

Jacksonville University

English Department

ENGLISH 103 EXIT ESSAY

The English department at JU requires students enrolled in ENGL 103 to take an exit exam focused on research, writing, and citation/documentation. These skills are emphasized throughout ENGL 103. Students must demonstrate proficiency in the above skills in order to pass the exam and exempt ENGL 214.

YOU MAY USE THIS SHEET FOR NOTES. WRITE YOUR ESSAY ON THE LINED PAPER.

- Select one of the following options and read the article carefully. You may wish to spend a few moments organizing your thoughts and writing down some ideas or an outline.
- Using appropriate conventions of organization, structure, and language, write a formal essay in response to the prompt, referring to the attached source article you selected. Your essay should demonstrate:
 - a. an effective introduction that establishes a focus for the essay
 - b. an essay body that is organized, unified, and developed
 - c. that you can properly integrate into the essay a summary, a paraphrase, and a quote (at least one of each should be evident in the essay), and cite each appropriately
 - d. appropriate documentation at the end of the essay
 - e. standard grammar and general mechanics

Option I –“Why College is Necessary but Gets You Nowhere”

PROMPT: What is the value of a college education? Answer this question using evidence from Reich's essay as well as your own knowledge and experiences.

Option II —“Attention Students: Put Your Laptops Away”

PROMPT: In this article, James Doubek cites experts who claim that taking notes by hand in class enables the processing of information and increases ability in conceptual application. Using evidence from the article and your own knowledge and experiences, construct an argument in which you discuss the value of taking notes by hand versus using a laptop. From a student's perspective, does the method of note taking make a difference in the learning experience?

Why College Is Necessary but Gets You Nowhere

By Robert Reich November 24, 2014

robertreich.org

This is the time of year when high school seniors apply to college, and when I get lots of mail about whether college is worth the cost.

The answer is unequivocally yes, but with one big qualification. I'll come to the qualification in a moment but first the financial case for why it's worth going to college.

Put simply, people with college degrees continue to earn far more than people without them. And that college "premium" keeps rising.

Last year, Americans with four-year college degrees earned on average 98 percent more per hour than people without college degrees.

In the early 1980s, graduates earned 64 percent more.

So even though college costs are rising, the financial return to a college degree compared to not having one is rising even faster.

But here's the qualification, and it's a big one.

A college degree no longer guarantees a *good* job. The main reason it pays better than the job of someone without a degree is the latter's wages are dropping.

In fact, it's likely that new college graduates will spend some years in jobs for which they're overqualified.

According to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, 46 percent of recent college graduates are now working in jobs that don't require college degrees. (The same is true for more than a third of college graduates overall.)

Their employers still choose college grads over non-college grads on the assumption that more education is better than less.

As a result, non-grads are being pushed into ever more menial work, if they can get work at all. Which is a major reason why their pay is dropping.

What's going on? For years we've been told globalization and technological advances increase the demand for well-educated workers. (Confession: I was one of the ones making this argument.)

This was correct until around 2000. But since then two things have reversed the trend.

First, millions of people in developing nations are now far better educated, and the Internet has given them an easy way to sell their skills in advanced economies like the United States. Hence, more and more complex work is being outsourced to them.

Second, advanced software is taking over many tasks that had been done by well-educated professionals – including data analysis, accounting, legal and engineering work, even some medical diagnoses.

As a result, the demand for well-educated workers in the United States seems to have peaked around 2000 and fallen since. But the supply of well-educated workers has continued to grow.

What happens when demand drops and supply increases? You guessed it. This is why the incomes of young people who graduated college after 2000 have barely risen.

Those just within the top ten percent of college graduate earnings have seen their incomes increase by only 4.4 percent since 2000.

When it comes to beginning their careers, it's even worse. The starting wages of college graduates have actually dropped since 2000. The starting wage of women grads has dropped 8.1 percent, and for men, 6.7 percent.

I hear it all the time from my former students. *The New York Times* calls them "Generation Limbo" – well-educated young adults "whose careers are stuck in neutral, coping with dead-end jobs and listless prospects." A record number are living at home.

The deeper problem is this. While a college education is now a prerequisite for joining the middle class, the middle class is in lousy shape. Its share of the total economic pie continues to shrink, while the share going to the very top continues to grow.

