

Price of Attending an Undergraduate Institution

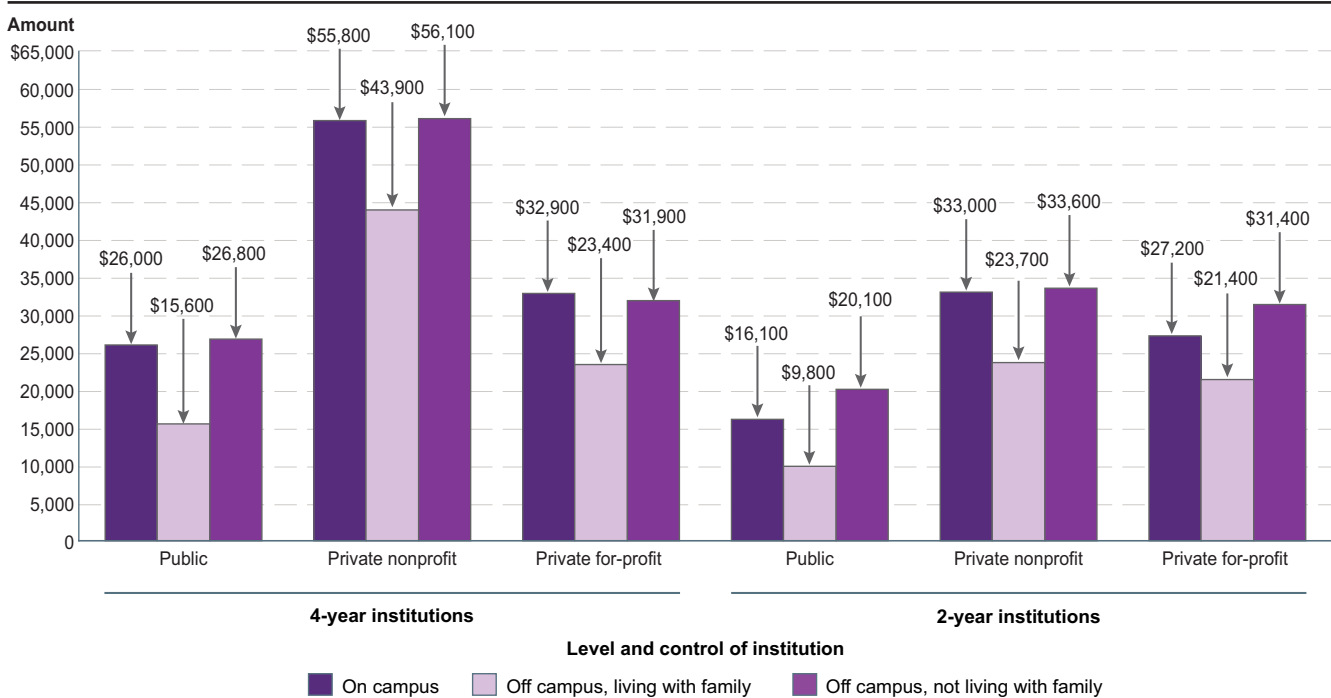
In academic year 2020–21, the average net price of attendance (total cost minus grant and scholarship aid) for first-time, full-time undergraduate students attending 4-year institutions was \$14,700 at public institutions, compared with \$28,400 at private nonprofit institutions and \$24,600 at private for-profit institutions (in constant 2021–22 dollars).

The total cost of attending a postsecondary institution includes the sum of published tuition and required fees;¹ books and supplies; and the average cost for room, board, and other expenses for each institution. In academic year 2021–22, the average total cost of attendance for first-time, full-time undergraduate students² differed by control of institution (public,³ private nonprofit, or private for-profit) and level of institution (4-year or 2-year). In addition, the

average total cost of attendance varied by student living arrangement. A student could live on campus; off campus with family; or off campus but not with family. For example, in 2021–22, the average total cost of attendance for first-time, full-time undergraduate students living on campus at 4-year institutions was higher at private nonprofit institutions (\$55,800) than at private for-profit institutions (\$32,900) and public institutions (\$26,000).⁴

Cost of Attendance

Figure 1. Average total cost of attending degree-granting institutions for first-time, full-time undergraduate students, by level and control of institution and student living arrangement: Academic year 2021–22



