

# Price of Attending an Undergraduate Institution

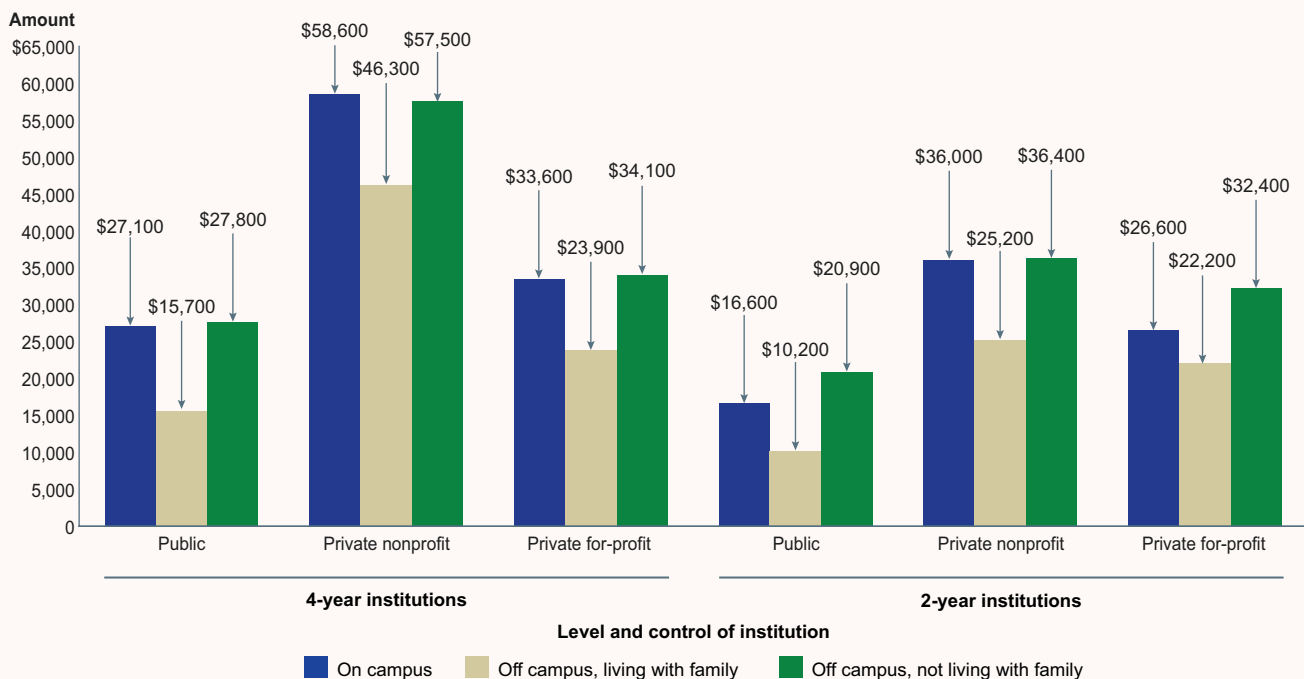
*In academic year 2021–22, the average net price of attendance (total cost minus grant and scholarship aid) for first-time, full-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students attending 4-year degree-granting institutions was \$15,200 at public institutions, compared with \$29,700 at private nonprofit institutions and \$24,400 at private for-profit institutions (in constant 2022–23 dollars).*

The total cost of attending a postsecondary institution includes the sum of published tuition and required fees;<sup>1,2</sup> books and supplies; and the average cost for room, board, and other expenses for each institution. In academic year 2022-23, the average total cost of attendance<sup>3</sup> for first-time, full-time degree/certificate seeking undergraduate students differed by control of institution (public, 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 2022-23, the average total cost of attendance for first-time, full-time undergraduate students living on campus at 4-year degree-granting institutions was higher at private nonprofit institutions (\$58,600) than at private for-profit institutions (\$33,600) and public institutions (\$27,100).<sup>4</sup>

## Cost of Attendance

FIGURE 1.

