



SUPPORTING YOUR STUDENTS IN MAKING AN INFORMED COLLEGE DECISION

THE MEFA INSTITUTE

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College applications slide, especially for low-income students

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NOVEMBER 10, 2020 / 6:06 PM / MONEYWATCH



FAFSA
completion
down 16%
(5.1% in MA)

ED
applications
down 8%
overall, 16%
for those with
fee waiver

CBSN



CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

WHAT'S THE COST OF DELAYING COLLEGE DURING PANDEMIC?

PANDEMIA:
LATINOS IN CRISIS
SUNDAY 9PM & MIDNIGHT ET
cbsnews.com/pandemia

LIVE
CBSN

00:07 / 04:59



CC



APPLYING TO COLLEGE DURING COVID

What's different?

- Testing policies
- Ability to visit campus
- ???

What's the same?

- Importance of high school transcript
- Need to make an *informed* decision
- ???

TRANSCRIPTS ARE STILL MOST IMPORTANT TO ADMISSION COUNSELORS

Factor	N	Considerable Importance	Moderate Importance	Limited Importance	No Importance
Grades in All Courses	220	74.5	15.0	5.5	5.0
Grades in College Prep Courses	220	73.2	16.8	5.9	4.1
Strength of Curriculum	219	62.1	21.9	8.7	7.3
Admission Test Scores (SAT, ACT)	221	45.7	37.1	12.2	5.0
Essay or Writing Sample	220	23.2	33.2	24.1	19.5
Student's Demonstrated Interest	218	16.1	23.9	28.0	32.1
Counselor Recommendation	218	15.1	40.4	26.6	17.9
Teacher Recommendation	219	14.2	40.2	26.5	19.2
Class Rank	220	9.1	29.1	34.1	27.7
Extracurricular Activities	219	6.4	42.9	32.0	18.7
Portfolio	219	6.4	11.9	26.9	54.8
Subject Test Scores (AP, IB)	219	5.5	18.3	35.2	41.1
Interview	219	5.5	16.4	28.3	49.8
Work	217	4.1	28.6	36.9	30.4
State Graduation Exam Scores	218	2.3	8.7	18.8	70.2
SAT II Scores	216	1.9	5.6	14.8	77.8

SOURCE: NACAC Admission Trends Survey, 2018–19.

**DOES
VISITING
CAMPUS
HELP OR
HURT
INFORMED
DECISIONS?**

Visiting a college campus is a time-honored tradition. While it can provide useful and helpful information, it can also unleash a flood of emotions, obscuring facts and clouding judgment



Cardio tour guide

THE SOLUTION

You can LEAD yourself through a process that helps structure the college choice problem...

Steps to Success

List

*Narrow list from
2400+ colleges down
to manageable
number*

Explore

*Gather and interpret
objective facts for
about 8 – 12
colleges*

Apply

*Submit applications
to about 5 – 8
colleges worth your
time and money*

Decide

*Choose the 1 college
that is best for you*

!

**ENHANCED
COLLEGE FIT**

LEAD = Academic Match + Cost + Career Match + Personal Match + Certainty + Learning Environment + Student Supports + Readiness



WHY DID WE DEVELOP LEAD PROCESS?

Far too many students choose a college with limited fact-based information. For example:

What is “demonstrated interest”?

- a. **When you contact a college or university to gain more information about them (e.g. campus visit, contacting admissions, etc.)***
- b. When you talk to your friends and family about which schools you want to apply to
- c. When you review the websites of colleges you are interested in
- d. When you talk to your high school counselor about applying to certain colleges
- e. Not Sure

Demonstrated interest is a factor in the admission decision-making process at some colleges. Private colleges are more likely consider demonstrated interest as a factor in the admissions process than public colleges. Prospective students can demonstrate interest by interacting with the college in a variety of ways, including visiting the campus and contacting admission office personnel by phone or email.