Given all this, a college degree is worth the cost because it at least enables a young person to tread water. Without the degree, young people can easily drown.

Some young college graduates will make it into the top 1 percent. But that route is narrower than ever. The on-ramp often requires the right connections (especially parents well inside the top 1 percent).

And the off-ramps basically go in only three directions: Wall Street, corporate consulting, and Silicon Valley.

Don't get me wrong. I don't believe the main reason to go to college – or to choose one career over another – should be to make lots of money.

Hopefully, a college education gives young people tools for leading full and purposeful lives, and having meaningful careers.

Even if they don't change the world for the better, I want my students to be responsible and engaged citizens.

But when considering a college education in a perilous economy like this, it's also important to know the economics.

Robert Reich is a professor of public policy at the University of California, Berkeley. He has written fourteen books and his works have appeared in the New York Times, Harvard Business Review, the Wall Street Journal, among others.

Attention, Students: Put Your Laptops Away

April 17, 2016 6:00 AM ET

NPR STAFF

JAMES DOUBEK

As laptops become smaller and more ubiquitous, and with the advent of tablets, the idea of taking notes by hand just seems old-fashioned to many students today. Typing your notes is faster — which comes in handy when there's a lot of information to take down. But it turns out there are still advantages to doing things the old-fashioned way.

For one thing, research shows that laptops and tablets have a tendency to be distracting — it's so easy to click over to Facebook in that dull lecture. And a study has shown that the fact that you *have* to be slower when you take notes by hand is what makes it more useful in the long run.

In the study published in *Psychological Science*, Pam A. Mueller of Princeton University and Daniel M. Oppenheimer of the University of California, Los Angeles sought to test how note-taking by hand or by computer affects learning.

"When people type their notes, they have this tendency to try to take verbatim notes and write down as much of the lecture as they can," Mueller tells NPR's Rachel Martin. "The students who were taking longhand notes in our studies were forced to be more selective — because you can't write as fast as you can type. And that extra processing of the material that they were doing benefited them."

Mueller and Oppenheimer cited that note-taking can be categorized two ways: generative and nongenerative. Generative note-taking pertains to "summarizing, paraphrasing, concept mapping," while nongenerative note-taking involves copying something verbatim.

And there are two hypotheses to why note-taking is beneficial in the first place. The first idea is called the encoding hypothesis, which says that when a person is taking notes, "the processing that occurs" will improve "learning and retention." The second, called the external-storage hypothesis, is that you learn by being able to look back at your notes, or even the notes of other people.

Because people can type faster than they write, using a laptop will make people more likely to try to transcribe everything they're hearing. So on the one hand, Mueller and Oppenheimer were faced with the question of whether the benefits of

being able to look at your more complete, transcribed notes on a laptop outweigh the drawbacks of not processing that information. On the other hand, when writing longhand, you process the information better but have less to look back at.

For their first study, they took university students (the standard guinea pig of psychology) and showed them TED talks about various topics. Afterward, they found that the students who used laptops typed significantly more words than those who took notes by hand. When testing how well the students remembered information, the researchers found a key point of divergence in the type of question. For questions that asked students to simply remember facts, like dates, both groups did equally well. But for "conceptual-application" questions, such as, "How do Japan and Sweden differ in their approaches to equality within their societies?" the laptop users did "significantly worse."

The same thing happened in the second study, even when they specifically told students using laptops to try to avoid writing things down verbatim. "Even when we told people they shouldn't be taking these verbatim notes, they were not able to overcome that instinct," Mueller says. The more words the students copied verbatim, the worse they performed on recall tests.

And to test the external-storage hypothesis, for the third study they gave students the opportunity to review their notes in between the lecture and test. The thinking is, if students have time to study their notes from their laptops, the fact that they typed more extensive notes than their longhand-writing peers could possibly help them perform better.

But the students taking notes by hand still performed better. "This is suggestive evidence that longhand notes may have superior external storage as well as superior encoding functions," Mueller and Oppenheimer write.

Do studies like these mean wise college students will start migrating back to notebooks?

"I think it is a hard sell to get people to go back to pen and paper," Mueller says. "But they are developing lots of technologies now like Livescribe and various stylus and tablet technologies that are getting better and better. And I think that will be sort of an easier sell to college students and people of that generation."