The Risky Academy: Environmental Scan for April 2019

ACADEMIC QUALITY

“Colleges and universities will have too much capacity and not enough demand at a time when the economic model in higher education is already straining under its own weight. Make no mistake—this is an existential threat to entire sectors of higher education. And New England, unfortunately, is ground zero.” The Higher Education Apocalypse

Instead of students receiving a reasonably priced, quality online degree, universities delivering their programs through Online Program Managers (OPMs) use them as cash cows while corporate middlemen hoover up the greater share of the profits. Big tech companies get the spill-off, in the form of massive sums spent on Facebook and Google ads. And it all started with John Katzman, who has come to deeply question what has become of his own creation. The Creeping Capitalist Makeover of Higher Education; What Kevin Carey Got Right (and Wrong); 7 Arguments Against “The Creeping Capitalist Takeover of Higher Education”

There are powerful forces in our society that would not only restrict the faculty’s academic freedom but also seek to transform our institutions of higher ed into engines of profit instead of sources of enlightenment. Yet these forces pale before the challenge of the faculty’s own apathy and indifference. ‘The Time for Engagement’

Thea Hunter was a promising, brilliant scholar. Then she got trapped in academia’s permanent underclass. To be a perennial adjunct professor is to hear the constant tone of higher ed’s death knell. The story is well known—the long hours, the heavy workload, the insufficient pay—as academia relies on adjunct professors, non-tenured faculty, who are often paid pennies on the dollar to do the same work required of their tenured colleagues. The Death of an Adjunct

The DoE negotiation committee unanimously approved compromise language covering all of the topics under consideration. If finalized, the changes will loosen the department’s oversight of accreditors and give accrediting agencies more flexibility to approve new programs and branch campuses, and more time to sanction colleges that are out of compliance. Consensus or Chaos? Education Dept.’s Rule-Making Session Reaches Agreement; New Rules for Accreditors

A growing number of states grant their community colleges authority to award some bachelor’s degrees. The degrees are generally work force oriented—many are bachelor’s of applied science—and most states require the college provide evidence of unmet labor market demand and/or ensure the degree does not duplicate programs offered by local public universities. Who Owns the Bachelor’s Degree?; Presidents Divided on Community College Bachelor’s Degrees

While distance-learning programs are not likely to replace the traditional college experience for everyone, the rate of growth in online enrollment is outpacing that for campus enrollment. The market for online programs is crowded and relatively easy to enter, but traditional name-brand universities now claim a larger share of it than in the past. Revenue From Online Ed Is On the Rise. So Is the Competition, Moody’s Says.

“I have a hunch, which is that professors are considerably less good at teaching than they think they are. The hunch is based on the fact that we don’t train teaching assistants to teach, that we select and hire professors without any regard to their ability or potential as teachers, and that we don’t then give them further training or professional development. And the incentives in the
system are all focused on research, and not improvement of one’s teaching. The final part of it is, I think teaching is really difficult. It’s a very difficult, complex skill that needs to be learned.” 

Research Universities Need to Improve Their Teaching. But More Money Won’t Help, a Philosopher Says.

A week into this spring semester, the computer science department had 650 names on course waiting lists. The university recently hired 8 faculty members to offset 3 retirements, and more offers are in the works, but recruiting is a challenge when individuals with Ph.D.’s receive salary offers more than two times higher in the private sector than at a public university. Student demand for computer science straining UW-Madison department resources

ADVANCEMENT

Early stage alumni entrepreneurs have immense giving potential. Overnight, they can become major gift prospects when they sell an app, go public, or receive venture capital funding. However, these millennial entrepreneurs, the “millennipreneurs,” may likely only support organizations with whom they had close bonds before attaining this wealth. Engage emerging entrepreneurs sooner rather than later

AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS

Activists want Swarthmore to terminate the leases of the fraternities, which rent their houses from the college, and ban them from the campus. Activism swelled since two campus publications published hundreds of pages of sexist, racist, and homophobic documents that apparently describe Phi Psi’s “meeting minutes” and rituals for initiating new members, from 2012 to 2016. Anger Over Greek Life Reaches Boiling Point at Swarthmore, Where Dozens Are Occupying a Frat House; Swarthmore Students Demand Closing of Fraternity That Boasted of ‘Rape Attic’; Student Activists Shut Down Swarthmore’s Fraternities. Here’s Why That Matters.; Swarthmore Fraternities Disband After Uproar Over ‘Rape Attic’ Documents