**Average total cost of attending degree-granting institutions for first-time, full-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students, by level and control of institution and student living arrangement: Academic year 2022–23**



See next page for notes and sources.

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. Data are for degree-granting institutions, which grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs, and U.S. service academies. Data are weighted by the number of first-time, full-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students at the institution who were awarded Title IV aid. Title IV aid includes grant aid, work-study aid, and loan aid. Figures are plotted based on unrounded data.  
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Student Financial Aid component and Institutional Characteristics component, Winter 2022–23 (provisional data) and Fall 2022 (provisional data). See *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, table 330.40.

For first-time, full-time degree/certificate seeking undergraduate students in academic year 2022-23, the average total cost of attendance at 4-year degree-granting 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

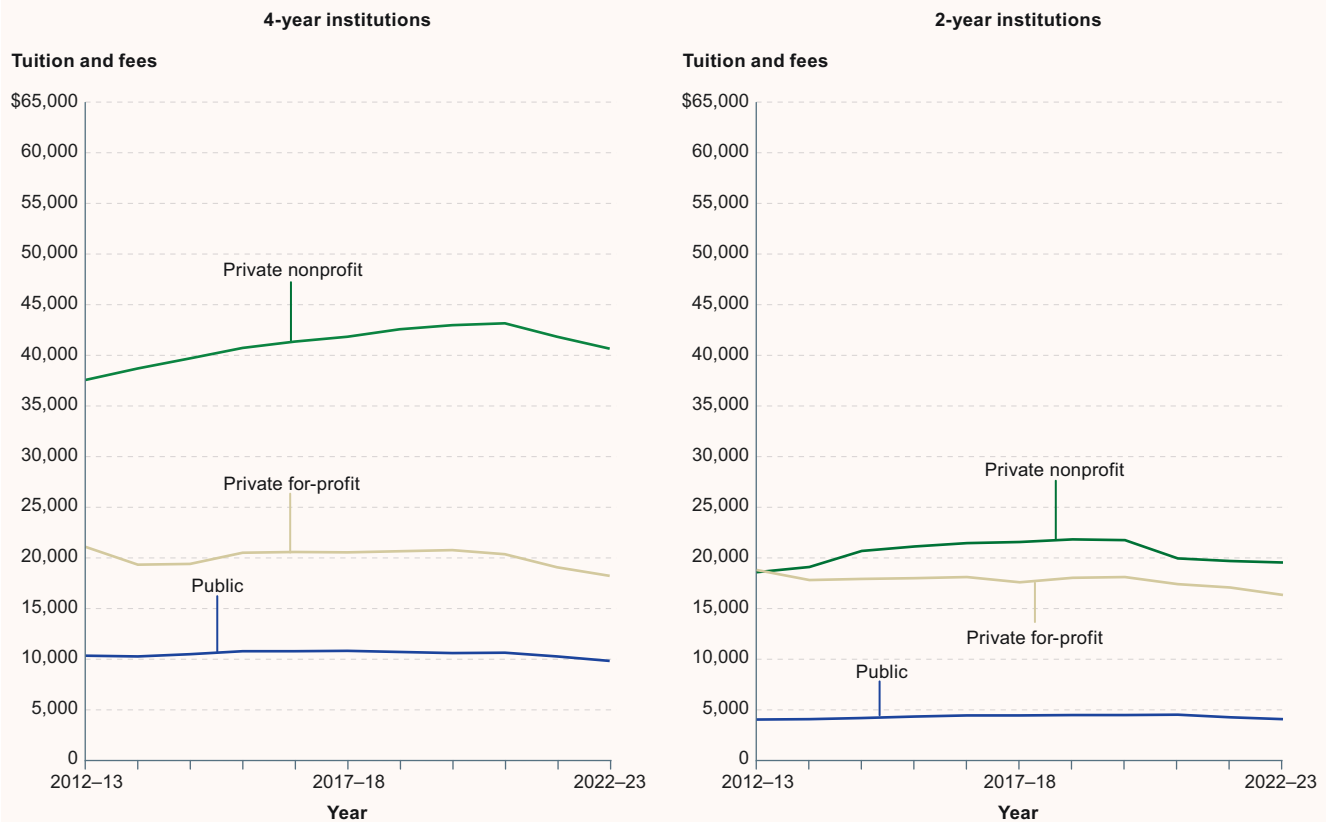
- \$27,800 for students living off campus but not with family;
- \$27,100 for students living on campus; and
- \$15,700 for students living off campus with family.

