The Risky Academy: Environmental Scan for February 2019

ACADEMIC QUALITY

A generation ago, the U.S. ranked first in the world in higher education attainment. But since then, our country has failed to improve at the same pace as some other countries, putting us at a grave competitive disadvantage. America has fallen behind in the global education race

Through legislation, lawsuits, and even public-records requests, higher education's detractors are taking aim at colleges' autonomy and attempting to set campus policy. "I suspect we're at the beginning rather than the end of an era in which the public will act to reform higher education." For a Dissatisfied Public, Colleges' Internal Affairs Become Fair Game

At a time when many colleges are struggling with shrinking enrollment and tighter budgets, Southern New Hampshire, Liberty, Grand Canyon, and Western Governors Universities, along with a few nonprofits, have built huge online enrollments and national brands in recent years by subverting many of traditional higher ed's hallmarks. The Rise of the Mega-University

Critics argue that increasing costs and low future earnings limit the value of a liberal arts education, especially compared to alternative options such as pre-professional programs that appear to be better rewarded in the current labor market. Existing evidence does not support these conclusions. The Economic Gains (Yes, Gains) of a Liberal Arts Education

Cancelling Elsevier subscriptions followed months of contract negotiations over the cost of the publisher's journals. "I fully support our faculty, staff, and students in breaking down paywalls that hinder the sharing of groundbreaking research," the UC system's president said. U. of California System Cancels Elsevier Subscriptions, Calling Move a Win for Open Access; UC Drops Elsevier; University of California boycotts publishing giant Elsevier over journal costs and open access; A Lesson From UC's Split With Elsevier: Keep the Faculty in the Loop

Complicating any discussion about open access is that many groups that agree in principle that research should be free to read disagree with the particulars of how that should happen. Those tensions emerged in the fall when a group of major European funding agencies took on the mantle of change through a new initiative: Plan S. A Turning Point for Scholarly Publishing; How to Bring Prestige to Open Access — and Make Science More Reliable

"Email is a wonderful thing for people whose role in life is to be on top of things. But not for me; my role is to be on the bottom of things." The idea that the life of a professor should be radically different than other professions, and that universities should take far-reaching steps to allow faculty members to be "on the bottom of things" is easy to dismiss as eccentric utopianism. But the time has come to take Knuth's vision seriously. Is Email Making Professors Stupid?

Students have better educational outcomes in courses taught by instructors who have "growth mind-sets" than those who believe intelligence is fixed. For minority students, achievement gaps are cut in half. The Impact of Faculty Attitudes About Intelligence

To prepare society for the demands of the future, colleges must equip tomorrow's leaders to be "AI bilingual." Students in every field need to be fluent in AI strategies to advance their own work, and technologists need fluency in the cultural values and ethical principles that should ground and govern the use of these tools. Prepare students for a future of artificial intelligence

STEM work is culturally less tolerant and supportive of caregiving responsibilities than other fields. Mothers—and fathers—may be squeezed out of STEM work and pulled into full-time work in non-STEM fields. Nearly half of US female scientists leave full-time science after first child

Applications went down in 70% percent of MBA programs in 2018. There's no question business schools are facing significant headwinds largely out of their control in recruitment, particularly among international students. Understanding the Decline in M.B.A. Applications

Many business students find the typical 2-year MBA program is unnecessary when a specialized master's program, typically centered on finance, health care, accounting, or marketing, can be completed in half the time. Specialty master's programs attract graduate students

McKinney "did not fare well" in merit system reviews starting in 2010, the judge wrote. Enrollments in his classes declined, he received poor student evaluations, and had a "stagnant" research agenda. Pa. university can give long-serving professor a 20 percent pay cut, federal court says; Court Backs Pitts Right to Reduce Professor's Pay