University at Buffalo freshman Sebastian Serafin-Bazan, 18, had been hospitalized after the suspected hazing at an off-campus house. The incident has led to an indefinite suspension of fraternity and sorority activities. University freshman dead after suspected fraternity hazing

AUDIT, COMPLIANCE, & LEGAL

In 2011, then-President Barack Obama’s administration urged universities to take more action on sexual assault complaints. Since then, universities have lost more decisions in these lawsuits than they have won. Most losses are judges deciding against universities’ motions to dismiss the cases. Students accused of sexual assault are suing colleges — and winning most of the time

A Clemson student who would have graduated in May will not be getting a degree, but will receive a $100,000 settlement from the university following a multi-year fight over the handling of a sexual misconduct case. Judge upholds $100,000 settlement with Clemson University in sexual misconduct case

A lawsuit alleging Washington State violated federal law and failed to protect an African-American student from a hostile campus environment in 2015 was dismissed from federal court, which determined WSU’s response may have been far from perfect, but it does not rise to the level of deliberate indifference. Court dismisses student’s lawsuit against WSU
A Michigan State engineering professor exploited his students and forced them to work long hours for little to no pay at his personal company. MSU officials have known about the issue since 2011, but did not take action to monitor the situation, according to a lawsuit. **Michigan State knew of engineering professor’s ‘abusive’ labor practices, lawsuit alleges**

**DIVERSITY & INCLUSION**

In 2017, there were more than a dozen fields—largely subfields within science, technology, engineering, and math—in which not a single doctoral degree was awarded to a black person anywhere in the United States. **The Disciplines Where No Black People Earn Ph.D.s**

Civil rights officials at the DoE are requiring the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center medical school to cease factoring race into admissions decisions, putting other institutions of higher ed on notice that their continued use of affirmative action policies will draw federal scrutiny. **U.S. Requires Texas Tech Med School to End Use of Race in Admissions Decisions**

“[Black professionals’] careers are mostly safe if they express gratitude (whether sincere or not) to the institution; generally go along with whatever their white colleagues want; outproduce their peers but do not conspicuously outshine them; if male, avoid all suspicions of impropriety with female students (particularly nonblack students); never raise their voice or make sudden moves except at a university sporting event; do not question their institution’s sincerity with regard to ‘diversity’ without first reassuring all the ‘allies’ that they are doing their very best; and, never—ever—forget to smile.” **Being a Black Academic in America**

**ENROLLMENT**

In fall 2018, 69% of 16- to 24-year-olds who graduated high school in 2018 were enrolled, with 9 out of 10 reporting they were full-time students—a marginal increase over 2017 high school graduates, 67% of whom were enrolled in college. Over the last decade, that figure has fluctuated between 66% and 70%. **College Enrollment Stays Flat, Continuing a Decade-Long Trend**

Since 2008, the post-high school educational attainment of Americans ages 25-64 has increased by 10 percentage points. That’s progress, but it’s not enough to reach 60% by 2025. Dramatic action is needed to meet the nation’s need for talent. **A Stronger Nation**

1) They’re juggling work and school. 2) No one told them how many credits to take. 3) They transferred schools, but their credits didn’t come with them. 4) They fell into the “exploration” trap. 5) They got stuck in remedial courses. 6) They lack confidence. 7) They couldn’t navigate the hidden curriculum. **7 reasons—other than cost—that students don’t graduate**

While students with an average m-index had a 74% graduation rate in 9 years, those whose m-index was a standard deviation higher than average graduated at a rate of about 80% during the same period. Only 8 days of meal data, including the weekend before classes started, significantly predicted graduation, “even when accounting for student demographics, precollege academic achievement, prior college credits, and college experiences.” **Are Students Socially Connected? Check Their Dining-Hall-Swipe Data**