At 2-year degree-granting institutions, the average total cost of attendance for first-time, full-time undergraduate students in 2022-23 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

- \$20,900 for students living off campus but not with family;
- \$16,600 for students living on campus; and
- \$10,200 for students living off campus with family.

**Institution Tuition and Fees****FIGURE 2.****Average tuition and fees of degree-granting institutions for first-time, full-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students, by level and control of institution: Academic years 2012–13 through 2022–23**

[In constant 2022–23 dollars]



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. Data are for degree-granting institutions, which grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs, and U.S. service academies. Data are weighted by the number of first-time, full-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate 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. Figures are plotted based on unrounded data.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Student Financial Aid component and Institutional Characteristics component, Spring 2011 (final data), Winter 2022–23 (provisional data), Fall 2012 (final data) through Fall 2022 (provisional data). See *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, table 330.40, *Digest of Education Statistics 2017*, table 330.40, *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, table 330.40, *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 330.40, and *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, table 330.40.

At all types of degree-granting institutions, average tuition and fees<sup>5</sup> for first-time, full-time degree/certificate seeking students increased by less than the rate of inflation from 2021–22 to 2022–23. Therefore, in constant dollars,<sup>6</sup> average tuition and fees were lower in 2022–23 than they were the year before. However, longer-term trends from 2012–13 to 2022–23 varied by level and control of institution.

At 4-year institutions average tuition and fees in 2022–23 were

- \$9,800 for public institutions, which was 5 percent lower than \$10,400 in 2012–13;
- \$18,200 for private for-profit institutions, which was 14 percent lower than \$21,100 in 2012–13; and
- \$40,700 for private nonprofit institutions, which was 8 percent higher than \$37,600 in 2012–13.

Despite recent annual declines, private nonprofit institutions experienced an increase in average tuition and fees between 2012–13 and 2022–23. In contrast, at public and private for-profit 4-year institutions, average tuition and fees during this period were at their lowest point in 2022–23.

