

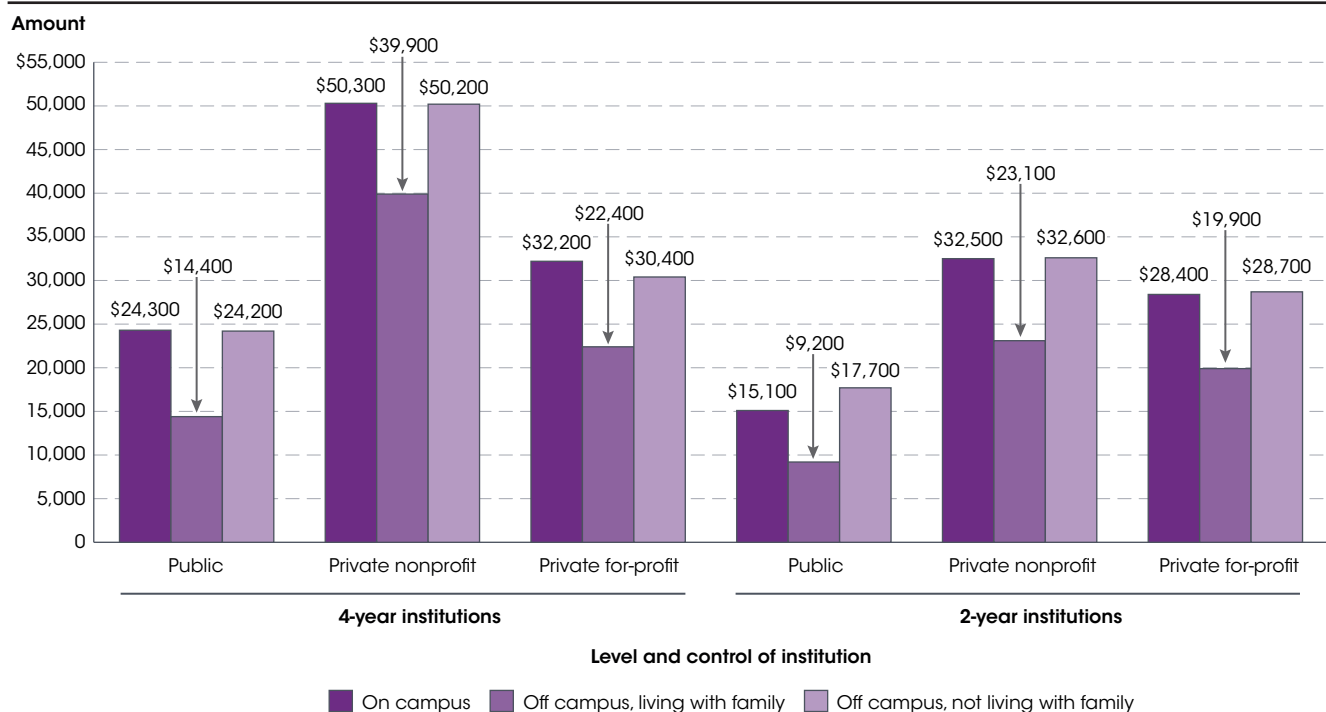
## Price of Attending an Undergraduate Institution

*In academic year 2016–17, 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 \$13,800 at public institutions, compared with \$26,800 at private nonprofit institutions and \$22,000 at private for-profit institutions (in constant 2017–18 dollars).*

The total cost of attending a postsecondary institution includes the sum of published tuition and required fees,<sup>1</sup> books and supplies, and the weighted average cost for room, board, and other expenses. In academic year 2017–18, the total cost of attendance for first-time, full-time undergraduate students<sup>2</sup> differed by institutional control (public,<sup>3</sup> private nonprofit, or private for-profit) and institutional level (2-year or 4-year). In addition, the total

