

Study: College isn't always worth it

By Danielle Paquette, Washington Post

Last month, after announcing his plan to make community college free, President Obama lauded a college degree as “the surest ticket to the middle class.”

New research in the prolific field of “Is College Worth It?” suggests it’s not that simple.

“‘Ticket’ implies a college degree is something you can just cash in,” said Alan Benson, assistant business professor at the University of Minnesota. “But it doesn’t work that way. A college degree is more of a stepping stone, one ingredient to consider when you’re cooking up your career. ... It’s not always the best investment for everyone.”

Benson, along with M.I.T.’s Frank Levy and business analyst Raimundo Esteva, co-authored a paper, released last week, examining the value of public university options in California. Factors like how long it takes to complete a degree – often longer than four years – and whether students make it to graduation, he learned, can significantly diminish the value of pursuing higher education.

Read the whole story