

College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

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The Federal Dollar

Budget Battle Begins

LAST YEAR, CONGRESS never passed a comprehensive budget, opting instead for limited extensions of spending authorizations. What they will do this year, with a post-election politically-divided House and Senate, is anyone's guess. But at least the budget debate got rolling in mid-February when President Obama submitted his \$3.7 trillion dollar budget proposal (down from his \$3.8 trillion proposal a year ago). His proposal is certain to be modified in both the House and Senate before it becomes law, assuming all three branches can agree.

Education was one winner in the first round. The president's 2012 U.S. Department of Education proposal is for \$77.4 billion, a 4 percent increase over the 2010 budget, the last passed by Congress.

This includes \$26.8 billion for elementary and secondary schools, an increase of nearly 7 percent. Schools would be required to spend this money on raising academic standards, expanding programs that work and eliminating those that don't.

That includes \$900 million for the administration's signature "Race to the Top" program. This year, that money will go directly to schools or districts with the most innovative reform proposals. In the past, it went to entire states. Funding for the Title I program, which targets low-income students, would get an increase of \$300 million, to \$14.8 billion. New money would reward schools where students improve.

Pell Program Cuts

President Obama's 2012 budget proposal does call for \$100 billion in cuts to the Pell Grant program. About \$90 billion of the proposed reductions come from two changes:

- The "year-round" Pell policy in which

summer school students can collect two grants in one calendar year would be ended. Administration officials say there is no evidence that the year-round grants speed up graduation rates. That change would save \$60 billion over the next decade.

- The second change would reduce loan subsidies for graduate and professional students, saving another \$29 billion over the next 10 years.

"Definitely students will have to work harder to make it work and I'm very concerned about the disproportionate burden that will fall on low-income students," Linda Hanson, president, Hamline U., told the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*.

The good news for the nine million Pell students is that the maximum grant would remain at \$5,500 per year under the president's plan. However, it will not increase, even though tuition and other college costs continue to escalate. House Republicans may seek to cut that maximum by 15 percent or about \$845 per maximum grant, according to *The New York Times*.

OTHER ITEMS IN THE BUDGET

At the same time, the future of the program is perilous. The administration projects a \$20 billion shortfall for the program in 2012. Should Congress fail to fill the gap, the maximum Pell Grant could fall to \$2,500 to meet increasing demand.

The president's 2012 budget also calls for continued support for Federal Work-Study and Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants. The Perkins Loan program would increase from \$1 billion to \$8.5 billion. Two college completion programs would receive \$175 million. But funding for career and

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Admissions Watch

New California State Fluctuations. Last fall, California State U. was forced to reduce its enrollments at its 23 campuses by 20,000 to 412,000 students, due to state financial problems. Then, the state came up with an extra \$305 million, which when matched with \$106 million in federal stimulus money, made it possible for CSU to enroll an additional 30,000 this spring. But by the time the dust settled, the students (mostly transfers) weren't there to enroll. This was the opposite from last spring when CSU turned away students. CSU hopes that it can keep those funds to help shore up the expected \$500 million cut projected in the next draconian state budget.

Carnegie Mellon Record. Carnegie Mellon U. in Pittsburgh, the highly-rated science, technology and business school, attracted 16,497 applications this year, an increase of 6.5 percent over last year. "The applicant pool is by far the most talented and diverse in our history," said Michael Steidel, director of undergraduate admission.

Dean Apps Up. The Internet is assisting small colleges such as Dean C. in Massachusetts to increase the number of applications they receive. Dean will match or exceed last year's record of 1,600 applications, said James Fowler, admissions dean. This year's first-year class of 597 students was a record. Historically, half of its students come from in-state and many more from nearby New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island and New Jersey. "A

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BUDGET BATTLE BEGINS

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technical education programs was reduced by \$265 million. Also, Teach Grants of \$4,000 per student who agrees to work in high-need fields would be replaced with a scholarship program for the states.

The president's budget also calls for additional money in various departments for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) projects.

Not All Eligible Students Applying For Aid

More than 40 percent of community college students who are eligible for a Federal Pell Grant and 25 percent of eligible students who attend four-year institutions failed to apply for the grants in the 2007-2008 school year, according to a recent analysis of the College Board and American Association of Community Colleges. These low-income students failed to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Financial Aid. Statistics indicate that students who do fill out the FAFSA are 50 percent more likely to attend college.

New Net Price Calculator

College-bound students who want to know how much a particular college will cost them will have a new tool at their disposal. Beginning October 29, 2011, the Higher Education Opportunity Act requires all 7,000 U.S. colleges and universities that provide their students with federal financial aid to post a new Net Price Calculator on their websites.