FACT: Many colleges use demonstrated interest when making admission decisions (non-academic factor)

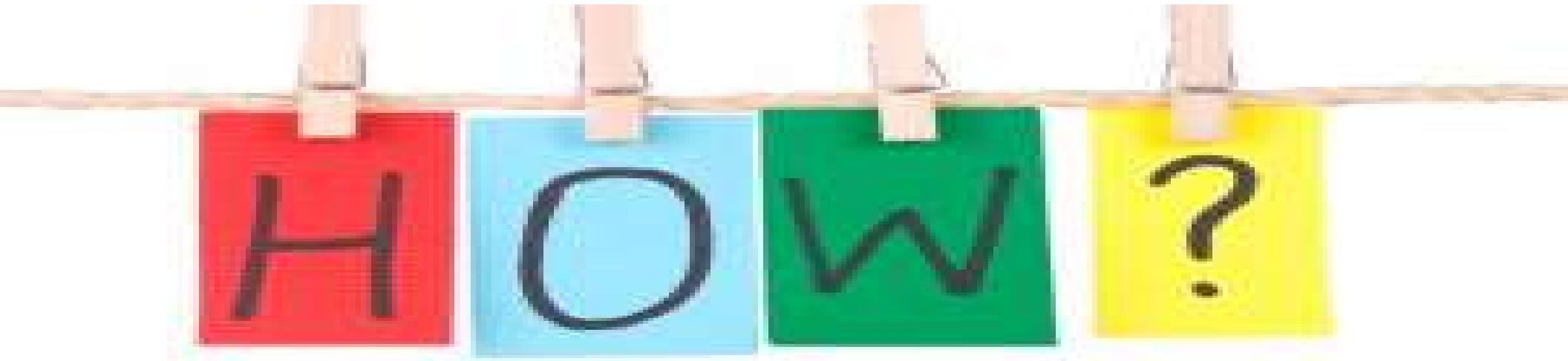
Want to test your own College Knowledge? Visit www.collegesanity.com

COMMON DATA SET

- Some colleges participate in the **voluntary** Common Data Set initiative to ease their own reporting burdens
- There is no reliable central place to find this – you just need to do a web search for the college name and “common data set”. For example: *University of Massachusetts Amherst Common Data Set*

C7 Relative importance of each of the following academic and nonacademic factors in first-time, first-year, degree-seeking (freshman) admission decisions.

C7		Very Important	Important	Considered	Not Considered
C7	Academic				
C7	Rigor of secondary school record	X			
C7	Class rank		X		
C7	Academic GPA	X			
C7	Standardized test scores	X			
C7	Application Essay		X		
C7	Recommendation(s)		X		
C7	Nonacademic				
C7	Interview				X
C7	Extracurricular activities		X		
C7	Talent/ability		X		
C7	Character/personal qualities		X		
C7	First generation		X		
C7	Alumni/ae relation			X	
C7	Geographical residence			X	
C7	State residency			X	
C7	Religious affiliation/commitment				X
C7	Racial/ethnic status			X	
C7	Volunteer work			X	
C7	Work experience		X		
C7	Level of applicant's interest		X		



- How can we promote informed college decision making during COVID-19?
 - We can encourage students and families to be exploratory and planful by asking a series of specific questions about *every* college they are seriously considering
 - We can also help them be informed consumers by recognizing common myths about college

KEY QUESTIONS



1. How supported and satisfied are Freshmen?
2. How many students make it to graduation?
3. How likely am I to have close interactions with professors?
4. How many other students are in the major(s) I am interested in?
5. How diverse is the student body?
6. How much will it cost to attend this college?
7. What is the average salary of graduates?