While students are over being impressed by guides walking backward, they pay a lot of attention to the guides themselves, and colleges should pay close attention to the quality of tours. When counselors are being debriefed by students about their college trips, students will reference the name of the guide before the name of the college—and connecting with that person seems to be something high school students expect. This may be unfair to colleges, but institutions need to know that they are being judged by their tour guides. **What High School Students Want**
One coach and 13 parents reach deals over legal charges. Ms. Loughlin and Mr. Giannulli entered not-guilty pleas along with several others. Others face new charges. New details emerge on test fraud after another guilty plea. 14 Agree to Plead Guilty in Admissions Scandal;  Actress Lori Loughlin and Husband Mossimo Giannulli Plead Not Guilty in College-Admissions Case

The testing expert, Mark Riddell, traveled across the country to take ACT and SAT exams for the children of the rich and famous. Mr. Riddell, 36, appeared in Boston federal court to plead guilty to charges in the college admissions scandal. Prosecutors said he was a key part of the scheme. As Test Expert in Admissions Scandal Pleads Guilty, Exam Companies Move to Fix Weaknesses

“I did not know—even after 4 years at the institution—that the [private Los Angeles high] school’s impressive matriculation list was not the simple by-product of excellent teaching, but was in fact the end result of parental campaigns undertaken with the same level of whimsy with which the Japanese Navy bombed Pearl Harbor. ... I just about got an ulcer sitting in that office listening to rich people complaining bitterly about an “unfair” or a “rigged” system. Sometimes they would say things so outlandish that I would just stare at them, trying to beam into their mind the question, Can you hear yourself? That so many of them were (literal) limousine liberals lent the meetings an element of radical chic. They were down for the revolution, but there was no way their kid was going to settle for Lehigh.”

They Had It Coming

The majority of students—more than 80%—attend schools that accept more than half their applicants. In 2017, roughly 3% of the country’s bachelor’s-degree candidates were enrolled at a 4-year university that accepts fewer than a quarter of undergraduate applicants; only 0.8% of undergraduates were attending one of the handful of universities that accept fewer than one in 10 applicants. College-Admissions Hysteria Is Not the Norm

Leaders at all colleges should review admissions records and policies and seek ways to counter the narrative that admissions are “fixed.” Suggestions also include checking team rosters to ensure students admitted as athletes are playing, and taking the steps companies do to protect themselves from fraud. 3 steps all colleges should take after the admissions scandal

FACULTY RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

For full-time faculty, the overall median salary increase over the past year was 1.67%. Salary increases for tenure-track faculty continued to trail those for non-tenure teaching faculty. Representation and pay equity for both women and racial/ethnic minorities decline with increases in rank from assistant to associate to full professor. 2019 Faculty in Higher Education Annual Report; New Faculty-Data Report: Health Professions Are ‘Hottest’; Faculty Salaries Up 1.7%; Faculty Salaries Stay Flat

The long and short of it: Pay raises were modest, faculty buying power has eroded, and many different factors are rolled into faculty pay. But the data, from nearly 1,000 two- and four-year colleges, also tell us 3 things about the academic workplace: Professors’ paychecks are still squeezed by the effects of inflation. Part-time faculty salaries vary—a lot. Gender equity remains an issue. 3 Things a Faculty-Pay Survey Shows About Academic Jobs

Women represented 51% of administrators but only 20% of the top 5 highest-paying dean roles. Nearly half (47%) of the 5 lowest-paying dean positions were held by women. People of color represented 16% of administrators, up from 15% last year. Only 5% of all deans of medicine, the highest-paying dean position, were people of color. 2019 Administrators in Higher Education Annual Report; 3 Takeaways From a New Survey on Administrative Pay
A purportedly world-leading American higher ed system that nevertheless relies on faculty with no claim to stable employment, health insurance, retirement benefits, or even their own office is simply unsustainable. Even a society that doesn’t care about the feelings of adjunct professors, nor about their quality of life or health, should recognize that a system operating as if it has no future is not a good thing. Not for universities, not for the economy, and not for civic life. The University Is a Ticking Time Bomb

**FINANCE**

Asked about the top issues influencing the public’s negative perceptions of higher ed, large majorities of trustees cite news about college student debt (72%) and news about the price of tuition (64%). In fact, over half of trustees (58%) say their top concern about the future of higher ed is the price of higher ed for students and their families. A Crisis in Confidence in Higher Ed

