

The College Buffet

A Paradigm for Getting the Most Out of Higher Education

2026 Edition — with a New Foreword

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To every student who pursues higher education and those who support them, may the following provide a thoughtful perspective that will enhance your experience and get the greatest return on your investment.

Foreword to the 2026 Edition

I wrote *The College Buffet* in 2020 for a reader I rarely meet anymore.

Back then, my audience came to me through a different door — high school students, incoming freshmen, parents touring campuses, people asking me which college to choose before they had chosen one. That book is built for that moment: how to pick the right buffet, how to read a course catalog, how to find a Sherpa before you start climbing. It is, fundamentally, a book about *choosing well*.

Six years later, almost none of the students I work with are choosing. They already chose. They are Sophomores, Juniors, Seniors, and recent graduates — people who walked into the buffet years ago and are now standing somewhere in the middle of it, plate in hand, wondering if they have been eating the right things. My audience shifted from social media, not the campus tour circuit, and the question changed with it. Nobody is asking me which college to pick anymore. They are asking, often with real fear in the question, "*Am I actually ready?*"

The book you are about to read was written to help you choose your buffet and eat wisely once you arrived. It will not tell you whether your plate is actually full of the right things. That gap — between eating and knowing if the eating worked — is the gap I spent the last two years trying to close.

The closing chapter of this book ends with a challenge: every student must pivot from buffet patron to chef. I still believe that completely. But in 2020 I had no way to tell a student *whether* they had made that pivot. I could only tell them it mattered. That bothered me for years — advising students who felt confident and were not, and students who felt unready and actually were.

So I built something. It is called the **Mangle Metric** — a free, seven-dimension assessment that gives you an honest, specific number showing exactly where you stand and what to do next. It is the instrument this book was always missing. Where *The College Buffet* gives you a philosophy, the Mangle Metric gives you a score.

I have scored real students with it. The pattern held every time: students who scored 75 or above had a job secured before graduation. Students below 75 were still searching. The number predicted the outcome before the market said a word. That is the kind of feedback loop I wish I had been able to offer the readers of this book in 2020 — and it is the reason I am giving this book away for free now instead of selling it. The book was never the product. Helping you get the most out of your education is the product. The book is one tool. The Mangle Metric is the other.

Read this book for what it still does well — the Sherpa, the chef-versus-cook distinction, the punch card, the honest reckoning with why you are even in college. Then, when you are ready to know exactly where you stand right now — not philosophically, but specifically, with a number and a roadmap — take the free assessment.

Free. Twelve minutes. andrewmangle.com/score.html

Seven dimensions. One hundred points. The honest number nobody else will give you.

Come hungry. Eat wisely. And when you are ready to know if it worked — I'll be there.

— Dr. Andrew Mangle
Best Entrust, LLC
2026

1. Your Host

The College Buffet is a paradigm shift in the way of contemplating higher education. The book proposes a buffet as an analogy for universities which aids students, parents, business, alumni, faculty, and the public to understand the business (yes business) of education. After completing this book, the buffet analogy will provide a new perspective that will benefit all readers. I ask you to consider your buffet choices wisely (colleges, majors, activities). When you reach the final page, my goal is that you have been challenged to reflect on schooling in an alternative and productive manner.

The analogy comes from a lifetime in education — mostly higher education. I have been either in college or working in a college more years than I haven't. Raised by two educators, the profession was in my purview. My perspective on higher education has shifted from idealistic to realistic. I do not look at higher ed through rose colored glasses but as a dystopian reality where the product being marketed is not the product being delivered. Don't believe me, attend an open house — you will see everything but the product you are seeking — knowledge. When touring a campus, did you sit in a classroom where teaching was occurring? Did the student and parents experience the instruction, student/teacher dynamics, and interactions among campus stakeholders OR did you hear about the "experience"? Is the information you did receive unbiased?

