

# College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

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## Tuition Up Sharply

EVEN AS THE NATION struggled with the worst recession in years, the nation's colleges and universities still ramped up tuition rates. According to "Trends in College Pricing" published by the College Board, the average in-state tuition and fees at four-year public colleges in 2009-10 shot up 6.5 percent, or \$429, making the average tuition \$7,020. For out-of-state students, the average tuition at these schools jumped by 6.2 percent to \$18,548.

At private four-year colleges, tuition grew by 4.4 percent to \$26,273. At public two-year colleges, tuition soared even higher, at a rate of 7.3 percent to an average of \$2,544. Students in states such as California, Florida, New York and Washington are paying double-digit increases.

Meanwhile, consumer prices fell by 2.1 percent during the same time period.

**Grants Increase.** However, these increases were blunted somewhat by increased student financial aid. These days, nearly two-thirds of full-time undergraduates receive grants. In 2008-09, the average grant reached \$5,041. Students also received an average \$4,585 in federal loans.

The College Board said that 41 percent of all grants came from the colleges and universities themselves, while 32 percent came from the federal government, 11 percent from the states and 16 percent from employers and private sources.

After all the aid is factored in, the estimated net price for four-year public colleges is \$9,810, including tuition, fees, room and board; for private four-year colleges, \$21,240.

**Student Debt.** Yet, only 26 percent of students who graduated in 2007-08 left school with no debt. Total student/family borrowing increased by 5 percent. Federal loans increased by \$15 billion, while non-federal loans declined by

\$11 billion. In fact, due to the first stages of the credit crisis, non-federal loans declined by almost 50 percent from 2007-08.

For more, see: [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

### Meanwhile...More Aid Applications

At the same time, the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators confirmed that student aid applications rose significantly this year. According to its recent survey of 500 financial aid administrators:

- 61 percent of institutions have seen applications for financial aid increase by 10 percent or more over last year. Only 8 percent saw no increase;
- 63 percent reported that the number of Pell Grant recipients has increased by more than 10 percent compared to last year. Only 5 percent recorded no increase;
- 65 percent noted a 10 percent or greater increase in aid appeals. Only 7 percent reported no increase;
- 51 percent observed an increase of 10 percent or more in the number of students who still had financial need after using federal and state loans. Only 17 percent reported no such increase.
- 55 percent said that they have increased institutional aid for students. Four-year institutions were more likely to offer additional institutional aid this year.

In the end, this means, among other things, more work for financial aid administrators. "The increase on professional judgments alone is so much more work and we certainly did not receive any extra help to do this process," one administrator noted. "This has been the most difficult and stressful year that I have ever experienced in my 34+ years as a financial aid administrator," lamented another.

To read the entire survey, go to: [www.nasfaa.org/publications/2009/AidSurvey](http://www.nasfaa.org/publications/2009/AidSurvey).

*continued on page 2*

## Admissions Watch

The fall numbers at individual colleges continue to come into *CB's* offices.

**Enrollment Up at Public Universities.** A sign of the times? The Northeast Ohio Council on Higher Education reports that around 208,000 students are enrolled at colleges in Northeast Ohio, and 80 percent are attending public universities.

Cleveland State U., for example, saw an 8 percent increase from last year, and business graduate students have increased 23 percent from last year. CSU is not the only institution to experience this enrollment boom, as public universities and community colleges across Ohio report similar trends.

"We all experienced an increase, obviously, and a lot of that came in during the last four weeks of enrollment," said Michael Droncy, vice president for administration at CSU. He explained that many students waited until later in the summer to enroll to see how much financial aid they received.

Kent State U. began fall courses with its largest first-year class of all time at 4,030 students. Enrollment on the main campus grew by 8.8 percent from 2008. At KSU's regional campuses, which service a larger number of nontraditional students, enrollment has increased more significantly. The Ashtabula campus saw enrollment escalate by 26 percent.

Cuyahoga Community College's Metro Campus also saw a 40 percent increase in students since last year.

"The really selective schools, like the Ivys,

*continued on page 2*

## INSIDE

- New Trends in College Admissions
- The Counselor's Bookshelf
- Financial Aid Matters

## ADMISSIONS WATCH

*continued from page 1*

had no problem filling their ranks,” said Pat Cirillo, a statistician who works with NOCHE. “But the moderately or even fairly selective but expensive private schools had a tough time filling their classes without offering students a lot of aid. Such private schools in regions with strong public universities, like Northeast Ohio, had a particularly tough time.