During the recession, tuition as a share of revenue skyrocketed, increasing 10 percentage points in just a few years. This has historically been what states do when there’s a recession. While state higher ed appropriations are now slowly rising, reliance on tuition doesn’t bode well for the near future. “We’re concerned about what will happen during the next recession.” Partial, and Uneven, Recovery From Recession

The DoE issued recommendations for colleges to improve the transparency of financial aid offered to students, including such guidance as avoiding referring to financial aid offers, which can include loans and Federal Work-Study, as “awards.” Feds Recommend Colleges Clarify Financial Aid Offers; What Should Colleges Tell Admitted Applicants About Aid?

The former director of financial aid signed off on excessive “cost of attendance” figures that did not reflect the students’ actual cost of living. She then approved excessive stipends for the scamming students, sometimes creating fraudulent forms that gave the appearance that professors or other administrators had requested the money. The 4 students then allegedly paid the financial aid director nearly $1M in kickbacks. Financial aid chief at Columbia University’s Teachers College sentenced to over 3 years for kickback scheme

**GLOBAL & INTERNATIONAL**

Over the past 18 months, the White House, federal agencies, and Congress have all signaled concerns about theft of sensitive academic research by foreign competitors. And they’re signaling that when it comes to the balance between scientific openness and national security—and, to add a third dimension, economic competitiveness—they’re not happy with where that balance is being struck, especially when it comes to China. Science vs. Security

The FBI has mounted a counterintelligence operation that aims to bar Chinese academics from the U.S. if they are suspected of having links to Chinese intelligence agencies. As many as 30 Chinese professors in the social sciences, heads of academic institutes, and experts who help explain government policies have had their visas to the U.S. canceled in the past year, or put on administrative review. F.B.I. Bars Some China Scholars From Visiting U.S. Over Spying Fears

Three types of projects will be subject to the higher review: those funded by people or entities from China, Russia, and Saudi Arabia; those involving MIT faculty or staff members or students doing work in those countries; and collaborations with people or entities from those countries. MIT, Amid Scrutiny of Foreign Research, Announces Stricter Review of Chinese and Saudi Collaborations; Elite U.S. school MIT cuts ties with Chinese tech firms Huawei, ZTE
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

In addition to eliminating undergraduate tuition at public colleges and universities, she would expand federal grants to help students with nontuition expenses and create a $50B fund to support historically black colleges and universities. She would eliminate up to $50,000 in student loan debt for every person with a household income of less than $100,000; borrowers who make between $100,000 and $250,000 would have a portion of their debt forgiven.

Elizabeth Warren’s Higher Education Plan: Cancel Student Debt and Eliminate Tuition; Elizabeth Warren has the wrong answer to America's student debt problem; Warren’s Free-College Plan Would Cancel Student Debt for Millions; Democrats Running for President Are Staking Out Ground on Free College, Here’s Where They Stand.; Warren Shakes Up Student Loan Debate;  Warren’s Student-Debt Deal Would Most Benefit Stronger Earners, Study Finds

INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Washington State and its insurers agreed to pay up to $5.26M and provide potential victims an additional 2 years of free credit monitoring. The suit stemmed from a burglary at an Olympia storage facility in which someone stole a safe containing a hard drive, which in turn contained sensitive information on nearly 1.2 million people, including names, Social Security numbers and personal health records. WSU settles class action suit over 2017 hard drive theft

Georgia Tech has hired two companies—Mandiant and Ankura—to analyze last week’s online security breach. Mandiant will investigate how the breach occurred and the method of attack, while Ankura will examine what information was taken. Georgia Tech hires firms to review data breach;  Data breach exposes up to 1.3M Georgia Tech faculty, students

A test of UK university defenses against cyber-attacks found that in every case hackers were able to obtain “high-value” data within 2 hours. The tests were carried out by “ethical hackers” working for JISC, the agency providing internet services to the UK’s universities and research centers. Hackers beat university cyber-defences in two hours

The Office for Civil Rights has launched a case, which concerns website and online course accessibility. University of Louisville being investigated for possible disability discrimination

