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## Healthy skepticism about Polls on College Value

By Darryl Greer

The November 7, 2016 *Hechinger Report* featured a,

cost as a major barrier to access, cost is not the single most important factor in choosing a college according to Stockton research. Location and program offering are equally important factors, and more important than cost taken together.

Furthermore, the finding in recent national polls that fewer first-time students get into colleges of first choice may be somewhat misleading. Historically, 70-80 percent of all students get into college of first or second choice. Not only are most colleges and universities non-selective, but also, as recent University of Wisconsin research confirms, most students go to college very close to home, locally and regionally. It is unlikely that the "first-choice" finding has much significance within this context. ~~Research by the University of Wisconsin at Madison~~

more intensive advising and counseling, with both colleges and students taking more responsibility, our 2016 NJ survey of recent college graduates indicates that about 30 percent of respondents say that academic advising and career counseling are unimportant to career success. Read together, closing the disconnect among colleges and students on shared responsibility for providing and seeking internship opportunities, as well as providing and taking advantage of intensive advising and counseling services may be a constructive means of achieving highly valued college outcomes.

The four Stockton University Polling Institute studies on college cost, value and outcomes 2013-16, focus groups summaries and reports are at: [www.stockton.edu/hughescenter/hesig](http://www.stockton.edu/hughescenter/hesig)

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