“Parents and students couldn’t justify that high tuition with such good public options available. The private schools dug into their waiting lists far earlier than usual this past year.”

**DePaul.** DePaul U. in Chicago set enrollment records this fall with 25,072 students in its eight colleges. The freshman class of 2013 reached more than 2,500 and is slightly smaller than last year, but surpassed the enrollment goal by 100 students. The first-year class is also the most diverse in school history, Jon Boeckenstedt, associate vice president of enrollment management, told *The DePaulia*. A quarter of the new class is African American or Latino/Hispanic, up from 18 percent last year. About 58 percent is white. “We’re using a more holistic review that will accept more students from Chicago,” Boeckenstedt told the paper. But for other students, the criterion remains the same; good test scores, high grade-point average in challenging courses.

**Indiana U.’s** statewide system enrolled 107,160 students, a 5.3 percent increase over last year, and a new record. The flagship Bloomington campus attracted 42,347 students, up almost 5 percent. Enrollment of African Americans and Latinos rose nearly 11 percent, while it grew by over 9 percent for Asian American students. (Also, the Indiana Commission of Higher Education waived application fees for Indiana applicants during one week in October to persuade more students to apply to college. It was part of its College GO! Week.)

## TUITION UP

*continued from page 1*

### AND MORE APPLICATIONS IN COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

The National Association for College Admission Counseling released its “2009 State of College Admission Report” October 20, which showed that applications have increased significantly since 2001. This led to a decrease in acceptance rates across colleges and universities.

Applications have gone up by about 24 percent, and the number of acceptance letters has inclined by 20 percent. The overall acceptance rate at four-year institutions has gone down from 71.3 percent in 2001 to 66.8 percent in 2007.

## Michigan Reaches Enrollment High.

Public university enrollment in Michigan certainly increased this fall. The U. of Michigan enrolled 41,674 students, an all-time high for that school, according to *The Detroit News*. U-M had increases in applications, offers of admission and graduate as well as undergraduate enrollment. However, the paper noted, minority enrollment was down 11.4 percent this fall. Underrepresented minorities make up 9.1 percent of the freshman class, down from 12.6 percent in 2006.

**Oregon.** The U. of Portland enrolled 816 first-year students this fall. Its target was 800. *The Seattle Times* reported that due to the recession, the school increased its tuition discount, the average amount of tuition given back to students in merit and need-based aid, to 41 percent.

Numbers were higher at community colleges in Oregon, too. In fact, the majority of Oregon’s 17 community colleges saw increased enrollment and this trend is the same for two-year colleges across the country.

Central Oregon Community C. was forced to cut off admission in early September because of record enrollment numbers, according to a recent article in *OPB News*. The college had enrolled 5,550 students at that time, and 7,600 names were on its wait list. Because of these numbers, there are many students who are attending the school, but who are on waiting lists for all the classes they want.

Enrollment at Columbia George Community C. grew by 42 percent more than last year’s enrollment. Karen Carter, chief student services officer at Columbia George, said, “It’s a wonderful problem to have, and community colleges are just tickled to death to see this enrollment growth. But it’s almost too much of a good thing.”

**Washington.** Gonzaga U. enrolled 1,239 freshmen this fall, about 15 percent above its target, prompting a scramble for addi-

The yield rate at schools has also decreased. And colleges have had a harder time predicting how many students will actually enroll in the fall after they have been accepted.

In addition, almost 60 percent of admission counselors who were surveyed said that they have seen more students looking at public schools because of the economy. About 15 percent of counselors (25 percent at public schools) added that they have seen an increased number of students planning on deferring higher education for financial reasons.

Other NACAC conclusions:

- “College enrollment reached an all-time high. As of 2006, approximately 17.8 million students were enrolled in degree-granting postsecondary institutions. Total college

enrollment is expected to continue increasing until at least 2017.

Meanwhile, Seattle U. enrolled 747 first-year students, about 17 percent fewer than last year. Both are private institutions. Overall, Gonzaga enrolled 7,682 students this school year. Seattle is still the state’s largest private college with 7,751.

**The Small Privates.** To further confuse any analysis of admissions trends, a number of small private colleges found that their enrollments increased this fall. For example, enrollment is up at Cowley C. in Arkansas this fall, according to a post on *NewsCow*. Full-time student enrollment reached 2,424, up 236 students from last year. The number of online Cowley students also has increased rapidly over the last four years, doubling in size, to 679 students. The Arkansas City campus alone enrolled 1,110 students. School officials said the rise in numbers is the result of the college’s increase in “targeted” calls to 2,500 students, “enrollment days” and longer admissions office hours.

