



## Press Release

# Options for Innovation and Reform in Higher Education

ANDREW EVANS | NOVEMBER 12, 2019

Higher education in the United States is ripe for innovation: With job openings exceeding hires, the economy is demanding a skilled workforce, yet the current higher-education system is struggling with questions around its cost and value. Nevertheless, the current system is structured to favor the incumbents, write AAF experts Isabel Soto and Tom Lee in new research. A variety of innovative approaches to education and workforce training exist on a small scale, yet national-level policies prevent their expansion and further innovation.

An excerpt:

Policymakers have several reforms available that could enhance the value of higher education. Revising the outdated accreditation system and encouraging the release of more information could spur more competition. Allowing the private sector to take an active role in workforce development could help address the country's skills gap challenge. Providing a level regulatory and funding playing field for educational alternatives in which students can enter a shorter degree program to gain high-demand skills sets them up for higher earnings in addition to providing them with greater job security and less debt than if they had gone to a traditional 4-year institution. Such reforms could encourage much-needed innovation in how American workers train for the future economy.

## [Read the Research](#)

More from AAF on this topic:

- [The Economic Benefits of Educational Attainment](#)
- [Projecting Future Skill Shortages Through 2029](#)
- [An Analysis of Federal Training Programs](#)