



Paying for College

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The Numbers

\$80,000

The average cost to attend a moderately priced public university with in-state tuition if living on campus for four years.

How much does college cost?

On average per year:

- 2-year public: ~\$3,500
- 4-year public, in-state tuition: ~\$10,000
- 4-year public, out-of-state tuition: ~\$25,000
- 4-year private: ~\$34,000, although many of our local private schools cost much more than this.

Planning to live on campus? Add at least \$10,000/yr.

82%

The number of students who receive some form of financial aid for college

What are the statistics on financial aid?

\$46 billion is awarded each year in scholarships and grants

- 48% from the federal government with an average award of \$4,755
- 36% privately with an average award of \$8,366
- 16% at the state or local level with an average award of \$2,844

Each year, about \$100 million in scholarship money and \$2.9 billion in federal grant money goes UNCLAIMED!

\$28,400

The average student debt upon completion of a Bachelor's degree

Student Loans

43.3 million students borrow money for college; 60% of college grads have debt.

The average default rate of student loans is 11.8%.

Almost 30% of student borrowers move back in with their parents after graduation, and a significant portion (up to 70%) of student borrowers delay buying cars and houses, getting married and starting families, and saving for retirement due to their college debt.

Forms of Financial Aid

Federal Grants

What are they?

Grants are like scholarships in that they do not have to be paid back. They are awarded by the federal government and are need-based rather than merit-based.

Types:

Federal Pell Grant

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)

TEACH Grant

Iraq & Afghanistan Service Grant

How do I get them?

By completing the FAFSA. Shawnee Community College often has FAFSA completion workshops at the extension center. The opening date for FAFSA completion is October 1st. **EVERYONE SHOULD COMPLETE THE FAFSA IF ATTENDING COLLEGE** regardless of whether or not you believe you will receive grants. In fact, most colleges require it.

State Grants

Illinois also has the MAP grant, which works the same way but can only be used if attending college in-state.

The FAFSA
calculates your
expected family
contribution (EFC)

Completing the FAFSA

To be eligible:

- U.S. citizen or national, or eligible non-citizen
- Valid SSN
- HS diploma or GED
- Registered with the draft (if a male 18-24)
- Do not owe refunds on federal student grants
- Not charged with illegal possession or distribution of drugs while receiving federal grants

Getting started:

- SSN for parents and student
- Federal tax returns for student and anyone claiming student as a dependent for the previous year.
- Bank account balances
- Investment information
- Alien registration number for student if applicable

Completing the FAFSA, cont

On average, it takes 22 minutes.

You are encouraged to complete the application online due to the opportunity for faster turn around, immediate error correction, and IRS retrieval tools.

To complete the application online, go to fafsa.ed.gov and click on the link “Start a New Fafsa.”

If you are attending a FAFSA completion workshop, you will need to apply for an FSA ID number ahead of time. It can take a day or two for you to be assigned an ID number, which is required before being able to complete the application.

You can apply for an FSA ID by going to fafsa.ed.gov and clicking on the “FSA ID” link. Complete the steps as prompted.

Scholarships

Scholarships are awards that do not have to be paid back. They are often based on merit or a predetermined set of characteristics.

Scholarships can be given for a variety of things: academic achievements, participation in clubs or sports, religious affiliation, ethnicity, hobbies, having a veteran or enlisted family member, etc.

Scholarships can be provided by individuals, organizations, colleges, businesses, and/or corporations, and can be awarded at the local or national level.

Begin the search for scholarships as early as possible. Although most cannot be applied for until senior year, it's good to know what's out there.

Know your resources. Some of the best places to look for scholarships are the school website (aj81.net), your chosen college's website, and fastweb.com, a free scholarship search engine.

Apply for as many
scholarships as
you can, no matter
how small!

Academic Scholarships

As a general rule, university scholarships provide the most money and are awarded based on a formula which takes into consideration a student's standardized test scores and GPA.

Typically, a 24 ACT/1160 SAT is the starting point for university scholarships, while a 28 ACT/1280 SAT is where you start getting into significant tuition coverage. This information can be found on the university's website.

A good way to ensure maximum scholarship awards is to retake the ACT or SAT for a better score. Students can study for the SAT using Khan Academy, and SEMO often runs ACT prep classes in the month before a test.

Most schools no longer offer full-ride scholarships, so it's best not to bank on getting your tuition covered with a single award.

2%

The number of high school athletes who receive athletic scholarships for college.

Athletic Scholarships

Athletic scholarships often go by percentages of tuition, rather than a set monetary award. For instance, a volleyball team might have ten scholarships to award with 30% tuition, and only one or two 50% or above.

Different awards are given to team members based on perceived skill and value to the team. Very few full-ride athletic scholarships are out there even for the most talented athletes.

