences on education's future, and explain your choices.

- Competency Based Learning → It just makes sense. Honestly and truly it is almost nearly impossible to truly measure learning and our current system is based upon the concept that it can be done. Using assessments and methods that can never really gauge learning almost seems ridiculous and what is even more strange is this is how education has been set up. Using CBL could really call into question how we look at and think about education for the future. Changing the credit hour structure, assessing and counting prior knowledge and allowing students to work completely on their own through a self-based program would change the very foundation that education was built upon.
- Emerging Technology. We can do things in the classroom today, that was completely unheard of just 5 years ago. With the advancements of technology just in the past few years, the trends in technology and what that means for the future could be revolutionary. I am already completely impressed with current technological trends such as MOOCs, digital badging, the KAHN Academy, etc.
- I think with all of these advances (CBL and Technology) we are going to see education change. With this change, I think there is going to be a change in the classroom. I totally agree that there is a major social piece to education but I also think that classes can no longer be a 50 to 90 minute lecture. I am really excited about the flipped classroom concept (I have never heard of it until this class) and I think that new and emerging classroom techniques are also going to influence the future of higher education.

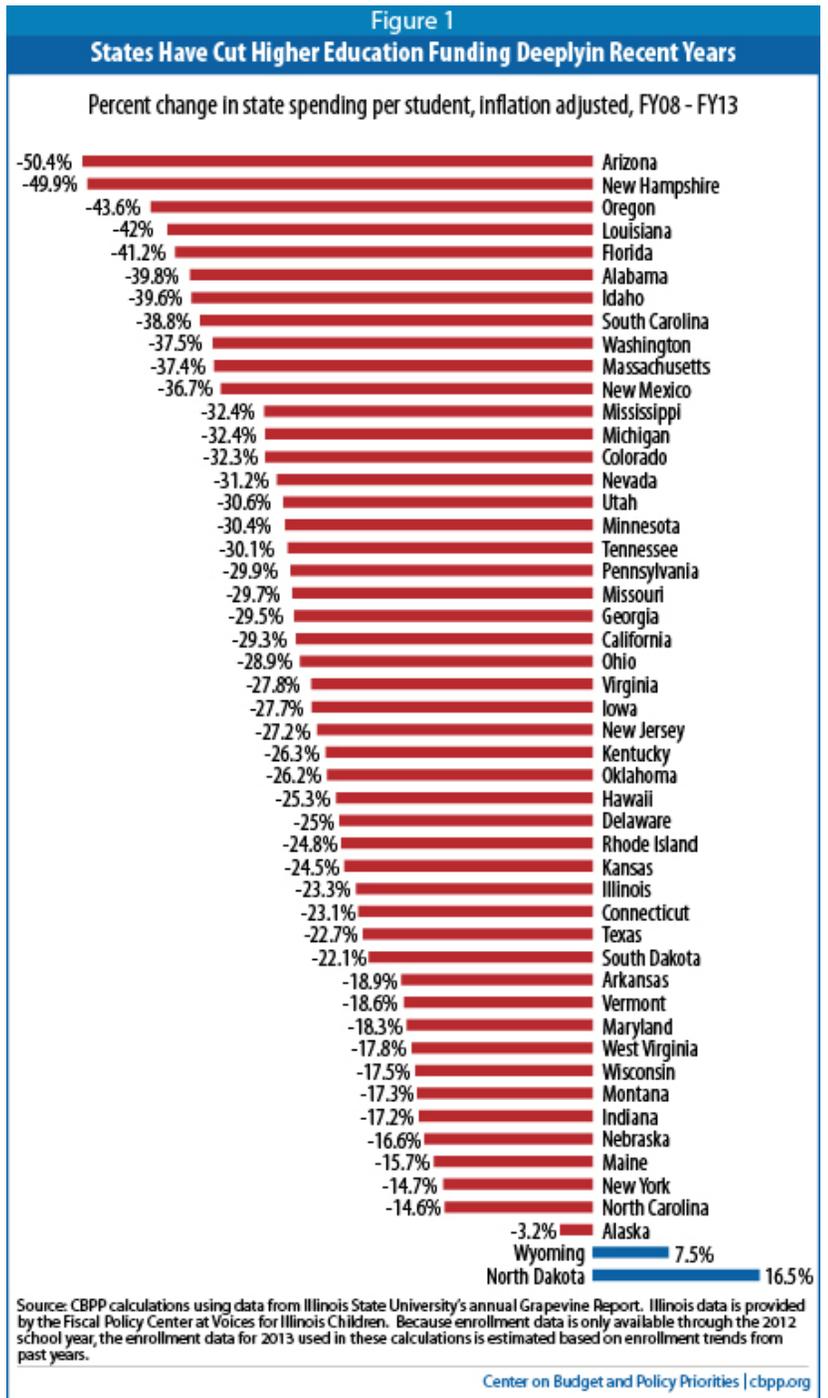
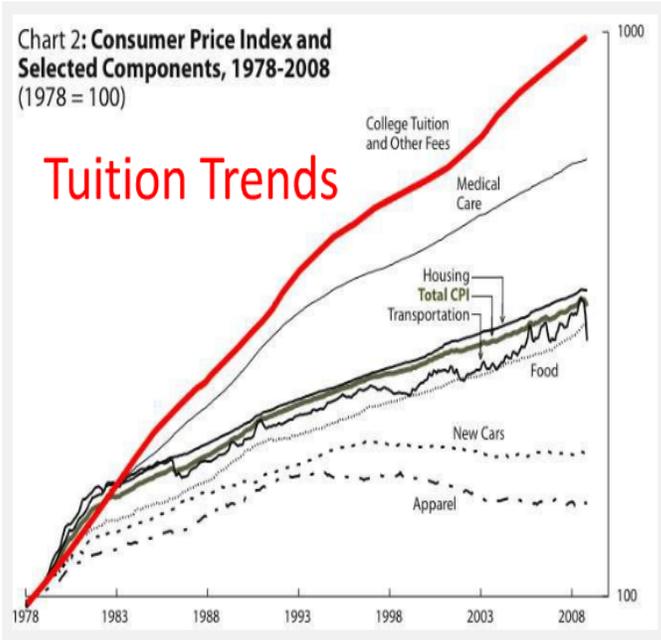
2. Describe the changes in the cost of K-12 education in recent decades.