Let me be your host at the college buffet. An edutainer of sorts with academic, practical, and zen-like insight. As your host, let me share a distinct perspective of higher education almost never shared. I have heard the term academic contrarian, but I think practical and realistic is more accurate. Am I biting the hand that feeds? Maybe. As your host, I believe if we are more direct and honest, we will produce better results.

I spent some time away from higher education to gather pertinent professional experience in my area of expertise, which progressed from application development to cyber security and distributed ledger technology (blockchain). I have done contracting work with both public and private sector as well as employment with public and public-private entities. I have participated on boards of directors too. Each experience offers an opportunity to understand the role education has on workforce development, community engagement, and positive living. However, this outcome on higher education is SOLELY based on how you approach and prepare for the buffet.

My time as a student started at a four-year public traditionally white institution (TWI), progressed to a four-year private college, and then finally at a historically black college and university (HBCU). As an undergrad student, I played a college sport (tennis — not well — dropped after my first year), served as President of the Student Government Association, worked as a resident assistant in a residence hall, and participated in a national fraternity as treasurer and briefly as president. I was BIG on the "experience" while still graduating from my college's honors program with cum laude honors.

One of the greatest advantages I had at the buffet was the ability to start college my first semester without remedial courses. The amount of remedial coursework students face today is an epidemic. At a local two-year institution, close to 80% of students need either remedial math or English if not both. These courses cost the same as regular courses but will not count toward graduation — they impede graduating in four years.

The second advantage was my parents and high school preparing me for college years in advance through coursework, mentorship, SAT prep, job shadowing, focus on early internships, incentives and disincentives for performance, and awareness of pitfalls that lurk but are not clearly visible. Realistically, I think I was lucky. When I got myself in a jam, I figured a way out, but I saw many people who were held up and had to drop out. Some issues are outside of your control, but how you respond is within your control — ask for help early, seek out interventions and alternatives, and craft a plan. College cannot help you if they do not know you are in a jam — response time is slow, and they have little data to identify problems before a point of no return.

I had multiple internships including the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in Washington, DC, a startup called Moonbuzz, and my fraternity's headquarters during a winter session. The internships introduced me to things I did and did not enjoy. After my OPM internship, I — and on average four out of every five students — switched majors. I switched from Actuarial Science to Computer Science, which did not impact my graduation date. I now adopt the philosophy: seek out the work you enjoy versus "find your passion," which is often elusive and changes over time.

After graduation, I started a full-time job three weeks out of college and started graduate school three months later. After earning my master's degree in two years, I took a three-year hiatus to develop my career, then returned to pursue a Ph.D. in Business Administration. Along the way I earned various certifications which have been beneficial for my career, including CISSP, PMP, CISA, Project+, and Network+. In summary, I am pretty good at education — and in particular, testing. Continuous improvement is a mantra that permeates the buffet analogy: stay hungry, keep eating.

I started my career as a lecturer at a two-year college and progressed to a non-tenure Assistant Professor in the technology domain. I accepted a promotion at a local four-year college as a clinical Assistant Professor after five years at the two-year college. Three years later, I accepted a promotion to my current position as a tenure-track professor in Management Information Systems. I have held many roles on campus including college senate, articulation committees, hiring committees, and curriculum development and review. I feel like an optometrist with how many lenses I have viewed college through.

By now, I hope I have convinced you that I am qualified to share this information and that what follows is the best information you can have moving forward, within, and beyond college.

The book flows in the analogy from location selection, to dining, and then to exiting — just as you would when deciding and eating at a buffet restaurant. Through the process, you should be challenged to consider how college and a buffet are similar and dissimilar.

Some thoughts before proceeding: I spoke to thousands of people before sharing the College Buffet with you. My goal is to sell honesty and transparency in a broken industry. In the short and medium term, I cannot change the rules or the inertia of higher education. However, I can help others navigate and extract the highest value from the existing fiefdom of learning.

Let me be your host and let the feast begin.