The aim is to have one way in which information is embedded into a file, so that third parties can verify it without having to go back to whoever issued the file. The credentials become autonomous pieces of information, which students can manage on a phone, post on a website, or give out to potential employers. Seeking a Shared Global Standard for Digital Credentials

INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

North Carolina women’s basketball coach Sylvia Hatchell built a Hall of Fame career over more than 3 decades with the Tar Heels, including winning a national championship and becoming the ACC’s all-time winningest coach. That tenure ended with her resignation after a program review found concerns over her making “racially insensitive” comments and pressuring players to compete through medical issues. UNC coach Hatchell resigns after program review

MEDICAL & CLINICAL

UCLA Health will pay $7.5M to settle a class action lawsuit filed by the victims of a data breach from 2014. Victims allege UCLA Health failed to inform them in a timely manner, and claimed that there were violations of contracts, California’s privacy laws, and UCLA Health’s failure to protect patient privacy. UCLA Health Settles $7.5M Lawsuit Over Data Breach
“Specifically, Defendants engaged in a pattern [of] intentional, reckless, and or/negligent conduct whereby they made false statements regarding Plaintiff's mental health and falsely presented Plaintiff as a threat to others,” the lawsuit states. **UT fired counselor accused of disclosing student’s PTSD**

Two years ago, measles cases unexpectedly popped upward again, rising 30% in a year, and re-invading countries where it had been vanquished. Anti-vaccine activists, false rumors, and serious missteps by some vaccine companies all contributed to the global rebound. Jet travel has also fueled the spread. **Scientists Thought They Had Measles Cornered. They Were Wrong.**

While such wrongdoing can occur in any setting, the danger is significantly greater in the training of American physicians. Much of this is tied to the stakes—medical students have close to a decade of advanced education, critical career opportunities, and even financial survival hanging in the balance. **America’s Medical Profession Has a Sexual Harassment Problem**

Based on assessments, audits, and reviews of nearly 600 health care organizations and business associates, most were found to be performing “well below where we would like to see them,” with only an average of 47% aligning with the NIST Cybersecurity Framework and 72% reporting compliance with HIPAA. **Healthcare organizations lagging behind NIST Cybersecurity Framework, HIPAA guidance**

**ORGANIZATION, GOVERNANCE, & PLANNING**

Cognitive bias underlies many strategic planning problems. Cognitive bias, which is rooted in human nature, is a universal psychological phenomenon driven by unconscious reactions. Cognitive bias #1: The “here and now” fallacy. #2: “Stay the course” syndrome. #3: The paradox of participation. **3 assumptions that derail strategic planning—and how to fix them**

The long-running criminal court drama over the Sandusky child sexual abuse scandal moved to a conclusion when a judge ordered Penn State's former president to finally report to prison on May 1. Hours before he was slated to report to jail, a federal judge threw out the embattled leader’s 2017 criminal conviction for child endangerment, agreeing that prosecutors improperly applied an expanded child-endangerment law, from 2007, to hold Spanier accountable for his conduct in 2001. **Former Penn State Pres Graham Spanier ordered to prison – finally – in Sandusky scandal; With Last-Minute Ruling, Graham Spanier Evades Jumpsuit and ‘Hard Cell’**

**PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

After a two-inch gas line was hit near Brightleaf Square shortly after 10:00 a.m., the resulting blast caused a nearby building’s partial collapse, initially sending 17 people to area hospitals. The number of injured people rose to 25. Since the explosion, 500 Duke employees who work downtown are being relocated. **Frightening and sad day: Duke employees injured in Durham explosion, President Price says**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

The 21-year-old summoned an Uber ride during the early morning hours and was waiting for the ride to come. Josephson was seen on video mistakenly getting into the car—a black four-door Chevy Impala—thinking it was an Uber. **University of South Carolina student murdered after mistaking car for Uber, police say**
Two students were killed and 4 others injured in a shooting in a “Science, Technology, and Society” class taught by Adam Johnson, an anthropology instructor. Riley Howell, who was killed, charged at the gunman and pinned him down until police officers arrived. 2 Students Are Killed in Shooting at U. of North Carolina at Charlotte; U.N.C. Charlotte Shooting Leaves 2 Dead and 4 Wounded; U.N.C. Charlotte Student Couldn’t Run, So He Tackled the Gunman