At Wesley C., Delaware’s oldest private college located in Dover, the incoming first-year class and overall student population reached record levels. New student enrollment has increased 26 percent. Applications for admission were up 65 percent in 2009. The first-year class grew to 673 students, which is the largest in the school’s history. Bill Firman, enrollment management dean, said that the commitment of the staff and reasonable tuition costs have contributed to these numbers.

**Be Careful What You Wish For.** Finally, Ithaca C. in New York ended up with more freshmen this fall than projected. According to *The Ithacan*, 600 freshmen found themselves in lounges, triples in a dorm room or in new temporary housing. Ithaca’s freshman class of about 2,050 was the largest in history and a year after the college faced a decline in admissions. One impact for this year’s cycle: Ithaca C. reinstated early decision and raised admissions standards. ■

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- *Racial/ethnic minorities and low-income students remain underrepresented.* In 2007, black and Hispanic students constituted approximately 32 percent of the traditional college-aged population, but they made up only about 25 percent of students enrolled in postsecondary education.

- *Online applications increased.* For the Fall 2008 admission cycle, four-year colleges and universities received an average of 72 percent of their applications online, up from 68 percent in Fall 2007 and 58 percent in Fall 2006.”

For the full report, see [www.nacacnet.org](http://www.nacacnet.org). Free for NACAC members and \$25 for non-members. ■

# New Twists in College Admissions

**MIT Students Blog for Prospective Applicants.** Prospective students looking at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology have the chance to read Blogs by current students about their experience on campus, according to a recent *New York Times*. The school pays students to discuss how they made it through the application and how they juggle their school work as current students.

MIT is one of many colleges that has started a Blog, although it is the most uncensored, said the article. Schools such as Amherst C., Bates C., Carleton C., Colby U., Vassar U., Wellesley C. and Yale U. have recognized that high school students are receptive to information in this format.

"A lot of people in admissions have not been eager for Bloggers, mostly based on fears that we can't control what people are saying," said Jesse Lord, dean of admission for Haverford C. "We're learning, slowly, that this is how the world works, especially for high school students."

**Travel Down, Virtual Talk Up.** Erin Breese, senior assistant director of admissions at U. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, visited 15 upperclassmen at a private school in Virginia via Webcam, according to fredericksburg.com. Because of budget cuts, UNC Chapel Hill has limited the admission office's travel budget. Other colleges have also restricted or eliminated their out-of-state traveling. But not every school has adopted Webcam visits. Wake Forest U. implemented virtual interviews last year, and Dartmouth C. talked with South African students via Skype.

Also, virtual college fairs are becoming more popular as a way to reduce costs and get schools' names out, according to eSchoolNews. Shannon Meairs, co-founder and chief executive officer of University Drive, an admission consulting company, said that she recommends students first research schools online before looking at them more closely. "Ideally, I would like a student to have a personal interaction

with a college, but if a student is unable to visit the campus, a virtual college fair is the prime opportunity for students to connect with college reps," she explained.

**Pedal Power Marketing.** Then, according to an October 9 article in the *Olean Times Herald*, Alfred U. now uses a seven-person bicycle to drive around prospective students. "This is a very out-of-the-box way to get our name out to students," said Jodi Bailey, director of marketing. "[Alfred U.] is a balance of strong academic programs and we have a great social life here."

**iAdmissions.** A network of former college admissions officers are using on-line technology to "provide personalized and affordable guidance" on the college admissions process. It hosts a series of free Webinars open to the public. For more information, see [www.iAdmissions.com](http://www.iAdmissions.com).

**Free Online Test Prep.** Grockit, a new online social learning game company, is making its SAT and ACT online test prep and learning game services available free to students across the nation. The program allows students to practice with and help each other, as well as learn from experts. "Grockit offers a more engaging way for students to prepare for and succeed at standardized tests," says the company's CEO Farb Nivi, "and they can do it for free." For more information, go to: [www.grockit.com/sat](http://www.grockit.com/sat) or [www.grockit.com/act](http://www.grockit.com/act).