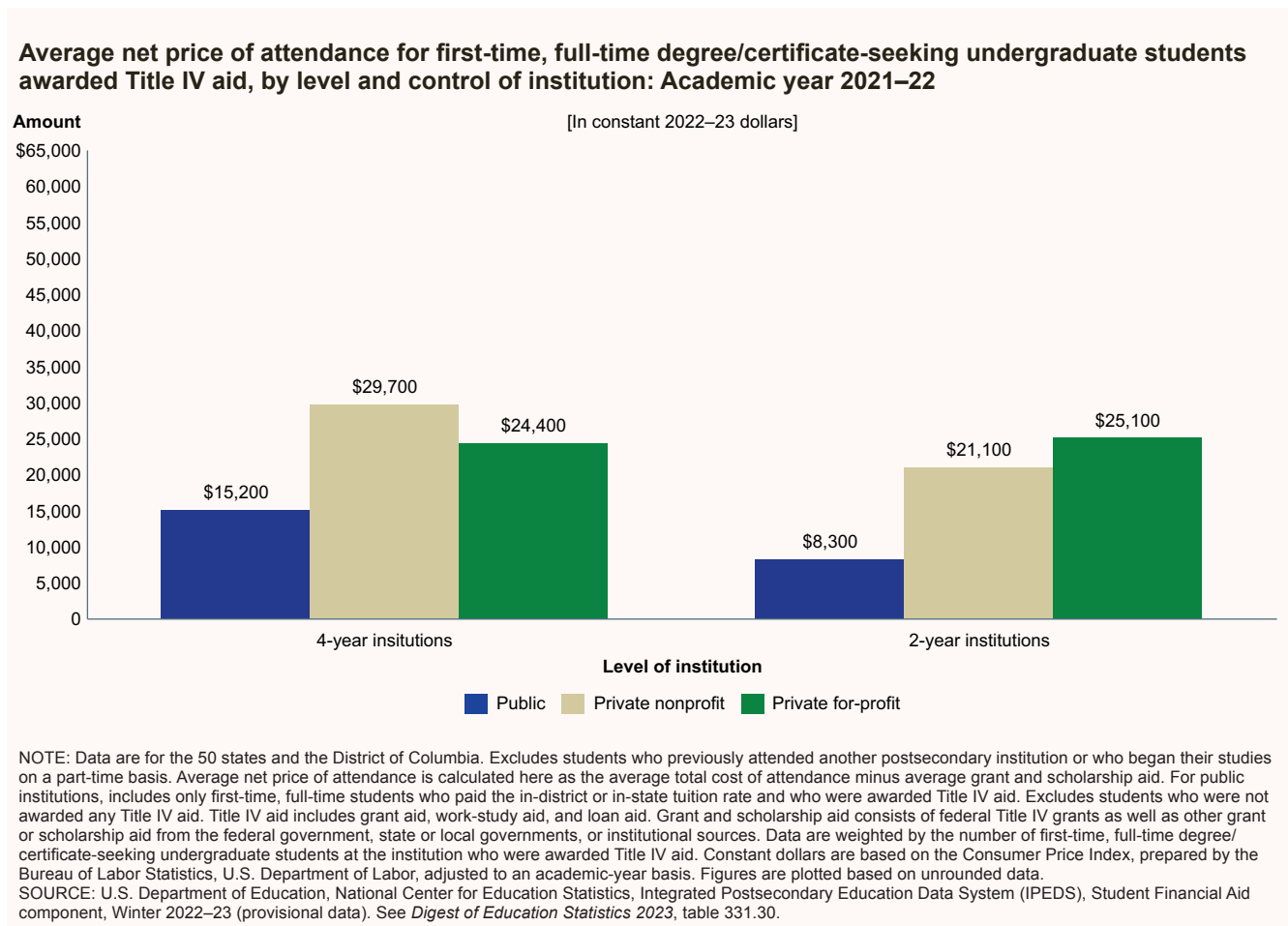
At 2-year degree-granting institutions, average tuition and fees in 2022-23 were

- \$4,000 for public institutions, which was 1 percent higher than in 2012-13 (also rounded to \$4,000);
- \$16,300 for private for-profit institutions, which was 13 percent lower than \$18,800 in 2012-13; and
- \$19,500 for private nonprofit institutions, which was 5 percent higher than \$18,600 in 2012-13.

Average tuition and fees at private for-profit 2-year institutions were highest in 2012-13, followed by a decline over the period. In contrast, average tuition and fees at public and private nonprofit 2-year institutions over this period were both lowest in 2012-13, and then peaked in 2020-21 (\$4,500) and 2018-19 (\$21,800), respectively.

### Net Price of Attendance

FIGURE 3.



The net price of attendance is the estimate of the actual amount of money first-time, full-time degree/certificate seeking 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<sup>7</sup> awarded to students.

In academic year 2021-22, the average net price of attendance (in constant 2022-23 dollars) at 4-year institutions for first-time, full-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students awarded Title IV aid<sup>8</sup> was lowest for students at public institutions and highest for students at private nonprofit institutions. Average net prices were