It was forbidden. But the group of friends sneaked into Fordham’s most recognizable building in the dead of night anyway. They clambered up the steep staircase of the granite bell tower that overlooks the Rose Hill campus to take in the view of the Bronx under moonlight, sending a Snapchat video from the top. Then something went horribly wrong. Fordham Student, Sydney Monfries, Dies After Fall From Campus Bell Tower

The evidence supporting empowerment self-defense programs is hard to dispute. But few colleges offer them. The core argument against promoting self-defense as an anti-sexual-assault strategy is a predictable one: The courses put the burden on women to protect themselves, instead of teaching men not to rape. Empowerment Self-Defense’ Programs Make Women Safer. Why Don’t More Colleges Use Them?

SPONSORED RESEARCH

The biggest spending issue was nearly $900,000 in unapproved transfers to other entities, when ASU gave NSF funds to follow researchers who left the university for other institutions. Auditors also were concerned about nearly $130,000 in “inappropriately allocated expenses,” more than $50,000 in other expense problems, and more than $5,000 in “unreasonable” travel expenses. Audit: ASU misspent more than $1 million in federal research funds

A high-level U of Kentucky researcher is under investigation by UK’s Office of Research Integrity. Xianglin Shi was the subject of story in Retraction Watch, which noted that Shi had retracted 3 papers from the Journal of Biological Chemistry that had questionable “image duplication.” University of Kentucky researcher under investigation after article retraction

Stanford concluded that Dr. Quake did not “directly participate in any way in JK’s research, including in the conception or performance of the work.” In fact, Dr. Quake discouraged Dr. He from pursuing the project and urged him to follow proper scientific practices after he insisted on going ahead. Stanford Clears Professor of Helping With Gene-Edited Babies Experiment

MD Anderson took the actions after receiving e-mails last year from the NIH, the nation’s largest public funder of biomedical research, describing conflicts of interest or unreported foreign income by 5 faculty members. MD Anderson ousts 3 scientists over concerns about Chinese conflicts of interest

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

In the wake of violent political protests on campuses around the country, some students have stepped away from the fray and sought what’s been lacking: space for reasoned conversation, listening, and middle ground. The hunger for moderation comes with rules that emphasize facts, ban personal attacks, and respect ideological opponents. To be fair, campuses remain split and charged, but there is also a new drive for meeting spaces and a quest for common ground. Getting rid of the ‘gotcha’: College students try to tame political dialogue
The number of 18- to 26-year-old students who report suffering from anxiety disorder has doubled since 2008, perhaps as a result of rising financial stress and increased time spent on digital devices. Anxiety ‘epidemic’ brewing on college campuses, researchers find

With a national spotlight on low-income and vulnerable students, the protest at the U of Kentucky is the latest sign that colleges are being forced to do more to provide for their basic living needs. The concept of creating a single point of contact for vulnerable students exists in K-12 education and at community colleges, but not many 4-year institutions have such a center. That’s changing. In Kentucky, a Hunger Strike for Basic Support Forces a President’s Hand; UK students to end hunger strike: ‘Racist’ mural to be covered, low-income needs remedied

NEW ERM RESOURCES

Among numerous findings, the study reveals that enterprise-wide risk management practices in most organizations remain relatively immature, but are improving over time. Most boards of directors want senior executives to increase management involvement in risk management. Organizations are struggling to connect their risk management efforts with strategy, but they are seeking to find ways to strengthen that integration. An increasing number of organizations are appointing an executive to formally lead their risk management efforts, and a large majority of organizations have implemented a management-level risk committee. 2019 The State of Risk Oversight

This monthly publication is being sent to all IU Risk Owners and others participating or interested in the IU Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) program by Merri Beth Lavagnino, Director of Strategic Planning & Enterprise Risk for IU, in order to increase awareness of current trends affecting enterprise risk in higher education. Please reply to her at mbl@iu.edu if you would like to be taken off the mailing list, or if you have others you would like to add to the mailing list. Thank you!