First off, I give a lot of credit to teachers now a days. Educating students is just so much harder. Students are so much more distracted by everything in the world, that reaching students is an ever growing concern. The chart on the left shows that while education costs are increasing, very little else is increasing in the means of student learning and knowledge retention. In fact, with reading and math, students achievement has been pretty stagnate for the past 30 years where as in the sciences they have dropped.

A lot goes into this, especially with the economy. The costs of things are increasing, which means so does education. It also costs money to pay for teachers, and as schools are laying off teachers to meet budget gaps, it is putting more stress on current teachers to work on achievement with less staff.

3. **Describe the changes in the cost of higher education in recent decades.**
 The trends in cost for higher education has expanded over 300% in the past few years. Tuitions are increasing, student loan debts are increasing, state appropriations are decreasing at a dramatic rate. This is causing education to become even more unaffordable for students and is creating an unsustainable model. The really clincher here though is with such a rapid increase in education...what are students getting out of these increases? I would say nothing since education has remained static....students today are getting the same thing they were getting 50 years ago but at a much higher cost.



4. Discuss the concept of “grade inflation” and the evidence that it exists.

- Grade inflation is the practice in awarding higher grades when previously lower grades would have been awarded. Overall this is a bad policy because it makes it harder to point out the best students. Most grade inflation is also not uniformed (among schools or disciplines); therefore when a student gets an A at Penn State and an B at Harvard, this could be detrimental to the student. There are also fears that if the faculty do not participate in grade inflation, that it might result in poor course evaluations that could result in failure to receive tenure or promotion. Schools could also fear that not inflating grades could be detrimental to accreditation statistics and school rankings.
 - It became such a big thing that Princenton University took a stance on inflation by stating that “A” grades should make up less than 35% of grades for undergraduate courses and less than 55% of independent course work for upper class students (juniors and seniors). This is HUGE!
- It is hard to prove that grade inflation is actually happening and it looks like there are people on both sides saying yes or no. However a recent study in 2010 by Rojstaczer and Healy conclude that there is clear evidence of inflation over time. The study shows that an average fo 3.3% inflation at private schools and about a 3.0% inflation at public schools. The data also shows very similar to high schools as well. When it comes to high school it shows that students are studying less and making higher grades which may also be creating a gap in knowledge making it harder for them to be successful in college.

5. Discuss the use of international comparisons of educational progress.

It is hard to compare international educational progress since schools and systems do things differently. However there are several areas that can be used as benchmarks to compare how educational standards are different among other countries. However using certain standards, there are organizations out there that can measure how other countries are doing in various areas.

However such studies can be used to help trigger reforms, especially when you can use this data to try to figure out why other countries out perform other countries or to find the inequalities of skill levels among different societies or subgroups in other societies.

Though such comparisons can help promote change and reform, there are also a lot of statistical issues that arise. First and foremost, such research requires some pretty great statistical assumptions. It is pretty subjective to describe inequalities within a society and compare them from society to society, as well as how do you truly define “achievement” across a society. Every society has a different definition of achievement.