**Merger.** CollegeZapps and ConnectEDU have created a partnership to allow "students to apply to more than 1,000 colleges and universities through an easy and efficient online solution." ConnectEDU's president said, "Our partnership with College Zapps is the first step toward our goal of providing the industry's first solution to deliver a complete application package electronically." ■

## COUNSELOR'S BOOKSHELF

*Acceptance: A Legendary Guidance Counselor Helps Seven Kids Find the Right Colleges—and Find Themselves* by David L. Marcus (The Penguin Press, 2009); ISBN: 978-1-59420-2214; \$25.95.

*Crossing the Finish Line: Completing College at America's Public Universities* by William G. Bowen, Matthew M. Chingos, Michael S. McPherson (Princeton University Press, 2009); ISBN: 978-0-691-13748-3; \$27.95.

*The Best 172 Law Schools* by Eric Owens, Esq., John Owens, Esq., Julie Doherty, and the Staff of The Princeton Review; 2010 Edition; ISBN 978-0-375-42958-3; \$22.99. And, *The Best 168 Medical Schools* by Malaika Stoll, and the Staff of The Princeton Review; 2010 Edition; ISBN 978-0-375-42957-6; \$22.99. Both from Random House, Inc. at [www.PrincetonReview.com/bookstore](http://www.PrincetonReview.com/bookstore).

*ACT or SAT: Choosing the Right Exam for You* by Josh Borstein with Rebecca Lessem and the staff of The Princeton Review; (Random House, Inc.); ISBN 978-0-375-42924-8; \$15.99.

A new website, [www.collegefreshmansurvival.com](http://www.collegefreshmansurvival.com), and the DVD, *College: The Big Change—The Success Guide for First-Year Students* helps parents and students entering college for the first time. The DVD is available from the website.

*Beat the College Admissions Game: Do A Project!* Susan Tatsui D'Arcy recommends that students get into the college of their choice by working on a project that would illustrate their passion and initiative. ISBN: 978-0-6151-3766-7. The book is available on her website [www.meritworld.com](http://www.meritworld.com).

### Reports of Note

"Strengthening Pre-Collegiate Education in

Community Colleges: Project Summary and Recommendations." A report from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. See [www.carnegiefoundation.org](http://www.carnegiefoundation.org).

*Building Momentum: Strategies for Achieving Critical Mass* by Robert A. Sevier, a user's guide for institutions that want to develop, launch, and sustain a strong brand. Strategy Publishing. See [www.strategypublishing.com](http://www.strategypublishing.com).

"Rewarding Persistence: Effects of a Performance-Based Scholarship Program for Low-Income Parents." Richburg-Hayes, Lashawn et al. 2009. MDRC. See [www.mdrc.org](http://www.mdrc.org).

*P.S. Autism & the Transition to Adulthood: Success Beyond the Classroom* by Wehman, Smith and Schall; chapter on "Postsecondary Options for Children with Autism;" 285 pages including index; (Paul Brookes Publishing Co., 2009); ISBN-13: 978-1-55766-958-2. ■

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

**World's Top 100 U.'s.** An international survey of 9,000 institutions of higher education from the [London] *Times Higher Education* and OS Top Universities placed 13 U.S. universities in the top 25 of their top 100 rankings. Here are the top 25, in order:

Harvard U., U. of Cambridge, Yale U., UCL (U. College London), Imperial C. London, U. of Oxford, U. of Chicago, Princeton U., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, California Institute of Technology, Columbia U., U. of Pennsylvania, Johns Hopkins U., Duke U., Cornell U., Stanford U., Australian National U., McGill U., U. of Michigan, ETH Zurich (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology), U. of Edinburgh, U. of Tokyo, King's C. London, U. of Hong Kong, Kyoto U. To view the entire list, go to: [www.guardian.co.uk/education/datablog/2009/oct/08/top-100-universities-world/print](http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/datablog/2009/oct/08/top-100-universities-world/print).

**Foreign Enrollment Up In Canada.** Canadian universities are experiencing a jump in the enrollment of foreign students, according to a survey conducted by *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. The U. of

Alberta posted a 45 percent increase in its foreign students, the U. of Prince Edward Island was up 32 percent, McGill U. was up 17 percent. The U. of Toronto and U. of British Columbia expect similar numbers when statistics are final. The increase is the result of a new emphasis on internationalism and new marketing abroad.

Other sources note that 10,000 U.S. students attend Canada's 94 universities, up from 3,000 a decade ago. One reason is cheaper tuition. Another is that Canadian schools have stepped up recruitment in the U.S. For more information about Canadian colleges, see: [www.educationau-incanada.ca/](http://www.educationau-incanada.ca/) or [www.aucc.ca](http://www.aucc.ca).