NOTE: Data are for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The total cost of attending a postsecondary institution includes tuition and required fees; books and supplies; and the average cost for room, board, and other expenses. Tuition and fees at public institutions are the lower of either in-district or in-state tuition and fees. Not all institutions offer on-campus accommodations. On-campus estimates include weighted averages of room and board and other costs only for institutions that report these costs. Excludes students who previously attended another postsecondary institution or who began their studies on a part-time basis. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Data are weighted by the number of students at the institution who were awarded Title IV aid. Title IV aid includes grant aid, work-study aid, and loan aid.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Winter 2021–22, Student Financial Aid component; and Fall 2021, Institutional Characteristics component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 330.40.

For first-time, full-time undergraduate students in academic year 2021-22, the average total cost of attendance at 4-year institutions was higher for those living on campus and those living off campus but not with family than for those living off campus with family. This pattern in the total cost of attendance was observed for public, private nonprofit, and private for-profit institutions. For example, at public 4-year institutions, the average total cost of attendance was

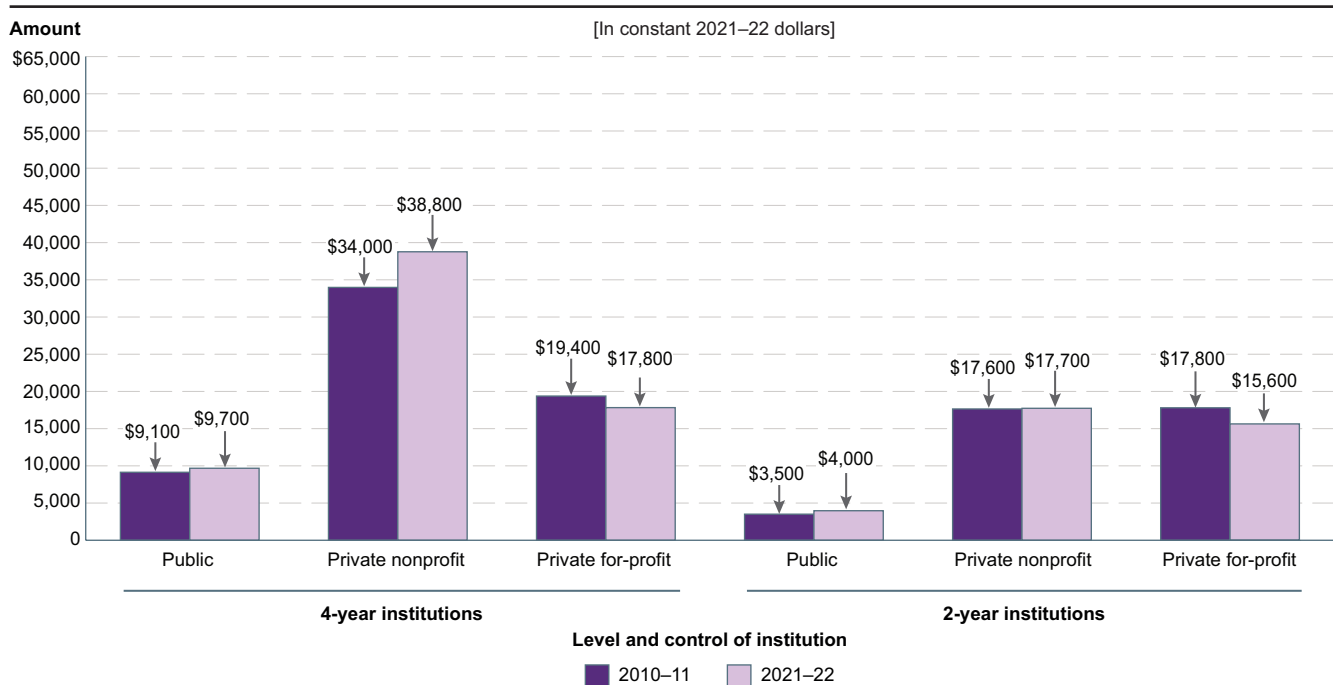
- \$26,800 for students living off campus but not with family;
- \$26,000 for students living on campus; and
- \$15,600 for students living off campus with family.

