Higher Education in a post-COVID-19 world

While uncertainty pervades all aspects of higher education right now (e.g., virtual learning, remote work, uncertain financial conditions, constrained enrollment) it is inevitable that many colleges and universities will be operating in a very different environment in a post-COVID-19 world.

Immediate

Remote Delivery
Most institutions are shifting courses to virtual learning platforms and all operations to remote work; limited IT resources and faculty experience with these modalities will create challenges.

Rapid Restructuring
Some institutions will face the need to rapidly reexamine and potentially restructure operations and evaluate liquidity to ensure short term continuity.

Short-term

Student Well-Being
Student services such as advising, counseling, faculty office hours, and career services will need to adapt to remote/virtual engagement in order to address students needs.

Uncertain Enrollment
While historically enrollments are counter-cyclical, uncertainty in enrollment forecasts into the next academic year due to fewer channels, potential student dissatisfaction with level of service, and financial crisis impacts on parents and students will make planning difficult.

Increased Cyber Risks
Short term measures to rapidly scale up "remote access" potentially leave institutions more vulnerable as entry points for attackers increase.

Long-term

Title IV Compliance
The implications of a shortened academic year, enrollment status changes, treatment of credit balance requirements, and an uncertain landscape around waivers, put future tuition revenues further in doubt.

Long-Term Solvency
Closures and mergers may be the result from short-term tuition, room and board refunds, and longer term enrollment declines.

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