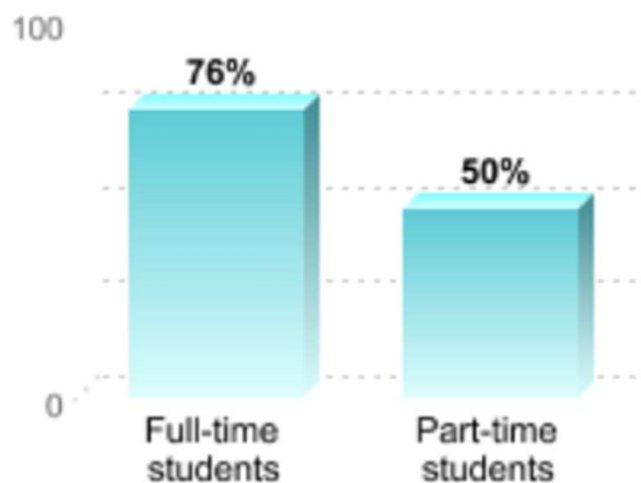
All of these questions can be answered on free websites paid for by your tax dollars:

- College Navigator (<https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>)
- College Scorecard (<https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/>)
- Net Price Calculator (<https://collegecost.ed.gov/net-price>)
- College Results Online (<https://CollegeResults.org>)

MEFA Pathway (<https://mefapathway.org/>) also provides some of this information as well as tools to help students learn about themselves, scholarships, and careers

#1 - How supported and satisfied are Freshmen?

RETENTION RATES FOR FIRST-TIME STUDENTS PURSUING BACHELOR'S DEGREES

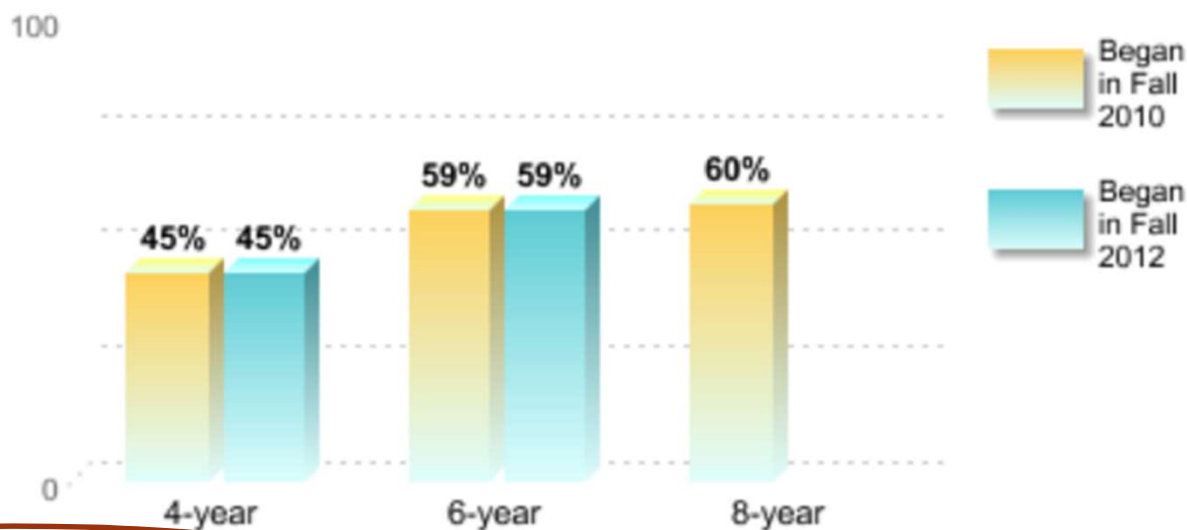


Percentage of Students Who Began Their Studies in Fall 2017 and Returned in Fall 2018

You will find this under the Retention and Graduation Rates section

#2 - How many students make it to graduation?

GRADUATION RATES FOR STUDENTS PURSUING BACHELOR'S DEGREES



Percentage of Full-time, First-time Students Who Graduated in the Specified Amount of Time and Began in Fall 2010 or Fall 2012

You will find this under the Retention and Graduation Rates section

#3 - How likely am I to have close interactions with professors?