2. Why a Buffet?

Simon Sinek recommends starting with Why? to inspire colleagues and customers. So I will ask: Why go to college? Whatever your reason, I am going to ask again — Why? Okay, Why? Okay again, Why? And finally, Why? Are we at the heart of why? My fear is that after the second or third Why? you are lost. I would rather you acknowledge this before spending hundreds of thousands of dollars and years of your life on something you don't understand. As a professor and advisor, most students never ask nor answer the question of "Why go to college?"

PAUSE OR STOP — WRITE YOUR ANSWER TO WHY GO TO COLLEGE HERE:

I think many people will say there are no other options — only college. On one hand, I thank you for your money, but on the other I think many students should have considered alternative options. Is a buffet your only food option? I hope you will have considered the alternatives to higher education.

In the knowledge and service economy, we rely on the acquisition of knowledge (aka "food"). Our methods vary based on length, specificity of knowledge, delivery method, location, and supporting stakeholders. Today's technology allows students to access knowledge in real-time, at their own pace, from a wide variety of global teachers — sources of knowledge that are diverse, accessible, and low cost. Over 20 years ago, professors were the smartest and most accessible source of knowledge, at a high cost. That paradigm has evolved.

I will frame alternative options in a food-service context: buffet, sit-down, fast-food, food truck, cooking/grocery shopping, personal chef, and even foraging. The buffet, like higher education and knowledge itself, is time-sensitive — only possible and lucrative for a short period of time. Going back to your Why — is this the best time for college? There are other options, just like when you want to eat.

A "buffet" style of instruction fits the concept of a traditional four-year and two-year college: a wide range of course offerings, majors, and knowledge structured to appease the greatest number of potential customers. Each buffet usually adopts a specific theme to hone marketing and establish identity and relevance. A college usually defines a niche — what's their theme? The why of the college.

In short, the buffet and college analogy resonate at the highest level. Students pay first before eating. Students can consume as much knowledge as they want. Students have to get the food themselves — attend class, find mentors, seek extracurriculars, ask for more. It's how the buffet is organized and how the participant engages with it that makes it worth the money.

The challenge is that the college buffet is more than consumption — after four years, the student is expected to become a chef, creating food for others to consume. **Students at graduation shift from knowledge consumer to knowledge producer based on their experience at the buffet.** This is HUGE — students must understand that college is a buffet with the goal of eating in order to figure out the one dish they will craft, for life.

2026 note: This chapter's central insight — consumer to producer — is the exact insight the Mangle Metric was built to measure. Dimension 3, Skill Marketability, asks a blunt question this chapter only gestures at: have you actually produced anything a hiring manager could evaluate? Not described. Produced. See the bridge section at the end of this book.

The alternative metaphor to the buffet is the sit-down restaurant. Most U.S. students approach college similar to a sit-down restaurant — expecting a menu, personalized service, and a relatively passive experience where every whim is catered to. Examples of the true sit-down alternative include skilled trade and vocational schools. I am not saying one is better than the other. I am encouraging you to explore the differences.

An alternative approach to the sit-down restaurant is the entertainment style — a Hibachi grill or dinner theatre. This edutainment combines the experience of a sit-down restaurant with a fixed menu and some additional flair. Higher education is increasingly blending the buffet with edutainment to engage students. Without identifying specific examples, in this style of education students often watch, philosophize, and enjoy the experience with little practical or recallable knowledge.

Other alternatives include "fast-food" — intensive training on a narrow topic in a consolidated time frame, like boot camps. There is also the personal chef — a few students have access to mentors willing to share knowledge directly. There is the pantry/cook-on-your-own approach, where individuals have access to knowledge and resources but must aggregate their own curriculum. And there is foraging, where individuals must seek out skills without access to the resources — computers, internet, safe environment, supporting infrastructure — that others take for granted.