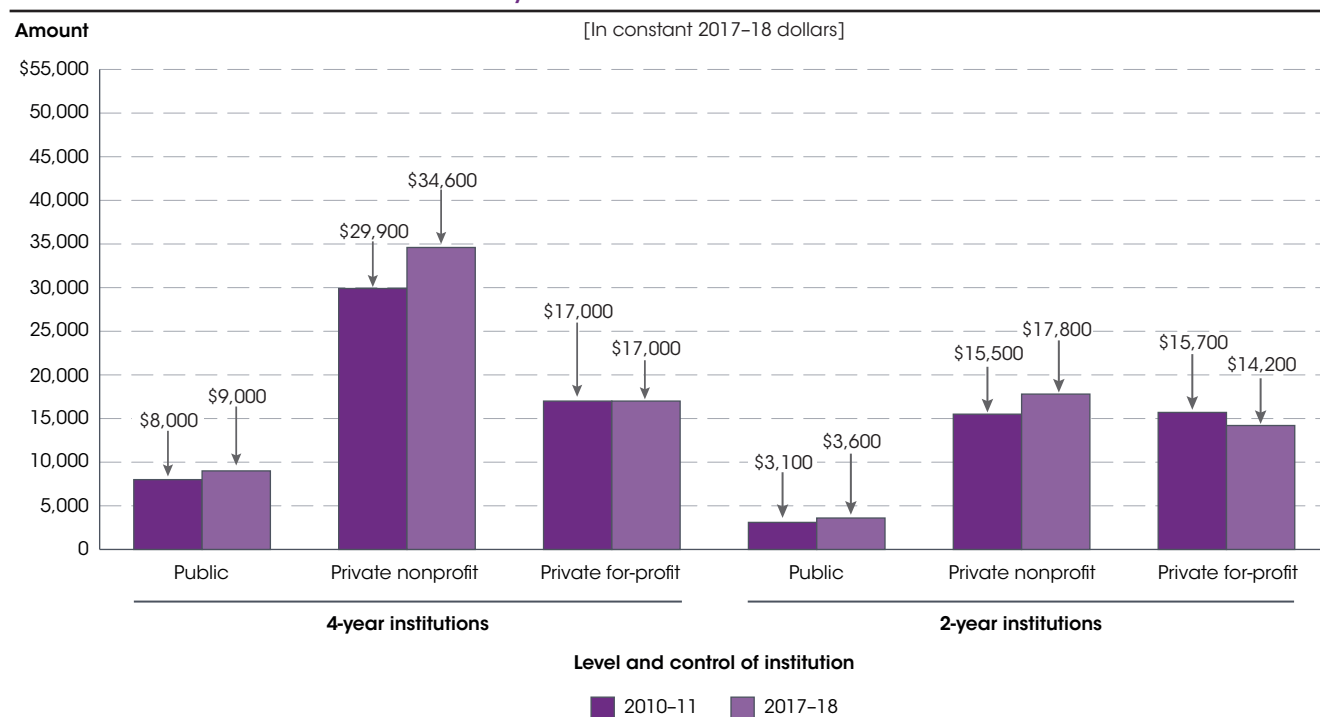
cost of attendance varied by student living arrangement (on campus; off campus, living with family; and off campus, not living with family). In 2017–18, the average total cost of attendance for first-time, full-time undergraduate students living on campus at 4-year institutions was higher at private nonprofit institutions (\$50,300) than at private for-profit institutions (\$32,200) and public institutions (\$24,300).

**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 2017–18**



NOTE: 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. Excludes students who have already attended another postsecondary institution or who began their studies on a part-time basis. 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 2017–18, Student Financial Aid component; and Fall 2017, Institutional Characteristics component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, table 330.40.

**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 2017-18**

NOTE: Tuition and fees at public institutions are the lower of either in-district or in-state tuition and fees. Excludes students who have already attended another postsecondary institution or who began their studies on a part-time basis. 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 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 2017-18, Student Financial Aid component; and Fall 2010 through Fall 2017, Institutional Characteristics component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, table 330.40.

Average tuition and fees were higher in academic year 2017-18 than in academic year 2010-11 for first-time, full-time undergraduate students at public and private nonprofit 4-year institutions (in constant 2017-18 dollars). At public 4-year institutions, average tuition and fees were \$9,000 in 2017-18, about 12 percent higher than they were in 2010-11 (\$8,000). At private nonprofit 4-year institutions, average tuition and fees were \$34,600 in 2017-18, about 16 percent higher than they were in 2010-11 (\$29,900). At private for-profit 4-year institutions, in contrast, average tuition and fees were similar in 2010-11 and 2017-18 (about \$17,000 each).

The pattern of average tuition and fees at 2-year institutions was generally similar to the pattern at 4-year institutions. Average tuition and fees were 18 percent higher in academic year 2017-18 than in academic year 2010-11 at public 2-year institutions (\$3,600 vs. \$3,100) and 14 percent higher in 2017-18 than in 2010-11 at private nonprofit 2-year institutions (\$17,800 vs. \$15,500). In contrast, average tuition and fees were 10 percent lower in 2017-18 than in 2010-11 at private for-profit 2-year institutions (\$14,200 vs. \$15,700).

Many students and their families pay less than the full price of attendance because they receive financial aid to help cover expenses. The 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 aid from employers. In academic year 2016-17, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid<sup>4</sup> (in constant 2017-18 dollars) for first-time, full-time undergraduate students awarded Title IV aid<sup>5</sup> 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 \$22,300 in grant and scholarship aid, compared with \$7,500 at public institutions and \$6,300 at private for-profit institutions.