Campus setting:	City: Large
Campus housing:	Yes
Student population:	7,186 (5,044 undergraduate)
Student-to-faculty ratio:	15 to 1

You will find this right up at the top of the page

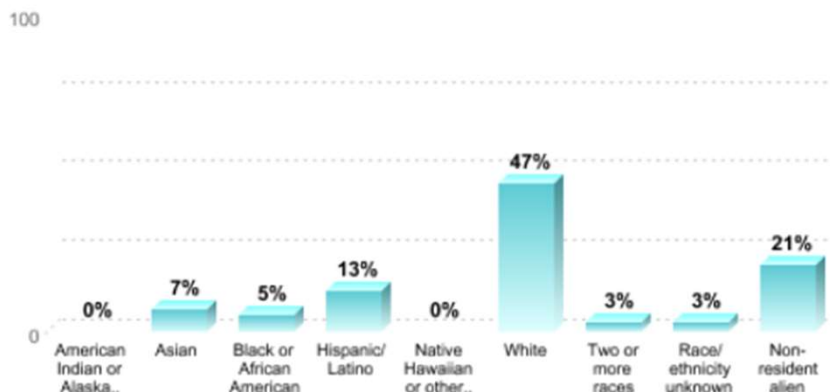
#4 - How many other students are in the major(s) I am interested in?

▼ PROGRAM	ASSOCIATE	BACHELOR	MASTER	DOCTOR	UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATE	POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE
Area, Ethnic, Cultural, Gender and Group Studies						
Asian Studies/Civilization	-	1	-	-	-	-
Disability Studies	-	-	-	-	-	1
Category total	-	1	-	-	-	1
Biological And Biomedical Sciences						
Biochemistry	-	4	-	-	-	-
Biology/Biological Sciences, General	-	51	-	-	-	-
Marine Biology and Biological Oceanography	-	0	-	-	-	-
Radiation Biology/Radiobiology	-	3	-	-	-	0
Category total	-	58	-	-	-	0

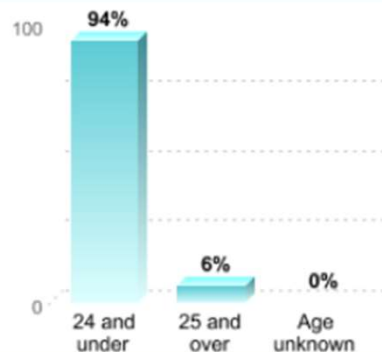
You will find this in Programs/Majors section

#5 - How diverse is the student body?

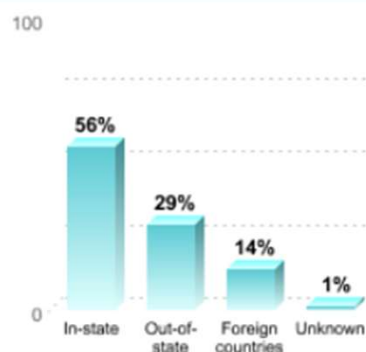
UNDERGRADUATE RACE/ETHNICITY



UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT AGE



UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT RESIDENCE

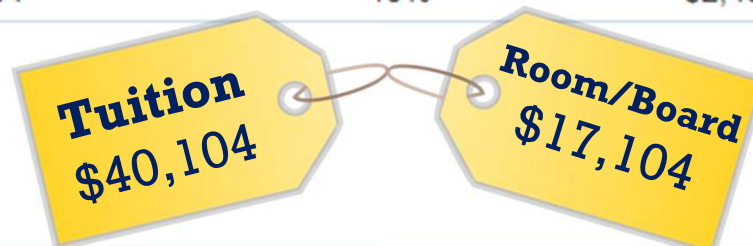


- Age data are reported for Fall 2017.
- Residence data are reported for first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates.

You will find this in Enrollment section

#6 - How much will it cost to attend this college?