ADVANCEMENT

Charitable revenue from donations of at least $1,000 increased by 2.6% in 2018, and there were signs that the tax law is discouraging some gifts. The number of donors declined 4.5% last year and donations under $250 dropped by 4.4%, while donations between $250 and $1,000 also dropped. Charitable Giving Shifts Toward Large Donations in First Year of New Tax Law

The nearly $47B educational institutions took in was fueled in part by a 66% leap in dollars channeled from donor-advised funds. Giving to Colleges Rises 5%, With Harvard and Stanford Raising the Most; Giving to Colleges Is Up 7.2%; How Generous Are the Colleges to Which Donors Are Most Generous?; Giving to Colleges Jumps 7.2% to Record $46.7 Billion

The projection for giving to education in 2019 is higher than the historical 10-year and 40-year annualized average growth rate for giving of this type, but lower than the 25-year annualized average. In 2020, education giving is predicted to exceed the 10-year, 25-year, and 40-year annualized averages. The Philanthropy Outlook: Giving to Education

Colleges and universities reported that 49% of their endowment spending went to support student scholarships and other financial aid programs, and 16% for academic tutoring and other similar student support programs. Half of Endowment Spending Supports Financial Aid

The U of Michigan became the 1st public university to raise more than $5B in the most successful fundraising campaign in its history. At the campaign close, more than 398,000 donors gave 2.4 million gifts over 7.5 years, totaling $5.28B. Victors for Michigan Campaign: Final results

The NY Academy of Sciences and Columbia U joined the universities, museums, and nonprofits reviewing philanthropic relationships with the Sackler family, owners of pain-pill maker Purdue Pharma LP. Nonprofits Grow Uneasy With Philanthropy Tainted by Opioid Proceeds

AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS

Nine members of Louisiana State's Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity are accused in arrest warrants of hazing violations, including ordering pledges to lie face down on a basketball court covered in broken glass while they were urinated on. LSU hazing: DKE pledges were urinated on, struck with pipe during hazing rituals, arrest reports say

The teen died inside a Sigma Pi Epsilon annex house in Athens, Ohio, where he was allegedly beaten with a belt, pelted with eggs, deprived of sleep and forced to take drugs and drink a gallon of alcohol in an hour, the lawsuit alleged. Family of deceased Ohio University student sues fraternity, claiming 'extensive' mental and physical hazing caused death

AUDIT, COMPLIANCE, & LEGAL

The Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989 (DFSCA) gets much less attention and has not made it into compliance discussions. Universities were warned via a lesser known 2011 letter that the DoE would be enhancing their monitoring of DFSCA compliance. Now, for the first time since the law went into effect in 1990, institutions are facing consequences for compliance violations. The Consequences of Not Complying

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Black students who began college in the fall of 2011 had higher dropout rates and lower 6-year completion rates—46% at publics, 57% at privates—than any other racial group. The gender gap is wider than for any other group, as nearly two-thirds of black undergraduates, and more than two-thirds of black graduate students, are women. Black male students pursuing bachelor's degrees were the most likely among any demographic group to drop out after their freshman year. Nearly Half of Undergraduates Are Students of Color. But Black Students Lag Behind.

Fewer than 1% of doctorates in math are awarded to African-Americans. Edray Goins, who earned one of them, found the math world a challenging place. "I am an African-American male. I have been the only one in most of the universities I've been to—the only student or faculty in the mathematics department." For a Black Mathematician, What It's Like to Be the 'Only One'

How common is it for faculty and administrators to harbor attitudes toward international students that could be characterized as culturally insensitive or even outright discriminatory or hostile? Experts say the email from a Duke professor about Chinese students speaking Chinese in lounges is not an isolated incident. Not an Isolated Incident

What has become—as one scholar put it—the "great college-yearbook reckoning" arose after racist images from Virginia governor Ralph S. Northam's 1984 medical-school yearbook were posted online. The 'Great College-Yearbook Reckoning': Why Scholars Say Blackface Images Aren't Outliers; Beyond College Campuses and Public Scandals, a Racist Tradition Lingers