The net price of attendance is the estimate of the actual amount of money that students and their families need to pay in a given year to cover educational expenses. Net price is calculated here as the total cost of attendance minus grant and scholarship aid. Net price provides an indication of what the total financial burden is on students and their families since it also includes loans.

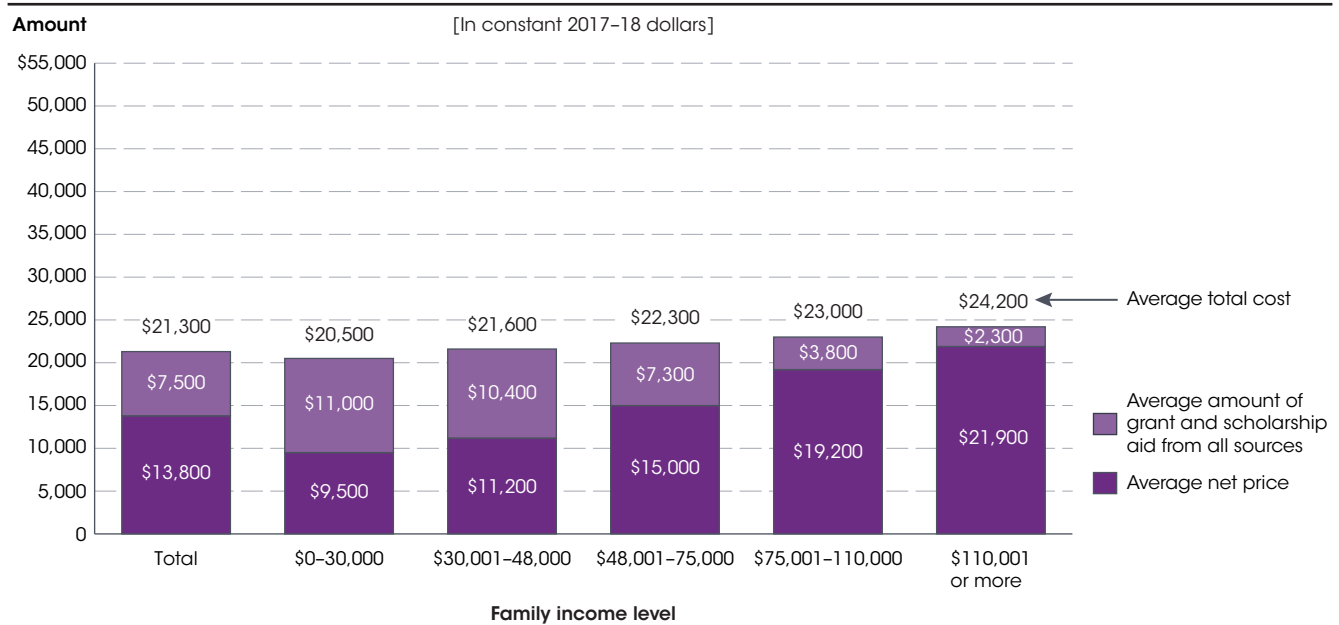
Among first-time, full-time undergraduate students in academic year 2017–18, the average total cost of attendance at 4-year institutions was similar for those living on campus and those living off campus but not with family. In comparison, the average total cost of attendance was lower for those living 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 \$24,300 for students living on campus and \$24,200 for students living off campus but not with family, compared with \$14,400 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 academic year 2017–18 was 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 higher for students living off campus but not with family (\$17,700) than for students living on campus (\$15,100); both groups had a higher average total cost of attendance than students living off campus with family (\$9,200).

In academic year 2016–17, among 4-year institutions, the average net price of attendance (in constant 2017–18 dollars) for first-time, full-time undergraduate students awarded Title IV aid was lower for students at public institutions (\$13,800) than for those at both private for-profit institutions (\$22,000) and private nonprofit

institutions (\$26,800). Similarly, the average net price at 2-year institutions in 2016–17 was lowest at public institutions (\$7,400) and higher at private nonprofit institutions (\$21,600) and private for-profit institutions (\$21,800).