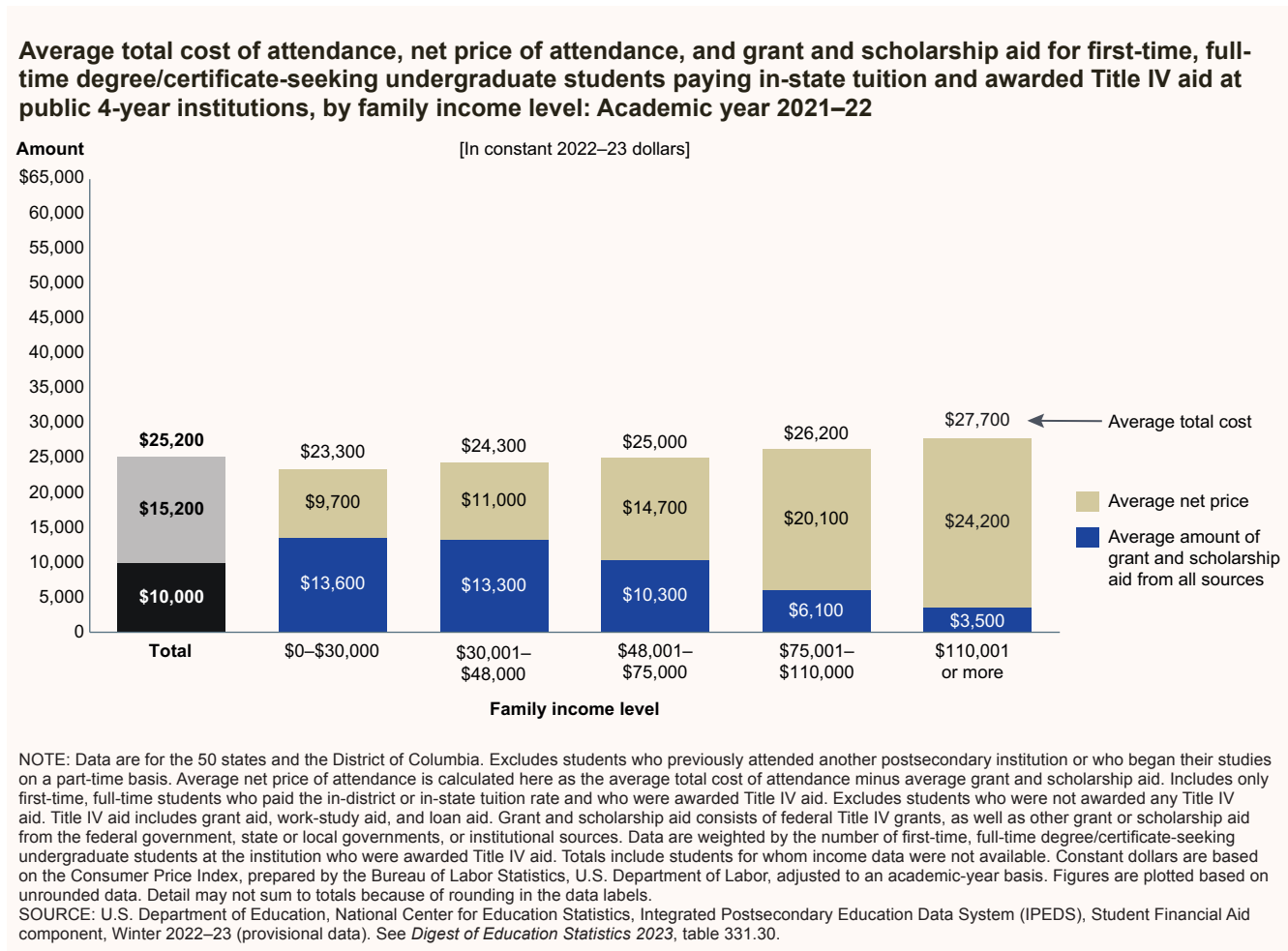
- \$15,200 at public institutions;
- \$24,400 at private for-profit institutions; and
- \$29,700 at private nonprofit institutions.

The average net price at 2-year institutions in 2021-22 (in constant 2022-23 dollars) was lowest at public institutions, and highest at private for-profit institutions. Average net prices were

- \$8,300 at public institutions;
- \$21,100 at private nonprofit institutions; and
- \$25,100 at private for-profit institutions.