At 2-year institutions, the average total cost of attendance for first-time, full-time undergraduate students in 2021-22 was also higher for students living on campus and those living off campus but not with family than for those living off campus with family. This pattern was observed for public, private nonprofit, and private for-profit institutions. For example, at public 2-year institutions, the average total cost of attendance was

- \$20,100 for students living off campus but not with family;
- \$16,100 for students living on campus; and
- \$9,800 for students living off campus with family.

Institution Tuition and Fees⁵

Figure 2. Average tuition and fees of degree-granting institutions for first-time, full-time undergraduate students, by level and control of institution: Academic years 2010–11 and 2021–22



NOTE: Data are for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Tuition and fees at public institutions are the lower of either in-district or in-state tuition and fees. Excludes students who previously attended another postsecondary institution or who began their studies on a part-time basis. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Data are weighted by the number of students at the institution who were awarded Title IV aid. Title IV aid includes grant aid, work-study aid, and loan aid. Constant dollars are based on the Consumer Price Index, prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, adjusted to an academic-year basis. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded data.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Spring 2011 and Winter 2021–22, Student Financial Aid component; and Fall 2010 and Fall 2021, Institutional Characteristics component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 330.40.

Average tuition and fees were higher in academic year 2021-22 than in 2010-11 for first-time, full-time undergraduate students at public and private nonprofit 4-year institutions (in constant 2021-22 dollars).⁶ In contrast, for private for-profit 4-year institutions, average tuition and fees were lower in 2021-22 than in 2010-11.

Specifically, average tuition and fees in 2021-22 were

- \$9,700 for public institutions, which was 6 percent higher than \$9,100 in 2010-11;
- \$17,800 for private for-profit institutions, which was 8 percent lower than \$19,400 in 2010-11; and
- \$38,800 for private nonprofit institutions, which was 14 percent higher than \$34,000 in 2010-11.

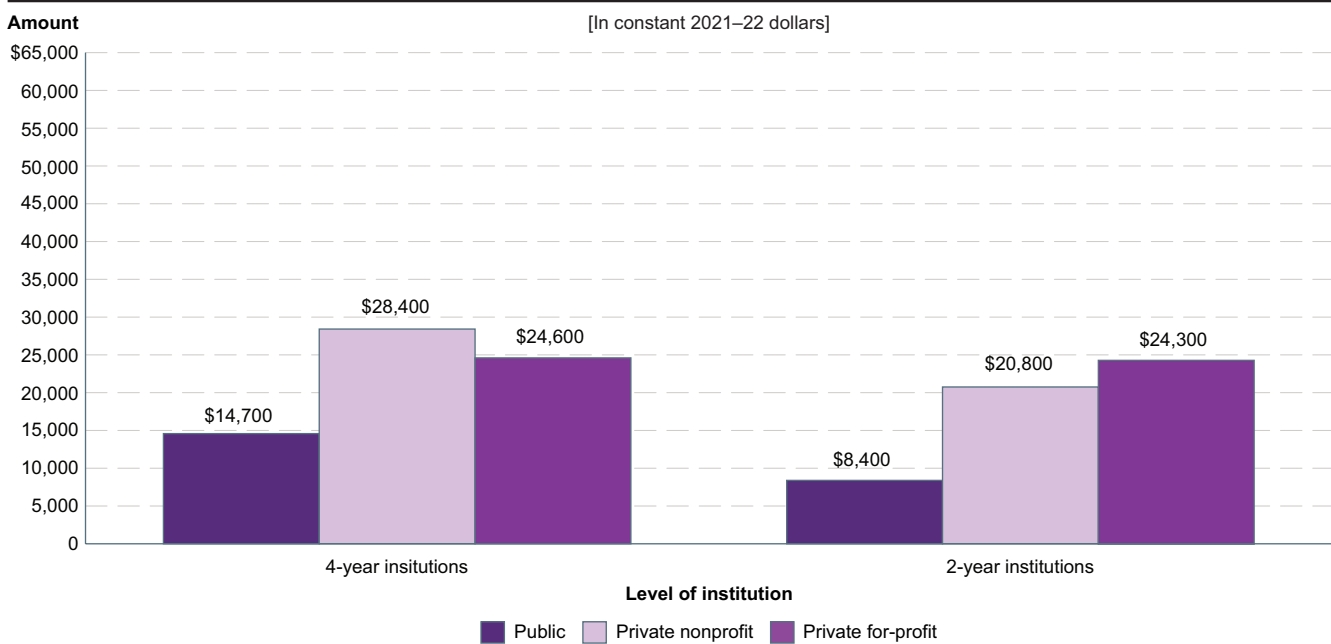
Similarly, at 2-year institutions, average tuition and fees were higher in 2021-22 than in 2010-11 for public and private nonprofit institutions and lower in 2021-22 than in 2010-11 for private for-profit institutions. Specifically, average tuition and fees 2021-22 were