**Figure 3. Average total cost, grant and scholarship aid, and net price 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 2016–17**

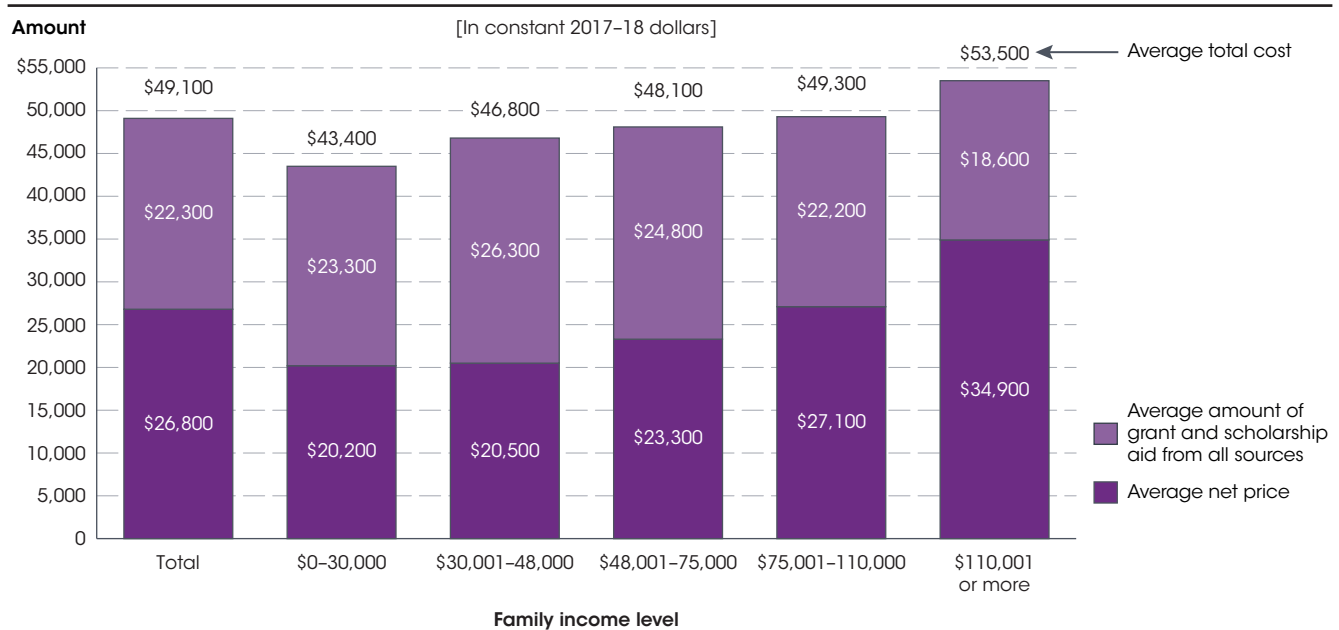


NOTE: Excludes students who previously attended another postsecondary institution or who began their studies on a part-time basis. Net price is calculated here as the average total cost of attendance minus average grant and scholarship aid. Includes only first-time, full-time students who paid the in-district 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 based on the Consumer Price Index, prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, adjusted to an academic-year basis. 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 2017–18, Student Financial Aid component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, table 331.30.

In academic year 2016–17, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid awarded and the net price paid (in constant 2017–18 dollars) differed by students’ family income level. In general, the lower the income, the greater the average amount of grant and scholarship aid awarded. For example, at public 4-year institutions, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid awarded to first-time, full-time undergraduate students paying in-state tuition

in 2016–17 was highest for those with family incomes of \$30,000 or less (\$11,000 in aid) and lowest for those with family incomes of \$110,001 or more (\$2,300 in aid). Accordingly, at public 4-year institutions, 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 (\$21,900) was for those with family incomes of \$110,001 or more.

**Figure 4. Average total cost, grant and scholarship aid, and net price 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 2016–17**