Reporters found more than 200 examples of racist photos in 25 states in a survey of college yearbooks from the 1970s and 80s. Blackface, KKK hoods and mock lynchings: Review of 900 yearbooks finds blatant racism

ENGAGEMENT & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Universities are under increasing pressure from funders, politicians, and the public to demonstrate the value of their work. Some are investing in public engagement to showcase the importance of their scholarship and reach the practitioners, policy makers, business and nonprofit leaders, journalists, activists, and citizens who can help turn their research into action. Public Engagement and the Future of the University

ENROLLMENT

Among students who started at a community college or 4-year institution in 2010, 60.4% graduated by 2018. That national 8-year completion rate is 5.6 percentage points higher than the 6-year rate of 54.8%. New Data: 60% of Students Graduate Within 8 Years

Some nontraditional Pell recipients—particularly part-time transfer students—complete college at higher rates than their nontraditional peers who do not receive the grant. But, a cavernous gap exists between the bachelor's degree attainment rates of Pell and non-Pell students—more than 10 percentage points at public colleges and nearly 15 percentage points at private colleges. [New Insights Into Attainment for Low-Income Students](#)

The U.S. is notoriously ineffective at retraining workers who've been displaced by outsourcing and technological change, and it invests just 0.03% of GDP on training people, compared with Denmark's 0.6% and Germany's 0.2%. For older Americans who want to retool their skills, they often have to spend a significant amount of their own money to return to school, and it can be daunting to determine if it's worth it. [Going back to school after 50](#)

Insight #1: Adult learners are increasingly pragmatic. Recommendation: Reach prospects early through newer targeting methods. Insight #2: Adult learners are digital consumers—with high expectations for recruitment. Recommendation: Tailor your marketing to prospective student intent. Insight #3: Older and younger adult learners value different program factors. Recommendation: Adapt your marketing messaging based on prospective student characteristics. [3 insights for program growth from our 2019 adult learner survey](#)

Colleges historically are more diverse in their admissions materials than they are in real life. At colleges with meaningful efforts to recruit and retain minority students, "You don't have to pose a picture. You don't have to do Photoshop. You can just go to the student center and point a camera in any direction." [When Colleges Seek Diversity Through Photoshop](#)

FACULTY RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

Facing flat enrollment and strained annual budgets, DePauw will tap endowment to finance layoffs for dozens of staff members and hefty voluntary retirement packages for a graying faculty. [Downsizing Through Buyouts](#)

How many courses per semester should a faculty member at a major research university teach? It's in the interest only of innocent undergraduates, who don't realize that the tenure-line faculty members supported by their tuition dollars may be teaching a decreasing number of courses. And although they don't know it, it's in the long-term interest of faculty members themselves. [The Great Disappearing Teaching Load](#)

Using cohort benchmarks can help compare teaching activity to peers with a similar emphasis on research or teaching. For example, full-time instructors at colleges with greater research expenditures typically teach less than 5 credit hours per term; at institutions with little to no research, it's 9 credit hours per term [Here's how to answer common faculty workload questions](#)

Departments that routinely make data on faculty activities accessible are likely to promote perceptions that workloads are transparent and fair. When professors saw how their workload compared to others, "they felt greater permission to likewise self-advocate and take steps to ensure their own workload was fair." [4 simple strategies to address faculty workload](#)

Mentorship has long been a critical element of faculty development. Some departments and research offices offer training tools or additional support, but the ad hoc nature of these relationships means early-career faculty have varying experiences and support networks. [10 Strategies to Strengthen Faculty Research Mentorship Opportunities](#)

FINANCE

Student-loan delinquencies surged last year, hitting consecutive records of $166.3B in the third quarter and $166.4B in the fourth. Delinquencies continued to climb even as the unemployment rate fell below 4%, suggesting the strong job market hasn't generated enough wage growth to help some people manage their outstanding obligations. U.S. Student Debt in 'Serious Delinquency' Tops $166 Billion