Students will input information about their financial status and life style, and Net Price Calculator will provide an estimated cost of the school, including aid eligibility. That will allow students to compare estimated costs at several colleges before they actually apply and hear back from the financial aid offices. The calculator works by using the full cost of the university, subtracts potential student aid (not including private scholarships, work study or loans), divides that number by the number of students who seek aid, and then computes the net price a student will need to pay to attend that particular college.

Dept. of Ed Releases Nation's Report Card

Less than half of the students in the U.S. are proficient in science. That's according to the latest results released from the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress, also known as the Nation's Report Card. The report indicates that only 34 percent of fourth-graders, 30 percent of eighth-graders and 21 percent of twelfth-graders are proficient in science. "These results shed light on the critical need to ensure that all students have a strong foundation in science," said David Driscoll, chair of the bipartisan Governing Board. See, www.nationsreportcard.gov. ■

Aid to International Students

"Do you award aid to international students?" *CB* asked college admissions officers in its annual survey of colleges for fall 2010.

Schools that said they do give international aid included: Adelphi U. "only merit scholarships;" Aquinas C.; Baldwin-Wallace C.; Bucknell U.; California State U.—Stanislaus "scholarships only (based on criteria);" Carlow U.; Centre C. "with restrictions;" Chapman U. "merit only;" Claremont McKenna C. "need-based and merit-based;" Colgate U.; DePauw U.; Dickinson C.; Elon U. "institutional grants only;" Embry Riddle Aeronautical U.—Daytona Beach, Embry Riddle Aeronautical U.—Prescott, AZ; Emory U. "merit-based aid only (Emory Scholars Program);" Franciscan U.; Harvey Mudd C.; Hendrix C. "institutional aid only;" Hope C. "limited budget."

Also, Illinois Wesleyan U. "no restrictions;" James Madison U. "aid comes from sources other than the financial aid office;" John Hopkins U.; Kalamazoo C.; Lawrence U. "no restrictions;" Lehigh U.; Louisiana State U.; Macalester C.; Middlebury C.; Moravian C.; Mount Mercy U.; Oberlin C.; Ohio U. "merit scholarships only;" New C. of Florida "merit scholarships only;" Oklahoma City U.;

Philadelphia Biblical U.; Portland State U.; Providence C. "merit only;" Purdue U. "need-based financial aid is not typically available to students who do not meet financial aid citizenship requirements. Merit-based financial aid may be available for both undergraduate and graduate international students from private sources."

And, Reed C.; Rhodes C.; Saint Joseph's C. "non need-based aid only;" Saint Louis U.; Saint Michael's C. "mainly merit-based;" Scripps C. "no restrictions;" Southern Illinois U.—Carbondale; Southern Vermont C. "only merit scholarships;" Temple U.; Thomas More C.; U. of Bridgeport; U. of Colorado—Boulder; U. of Dayton "GPA greater than 2.75;" U. of Florida; U. of Idaho "no restrictions;" U. of Illinois—Chicago "non need-based;" U. of Iowa "they can apply for scholarships;" U. of Michigan—Ann Arbor "limited merit scholarships;" U. of North Carolina—Chapel Hill "not need-based aid, but do qualify for some merit scholarships;" U. of North Florida "tuition waivers only;" U. of Oklahoma "federal and state restrictions;" Wabash C.; Wagner C.; Wartburg C.; Wells C. "merit-based;" and Whitman C. ■

ADMISSIONS WATCH

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lot of it is an increase in the ability of families to research and assess information on the Internet," Fowler told *The Milford Daily News*. Dean also has added options to its liberal arts, business and theater programs to help attract and educate students.

Harvard Renews Early Action. Harvard C. sent out 300 "likely letters" in February to athletes and other exceptional candidates informing them of their expected admissions in the spring. But, on February 24, Harvard C. announced to top-caliber students it was bringing back its early action admissions program which it eliminated in 2007. This new policy begins this fall for the class of 2016.

Princeton U. announced the same day that it would "reinstate an early admission program, beginning next year with the class" entering fall 2012.

Record Apps Two Years in a Row. Mary Baldwin C. received 3,674 applications this fall, up over 13 percent from last year and a historic number for the college, according to the *newsleader.com* last month. The school has a rolling admissions policy and expects an even higher total increase over the next months. These record numbers have led Mary Baldwin to institute a wait list for the first time in many years. The increase in applications is mostly due to the school's "aggressive campaign" to increase enrollment over the next few years,

said college officials. That includes expanding the admission's office geographic span, communicating more with potential students and increasing financial aid. MBC also has touted its "personalized education," offering students programs ranging from Renaissance studies to peacemaking and conflict resolution.