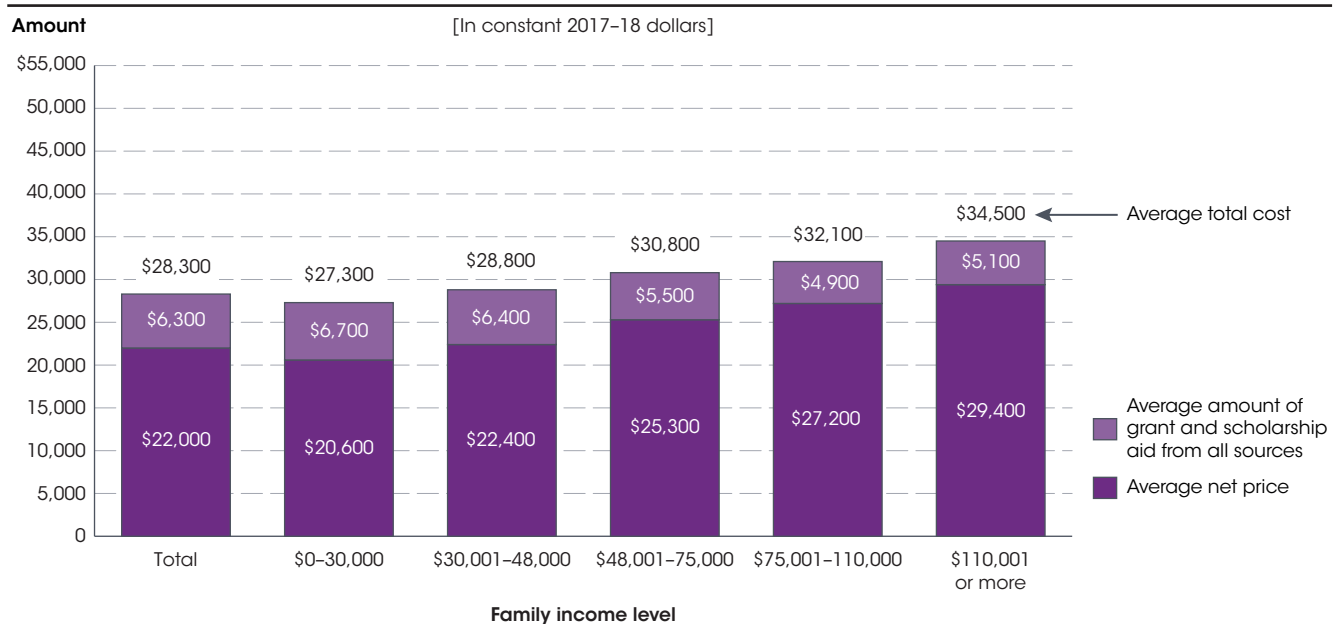


NOTE: Excludes students who previously attended another postsecondary institution or who began their studies on a part-time basis. Net price is calculated here as the average total cost of attendance minus average grant and scholarship aid. Includes only first-time, full-time students who were awarded 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 based on the Consumer Price Index, prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, adjusted to an academic-year basis. 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 2017–18, Student Financial Aid component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, table 331.30.

The pattern of average net price increasing with family income was also observed at private nonprofit 4-year institutions in academic year 2016–17. However, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid awarded (in constant 2017–18 dollars) was highest for first-time, full-time undergraduate students with family incomes between \$30,001 and \$48,000 (\$26,300 in aid), followed by those with family incomes between \$48,001 and \$75,000

(\$24,800 in aid), those with family incomes of \$30,000 or less (\$23,300 in aid), those with family incomes between \$75,001 and \$110,000 (\$22,200 in aid), and those with family incomes of \$110,001 or more (\$18,600 in aid). The lowest average net price (\$20,200) was paid by students with family incomes of \$30,000 or less, and the highest average net price (\$34,900) was paid by those with family incomes of \$110,001 or more.

**Figure 5. Average total cost, grant and scholarship aid, and net price 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 2016–17**



NOTE: Excludes students who previously attended another postsecondary institution or who began their studies on a part-time basis. 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 based on the Consumer Price Index, prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, adjusted to an academic-year basis. 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 2017–18, Student Financial Aid component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, 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 2016–17 (in constant 2017–18 dollars) was highest for those with family incomes of \$30,000 or less (\$6,700 in aid) and lowest for those with family incomes between \$75,001 and \$110,000 (\$4,900 in aid). The lowest average net price (\$20,600) was paid by students with family incomes of \$30,000 or less, and the highest average net price (\$29,400) was paid by those with family incomes of \$110,001 or more.

In academic year 2016–17, at most family income levels, the average amount of grant and scholarship aid at 4-year institutions (in constant 2017–18 dollars) was highest for first-time, full-time undergraduate students at private nonprofit 4-year institutions and lowest for students at

private for-profit 4-year institutions. Additionally, at each family income level except the highest level (\$110,001 or more), the average net price was highest for students attending private for-profit 4-year institutions and lowest for students attending 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 highest at private nonprofit institutions (\$26,300), followed by public institutions (\$10,400) and private for-profit institutions (\$6,400). The average net price of attending a private for-profit 4-year institution (\$22,400) at this family income level was higher than the price of attending a private nonprofit institution (\$20,500) or a public institution (\$11,200).

**Endnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> For public institutions, the lower of in-district or in-state published tuition and required fees.

<sup>2</sup> Includes only students who are seeking a degree or certificate.

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

<sup>4</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.

<sup>5</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.

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**Reference tables:** *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, 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; Full-time enrollment; Postsecondary institutions (basic classification by level); Private institution; Public school or institution; Title IV eligible institution; Tuition and fees; Undergraduate students