We started with your Why. The underlying answer for most is this: college is becoming mandatory as a societal and business requirement. This is not absolute — some jobs and social groups don't have these requirements — but the majority of society and business demand or pressure higher education. Higher education has become the glass ceiling in traditional jobs. This is a warning, but also a stark reality.

The odds are stacked against someone without a college education in the United States. A degree allows human resources to quickly screen candidates who do not meet the education minimum. I do not believe this is "right," but it is reality. A degree or certificate is training you have provided for yourself to be qualified for employment. Would an employer like to pay your training bills, or would they like you to have already paid them?

At this point, you have likely decided the buffet is the best choice. As an advisor of students, I'll tell you plainly: once you start your third year, you HAVE to finish.

3. Which Buffet?

At the start of this chapter, the assumption is that the College Buffet is your choice and you have a strong enough Why to commit to the process. The next choice is deciding which buffet is right for you. This must be what's best for you, with the best information you have available. Many people will attempt to influence the decision — keep a clear vision. The link between you and the buffet, in most cases, is forever — so choose wisely.

The buffet is a business, regardless of whether the college is for-profit or non-profit. You are going to be heavily wooed through experiences — rallies, personalized communication, marketing, recognition. Just wait for your first college visit: the grounds will be impeccable, the students joyful, the tours funny, the energy high. Behind the scenes, this event is highly coordinated, planned, measured, and continuously improved. Why? To get the students who will best exemplify the brand — and pay.

You need to be better than the average visitor — tour on your own schedule, preferably during the week when classes are in session. Check online and start a dialogue with pertinent stakeholders. Consider requesting to sit in a class in your particular major. You will experience an average class and ask questions to actual majors and students — not pre-screened and coached anomalies.

My recommendation for choosing the college buffet:

1. Can you get into an Ivy League college? Yes — Go.
2. Can you get into a tier-1 state school? Yes — Hold it.
3. Were you accepted to a state college? Yes — Hold it.
4. Did you get a FULL RIDE to a private college? Yes — Hold it.
5. None of the above, or holding multiple offers:
 - a. Two-year college — I recommend this strongly, unless #1 applies.
 - b. State college after two years — I recommend it.
 - c. Perform a cost-benefit analysis on all others.

What is the basis for these recommendations? Two-year and state colleges are highly subsidized — anyone who lives in the state, and even the specific county, is subsidizing your education. Textbooks and materials are often consistent among majors regardless of institution. YouTube is the same regardless of where you go. And two-year and four-year local or state options often reduce the additional, often hidden, cost of transportation and housing.

I often hear about a particular program at a certain institution. For the record, 80% of students change majors, in addition to students who arrive undecided. I'm highly skeptical of a program's claimed superiority, as success is too often tied to recruiting students rather than teaching and learning. Who has the best program in any given field? Why? How do you know? Is it marketing? One professor's research? A powerful alumni network? Where's the data?

The buffet is dependent on one person — the student. Great students can succeed almost anywhere, just as an avid buffet patron will get their money's worth out of any location. At the buffet, don't let a single patron, chef, or owner mess with your dining experience.

I do have a brief quiz I ask students to assess "fit" — the alignment between me, the department, and the student.

The "Fit" Quiz

1. What is your major?
2. What does this major look like in a job? Can you list multiple jobs or alternatives?
3. What interests you in this major? Is the response related to the major?
4. What have you done in your major — internships, jobs, experiences, competitions? If you majored in ballet, wouldn't you have practiced some ballet?
5. What makes you qualified for an internship? What skills or capabilities do you possess or have you acquired?
6. What work do you enjoy doing?

These questions are leading the student to identify the work they want to do, have done, and are capable of doing — hopefully all answers align.

2026 note: This Fit Quiz was the seed of the Mangle Metric, six years before the Metric existed. Question 4 — what have you actually done in your major — is now Dimension 1, Work Experience and Applied Proof, worth 25 of the 100 points. It is the single highest-weighted dimension in the entire framework, for exactly the reason this chapter describes: if you majored in ballet, you should have practiced some ballet.

