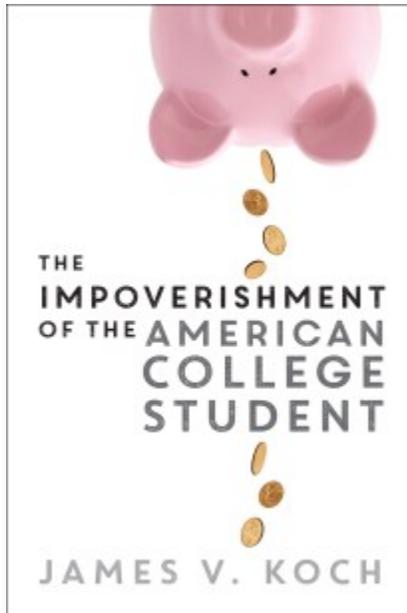


BOOK

The Impoverishment of the American College Student

By James V. Koch July 9, 2019



Is the end in sight for college tuition hikes?

Tuition and fees at public colleges and universities consistently have risen twice or even three times as fast as comparable increases in the Consumer Price Index in recent years. Since 2000 these costs have even grown 60 percent faster than health care costs. The results have been rapidly rising student debt (now \$1.4 trillion nationally), rising delinquencies in debt repayment, and a dysfunctional stratification of public college student bodies on the basis of family incomes. This is a broken, unsustainable model for the majority of public colleges.

Why has this occurred? The multiple causes include declining state support, the avaricious behavior of individual institutions, their reluctance to adopt productivity-increasing innovations, their cost-increasing competition for higher *U.S. News* ratings, and misdirected federal student financial aid policies. The key actors are the 50,000 members of the governing boards of public colleges, who too often forget that their primary responsibility is to citizens, taxpayers, and the 15 million students. Instead, board members are co-opted by

clever administrators into approving tuition and fee increases well beyond what is needed to make up for declining state funding. Concerted, informed public pressure on governors, legislators, and board members is necessary to move institutions in more positive directions.

Higher education funding and tuition and fee inflation are complicated matters that very few people understand well. *The Impoverishment of the American College Student* clarifies the central issues and provides plentiful data to support its key points. It is a must-read for anyone who believes that maintaining access to and the affordability of public colleges are vitally important to our society's future.

BOOK DETAILS

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

James V. Koch is Board of Visitors Professor of Economics emeritus and president emeritus of Old Dominion University. He has been a consultant for more than 100 colleges and businesses and has written widely about economics and higher education. Koch served as president of the University of Montana between 1986 and 1990 and Old Dominion University from 1990 to 2001.

PRAISE FOR THE IMPOVERISHMENT OF THE AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENT

“Soaring college costs and public concerns about educational quality are front-page news, but it is hard to find clear explanations of decision-making in university administrative suites and boardrooms. James Koch’s timely and important new book separates economic fact from wishful thinking.”

—Richard A. DeMillo, executive director, Center for 21st Century Universities, Georgia Institute of Technology

“Tuition and fee price inflation is a serious problem in higher education. Jim Koch lasers in on the causes underlying this problem and provides us with a practical plan to remedy it. These solutions reflect in part Koch’s fifteen years of distinguished experience as a university president and the insights he has

developed as a serious scholar.”

—Richard J. Cebula, professor of finance, Jacksonville University

“A detailed look at the complex facets contributing to the college cost crisis, *The Impoverishment of the American College Student* doesn’t let anyone off the hook. Koch focuses on how to restore the promise of public higher education, particularly for low- and middle-income students.”

—James Toscano, president, Partners for College Affordability and Public Trust