



New Survey Reveals Strong ROI For Graduates Of AP-Supported Programs

Academic Partnerships helps regional public universities and small colleges develop and grow their online degree programs in nursing, teaching, business, and other high-demand sectors. Amidst the important national conversation about the cost and value of higher education, AP commissioned Ipsos to measure the experience of graduates of AP-supported programs. The AP ROI Survey reveals that graduates of AP-supported programs fare well – from salary gains and career advancement, to low debt levels and short payback, to overall satisfaction with their degree.

Key Findings

- 1. Programs Deliver Double-Digit Salary Increases and Short Payback Period¹.** Graduates of AP-supported programs average a first-year salary increase of nearly \$14,000, allowing them to pay back tuition in just over a year.
 - Average total tuition for a full degree program was \$16,600.
 - Recent grads (2021, 2022) show a 20% increase in salary one year after degree completion. This works out to \$13,700 and the ability to pay back tuition in 1.2 years, on average.
 - Those who graduated three years ago see a salary increase of 29%, or \$18,400 on average.
- 2. Most Fund Their Degrees Without Loans.** 54% did not have to take out loans; student debt averaged out to be just over \$6,000.
 - Loans make up less than half of degree program funding among graduates of AP-enabled programs – 38%, representing just ~\$6,300 on average.
 - More than half (54%) did not take on any student debt.
- 3. Graduates Overwhelmingly Affirm the Value of Their Degrees.** More than 8 in 10 of graduates say “my degree was worth the investment.”
 - 85% consider their degree worth the investment, and 81% would recommend their program to a friend or colleague.
 - Affordability (69%) and time to complete the degree (41%) were the top reasons graduates chose their universities.
 - Six in 10 (61%) report choosing their online degree program for career advancement, while even more (67%) agree that their degree helped them do just that.

About the Study

From February 15 to March 3, 2023, a total of n=52,756 graduates across 25 AP partner institutions were contacted via email. Ipsos, one of the world’s leading independent market research companies, completed 916 surveys among respondents working either full- or part-time since starting their degree program – the subject of the report.

¹ Salary gains = post-graduation salary – salary before program among 2022/2021 graduates (n=541) and 2020/2019 graduates (n=233). Payback = tuition divided by salary gains among 2022/2021 graduates (n=541).