

Over-Educated “Bartenders”

On January 28, 2013, [*The Chronicle of Higher Education*](#) reported, “Millions of Graduates Hold Jobs That Don’t Require a College Degree, Report Says” by Allie Bidwell.

“According to a report on the study, ‘Why Are Recent College Graduates Underemployed? University Enrollments and Labor Market Realities,’ out of 41.7 million working college graduates in 2010, 48 percent—more than 20 million people—held jobs that required less than a bachelor’s degree. Thirty-seven percent held jobs that required no more than a high-school diploma.”

The report’s authors—Richard Vedder, Jonathan Robe, and Christopher Denhart—used employment data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics to calculate that the number of college graduates is growing at a rate disproportionate to the number of jobs requiring a college degree.

“We have noted for several years a disconnect between the number of graduates and the realities of the labor market,” Mr. Vedder said. “It isn’t like underemployment was growing slowly and shot up in the last five years. It has been a steady rise.”

“Mr. Vedder said the number of college-level jobs is growing at a slower pace than the number of college graduates, and it will continue to grow more slowly if government data prove to be true.”

“Maybe we should incentivize colleges to more accurately counsel students,” Mr. Vedder said. “If you get a degree in business administration, you may not necessarily walk into a middle-class life. There’s a good chance you may end up being a bartender.”

So, given the failures of integrity at USM that we at usmnews.net have chronicled, do you expect USM administrators and faculty to address this fundamental problem with their product, education? We have witnessed many graduates of USM who have never applied their undergraduate and graduate degrees. Lawn maintenance laborers having master degrees in education, store clerks with bachelor degrees in criminal justice, secretaries with bachelor degrees in business,

and, yes, bartenders who have psychology degrees, among other jobs not requiring an undergraduate degree much less a masters degree.

The article cited above focuses on the gradual increase to a critical mass of overeducated “bartenders.” Contrary to popular belief, we don’t need more education, i.e., we don’t need more over-educated “bartenders.” And, without doubt, USM is contributing its share of over-educated “bartenders.” The challenge to USM administrators and faculty is not only to overcome their inclination to deceptive public relations—sucking naïve students to worthless USM educations—and myopic self-interest, but to provide real educations for equivalent real jobs.