The "Fit" quiz assesses the career initiative, progress, and direction of the student. Regardless of the response, faculty seeks to

guide students — but faculty cannot answer the questions for the student. An analogy I use is that a professor is a Sherpa. A modern Sherpa guides hikers up Mount Everest based on experience, knowledge, and skillset. I can carry weight and guide students through the mountain that is college, but the student is walking the entire time and must be adequately prepared. If a student puts me in danger, I will turn around. If a student puts themselves in danger by not following the Sherpa's guidance, that is the student's choice.

2026 note: The Sherpa metaphor is the clearest articulation I had, six years ago, of what later became Dimension 5 — Network and Relationship Capital. A Sherpa is not a LinkedIn connection. A Sherpa is someone with real influence who will carry weight on your behalf. Most students think they have a network because they have followers. Almost none have a Sherpa.

When selecting a college, consider the Sherpas. Are faculty going to guide you up the mountain, or are you on your own? At tier-1 institutions, the Sherpas are often Teaching Assistants — meaning students — with little incentive to advise. At more colleges, advising is handled outside the department entirely.

My role is to prepare students for life — giving them the experiences, tools, habits, and encouragement to not just get a job, but the skills and capabilities to succeed for the future. I recently told a student to keep exploring for their gold. Start digging. If you don't enjoy the digging at one location, find another spot. The key to long-term success is not passion, but seeking joy in the hard work.

Keep in mind that each experience is unique. Stay flexible in selecting a major and have a backup option, mindful of total cost. Think locally, or at least conveniently, and then work outward. You should not be touring outside your area unless the college is Ivy League or you have a full ride. Look past marketing and hype and examine actual data — Clery reports, majors, costs, and graduation rates.

4. Your Buffet

Your buffet is all your own. The experience, ambiance, food, location, reputation, and culture are unique, but the relationship between these and you will be amorphous — changing as you grow, mature, and reflect.

You may be assigned a guide — a mentor, RA, ambassador, or advisor. If not, you need to seek one out, especially one in your major. Ideally you are building a team: students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and industry insiders. Some of the most valuable connections as an undergraduate were those I did not appreciate at the time — keep your focus on both the short and long term.

The arrival on campus will be overwhelming. As a student, and now as faculty, I look forward to events like orientation and homecoming because they represent the buffet operating at peak — but this is not your buffet. It's the equivalent of a veneer, stage photos for the marketing materials.

Life Pro Tip: See if you can get the earliest registration possible. Ask if you can take a summer online course or get AP credits or transfer credits in to skip first-year courses. Beat the rush. If a class is full, ask to be waitlisted or ask for an override.

You need to be a catalog expert. Do not rely on faculty or staff to know what you need to take to graduate. The catalog allows you to glimpse the buffet — just like a menu. You can read the description, but you have no idea how it will taste until you take it.

Some students never see the entire buffet and claim the buffet has poor service. The buffet is similar to a gym — if everyone used all the services at once, it would have to close down. Be aware most things will be back soon, deadlines are made up, and exceptions will be made. Be aggressive if necessary, once — but don't get a reputation.

You have already paid for everything once the semester starts, with few exceptions. Be active seeking out opportunities. Identify administrative assistants who read their own and their supervisor's emails. The admins know everything. Be nice to them at all costs.

Developing mentors, networks, and information sources will provide you with key insight about upcoming and existing opportunities. You can't trust everyone right away — start small, listen, be kind. Being nice will benefit you and whoever you deal with in your buffet. People are always watching you.

Be careful of the upsell. Be intentional about your goals — the why am I in college. Understand why you are choosing the food. Is the food what you want, or is someone telling you what to eat? Does the food bring you joy? If you do not enjoy the work in class, it will be tough continuing to do the work in a job or continuously improving for the career.