- \$4,000 for public institutions, which was 13 percent higher than \$3,500 in 2010-11;

- \$15,600 for private for-profit institutions, which was 12 percent lower than \$17,800 in 2010-11; and
- \$17,700 for private nonprofit institutions, which was 1 percent higher than \$17,600 in 2010-11.

Net Price of Attendance

Figure 3. Average net price for first-time, full-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students awarded Title IV aid, by level and control of institution: Academic year 2020–21



NOTE: Data are for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Excludes students who previously attended another postsecondary institution or who began their studies on a part-time basis. Average net price is calculated here as the average total cost of attendance minus average grant and scholarship aid. For public institutions, includes only first-time, full-time students who paid the in-district or in-state tuition rate and who were awarded Title IV aid. Excludes students who were not awarded any Title IV aid. Title IV aid includes grant aid, work-study aid, and loan aid. Grant and scholarship aid consists of federal Title IV grants, as well as other grant or scholarship aid from the federal government, state or local governments, or institutional sources. Data are weighted by the number of students at the institution who were awarded Title IV aid. Constant dollars are based on the Consumer Price Index, prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, adjusted to an academic-year basis.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Winter 2021–22, Student Financial Aid component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 331.30.

The net price of attendance is the estimate of the actual amount of money that first-time, full-time students and their families need to pay in a given year to cover educational expenses. Net price is calculated here as the average total cost of attendance minus average grant and scholarship aid (not including loans)⁷ awarded to students.

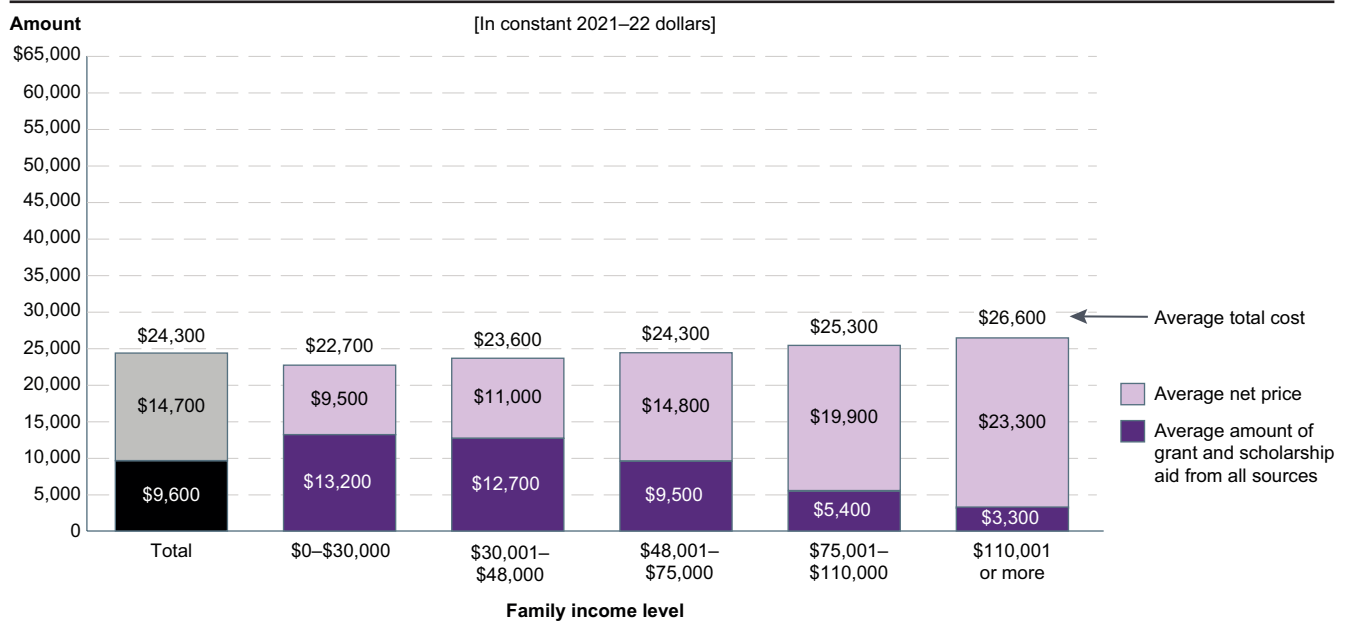
In academic year 2020-21, the average net price of attendance (in constant 2021-22 dollars) at 4-year institutions for first-time, full-time undergraduate students awarded Title IV aid⁸ was lowest for students at

