

College Talk Assignment #1 – “To Go or Not”

Please share this assignment on Google Classroom. In order to do so properly, copy the question below and post into the google classroom document. Then provide your answer. Make sure that you do not submit this as a google docs or as a Word Document. Type it directly into Google Classroom.

In Part One of this Real World Economics Assignment we will look at the topic of going to college. If it is so expensive – what’s the use of taking on such debt? Read each of the articles above...take a look at the questions below and answer each thoughtfully and thoroughly.

While the news articles are from two or three years back they are valid. I will supplement these articles with more current NPR podcasts, which you will be assigned periodically throughout this unit.

- **The News articles below are linked in PDF form on the buddhablog**
- *Yes, college Degree has value – try \$1 million – MSNBC (11/17/11)*
- *The Value of A College Degree – New York Times (9/21/10)*
- *What’s more Expensive than College? Not Going – Atlantic (2012)*
- *Yes, a college Degree is worth the cost – USA Today (12/6/11)*

MSNBC – The dollar value of a degree

1 – Figure #3 – Median Earnings by Age

OK...lets take a look here. Study the graph and level of ascent of the line pertaining to income (over time) If you have a college degree – whatever that degree – what happens to the rise of the line. Talk about what you see on that graph – explain.

2 – Figure #1 – Education Attainment of Population 25 and older

Again – look only at the graph. What has happened to Americans since 1940 in regards to education levels. Why do you think that this has occurred? And why in the time period? Do you see it continuing the same?

3 – One more thing to think about ...

Next to figure #1 the article compares – accumulated wealth of white men, white women, and minorities. Talk about those numbers – what do you think about them? Do you see any changes coming?

New York Times– The Value of that Degree is Growing

4 – Median Earnings

“the median earnings of full-time workers with a bachelor’s degrees were \$55,700 in 2008. \$21,900 more than those of workers who finished only high school.” Identify specific things that you could do with the higher income; how would this affect your quality of life? How might something like health care also creep into the mix? What about if you or your partner become pregnant?

5 – Catching Up

If you go to college, you obviously incur up front costs that somebody going into the workplace does not incur. What does the author say about a time table in regards to catching up?

6 – Unemployment

What does the author say about unemployment and a college degree? What are the numbers? Why do you think this is the case?

7 – Quality of Life Correlation

On page two of the article the author talks about quality of life. First of all what is the difference between causation and correlation? Next, look at what she is saying...why do you think the report holds true in regards to such claims?

Atlantic – What’s More Expensive than Going?

8 – International Comparisons

This article talks about spinning the globe – Identify a few statistics from around the world that still make the USA a good place for your little sperm and your little egg to get together. And then take a look at the green graph. What is it saying? And why?

9 – One Size Doesn’t Fit all

The author concedes, “College has its skeptics.” Identify some valid points that the author makes about NOT attending a traditional four-year college. What do you think?

10 – Education Pays – Graph (Red & Green)

This final graph is extremely interesting. Study it. Identify what you see to be the most significant findings. Look at unemployment and earnings.

USA Today – What’s More Expensive than Going?

11 – Quote “Who populates the ranks of the unemployed? According to Bureau of Labor Statistics”

So look at those numbers. What do you see? What do you see in the future with those numbers? Explain.

12 – Quote “Once again, educational attainment correlates with income, according to the BLS.”

So look at those numbers. What do you see? What do you see in the future with those numbers? Explain.

13 – An Interesting little story about a football player

The author tells a little story about a football player at his University – what transition experience did the football player have? How did it change his life?

14 – An Interesting little story about a chicken farmer

The author tells a little story about his Great Grandpa – what happened? How did this change his dad’s life? His life?

After reading about the statistics and the stories and the correlations and opinions...What about you?

Everybody has their own story, their individual life to lead. But statistics are stubborn things. Earnings and quality of life and education – all of it correlates. It’s difficult to walk away from these numbers and not have some opinion. So what is yours?

15 – The Most Striking Numbers

Of all of these articles...what numbers are the most striking to you? Why?

16 – SO...What’s your plan?

Briefly – what is your long term education plan? Tell me. Fall 2011 – 2012 and beyond.

17 – What is your biggest Obstacle?

Be honest. Tell me what is your biggest fear that could possibly derail #16?
