

How Do Students Meet the Cost of Attending a State University?

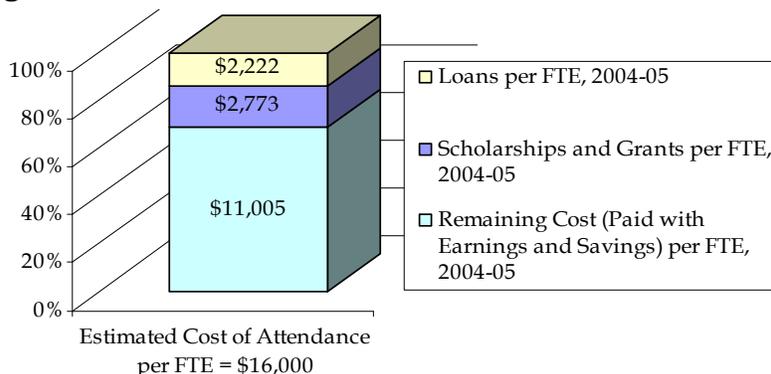
Background

- Students and their families must cover, on average, 83% of the roughly \$16,000 cost of attendance for a full-time, in-state undergraduate at a state university in Florida.
- On average, 75% of the cost of attendance in Florida's public universities is from expenses other than tuition and fees and books. The largest expense is room and board, accounting for nearly half of the cost of attendance. A [study by the Legislature's Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability](#) summarizes these costs at the different institutions in the state.
- Students and their families use earnings, savings, and financial aid to pay the full cost of attendance. Savings can include the Florida Prepaid Tuition plan or other investments. Financial aid includes grants and scholarships (that do not have to be repaid) and loans (which may or may not be subsidized by the federal government).

Financial Aid

On average, full-time state university undergraduates received about \$5,000 in scholarships, grants, and loans in 2004-05, or about 31% of the total cost of attendance.

Figure 1. Breakdown of Financial Aid to SUS Undergraduates



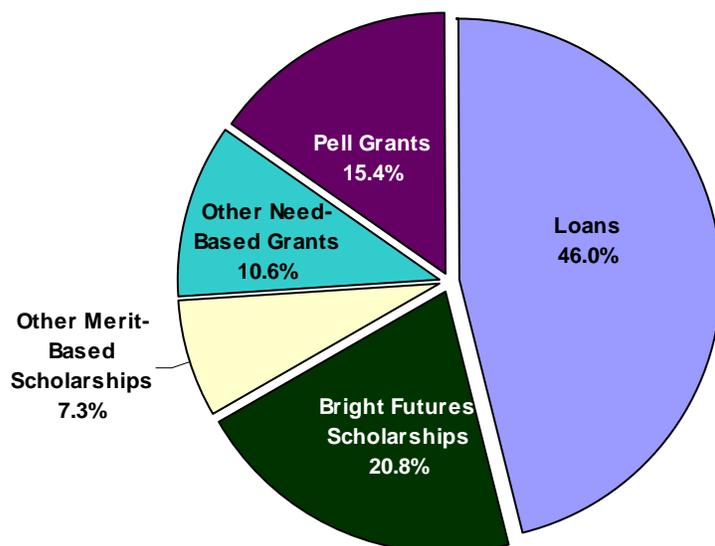
Note: An FTE here is defined as 30 credit hours in an academic year.

(For information about universities' costs of educating students and how responsibility for those costs is shared between government and families, read [Who is Paying for a Florida Student's Education?](#))

Almost half of all state university undergraduates apply for federal financial aid, and some who don't apply might qualify. In fall 2004, 47% of state university system undergraduates submitted a [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#), indicating that at least that many students sought grants and loans to help fund their university educations. Of those who did not apply for federal aid, some were from low-income families who might have qualified. For example, at least 19% of 2002-03 Bright Futures scholarship recipients who did not submit a FAFSA were listed as dependents on tax returns for households with taxable incomes of \$50,000 or less.

Three-quarters of state university system undergraduates have some form of financial aid. There are numerous grants, scholarships, and loans available to students from state, federal, university, and private sources. Student loans, mostly from [federal loan programs](#), constitute the largest source (46%) of all undergraduate student financial aid dollars, \$452 million to undergraduates in the state university system in 2004-05. Need-based grants, of which the federal [Pell grant](#) constituted more than half, provided \$256 million to public university undergraduates in 2004-05. [Bright Futures](#) accounted for about three-quarters of the roughly \$276 million in non-need-based scholarships awarded to undergraduates in 2004-05.

