

Infographic: Paying for College

Average tuition and fees rose about 3 percent in 2014-2015, according to U.S. News data.

By [Susannah Snider](#) Sept. 16, 2014 | 8:45 a.m. EDT + More

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College costs are – no surprise here – on the rise again. The U.S. News [Best Colleges](#) rankings, released last week, include a wealth of information about paying for college, which is at the forefront of most families' minds as they fret over the often high price of a degree.

Private school [tuition and fees](#) averaged \$31,381 in 2014-2015, according to data reported by 728 ranked private universities in an annual U.S. News survey. That's up 3 percent from the previous year.

Private university price tags ran the gamut, from [Columbia University](#) in New York, which charged \$51,008 in tuition and fees, to Kentucky's [Berea College](#), which charged just \$870 by offering students four-year [full-tuition scholarships](#).

At public universities, out-of-staters paid an average of \$19,867, while residents paid \$8,709, up 2.8 percent and 2.7 percent, respectively. That's according to data reported to U.S. News by 418 ranked [public colleges and universities](#).

Another number on the rise is average indebtedness. Nearly seven in 10 graduates from the class of 2013 took out institutional, state or federal [loans](#), graduating with an average \$27,667 in debt. That's about \$500 more than borrowers in the class of 2012 had to shoulder.

A [loan repayment calculator](#) can put \$27,667 in perspective for students. Graduates with that amount in debt would write a check for nearly \$300 per month over the standard 10-year repayment plan, assuming a 5 percent interest rate. That's not a crippling amount for most graduates, but enough to make them feel the financial sting.

Check out the infographic below for more data about paying for college, including a look at academically strong schools that won't break the bank. U.S. News ranks [Best Value Schools](#) on academic quality in relation to price, factoring in the percent of students receiving need-based aid and the percent of costs covered by need-based aid, called the discount price. The data are correct as of Sept. 16, 2014.



PAYING FOR COLLEGE

Only ranked schools were considered in this analysis.

AVERAGE TUITION & FEES (2014-2015)



FINANCIAL AID & AWARDS*

Schools giving merit aid to at least 40 percent of students without financial need

10 out of 1,054

Average need-based scholarship or grant award

\$13,569



STUDENT LOANS

Average total debt for for 2013 graduates who took out loans

\$27,667

Average percent of 2013 graduating class who borrowed money for college



68.3%