Keep filling your plate without spilling or overeating — analogous to dropping or failing a class. Pace yourself. Take several trips instead of grabbing the entire meal. I find students after the first two weeks have filled their plates to capacity, with not a single minute to spare. After a few weeks, some of what they piled on just gets tossed away, while new opportunities — research, jobs, experiences — get missed because there's no room left on the plate. Always leave a little room for ice cream. Good opportunities will pop up.

Be selective about seemingly great opportunities. There are many. Get at least two different perspectives from entities that want you to succeed. There are genuinely people on campus who want you to succeed — I succeed when students succeed. Few students can grasp the concept that others want to help them. For some, there is no hidden agenda; they are just good people. Your network will know the good people, and will also know the imposters.

Is your buffet made of cooks or chefs? A Chef creates the menu and oversees the kitchen. A cook makes the food as requested. The college buffet often has great Chefs — awesome people, geniuses, researchers, leaders in their domain. But not all Chefs serve at the buffet itself; some only teach a course every two years, or the best professors get promoted to lead Chef — department chair — where students get to taste their decisions but never experience the Chef directly.

Do you need a Chef or a Cook? The answer depends on the individual student. The goal here is to remove projection or idealism and focus on tangibles. No one will know about the buffet without marketing, and the marketing is targeted to stakeholders far beyond students — employees, community, industry, alumni, politicians. Selecting a buffet requires you to look beyond marketing, because that marketing is biased material produced to influence sources of income.

A buffet has finite resources, maximized by the institution. A buffet's ideal scenario is full capacity, fully paying customers, happy customers, light eaters, returning customers, and influencers. Your goal as a buffet patron is to leverage the ideal situation when appropriate — seek scholarships, seek growth opportunities, build influence — and divert when not.

Each campus is unique, even within the same institution. Culture matters, and each person must find their own fit. A single experience should cause you to reflect, but avoid letting one experience change your original intention.

It's graduation in four years, fingers crossed. If you have a plan — you knew what you were going to eat, when you were going to eat it, and the food and support was there when you wanted it — you could have left at any point, but the longer you stay, the

more you are locked in. Think of college as a frequent-customer card, and each semester gets you closer to a diploma. Would you give up a punch card that had six out of eight punches?

2026 note: The punch-card line above is, in hindsight, the clearest statement of sunk-cost dynamics I made in this entire book — and sunk cost is exactly what shows up in real student data as a trajectory problem. Dimension 2, Career Trajectory and Strategic Clarity, exists because the punch card pulls students forward whether or not they have a real target. Six punches in does not mean you know what you're punching toward.

Are you ready to graduate? Are you full? The worst part of a buffet is leaving feeling hungry or unprepared to start cooking your own meal. The diploma is the candy at the exit — it is not enough to keep you full on its own.

If you are not feeling well, you are likely experiencing some form of stomach rumblings — anxiety, stress, confusion, regret. These rumblings can come at various times. Some of this, I believe, is natural — not just a bad buffet. The good news: the buffet is always open. Go back for more food if necessary — a master's or doctorate — or just visit friends, mentors, or the campus. The problem is, in many cases, regardless of how you feel, you have to find work to start paying off the buffet bill. I need you to keep moving forward now.

We can spend the next lifetime questioning if you made the right choice. We will never know for certain. At some point we have to own it and move on. Keep moving forward.

5. Closing

At the end of your time at college, you have a few choices. The primary two options are find a job or start grad school. A graduate must start cooking on their own or return to the buffet. I chose both, to hedge my bets.

Students must shift from consumption to production. Instead of consuming the food — knowledge, skills, experiences — the student must produce food for others to consume. This is the challenge I pose to students: realize you must become the chef. Your major will point you in the direction; pivoting in a different direction will be time, energy, and financially draining. So choose your area of expertise wisely.

Graduating students are entering a different era than their parents or grandparents. A global workforce now competes directly for all opportunities. Companies are globally connected and the internet empowers employees and competition. Business cares about the deliverable, not who delivers it. A seismic shift in employee benefits and work schedules has also occurred, offering new opportunities and perspectives. Change, like the shift from traditional to gig economies, offers great opportunities while transforming traditional ones. You must be aware, properly equipped, and flexible.