**Financial Assistance at 4-Year Institutions**

**FIGURE 4.**



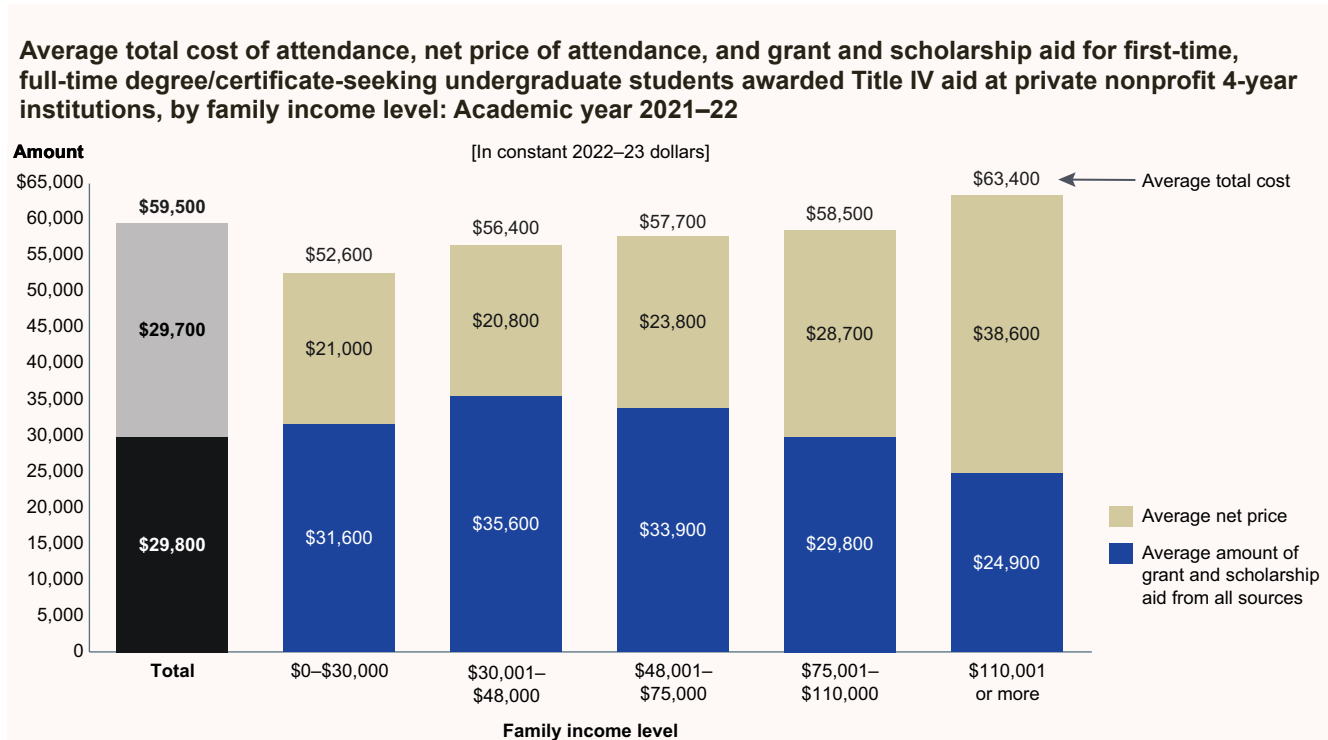
Many students and their families pay less than the full price of attendance because they receive financial aid to help cover expenses. Some primary types of financial aid are grant and scholarship aid, which do not have to be repaid, and loans, which must be repaid. Grant and scholarship aid may be awarded based on financial need, merit, or both and may include tuition waivers. In academic year 2021-22, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid (in constant 2022-23 dollars) for first-time, full-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students awarded Title IV aid was higher for students at private nonprofit institutions than for those at public and private for-profit institutions. At 4-year institutions, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid awarded was \$29,800 for those at private nonprofit institutions, \$10,000 for those at public institutions, and \$7,700 for those at private for-profit institutions.

In 2021-22, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid awarded and the net price paid (in constant 2022-23 dollars) differed by students' family income level.<sup>9</sup> 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 degree/certificate seeking undergraduate students, 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 awarded to students at public 4-year institutions was

- \$13,600 for those with family incomes of \$0 to \$30,000;
- \$13,300 for those with family incomes of \$30,001 to \$48,000;
- \$10,300 for those with family incomes of \$48,001 to \$75,000;
- \$6,100 for those with family incomes of \$75,001 to \$110,000; and
- \$3,500 for those with family incomes of \$110,001 or more.

