

Higher Ed Spotlight

Paying for College

How to pay for college is an important decision for every student and their families. Students rely on a variety of sources to finance their education. These include personal savings, work-study jobs, student loans and grants from a number of stakeholders (institutions, states, and the federal government). Knowing what students actually pay, and what support is available to them, is critical to understanding the true costs of college.



Average Tuition Prices in 2014-15

61% of students receive some form of grant aid and do not pay the published tuition and fees as a result.

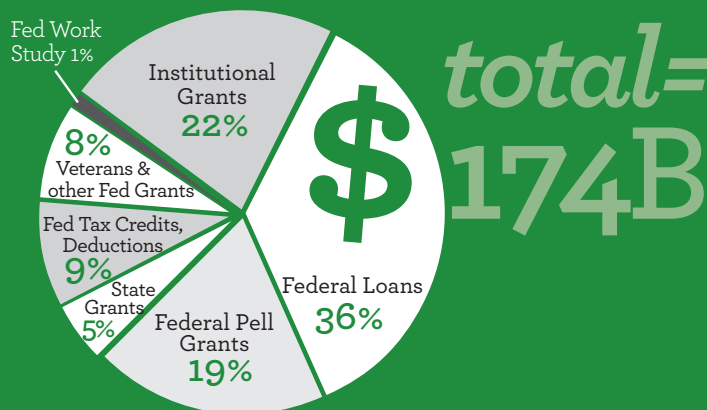
(For more on cost, see *Anatomy of College Tuition*.)

	PUBLISHED PRICES		NET PRICES
Public two-year	→ \$3,350		→ -\$1,740*
Public four-year	→ \$9,140		→ \$3,030
Private nonprofit four-year	→ \$31,230		→ \$12,360
For-profit	→ \$15,320		→ N/A

GAP = Grants + Tax Benefits (No Loans)

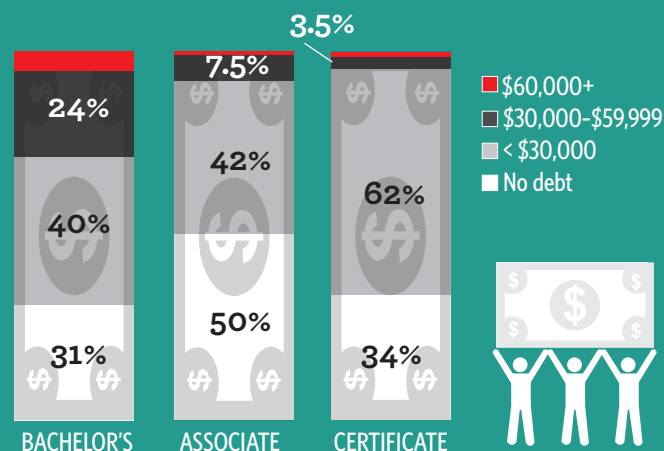
Total Student Aid for Undergraduates 2013-14

Seventy-three percent of total aid came from federal sources, while institutional and state aid accounted for 22% and 5%, respectively.



Cumulative Debt 2011-12

Most students had no loan debt, or had less than \$30,000 in debt, by the time they graduated.



Average Aid in 2013-14



	Recipients	Average aid per recipient
Federal education tax benefits	13.8 M	\$1,355
Pell Grants	9.2 M	\$3,678
Federal direct loans	7.8 M	\$6,670
Federal work study	690,000	\$1,413
Veterans benefits (Post-9/11 GI Bill)	792,000	\$14,107
State grants		\$710 (per FTE)
Institutional grants		\$2,030 (per FTE at public four-year) \$12,380 (per FTE at private nonprofit four-year)

Declining State Support for Higher Ed

Per-student state funding for public institutions in 2013 (\$7,161) was **18% lower** than it was 30 years ago.

SOURCES:

Baum, Sandy, and Jennifer Ma. 2014. *Trends in College Pricing 2014*. New York: The College Board.
Baum, Sandy, Diane Cardenas Elliott, and Jennifer Ma. 2014. *Trends in Student Aid 2014*. New York: The College Board.
National Center for Education Statistics. National Postsecondary Student Aid Study 2011-12.
National Center for Education Statistics. 2014. *Digest of Education Statistics*.

* Net price is negative because aid exceeds tuition and fees. Students have additional expenses like books and transportation.

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