Senator Lamar Alexander wants to apply a single loan-repayment system to programs at all colleges, nonprofit and for-profit alike, drawing concerns about student access. A proposal to automatically deduct loan payments as a share of borrowers' paychecks promises big improvements, but raises questions over some new complications, too. Simplifying Higher Ed Accountability -- or Complicating It?;   Alexander's Loan-Repayment Overhaul

The bill would permit students who do not have contact with their legal guardians, or who meet other criteria established by higher ed institutions, to fill out the FAFSA application as a "provisionally independent" student. As of now, this group of students must undergo a "dependency override" at each school they apply to before they can be considered for financial aid. Maryland Senators, Congressmen Introduce FAFSA Fairness Act of 2019

There are now more than 300 free college programs in 44 states, more than 120 of which were launched from 2015 to 2017. From Tennessee to Chicago, Free College Programs Take Off

Built specifically for college trustees, policymakers, and other higher ed decision-makers, this site is designed to equip the people who oversee colleges and universities with the tools to perform their own analysis of higher ed spending trends, and create benchmarks in comparison with other institutions. How Colleges Spend Money

It will take the Ohio university 20 years to return to the fiscal strength it held earlier in the decade. What went wrong? The answer is a mix of spending and scandal. Revenues declined, but spending did not. Inside Wright State's 6-Year Journey Into Financial Trouble

GLOBAL & INTERNATIONAL

In the fall of 2018, the final application count for prospective international graduate students declined by 4%, bringing the overall decline to 6% over the past two years. International Graduate-Student Enrollments and Applications Drop for 2nd Year in a Row;   New International Graduate Applications Decline 4%

Under pressure from lawmakers and parents, Minnesota is leading a national push for study-abroad accountability after several students in the state were sexually assaulted or fell ill while abroad. Study-abroad programs face new pressure to focus on student safety

The 8 defendants "conspired with each other and others to fraudulently facilitate hundreds of foreign nationals in illegally remaining and working in the United States by actively recruiting them to enroll into a metro Detroit private university that, unbeknownst to the conspirators, was operated by HSI (Homeland Security Investigation) special agents as part of an undercover operation." Farmington Hills fake university set up by ICE to nab foreign students;   Online, the U. of Farmington Looked Real. Behind the Scenes, It Was a Federal Sting Operation.;   The University Of Farmington Isn't Real. It's A Complex Federal Sting Operation;   India urges U.S. to release students detained in fake Michigan university sting

Despite pushback from faculty, staff, and students, MIT will keep its agreements with the kingdom. It places much of the responsibility for reconsidering partnerships on faculty members, some of whom will join staff members and students on an ad hoc committee to further examine the question. MIT Offers Harsh Words for Saudi Arabia, but Stops Short of Cutting Financial Ties; Troubled International Ties

Senators grappled with whether the benefits of the centers, such as fostering cultural awareness and language skills, outweighed the downsides of the programs, including concerns about their finances, the confidential contracts under which their teachers and directors work, and the censorship of equivalent U.S. centers in China. What Is It About Confucius Institutes That Spooks Lawmakers? A Senate Hearing Suggests 3 Factors; Who Controls Confucius Institutes?

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Lawmakers on the U.S. House of Representatives education committee announced a series of hearings to mark the formal start of an effort to reauthorize the Higher Education Act. Chairman Scott, Ranking Member Foxx Announce Five Bipartisan Hearings on Higher Education

Sen. Alexander, chairman of the Senate committee overseeing higher ed, hopes to get the Higher Education Act reauthorized within the next year. Could Congress Pass a New Higher-Education Law Before 2020?; A Mission to Overhaul Higher Education; 3 changes Sen. Lamar Alexander plans for the HEA in 2019; Going to College Should Not Be a Financial Albatross