One benefit of such comparisons though however allow for an examination across curriculums and instruction to make causal explanations. Looking at cross-national differences in curriculum, researchers can use the data to make some large assumptions about why children in one nation are learning faster in comparison to another nation.

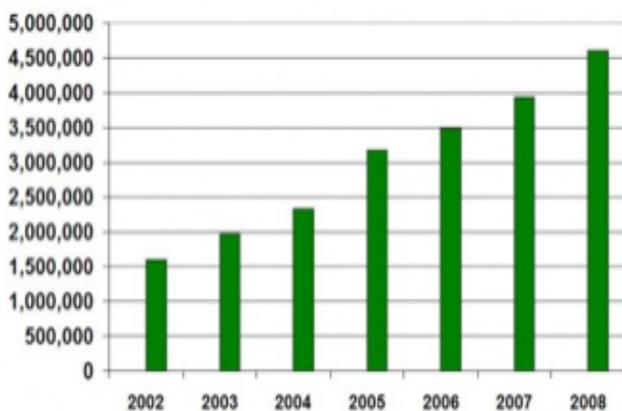
One study, the Third International Mathematics and Science Study, which surveys 50 countries, looks at how curriculum, instructional practice and student achievement are connected.

6. Discuss the increasing access to and use of technologies (including mobile devices) in learning.

- Well technology has definitely advanced in the past few years and it seems that wherever you look technology is there. Even kindergarteners are bringing cell phones to school. Imagine that! I didn't have my first cell phone until high school.
- There are also advancements made on using tickers or applications on your cell phone to "poll" students, or have them participate in an interactive way in the class room.
- Further advances too such as the Kahn Academy is amazing. To have the analytics that teachers can access from the Kahn academy is amazing. To be able to provide a program that offers many opportunities for students to test their knowledge and gain mastery over a topic is important. Especially if a teacher can then go in and pinpoint which areas students are struggling and use that to cater lessons and teaching towards those students weaknesses.

7. Describe the growth in online learning in the past two decades, and discuss the potential implications

Online Higher Education Enrollment



The proof is in the pudding. Online education is a thing...and I would say it is here to stay. With the increasing of physical education, and with the lack of flexibility, the brick and mortar education has a run for its money. Granted I don't think that Online education will ever become a disruptive innovation (completely), I do think that online education is able to do things that face to face classrooms cannot. Especially with MOOCs. If MOOCs do indeed take off more then they have and schools offer MOOCs for credit, I think being able to interact with students all across the world to help provide input and feedback is going to change how we interact globally with each other. I remember how important 5 to 10 years ago, international student populations on campus were extremely important...but having access to minds from all over the world from your fingertips is going to be huge (talk about global perspectives!!!). I also think that with Open Educational Resources (OERS), the pool of knowledge that people can access now really is remarkable and inspiring.

8. Describe the evolution of standards in either K-12 or higher education in the past few decades and potential implications for the future of education.

Higher education is currently in a state of evolution. New technologies and rising costs of education are changing the standards that are being used. The Kahn Academy is transforming the ideas of how education is measured. Instead of sitting in class and completing X amount of credits while being evaluated by assessments that don't really gauge mastery of the material, competency based learning is allowing students to really show what they know or learn at their own pace. This evolving thought on assessment standards and learning are going to change the future of education.

MOOCs are also changing standards as institutions are trying to figure out the best way to use MOOCs, the best way to award credit for MOOCs and how they can use MOOCs to boost their enrollment. Clearly in a class with 200,000 students, it is going to be impossible to grade every single student's paper, therefore using Peer to Peer review is also changing standards of grading.

9. Select one current trend in education and identify 2 pros and 2 cons about how it might affect education.

- Digital Badging:

- Pro: Increase motivation for students giving them something else to work towards. Badges are popular in gaming systems and people want the gold star, etc...so could it be the same for higher education? If it is successful, it could reinvigorate education for students making them more engaged/motivated causing an increase in grades, may lead to higher retention, etc.
- Pro: Could help with credentialing by setting a student apart when applying for jobs because they can show certain skills they have mastered that may not come across in a traditional academic transcript. This is especially important if a student is spending so much money on education, this could really cause them to stand out.
- Con: Validity of badges. Can anyone create them? Can they be forged? Granted current credentials can be forged (i.e. the Dean of Admissions at MIT who was just fired after 25 years of service because she never even graduated with a Bachelors degree).
- Con: There is an investment here that institutions are going to have to make. What happens if badging never advances and these investments are lost? Granted, it takes money to make money, but these could lead to pretty public failures for institutions. Granted...I think the risk is better in case they do take off.