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Affordability & Student Financial Aid [1]

Even in times of uncertainty, a college education continues to be an investment worth making. On average, people with bachelor's degrees earn $1.8 million dollars more over their working lives, experience lower unemployment and are healthier than those who do not graduate from college. The following information outlines CU's commitment to affordability, including how we keep tuition in check, continue to fund student aid, reduce out-of-pocket costs, and other factors that affect your investment in your future.

Video: Student Financial Aid

Learn about the value of a college degree, the cost of attendance, how CU funds student financial aid compared to the state and federal government, and the average amount of loan debt CU students have upon graduation.

For questions about student financial aid, please contact the University of Colorado Office of the Vice President of Budget and Finance at system.budget@cu.edu [2].



Value of a College Degree

Compared to high school graduates, college graduates earn more than $1.8 million over their lifetime, experience lower unemployment and better health. Around half of CU bachelor's degree recipients graduate with no debt.

Graduate Lifetime Earnings

On average, college graduates earn $1.8 million more than those with only a high school diploma.

Unemployment

College graduates experience lower unemployment than those with only a high school diploma.

CU Alumni Earnings

CU graduates find jobs and pay back student loans at a higher rate than others in Colorado and across the U.S. While income varies by field of study, in the first ten years after graduation, average loan repayments are only a fraction of annual earnings.

On average, annual student loan payment is 6% of annual earnings.

Alumni earnings are based on a survey of CU alumni. Average undergraduate loans are based on analysis by the Colorado Department of Higher Education.

Student Loan Default Rates

Students who earn a credential are least likely to default on student loans. At CU, the majority of students repay their loans. In the chart below, CU student loan default rates are compared to Colorado and national averages. CU rates are well below the national average.

Graduation Rates

Graduation rates are a key indicator of how many undergraduate students who start as full-time freshman earn their degrees within four years. Graduating within this timeframe saves money. Students earning 30 or more credits per year will earn their degree within four years.

Student Loan Debt

At CU, Colorado residents earning bachelor’s degrees who graduate with debt have between $25,000 and $28,000, based on analysis by the Colorado Department of Higher Education. Systemwide, around half of CU graduates have loan debt (rates vary by campus).

Loan Amounts of Bachelor’s Degree Recipients in Colorado

Based on this data from the Colorado Department of Higher Education, most college graduates with student loans have debt under $30,000, a manageable amount given growing income.



Strategic Planning

CU is committed to being a premier, accessible and transformative public university that provides a quality and affordable education with outstanding teaching, learning, research, service, and health care. Through collaboration, diversity, innovation, technology and entrepreneurship, CU fosters student success and strengthens Colorado’s economic foundation.

For more information on CU Strategic Planning, visit cu.edu/strategic-planning [3]



Tuition & Fees

CU works to identify efficiencies while keeping tuition in check. The amount of state funding directly impacts tuition rates and the share of costs between the state, students, and families.

State Funding Impacts on Student Costs

Since FY 2001, state funding of higher education has declined, shifting the burden of the cost of a college education to Colorado families.

Cost of Attendance

Cost of Attendance (COA) refers to all costs of attending college. This includes tuition, fees, room and board, books, transportation, and personal expenses.



Affordability & Student Financial Aid

While students invest in their futures, CU invests in its students to ensure Coloradans can afford a CU education. By keeping tuition in check, eliminating fees, providing financial aid to low income students, and focusing on time-to-degree, CU has increased its focus on

affordability.

Types of Student Aid

Systemwide, CU delivers millions in grants and scholarships to students. In a typical year, this amount exceeds ALL grants and scholarships from the federal government (including Pell), state, and private scholarships combined.

CU Institutional Aid

CU's investment in grants and scholarships has grown substantially over the years. Historically, CU awards more in grants and scholarships than the state provides in state aid to all Colorado public institutions.

Out-of-Pocket Costs

Total out-of-pocket costs are calculated using the Average Cost of Attendance (COA) minus the average aid package (grants+scholarships). Aid packages are the sum of federal, state, institutional, and other scholarships. Data limited to resident undergraduates applying for aid.

- CU Campus Resources
- CU System Resources
- State Resources

CU Boulder:

- Financial Aid Home [4]
- Net Price Calculator [5]
- Aid Estimator [6]

CU Denver:

- Financial Aid Home [7]
- Net Price Calculator [8]
- Cost of Attendance Calculator (includes aid estimates) [9]

UCCS:

- Financial Aid Home [10]
- Net Price Calculator [11]
- Student data on Financial aid [12]

- **CU Data Made Simple:** Home page for aggregated CU System data, visualizations, and videos. This includes student and employee data, cost of attendance, financial assistance, and general publications about all four CU campuses. This site is managed by the CU System Office of Institutional Research. https://www.cu.edu/cu-data [13]
- **CU System Cost of Education Estimator:** This tool can give you an idea of the average cost of college on each CU campus. You can also see the impact of transfer credits, living at home and reducing your personal expenses. Actual costs will be different and each campus has a Net Price Calculator on their website that will provide you with a more precise price estimate. https://costestimator.cu.edu [14]
- **CU Student Financial Aid Data Visualization:** This tool provides a summary of student financial aid received by CU students, including grants, scholarships, and loans. https://www.cu.edu/student-financial-aid [15]

- **The Road to Affordability:** The Colorado Department of Higher Education published an affordability roadmap with steps for institutions of higher education to follow to contain costs and support students https://highered.colorado.gov/return-of-investment [16]
- **Colorado Rises:** The Colorado Commission on Higher Education presents its master plan, Colorado Rises: Advancing Education and Talent Development, as an urgent call to action. If the state of Colorado is to prepare its students for changing workforce demands and maintain its high quality of life and vibrant economy, it must invest more in the educational attainment of all its citizens. http://masterplan.highered.colorado.gov/ [17]

Source URL:https://www.cu.edu/affordability

Links
[1] https://www.cu.edu/affordability [2] mailto:system.budget@cu.edu [3] https://www.cu.edu/strategic-planning [4] https://www.colorado.edu/financialaid/ [5] https://ofa.colorado.edu/NetPriceCalculator/ [6] https://ofa.colorado.edu/aidestimator/ [7] https://www.ucdenver.edu/student-finances/financial-aid [8] https://www.ucdenver.edu/tuition-cost/net-price-calculator [9] https://www.ucdenver.edu/tuition-cost/cost-of-attendance-calculator [10] https://www.uccs.edu/degreesandprograms/financial-aid-uccs [11] https://ir.uccs.edu/institutionaldata/net-price-calculators [12] https://ir.uccs.edu/studentdata/financial-aid [13] https://www.cu.edu/cu-data [14] https://costestimator.cu.edu [15] https://www.cu.edu/student-financial-aid [16] https://highered.colorado.gov/return-of-investment
[17] http://masterplan.highered.colorado.gov/