Accordingly, at public 4-year institutions in 2021-22, the lowest average net price (\$9,700) was paid by students with family incomes of \$30,000 or less and the highest average net price (\$24,200) was paid by those with family incomes of \$110,001 or more.

**FIGURE 5.**



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 of attendance 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 first-time, full-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate 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. Figures are plotted based on unrounded data. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding in the data labels.

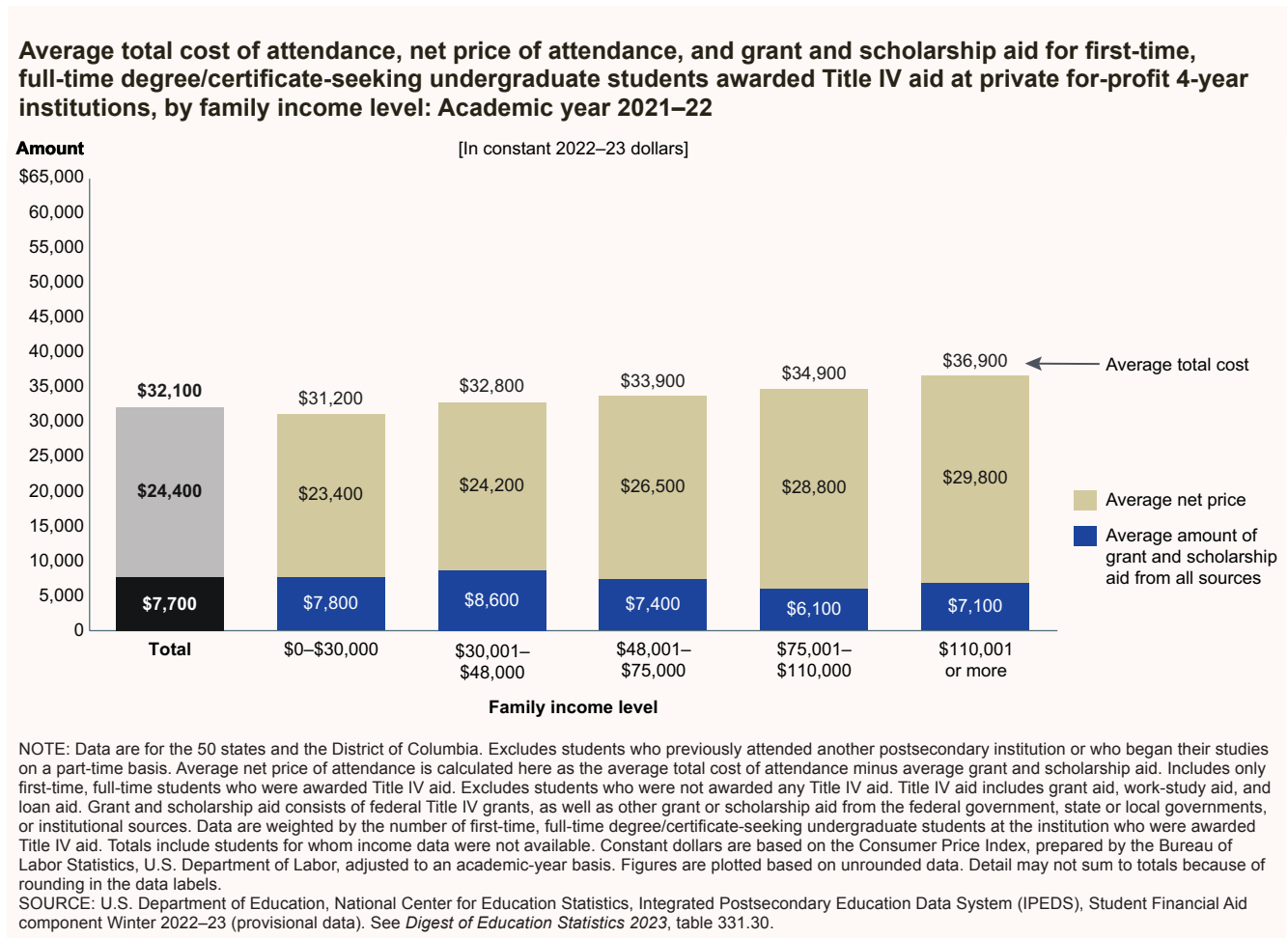
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Student Financial Aid component, Winter 2022–23 (provisional data). See *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, table 331.30.