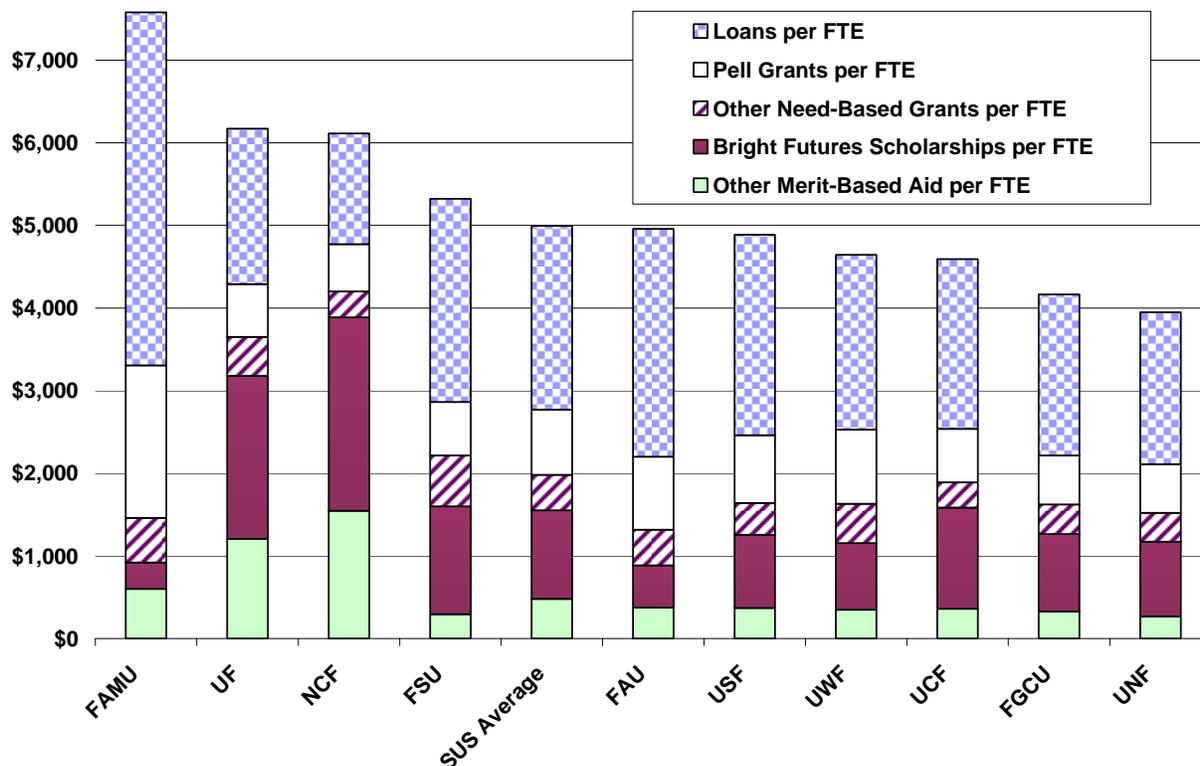
Figure 2. Nearly Half of All Undergraduate Financial Aid Comes From Student Loans



A look at aid per FTE (full-time equivalent undergraduate student, or 30 credit hours) reveals variations among state universities in the prominence of different types of aid at each institution. Systemwide, undergraduate students receive slightly less in loans than in other sources of aid combined. However, for example, at FAMU and FAU,

undergraduate loans exceed combined grants and scholarships, and at UF and New College, grants and scholarships considerably outweigh loans.

Figure 3. The Mix of Loans, Grants, and Scholarships Varies Across State Universities



For more detailed financial aid tables, see the state university system Fact Books at <http://www.flbog.org/factbook/>.

Financial aid bridges the gap between cost of attendance and income and savings. At least 56% of fall 2004 undergraduates were employed in Florida and earned an average monthly wage of \$753. Many parents also save money in anticipation of the costs of their children’s university educations. One such savings opportunity is the state-sponsored [Prepaid College Program](#), which allows families to purchase guarantees for public university tuition, fees, and dormitory costs at the time their child attends the university. In Fall 2004, over 33,000 state university undergraduates (16%) were beneficiaries of prepaid contracts.

For information about how Bright Futures scholarships and prepaid tuition plans relate to university tuition, read the Board of Governors information brief, “Bright Futures and Florida Prepaid Plans Cover Costs of Tuition Increases for Many Students, but the Impact Varies by Institution.”

Students receiving financial aid reflect the diversity of Florida and its state university system. Many students do not have sufficient savings and income to fund a higher

education on their own. Of the more than 200,000 Fall 2004 undergraduates, 74% applied for federal financial aid (grants, loans), and at least 73% of undergraduates received some form of federal, state, institutional, or other financial aid.

Table 1. Students Receiving Financial Aid Reflect the University System's Diversity

Demographic Groups	Percentage of Fall 2004 Undergraduates			
	Receiving Some Aid	Loans per FTE, 2004-05	Scholarships per FTE, 2004-05	Grants per FTE, 2004-05
Black	84%	\$3,998	\$1,342	\$2,615
Hispanic	71%	\$1,925	\$1,326	\$1,515
White	73%	\$2,180	\$1,710	\$873
Other	62%	\$1,486	\$1,411	\$1,298
Female	77%	\$2,498	\$1,607	\$1,386
Male	69%	\$2,179	\$1,506	\$1,157
Resident	75%	\$2,222	\$1,553	\$1,220
Non-Resident	59%	\$4,186	\$1,701	\$2,179
Full-Time	82%	\$2,240	\$1,905	\$1,389
Part-Time	46%	\$2,757	\$437	\$953
FTIC	82%	\$1,832	\$2,165	\$1,253
AA/ AS Transfer	62%	\$3,210	\$588	\$1,466
CC Transfer	59%	\$3,130	\$514	\$1,341
Other Transfer	59%	\$3,164	\$779	\$1,097

Where can I learn more?

For more information regarding what types of financial aid are available and how to apply for various types of financial aid, get in touch with the financial aid office at your university or contact the state [Office of Student Financial Assistance](#).

For questions about this information brief, contact:

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