public institutions and higher at private nonprofit and private for-profit institutions. Average net prices were

- \$14,700 at public institutions;
- \$24,600 at private for-profit institutions; and
- \$28,400 at private nonprofit institutions.

Similarly, the average net price at 2-year institutions in 2020-21 was lowest at public institutions. Average net prices were

- \$8,400 at public institutions;
- \$20,800 at private nonprofit institutions; and
- \$24,300 at private for-profit institutions.

Financial Assistance at 4-Year Institutions**Figure 4. Average total cost, net price, and grant and scholarship aid for first-time, full-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students paying in-state tuition and awarded Title IV aid at public 4-year institutions, by family income level: Academic year 2020–21**

NOTE: Data are for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Excludes students who previously attended another postsecondary institution or who began their studies on a part-time basis. Average net price is calculated here as the average total cost of attendance minus average grant and scholarship aid. Includes only first-time, full-time students who paid the in-district or in-state tuition rate and who were awarded Title IV aid. Excludes students who were not awarded any Title IV aid. Title IV aid includes grant aid, work-study aid, and loan aid. Grant and scholarship aid consists of federal Title IV grants, as well as other grant or scholarship aid from the federal government, state or local governments, or institutional sources. Data are weighted by the number of students at the institution who were awarded Title IV aid. Totals include students for whom income data were not available. Constant dollars are based on the Consumer Price Index, prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, adjusted to an academic-year basis. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded data. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Winter 2021–22, Student Financial Aid component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 331.30.

Many students and their families pay less than the full price of attendance because they receive financial aid to help cover expenses. Some primary types of financial aid are grant and scholarship aid, which do not have to be repaid, and loans, which must be repaid. Grant and scholarship aid may be awarded based on financial need, merit, or both and may include tuition waivers. In academic year 2020–21, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid (in constant 2021–22 dollars) for first-time, full-time undergraduate students awarded Title IV aid was higher for students at private nonprofit institutions than for those at public and private for-profit institutions. Students at private nonprofit 4-year institutions received an average of \$28,600 in grant and scholarship aid, compared with \$9,600 at public institutions and \$7,800 at private for-profit institutions.