The average amount of grant and scholarship aid (in constant 2022-23 dollars) awarded to first-time, full-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students at private nonprofit 4-year institutions in 2021-22 did not follow the same pattern as the amount awarded to those 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 awarded to students at private nonprofit 4-year institutions was

- \$35,600 for those with family incomes of \$30,001 to \$48,000;
- \$33,900 for those with family incomes of \$48,001 to \$75,000;
- \$31,600 for those with family incomes of \$0 to \$30,000;
- \$29,800 for those with family incomes of \$75,001 to \$110,000; and
- \$24,900 for those with family incomes of \$110,001 or more.

In 2021-22, the lowest average net price (in constant 2022-23 dollars) at private nonprofit 4-year institutions was paid by those with family incomes of \$30,001 to \$48,000 (\$20,800), followed by those with family incomes of \$30,000 or less (\$21,000).

**FIGURE 6.**



At private for-profit 4-year institutions, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid (in constant 2022-23 dollars) awarded to first-time, full-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students in academic year 2021-22 was highest for those with family incomes between \$30,001 and \$48,000 (\$8,600 in aid). The average amount of grant and scholarship aid awarded was lowest for those with family incomes between \$75,001 and \$110,000 (\$6,100 in aid). The lowest average net price (\$23,400) was paid by students with family incomes of \$30,000 or less. The highest average net price (\$29,800) was paid by those with family incomes of \$110,001 or more.

In 2021-22, at all family income levels, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid (in constant 2022-23 dollars) at 4-year institutions was highest for first-time, full-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students at private nonprofit 4-year institutions. At each of the four lower family income levels (\$110,000 or less), the average amount of grant and scholarship aid was lowest for students at private for-profit 4-year institutions; at the highest family income level (\$110,001 or more), it was lowest for students at public 4-year institutions. For students from families with incomes between \$75,001 and \$110,000, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid was \$6,100 at private for-profit 4-year institutions and \$6,100 at public 4-year institutions. The average amount of grant and scholarship aid awarded to students at 4-year institutions with family incomes between \$30,001 and \$48,000 was

- \$35,600 at private nonprofit institutions;
- \$13,300 at public institutions; and
- \$8,600 at private for-profit institutions.

Within each family income level, the average net price for 4-year institutions in 2021-22 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 (\$38,600).

#### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> For general technical notes related to data analysis, data interpretation, rounding, and other considerations, please refer to the [Reader's Guide](#).

<sup>2</sup> For public institutions, this is the lower of in-district or in-state published tuition and required fees.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> Data in this indicator represent the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

<sup>5</sup> Average tuition and fees presented in this indicator are based on a different population than the one used in [Loans for Undergraduate Students and Debt for Bachelor's Degree Recipients](#). Tuition and fees in this indicator are based on reporting for first-time, full-time degree/certificate seeking students, rather than all full-time students.

<sup>6</sup> All dollar amounts in this indicator are expressed in constant 2022-23 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.

<sup>7</sup> 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. Grant and scholarship aid does not include loans.

<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> 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 2023*, tables [330.40](#) and [331.30](#); *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table [330.40](#); *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, table [330.40](#); *Digest of Education Statistics 2017*, table [330.40](#); *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, table [330.40](#)

**Related indicators and resources:** [Financing Postsecondary Education in the United States \[The Condition of Education 2013 Spotlight\]](#); [Loans for Undergraduate Students and Debt for Bachelor's Degree Recipients](#); [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](#)