A college degree does not equate to a career, or even a job. The buffet gives you the opportunity to explore — but exploring is NOT enough to become a chef. You must pivot, as early as possible, from buffet patron to chef. The longer you wait, the less time you have to correct course.

This is where the original book ended in 2020. It told you that you had to become the chef. It could not tell you whether you had. Here is where the 2026 edition picks the thread back up.

One more thing about the college buffet: seek out work you enjoy. Avoid seeking a passion — find work you are willing to do that brings you joy. What work could you do for the rest of your life and enjoy it?

For now, the college buffet has to get back to prepping the next meal. I hope you have enjoyed your meal, and I look forward to your comments.

Bridge: From the Buffet to the Metric

The questions this book asks are still the right questions. What it could not do in 2020 — and what almost no advising system can do reliably — is tell you whether you actually answered them well. Encouragement is not feedback. A Sherpa's confidence in you is not a measurement. The Mangle Metric was built to be the measurement.

Below is the direct line from this book's metaphors to the seven dimensions the Mangle Metric scores. If a metaphor stuck with you while reading, there is very likely a real, scored dimension behind it.

Buffet Concept	Mangle Metric Dimension	What It Actually Measures
"Become the chef, not the cook" — shift from consumption to production	D1 — Work Experience & Applied Proof (25 pts)	Have you produced anything — a project, a role, a result — that someone else could evaluate? Not described. Produced.
The punch card — six of eight punches, locked into your direction	D2 — Career Trajectory & Strategic Clarity (20 pts)	Do you have a specific target — a company, a role — and concrete actions taken in the last 90 days toward it?
The "Fit Quiz" — if you majored in ballet, have you practiced ballet?	D3 — Skill Marketability & Demonstrated Output (18 pts)	Can you show your work publicly — a portfolio, a credential, a result — right now, without being asked twice?
"Be nice to the admins at all costs" — professionalism is always being watched	D4 — Professionalism & Self-Leadership (18 pts)	Do you follow through? Do you have a resume? Do you communicate like someone an employer would trust unsupervised?
The Sherpa — someone who carries weight on your behalf	D5 — Network & Relationship Capital (10 pts)	Do you have 3-5 real contacts with hiring influence who would take your call — not just accept your connection request?
"Why would you go anywhere else?" — understanding what you're actually buying	D6 — Major ROI & Field Awareness (7 pts)	Do you know the median salary, employment rate, and outlook for your specific major and field?
"Find work you enjoy, not your passion" — the financial logic underneath the choice	D7 — Financial Self-Leadership (5 pts)	Have you calculated your debt-to-income ratio? Do you understand the financial reality you're walking into?

Seven dimensions. One hundred points. The same questions this book raised in 2020 — now with an honest number attached.

Ready to find out where you actually stand?

Free. Twelve minutes. No cost, no catch.

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About the Author

Dr. Andrew Mangle is an Assistant Professor of Information Systems in the College of Business at Bowie State University (Bowie, MD). His previous appointments include Assistant Professor at Towson University and the Community College of Baltimore County. Before academia, he spent eight years working in the public sector as an application developer and supervisor, and continues to provide consulting services through Best Entrust, LLC. He teaches courses in social media, web development, computer programming, cybersecurity, information assurance, management information systems, project management, and IS auditing. His research includes publications and presentations in blockchain, social media, business intelligence, knowledge management, and cybersecurity. Dr. Mangle holds the following industry credentials: CISSP, CISA, PMP, CSSLP, Network+, ITIL Foundations, and Project+.

Dr. Mangle and his family live near Baltimore, MD. He is the proud father of twin girls, enjoys managing honeybees, and built the Mangle Metric because he was tired of telling students they had to become the chef without being able to tell them whether they had.