With Democrats in charge of the House education committee, supporters of a student-level data system hope to see progress in Congress on transparency for college outcomes. And opposition to expanded federal data collection from within higher ed appeared to soften last year as well. Expectations Build for College Transparency Legislation

HUMAN RESOURCES

Rude, abusive, harassing, and bullying behavior has been costing organizations big-time for decades. The cost is in decreased productivity, loss of top talent, stilted innovation, increased sick time, poor customer service and serious compliance violations. Adding retaliatory behavior makes the legal costs and compliance risks even higher. The Cost of Incivility in the Workplace

The number of individuals aged 55 and above in the labor force will grow from 35.7 million in 2016 to 42.1 million in 2026. Some organizations have identified talent-related risks that may be tied to aging workforces and are developing responses to help manage the impact of that risk. Other organizations may not believe they face a significant impact associated with the risk of an aging workforce or they may not realize there may be an emerging risk on the horizon related to this. Recognizing the Risk Impact of an Aging Workforce

Changes we can expect workplace culture to undergo by 2030: Workplaces will see greater inclusion and diversity. The communication skills gap will widen. Trust and privacy issues will emerge. Employees will need to constantly upskill. Workspaces will be redesigned. 5 ways your office will change by 2030

INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Purdue's recent switch to a new payroll system caused extreme pay shortages and overages for some staff members. The system had issues with schedules that weren't Monday through Friday and 40 hours a week. Some other mistakes include no holiday pay and no overtime pay. Purdue University Addresses Recent Payroll Problems

A student at Stanford uncovered a security flaw that allowed students to view classmates' Common App admissions data and high-school transcripts. [Personal information of students exposed in Stanford data breach](#)

The greatest challenge organizations continue to face is keeping up and staying informed about the evolving cyber risk landscape. These 8 risks point to the fact that as every organization continues to embrace technology, it only serves to expand the attack surface—and sometimes in unexpected ways. [2019 Cyber Security Risk Report: What's Now and What's Next](#)

INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

Student-athletes are more likely than their non-athlete peers to land a full-time job after graduation. Employers love to hire student-athletes for their leadership, interpersonal, and teamwork skills, and college athletic departments invest in their professional development. [Here's why student-athletes have better employment outcomes](#)

The booming popularity of esports has started a vociferous debate over whether the NCAA or another entity will regulate the industry for colleges and universities. [Video Games: Entertainment or Sports?](#)

At a time when the educational gap continues to widen between low income, particularly black and brown kids, and higher income white kids, football offers a path to upward mobility that is not really available through any other extracurricular activity. [Poor Students More Likely To Play Football, Despite Brain Injury Concerns](#)

MEDICAL & CLINICAL

Healthcare email fraud attack attempts increased by 473% over the past 2 years. Organizations should take 3 immediate actions to secure their systems: a multi-layered approach to network defenses, secure the email channel, and identify and protect the organization's "very attacked people" (VAPS). [Email fraud attacks up by nearly 500%, report says](#)

Federal health regulators unveiled 2 major proposed regulations amid a growing flood of health data that has become an ever-more-valuable asset. The draft rules address technology standards that are supposed to help unlock digital data stored in the electronic health records used by hospitals and doctors to track patients' care. [New Rules Could Ease Patients' Access to Their Own Health Records](#)

The World Health Organization has named a committee of 18 scientific experts who will meet next month to develop guidelines for scientists editing human DNA. [WHO Reacts to Chinese Gene-Edited Twins With Plan for Global Guidelines](#)

ORGANIZATION, GOVERNANCE, & PLANNING

"The number of qualified candidates is probably on the decline due to the job being less attractive, and I think we have boards trying to look for outside-the-box hires that more often than not don't tend to work out." [Who Wants to Be a College President?](#)

Penn State's president when the Jerry Sandusky child molestation scandal erupted may soon be going to jail after Pennsylvania's highest court declined to hear the appeal of his conviction for child endangerment. [Penn State ex-president Spanier's request for appeal denied](#)