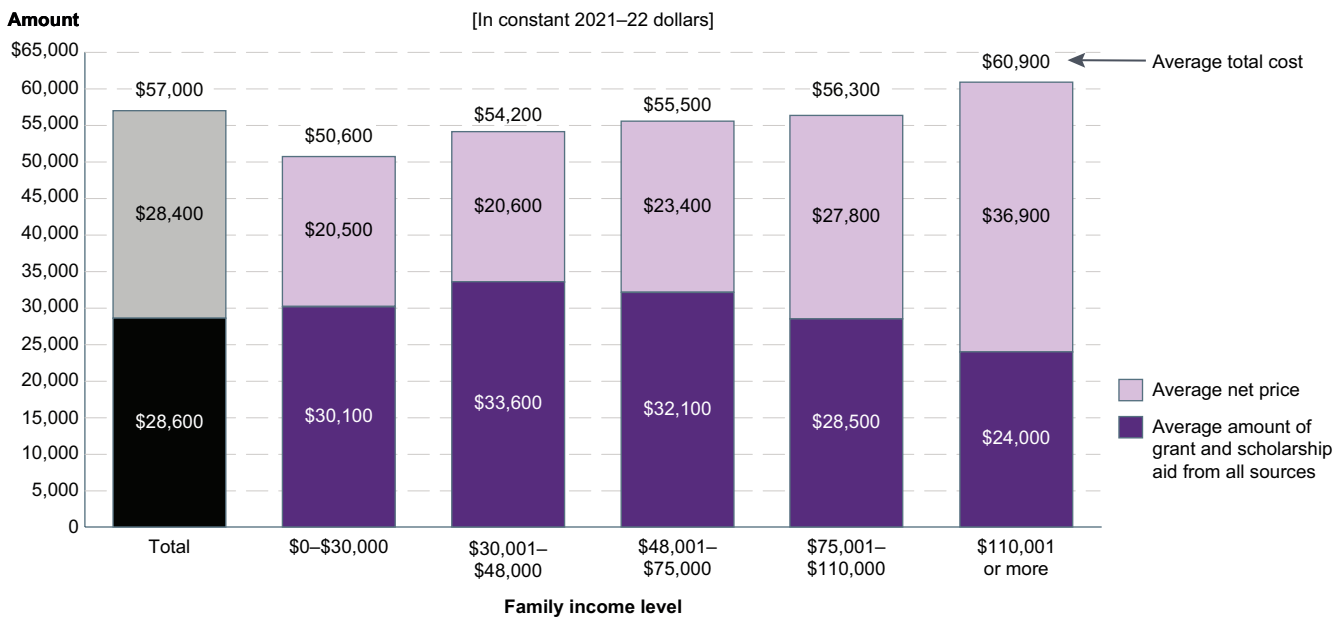
In 2020–21, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid awarded and the net price paid differed by students' family income level.⁹ At public 4-year institutions, the lower the income group, the greater the average amount of grant and scholarship aid awarded. For example, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid awarded

to first-time, full-time undergraduate students paying in-state tuition, by family income level, was highest for those with family incomes of \$30,000 or less and lowest for those with family incomes of \$110,001 or more. Specifically, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid at public 4-year institutions was

- \$13,200 for students with family incomes of \$0 to \$30,000;
- \$12,700 for students with family incomes of \$30,001 to \$48,000;
- \$9,500 for students with family incomes of \$48,001 to \$75,000;
- \$5,400 for students with family incomes of \$75,001 to \$110,000; and
- \$3,300 for students with family incomes of \$110,001 or more.

Accordingly, at public 4-year institutions in 2020–21, the lowest average net price (\$9,500) was paid by students with family incomes of \$30,000 or less and the highest average net price (\$23,300) was paid by those with family incomes of \$110,001 or more.

Figure 5. Average total cost, net price, and grant and scholarship aid for first-time, full-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students awarded Title IV aid at private nonprofit 4-year institutions, by family income level: Academic year 2020–21



NOTE: Data are for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Excludes students who previously attended another postsecondary institution or who began their studies on a part-time basis. Average net price is calculated here as the average total cost of attendance minus average grant and scholarship aid. Includes only first-time, full-time students who were awarded Title IV aid. Excludes students who were not awarded any Title IV aid. Title IV aid includes grant aid, work-study aid, and loan aid. Grant and scholarship aid consists of federal Title IV grants, as well as other grant or scholarship aid from the federal government, state or local governments, or institutional sources. Data are weighted by the number of students at the institution who were awarded Title IV aid. Totals include students for whom income data were not available. Constant dollars are based on the Consumer Price Index, prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, adjusted to an academic-year basis.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Winter 2021–22, Student Financial Aid component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 331.30.

The average amount of grant and scholarship aid awarded to first-time, full-time undergraduate students at private nonprofit 4-year institutions in 2020-21 (in constant 2021-22 dollars) did not follow the same pattern as the amount awarded at public 4-year institutions. Instead, the average amount of grant or scholarship aid awarded was highest for those with family incomes between \$30,001 and \$75,000. Specifically, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid at private nonprofit 4-year institutions was

- \$33,600 for students with family incomes of \$30,001 to \$48,000;
- \$32,100 for students with family incomes of \$48,001 to \$75,000;
- \$30,100 for students with family incomes of \$0 to \$30,000;
- \$28,500 for students with family incomes of \$75,001 to \$110,000; and
- \$24,000 for students with family incomes of \$110,001 or more.