According to the NCAA, only 2% of high school athletes are awarded money to play in college. Your best chance of getting a scholarship is at the DIII level, with 82% of student athletes receiving scholarships. Only 56% of student athletes at the DI level receive athletic scholarships.

Scholarship Tips

1. Keep track of what scholarships you're eligible for and their deadlines, as well as those you've applied for and any awards you receive.
2. Create a résumé that includes your GPA, class rank, awards, and extracurriculars, including clubs, sports, volunteer experience, and work. Keep track of the dates you were involved in all of your extracurriculars and any recognition, awards, or leadership positions. This information will be requested again and again.
3. Gather letters of recommendation, and get extra signed copies of each one.
4. Continuously search for scholarships. New scholarships are posted all the time.

Student Loans

There are two types of student loans: federal and private.

Federal student loans can be applied for using the information you receive after completing the FAFSA - it's all in the same place.

Private student loans are provided by a variety of lending institutions.

Federal Student Loans

Three types of federal student loans are available:

1. The Stafford Loan is offered by the Department of Education. The subsidized Stafford loan is given based on need and takes care of interest while a student is in school. The unsubsidized Stafford loan is not based on need and does not pay the interest a student accrues while in school.
2. The Federal Perkins Loan Program is available to students who can demonstrate need and are attending an approved institution. They have low fixed interest rates and manageable repayment plans.
3. PLUS Loans are loans for the parents of college students. Stafford Loans typically have lower interest rates than PLUS Loans, so it's best to utilize them first.

Private Student Loans

Many now require a qualified cosigner or collateral.

Students may not acquire a total debt of greater value than the cost of their attendance.

Interest rates vary considerably across lenders and can depend on the cosigner's credit.

[LendEDU](#) is a resource that has educational material about loans and other forms of financial aid and helps compare student loans across lenders.

Other Ways to Offset College Costs

Work-Study Jobs

The Federal Work-Study Program provides part-time jobs to students with financial need to allow them to earn money to help pay for college.

Not all schools participate in the program - your school's financial aid office will be able to tell you if they do or not.

Jobs vary by institution, but can be on or off-campus. Jobs off-campus are typically for private non-profits and must be in the public interest.

Campus Positions

Many universities have a variety of positions on campus that allow students to work off some of their tuition. These positions are typically things like Teacher's Assistants (TA's), Residence Assistants (RA's), Computer Lab Supervisors, Library Aides; some schools even pay for you to take notes for students with disabilities or record audio versions of texts. You can often also find research opportunities that provide compensation.

Unfortunately, few of these positions are available to freshmen or sophomores.

Employer Benefit

Some employers have scholarships for employees, and/or will compensate you for some or all of your education costs if you are willing to pursue an education in something that they need.

In the same vein, some employers will pay off student loans.

If not set-up in the form of a scholarship, this assistance is usually limited to \$5,250 annually - any larger amount is taxable.

The Military

Joining an ROTC program while in college can make you eligible for scholarships that cover some or all of your tuition. You are then obligated to be in the service after graduating.

Each branch of the military has its own Tuition Assistance program (TA) that reimburses its members at various rates for their educational expenses.

There are also funds that can be applied for through the GI Bill, though time spent in active duty is required for eligibility.

Good Old-Fashioned Part-Time Job

It is possible to work part-time while attending college full-time. Money earned in a part-time position can help with living expenses and can supplement other funds (such as scholarships or loans) to cover education costs.

Students who choose to work part-time during college **MUST** learn time management skills to be successful, and should look for an employer who is willing to work around class schedules.

Before You Decide...



Know the Numbers!

It's absolutely imperative that you familiarize yourself with the tuition and fees at each school you are interested in. You cannot make a decision without all the facts.

For example, did you know that many universities include student health insurance in their fees, and that this money (often a significant amount) can be refunded with proof of private insurance?

Don't be afraid to call the financial aid office with questions - it's their job to help you!

Be wary of advertised college tuition costs - some schools tend to advertise their full cost (all tuition & fees included), while others may leave off some or all of the fees (just like buying airplane tickets). In addition, schools rarely include the cost of housing in an advertised price. This is why it's important to check out a school's financial aid office page for a full listing of costs.

Resources

For info on student loans: www.lendedu.com

For info on federal grants and loans: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/>

To complete the FAFSA (and get a FSA ID): <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>

To search for private scholarships: www.fastweb.com

For local scholarships: <http://www.aj81.net/Information/Scholarships/Scholarships.html>

For info on military tuition assistance programs:

<http://www.military.com/education/money-for-school/tuition-assistance-ta-program-overview.html>

For info on athletic scholarships and NCAA eligibility: <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>

To find tuition and fee information and scholarships specific to a school, go to the school's website and look for a link called "admissions" or "new students". There will typically be a link to tuition and fee and financial aid information on this area of the site.