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

While open floor plans may be pleasing to the eye, experts note the design makes it harder to seek cover or lock down in emergencies such as active shooter events. In addition, cybersecurity and information protection can also be an issue in open office environments. Out in the Open: The Security Challenges of New Office Spaces

PUBLIC SAFETY

A Northern Illinois U student who was on his first day as an intern at a warehouse in Aurora, Ill., was among 5 people killed when a fired worker went on a shooting rampage last week. NIU student with 'heart of gold' killed on first day at Aurora warehouse

Students turned to social media to voice frustration with Penn State for not sending text alerts about a shooting that was two miles off campus. Penn State Under Fire for Not Sending Text Alert After Off-Campus Shooting

Corporate executives worried about workplace shootings are quietly installing gunfire-detection systems in U.S. offices and factories. Most don't tell employees what the sensors are, for fear of alarming them. The rapid uptick in adoption of gunshot sensors follows a wave of workplace shootings in the past year. Companies Roll Out Gunshot Detectors at the Office

Twelve behaviors that could lead to an act of workplace violence: temper tantrums; excessive absenteeism; decrease in productivity; testing limits; verbalizes negative action or harm; sabotage or theft; numbers and intensity of arguments rise; intense anger; social withdrawal; suicidal threats; and property destruction. Protecting Your Workplace Against Active Shooters

REPUTATION & BRAND

There has been a sharp rise over the past 3 to 4 years in corporate boards instituting reputation-risk modeling. Corporate executives and communications experts say that the increasing speed at which controversy propagates has forced them to perfect the three-pronged rapid response: acknowledge, apologize, and investigate. "Today you have to react within the first half hour. If you ignore something for half an hour, the longer you wait, the longer it takes to shape the perception of the public." What comes next can range from lying low to overhauling executive management. Acknowledge, Apologize, Investigate: How Big Brands Combat Online Outrage

"It's a new day and these public institutions are under intense scrutiny from the outside and from the inside. They really need to have a culture where they're studying other people's crises … because, but by the grace of God, it's not on your campus yet, but it could be tomorrow." What higher ed leaders should do when a scandal hits their campus

SPONSORED RESEARCH

A former Virginia Tech professor was found guilty of conspiring to commit federal grant fraud for submitting funding proposals for research that had already been done in China. Yiheng Percival Zhang intended to use the grant funds for other projects. To obstruct the investigation, Zhang submitted falsified timesheets to government investigators. Former Virginia Tech Professor Found Guilty of Grant Fraud, False Statements, Obstruction

The National Institutes of Health has referred 12 allegations relating to foreign influence over U.S.-funded research to a federal oversight office. Specifically, the action concerns researchers who may have failed to disclose financial ties to foreign governments. NIH asks inspector general to investigate 12 allegations of foreign influence in U.S. research

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The survey was sent to every undergraduate and graduate student at Duke who was over the age of 18. Some 6,782 responded, a rate of 40%. The survey defined sexual assault as "any unwanted, nonconsensual sexual contact," including sexual battery and rape. It did not include sexual harassment or coerced sexual contact. [48% of Female Undergrads at Duke Say They Were Sexually Assaulted While Enrolled, Up Sharply From 2016](#)

Schools in states covered by the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals are already making the changes to offer hearings, forced to do so by a series of court rulings, including a landmark one involving the U of Michigan. [As Devos pushes for campus sexual assault hearings, both sides describe trauma](#)

Civil-rights officials—with the help of activists and federal judges—have wielded the gender-equity law to try to upend gender stereotypes, define sexual harassment in an overly broad way, and force institutions to adopt a particular view of gender identity. "They're making up completely new rules." [Has Title IX Gone Too Far? This Professor Makes the Case](#)

As a matter of law, in loco parentis has been in retreat in recent decades. But as an organizing principle for college behavior, it's making something of a comeback. Past iterations were paternalistic, but the new version is driven by tuition-payers' expectations, colleges' concerns about legal liability, shifting cultural and social norms, and an evolving understanding of human development. [The New 'In Loco Parentis'](#)

