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California Postsecondary Education Commission

Resident Undergraduate Charges at California's Public Colleges and Universities

California charges its own residents less to attend its public colleges and universities than it charges nonresidents. All three of California's public postsecondary education segments charge resident students a systemwide enrollment fee. In addition, the California State University and the University of California also charge students mandatory, campus-based fees. These campus-based fees help support student services such as counseling, student union activities, student government, and recreation. California has sought to avoid charging resident students for the direct cost of instruction, which it charges as "tuition" to nonresident students.

What do the California Community Colleges charge resident students?

For the 2004-05 academic year, the California Community Colleges charged resident students \$26 per credit unit -- an increase from \$18 per credit unit assessed in 2003-04. In 2004-05, a full-time California Community College student enrolled in 15 units per term paid \$780 in mandatory statewide enrollment fees. This amount is lower than the fees charged by any other state in the nation. The state with the next lowest community college charges is New Mexico, which charges its full-time students \$896 per year -- nearly 15% more than the current California Community College fee level. In 2004-05, the average amount charged to a full-time resident community college students nationally was \$2,324 -- nearly three times the amount charged by California's community colleges.

What does the California State University charge resident students?

For the 2004-05 academic year, the California State University charged full-time resident undergraduate students an average of \$2,916 in mandatory fees. This amount includes \$2,334 in systemwide student fees and an average of \$582 in campus-based fees. This total is lower than all of the 15 public universities with which the California State University compares itself for faculty salary purposes. It is \$2,740 lower than the group's average:

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Newark	\$8,869
University of Maryland, Baltimore County	8,020
University of Connecticut	7,490
Cleveland State University	6,618
State University of New York, Albany	6,383
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee	5,835
Wayne State University	5,819
Illinois State University	5,588
George Mason University (Virginia)	5,448
University of Texas, Arlington	5,093
North Carolina State University	4,260
University of Colorado, Denver	4,160
Georgia State University	4,154
Arizona State University, Tempe	4,066
University of Nevada, Reno	3,034
Average of the comparison group	\$5,656
Average CSU undergraduate mandatory fees	\$2,916

What does the University of California charge resident students?

For 2004-05, the University of California charged full-time undergraduate residents an average of \$6,312 in mandatory charges. This includes systemwide student fees of \$5,684 and campus-based fees which average \$628. These mandatory fees do not include the cost of health insurance. If students do not have health insurance, they are required to pay for such coverage. The cost of student health insurance is determined by each University of California campus.

The \$6,312 in mandatory fees for resident undergraduate students is lower than three of the four public universities with which the University of California compares itself for faculty salaries. It is more than \$1,000 less than the average of that group:

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor	\$8,722
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign	7,944
University of Virginia	6,790
State University of New York, Buffalo	5,907
Average of the comparison group	\$7,341
Average UC undergraduate mandatory fees (excluding health insurance)	\$6,312

What has the Governor proposed in terms of changes to resident undergraduate student fees for the 2005-06 fiscal year?

In his recently released proposed budget for 2005-06, the Governor recommended no changes in fees for California Community College students. The Governor's proposed budget would continue the current \$26 credit unit charge for California Community College students.

For resident undergraduates attending the California State University and the University of California, the Governor proposed that their systemwide fees be increased by 8%. For full-time resident undergraduates at the California State University, this translates into an increase of about \$200 for the 2005-06 academic year, and for University of California undergraduates, this is about a \$450 increase.

Assuming that the proposed 8% increase in systemwide fees were enacted, full-time resident undergraduates at the California State University would pay an average of about \$3,100 per year – still lower than 14 of the 15 State University public faculty salary comparison institutions, and about half the average amount charged by their comparators. For full-time resident undergraduates at the University of California, the fee increase would result in average annual charges of about \$6,770 per year – about 8% lower than the average amount charged by the University of California's public faculty salary comparison institutions.

Who are resident students?

The California Community Colleges and the California State University determine the residency of their students according to State law, which defines resident students for tuition purposes as those who (1) have lived in California for at least one year and one day prior to enrolling in a college or university, and (2) intend to make California their home. A student may demonstrate an intent to reside in California through a number of means, including obtaining a California driver's license, owning or renting property in the state, registering a vehicle in California, and paying California personal income taxes.

State law allows nonresident students who have attended a California high school for three years and graduated to be considered as residents for tuition purposes.

Generally, undergraduate students at the University of California are considered nonresidents if their parents reside out-of-state. They may be classified as California residents if they can demonstrate that they are financially independent of their parents for at least two years prior to being classified as a resident. As such, it usually takes about three years for eligible out-of-state undergraduate students to qualify as California residents for tuition purposes.