**Fewer Foreign Grad Students Here.** U.S. colleges and universities admitted 3 percent fewer overseas graduate students this year, according to the Council of Graduate Schools. The source of the decline seems to be the fact that 16 percent fewer students from India and South Korea were offered admission. This is the first decline in enrollment since 2004. At the same time, more domestic students applied for graduate work in the U.S. ■

## FINANCIAL AID MATTERS

**DOD SMART Scholarships.** The Department of Defense enlarged its Science, Mathematics and Research for Transformation (SMART) Scholarship program this year to award 300 scholarships worth \$45 million. Students receive full tuition, fees, allowances for books and health care. They also receive an annual cash stipend ranging from \$25,000 to \$41,000. In exchange, students must agree to work for a DOD laboratory for a specified period of time.

The SMART Program is administered by the American Society for Engineering Education and the Naval Postgraduate School. Students must be 18 years of age, enrolled or planning to be enrolled in a STEM discipline and U.S. citizens. *Deadline:* Dec. 15. For more info, visit: <http://www.asee.org/smart>.

**NASA's Aeronautics Scholarships.** To encourage students to pursue a career in aeronautics, NASA will award 20 undergraduate and five graduate scholarships. Undergraduate awards amount to \$14,000 per year for two years with a \$10,000 stipend for interning at a NASA research center in the summer. Students must be committed to a U.S. institution in aeronautical engineering or related field by fall 2010. *Deadline:* January 11, 2010. For

info see [www.nasa.org](http://www.nasa.org).

**Poorer Families Have Larger Unmet Aid Need.** Students from families earning \$39,229 or less have greater unmet financial aid gaps than students from higher income families, according to Postsecondary Education Opportunity.

At four-year public colleges, these students average \$4,742 in "unmet financial need," the gap between school costs, and the financial aid granted and family contributions. For these students, the student work/loan burden averages \$8,776.

At four-year private colleges, the unmet financial need averages \$8,417. The student work/loan burden is \$15,645. At two-year public colleges, the unmet need averages \$5,902. The student work/loan burden is \$6,909.

**Most Diverse National U.'s.** Which U.S. universities are the most economically diverse? The leaders, according to *U.S. News & World Report*, are (with percent of undergrads receiving Pell grants): U. of California—Los Angeles (35 percent), U. of California—Berkeley (32), Columbia U. (17), U. of Southern California (16), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (15), Dartmouth C. (15), Harvard U. (14), Cornell

## Curriculum Capsules

**New Info Tech Degree.** The U. of New Hampshire began a new BS degree in information technology this fall. The major, aimed to train students for careers in IT, is part of the computer science department in the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences. The department also provides secondary focuses in business administration, justice studies and health management and policy.

**Northwestern's New Religion Major/Minor.** Northwestern U. will begin offering a new major in Jewish Studies and a minor in Catholic Studies, *The Daily Northwestern* reported.

**New BS in Digital Media Arts.** The New School of Architecture & Design in San Diego will launch a BS degree in Digital Media Arts. This degree connects architecture, graphic design, 3 D modeling and animation.

**MN Colleges Unite for Energy Tech Degrees.** Nine schools in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system will launch a two-year program this year to focus on both renewable and traditional energy. In addition to the "energy technical specialist" diploma, students can go for a certificate in four areas of focus, ethanol production, biodiesel production, wind turbine maintenance or solar energy assessment. ■

U. (14), Emory U. (14), Stanford U. (13), U. of Chicago (13), Brown U. (12), Vanderbilt U. (12), California Institute of Technology (12), Carnegie Mellon U. (11), Rice U. (11), U. of Pennsylvania (11), Johns Hopkins U. (10), Northwestern U. (10), Duke U. (10), Georgetown U. (10), Princeton U. (10) and Yale U. (10).

**Student Leader Scholarships in New England.** Just in. The Comcast Foundation in New England announced it is sponsoring a Leaders and Achievers Scholarship Program that will award \$1,000 scholarships to students who have demonstrated leadership skills, academic achievement and a commitment to community service. Previous winners tutored younger students, volunteered at local hospitals and participated in blood, food and clothing drives. Students must have a grade-point average of 2.8 or higher and be nominated by their high school principal or counselor. *Deadline:* Dec. 11. For more info, visit [www.comcast.com/scholarships](http://www.comcast.com/scholarships). ■

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