

# Government Crushes For-Profit Colleges, Jobs, Students' Dreams

[Craig Biddle](#) November 02, 2016 [Audio](#) [PDF](#) In [Winter 2016](#)

[The government's assault on for-profit colleges](#) rolls [onward](#)—crushing, as it always does, schools, jobs, and students' dreams.

A few weeks ago, after years of sustained attacks by the U.S. Department of Education, ITT Technical Institutes closed its doors, [explains](#) Allysia Finley in the *Wall Street Journal*. "The collateral damage includes some 8,000 employees left jobless" and "40,000 students, including 7,000 veterans" left in the lurch.

"It's a kick in the teeth," says Air Force veteran Roger Parks, who saw ITT's hands-on training as "a good fit" for his life and career goals. "Mr. Parks needed a B.A. to advance in his company and was three months shy of graduating when ITT closed."

The Department of Education, however, is not concerned with such trivialities as individuals' lives and goals. Rather, the department is concerned with maintaining government control over education, and maintaining the illusion that such control is in the "public interest."

When for-profit colleges are not assaulted, they and their students tend to thrive and make government-run education look bad. Add to that the fact that the schools aim to *profit* in the process, and we have a recipe for leftist hatred of these institutions. So statist attack the schools, work to close them down, and wreak havoc on people's lives.

"My life goal has been ripped up from underneath me," says Lisa Fernald, "a 38-year-old single mother of two who was a drafting and design student at ITT." Ms. Fernald "took classes at night and on weekends so she could work

part time at Home Depot and at an engineering firm where ITT helped her get a job.”

When ITT closed down, she had 12 weeks of classes left before completing her associate degree. Afterward, she intended to pursue a B.A. in project management. Most schools offer degrees in construction or architecture, not design and drafting. So now she must choose between starting from scratch at another school in a different field of study—or not earning a degree.

Such stories are heart wrenching—at least they are to people who care about individuals. But statisticians don’t care about individuals. They feel that they have more important concerns—such as ensuring that for-profit colleges don’t continue succeeding and profiting and showing that free-market colleges work beautifully compared to government-run community colleges, which notoriously [perform poorly](#).

The government’s continued assault on for-profit colleges is a microcosm of the nature and horror of statism. According to statisticians, individuals’ lives and goals don’t matter. Politicians’ and bureaucrats’ power does. Exchanges of value for value by mutual consent to mutual advantage are not revered and enabled. Expansion of government intrusion into people’s lives is.

Whereas freedom, voluntary exchange, and the profit motive enable people to thrive—statism, coercive policies, and bureaucratically forced school closures wreck people’s lives. The government’s assault on for-profit colleges is a case in point.

This assault will continue until freedom, individualism, and the pursuit of profit are widely recognized as moral. In the meantime: More casualties coming soon. Brought to you by statisticians and their supporters.

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## **About Craig Biddle**

Craig is cofounder and editor of *The Objective Standard*, cofounder and director of education at Objective Standard Institute, and executive director of Prometheus Foundation. He is the author of *Loving Life: The Morality of Self-Interest and the Facts that Support It*; *Rational Egoism: The Morality for Human Flourishing*; and the forthcoming *Moral Truths Your Parents, Preachers, and Teachers Don't Want You to Know*. He is currently working on his fourth book, "Thinking in Principles."

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