However, because first-time, full-time students from the lowest income families tended to enroll at institutions with the lowest average total cost, the lowest average net price (\$20,500) at private nonprofit 4-year institutions was paid by those with family incomes of \$30,000 or less. The highest average net price (\$36,900) was paid by those with family incomes of \$110,001 or more.

Figure 6. Average total cost, net price, and grant and scholarship aid for first-time, full-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students awarded Title IV aid at private for-profit 4-year institutions, by family income level: Academic year 2020–21



NOTE: Data are for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Excludes students who previously attended another postsecondary institution or who began their studies on a part-time basis. Average net price is calculated here as the average total cost of attendance minus average grant and scholarship aid. Includes only first-time, full-time students who were awarded Title IV aid. Excludes students who were not awarded any Title IV aid. Title IV aid includes grant aid, work-study aid, and loan aid. Grant and scholarship aid consists of federal Title IV grants, as well as other grant or scholarship aid from the federal government, state or local governments, or institutional sources. Data are weighted by the number of students at the institution who were awarded Title IV aid. Totals include students for whom income data were not available. Constant dollars are based on the Consumer Price Index, prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, adjusted to an academic-year basis. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded data. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Winter 2021–22, Student Financial Aid component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 331.30.

At private for-profit 4-year institutions, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid awarded to first-time, full-time undergraduate students in academic year 2020–21 (in constant 2021–22 dollars) was highest for those with family incomes between \$30,001 and \$48,000 (\$8,500 in aid). The average amount of grant and scholarship aid awarded was lowest for those with family incomes between \$75,001 and \$110,000 (\$6,400 in aid). The lowest average net price (\$23,600) was paid by students with family incomes of \$30,000 or less. The highest average net price (\$28,800) was paid by those with family incomes of \$110,001 or more.

In 2020–21, at all family income levels, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid at 4-year institutions was highest for first-time, full-time undergraduate students at private nonprofit 4-year institutions. At lower family income levels (\$75,000 or less), the average amount

of grant and scholarship aid was lowest for students at private for-profit 4-year institutions, but at higher family income levels (\$75,001 or more) it was lowest for students at public 4-year institutions. For example, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid awarded to students with family incomes between \$30,001 and \$48,000 who attended 4-year institutions was

- \$33,600 at private nonprofit institutions);
- \$12,700 at public institutions; and
- \$8,500 at private for-profit institutions.

Within each family income level, the average net price for 4-year institutions in 2020–21 was lowest at public institutions. The average net price was highest at private for-profit 4-year institutions for each family income level except \$110,001 or more, for which average net price was highest at private nonprofit institutions (\$36,900).

Endnotes:

¹ For public institutions, this is the lower of in-district or in-state published tuition and required fees.

² Includes only students who are seeking a degree or certificate.

³ Data for public institutions only include students who paid the in-district or in-state tuition and fees.

⁴ Data in this indicator represent the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

⁵ Average tuition and fees presented in this indicator are calculated differently from those presented in [Loans for Undergraduate Students](#). Tuition and fees in this indicator are based on reporting for first-time, full-time students, rather than all full-time students.

⁶ All dollar amounts in this indicator are expressed in constant 2021-22 dollars. Constant dollars are based on the Consumer Price Index, prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, adjusted to an academic-year basis.

⁷ Average amounts of grant and scholarship aid include federal Title IV grants, as well as other grant or scholarship aid from the federal government, state or local governments, or institutional sources.

⁸ Title IV aid includes grant aid, work-study aid, and loan aid. Data for net price and grant and scholarship aid only include students who were awarded Title IV aid.

⁹ To determine the income level of the student, institutions are instructed to use the income that was used by the institution's financial aid office to determine the student's Expected Family Contribution (EFC). For dependent students this includes the parents' adjusted gross income and the student's adjusted gross income. For independent students this includes the student's adjusted gross income.

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, tables 330.40 and 331.30

Related indicators and resources: [Financing Postsecondary Education in the United States \[The Condition of Education 2013 Spotlight\]](#); [Loans for Undergraduate Students](#); [Sources of Financial Aid](#)

Glossary: Constant dollars; Control of institutions; Financial aid; First-time, full-time student; Full-time enrollment; Postsecondary institutions (basic classification by level); Private institution; Public school or institution; Title IV eligible institution; Tuition and fees; Undergraduate students