TYPE OF AID	NUMBER RECEIVING AID	PERCENT RECEIVING AID	TOTAL AMOUNT OF AID RECEIVED	AVERAGE AMOUNT OF AID RECEIVED
Any student financial aid ¹	1,027	97%	—	—
Grant or scholarship aid	1,024	97%	\$20,196,115	\$19,723
Federal grants	321	30%	\$1,677,734	\$5,227
Pell grants	321	30%	\$1,581,734	\$4,928
Other federal grants	25	2%	\$96,000	\$3,840
State/local government grant or scholarships	230	22%	\$486,774	\$2,116
Institutional grants or scholarships	1,023	97%	\$18,031,607	\$17,626
Student loan aid	649	61%	\$6,321,011	\$9,740
Federal student loans	640	60%	\$3,833,070	\$5,989
Other student loans	134	13%	\$2,487,941	\$18,567



You will find this in Financial Aid section – Also Review Net Price Section



U.S. Department of Education

Net Price Calculator Center

#6 - How much will it cost to attend this college?

Search for Schools' Calculator

What does Net Price mean?

Net Price is the amount that a student pays to attend an institution in a single academic year AFTER subtracting scholarships and grants the student receives. Scholarships and grants are forms of financial aid that a student does not have to pay back.

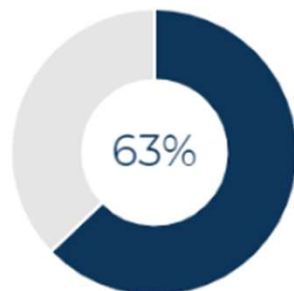
What is a Net Price Calculator?

Net price calculators are available on a college's or university's website and allow prospective students to enter information about themselves to find out what students like them paid to attend the institution in the previous year, after taking grants and scholarship aid into account.

<https://collegecost.ed.gov/net-price>

#7 - What is the average salary of graduates?

Graduation Rate ⓘ



Salary After Completing ⓘ

Salary after completing depends on field of study.



Average Annual Cost ⓘ

Cost includes tuition, living costs, books, and fees minus the average grants and scholarships for federal financial aid recipients.

\$30,469

Psychology, General - Bachelor's Degree

71

NUMBER OF GRADUATES ⓘ

71

MEDIAN TOTAL DEBT ⓘ

\$27,000

MONTHLY LOAN PAYMENT ⓘ

\$280/mo.

MEDIAN EARNINGS ⓘ

\$37,400

MONTHLY EARNINGS ⓘ

\$3,117/mo

You will find this in the Fields of Study section of the Report Card



Another resource to find same information...

Main		Grad Rates by Race, Gender, OR Income		Grad Rates by Race AND Gender		Grad Rates Over Time		Retention and Progression Rates					
Price and Financial Aid		Financial Outcomes		Funding and Faculty		College Characteristics		Student Characteristics		Admissions		Degrees Granted by Program Area	

	College	2017 6-Year Grad Rate	% Full-Time 2011 Freshmen Who Returned in 2012-13	4-Year Grad Rate	5-Year Grad Rate	6-Year Grad Rate	Transfer-Out Rate	% Still Enrolled	% Full-Time Students in the 2011 Freshman cohort	Number of Full-Time Students in the 2011 Freshman Cohort
<input type="checkbox"/>	University of Massachusetts-Amherst	77.4%	91%	67.3%	75.7%	77.4%	17.2%	0.5%	73	4668
<input type="checkbox"/>	University of Vermont	74.9%	87%	62.4%	72.9%	74.9%	-	0.5%	80	2411
<input type="checkbox"/>	University of Rhode Island	65.6%	83%	47.2%	62.8%	65.6%	-	1.8%	83	2965

CollegeResults.org



CollegeResults.org



**“The college I choose determines
the next four years of my life”**

*Students can and do transfer from one
college to another, all the time*





**“I have to decide on a major before
I get to college”**



*Knowing what you want to study can be
helpful, but it's OK if you aren't sure*



“There is only one college that is right for me”

There are many good colleges to choose from





“A college education is not worth the money”

People with a Bachelor's degree earn about \$1,000,000 more than people with high school diploma



**Invest
In your
Mind**

THANK YOU!

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