Students and institutions are grappling with issues like the surge in school shootings and trauma from suicides and sexual assault. But it's not just the crises that have shaken this generation—it's the grinding, everyday stresses, from social media pressures to relationship problems to increased academic expectations. [As Students Struggle With Stress and Depression, Colleges Act as Counselors](#)

Are we seeing an 'epidemic' of mental illness racing through the country? Or are we seeing a shift in attitudes, definitions, and the expectation of, availability of, and willingness to seek mental health treatment? [Here's the real reason more students are seeking counseling](#)

Arts and humanities students are more likely to agree they have a professor who cares about them as a person (39%), a professor who makes them excited about learning (73%), and a mentor who encourages them to pursue their goals and dreams (35%). Field of study is biggest determiner of whether students have support networks, even more than gender or racial/ethnic background. [Humanities students are more likely than STEM students to have a mentor](#)

A federal court ruled the U of Iowa can't strip a Christian group of its status as a registered student organization based on its requirement that leaders follow its statement of faith, which includes not having sex outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. The university unevenly applies the policy and still allows other groups to limit access to leadership or membership based on their religious views, race, sex and other protected characteristics. [Court: University of Iowa can't keep student group from requiring leaders to follow religious beliefs](#)

NEW ERM RESOURCES

While colleges and universities are making progress in terms of establishing ERM policies and practices, there is still a gap in the preparedness of institutions and the probability of reputational risk events occurring. Even more concerning is the devastating impact that reputational risk events have on institutions. To improve their preparedness for such events, and promote long-term success, institutions should move toward governance, culture, and practices that help identify, prioritize, and manage reputational risks. The top four reputational risks in the past three years are Campus Climate, Sexual Assault/Title IX, Academic Programs, and Student Behavior. Going forward, the top three reputational risks of the future are identified as Business Model, Sexual Assault/Title IX, and Campus Climate. [Are Universities & Colleges Doing Enough to Manage Reputational Risk?](#)

Most anything that provides tremendous value needs to be monitored periodically to ensure that what generates the benefit is maintained and enhanced over time as the organization and its environment continue to evolve. A constant eye on your organization's ERM process can ensure that the process is creating the intended strategic value over time. Periodic self-assessments of the ERM system's effectiveness is an important element of any ERM process. One of the best ways to identify opportunities for enhancement may be obtained by seeking feedback from members of senior management and the board of directors about what is working well and what opportunities they can identify for improvement in the organization's ERM process. Finding out from senior management and the board about how the ERM process might become a more valued strategic tool may lead to next steps in the organization's ERM evolution. Another effective approach to an ERM process self-assessment is to identify a recent risk event within your organization and then ask yourself and others to pinpoint how the organization's approach to risk management failed to either adequately prevent the risk from occurring or failed to timely and sufficiently manage its response to minimize the impact. This kind of "lessons learned" analysis may pinpoint existing shortcomings in the organization's ERM process. Some organizations are interested in seeking external perspectives on the effectiveness of their ERM processes. They may engage ERM consultants or other knowledge experts to review information about the organization's ERM process in order to provide feedback and suggestions about opportunities for improvement. Sometimes those individuals are able to provide benchmarking information that allows the organization to examine how their ERM process compares to other organizations of similar size, industry, or other demographic. Organizations can also take advantage of available evaluation tools. Networking groups of ERM leaders exist in some industries, including higher ed, whereby ERM leaders periodically meet to share ERM process ideas and techniques. One of the simplest ways to assess the effectiveness of an ERM process is to monitor thought papers and other best practice resources, such as webinars and conferences that focus on ERM techniques. Hearing from others about their approaches to ERM can generate helpful "food-for-thought" ideas that can be leveraged in your organization. [Pinpointing Opportunities to Strengthen Your Organization's ERM Processes](#)