Squeeze Play 2010
Public Attitudes About College Access and Affordability

February 2010
The Survey

• National survey of 1,031 adults; conducted December 9-13, 2009
• Margin of error: +/- 3 points
• Telephone interview using both landline and cell phones
• Interviews conducted in English and Spanish
Educating Students vs. The Bottom Line

Q: Which comes closest to your view?

- Colleges today mainly care about education and making sure students have a good educational experience:
  - 2007: 43%
  - 2008: 35%
  - 2009: 32%

- Colleges today are like most businesses and mainly care about the bottom line:
  - 2007: 52%
  - 2008: 55%
  - 2009: 60%

PUBLIC AGENDA
Students Should Be Priority for Stimulus

Q: Do you think that colleges and states that receive federal stimulus money for higher education should...

- Use all or part of it to hold down tuition and fees, even if that means colleges have less money to spend on operations and programs (10%)
- Use most of the money to maintain current operations and programs, even if that means increases in tuition and fees (25%)
- Don't know (65%)

NOTE: Totals differ slightly from those presented in the survey report due to rounding.
The Higher Education “Misery Index”

Q: Do you believe that...

- A college education is necessary for a person to be successful in today's work world
- Vast majority of qualified, motivated students have the opportunity to attend college

PUBLIC AGENDA

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY AND HIGHER EDUCATION
Money and Quality

Q: Which comes closest to your own view?

- If colleges cut budgets, the quality of an education will suffer:
  - 2007: 40%
  - 2008: 42%
  - 2009: 40%

- Colleges could spend less and still maintain a high quality of education:
  - 2007: 56%
  - 2008: 53%
  - 2009: 54%
Access, Cost and Quality

Q: Colleges could take a lot more students without lowering quality or raising prices. Agree or Disagree?

Year 2007: Somewhat Agree 30%, Strongly Agree 28%

Year 2009: Somewhat Agree 27%, Strongly Agree 33%

PUBLIC AGENDA
For More Information

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