Stanford Breaks Record. Stanford U. attracted about 34,200 applications this year, a 6.8 percent increase over last year's record. The West Coast powerhouse admitted only 7.3 percent of its applicants last year, a number that will decrease this year. Stanford is the third-wealthiest college in the nation, with an endowment of \$13.8 billion.

Ursinus Welcomes Decrease. Officials at Ursinus C., a liberal arts school outside Philadelphia, felt the school was getting too many applications. After five years of inflated applications caused ostensibly by the dropping of its application fee and essay, the school has intentionally made it harder to gain admission to its freshman class of about 550 students. Ursinus reinstated a required essay and called for a graded term paper from applicants, making it more likely the students are serious. It expects to return to its 2006 numbers of about 1,725 applicants. "Everyone is going up 10 percent every year for 20 years," the college's vice president for enrollment, Richard DiFelicianantonio, told *The New York Times* February 15. "It's absurd." He added, "The credibility of those numbers is questionable." ■

Jelly Beans, Darts and the 2010-11 College Admissions Cycle

COLLEGES ARE LIKE JELLY BEANS. They come not only in different flavors, but in whole different categories. Take Jelly Belly, for example. There are the official flavors, but then there are Rookie Flavors, Sport Beans, even Jelly Belly Soda Pop Flavors. To select colleges though, students need to go on more than just the name, color or stated flavor. But, as with jelly beans, students may feel that the college ranking materials, marketing brochures and hype found at various college functions or in their mailboxes are asking them to pick a flavor. For students, it may feel that the process is like tacking a college flavor chart to the wall and making a choice by throwing darts. Fear not. Here are 10 counselor-flavored suggestions for students:



Mary Ann Willis

to take advantage of classroom and extracurricular opportunities and getting out with a degree. According to the College Board, college-educated individuals vote more, contribute more to causes, are healthier and more engaged in communities.

• **Mom (and Dad): Step Back:** Students should drive the college selection car. Parents quitting their jobs to manage juniors' college applications? Ludicrous! Parents need to know that if they do things for their children now, they are telling them, at the worst possible moment, just before they are in a position to have to take care of themselves 24/7, that they are not capable of managing their own business. This is debilitating. Don't do it!

• **Match Matters:** Colleges talk "FIT" as if the applicant was a jigsaw puzzle piece that needs to conform to the university's preordained institutional needs. This could mean legacy matches, seven-foot centers, development cases and first violinists. But 17-year-olds aren't like cakes, they are not "done" yet. Most high school seniors are still rising, becoming who they will be. Predicting their contributions to the university and the world is an impossible game of roulette. Different seeds require different soils, growing periods and climates for optimal growth.

• **Money:** Some people predict that the price-point of a year's education at a highly-selective college could actually reach \$100,000 in the not too distant future. That shouldn't surprise you. Think about how many college options exist that are more affordable and how much aid and/or scholarship is available. Dig, really *DIG*, for the best options.

• **Mentoring:** Students need to think about the quality of the teaching, faculty-student relationships and related opportunities available at given colleges. Mentoring matters in college and life.

• **Method:** Don't throw darts. Lists should be vertical, thoughtfully assessed, carefully crafted and personally relevant. Yep—that means different flavors on a list for each student. Should a student stretch for a less-than-likely option? Only if the student, not grandma, dad, girlfriend or mom's business partner, thinks the reach school is a perfect 10.

• **Moment of Truth:** Make sure you have yours. It isn't about getting into college. It's about being equipped to do the work, being ready

• **Make It on Time:** Deadlines *matter* in college admissions, and in life. Procrastination is the enemy. Meet all deadlines.

• **Make it Fun!** Done right, selecting a college should not only be enjoyable for the senior, it should be a family adventure. Students should ignore the hoopla and do some homework. They should visit schools, in person and virtually, talk to alums and go to college fairs. They should read everything they can get their hands on and believe half of what they read. Draw conclusions based on needs. This does take work. But it opens up new possibilities.

• **Making a Contribution:** Students need to gain the ability to support themselves. They need to gain the ability to read, write and think at higher levels. They also need to become lifelong learners equipped to deal with an increasingly complex world with a ton of problems.

• **Magical Career Selection?** There are no magic darts or flavors that guarantee success. Many of the jobs students will have don't yet exist. Students today are more likely than previous generations to change places of employment. Their job market isn't local—it's global (and it may well be galactic).

So, tell students to put away the dart kit; take out the savor-the-flavor college-exploration backpack. They should look for places that match needs and encourage them to be the best they can be. Success comes from what they do, not where they do it. ■

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COUNSELOR'S BOOKSHELF

Culture Centers in Higher Education: Perspectives on Identity, Theory and Practice, ed. by Lori D. Patton (Stylus Publishing); 212 pages, \$27.50.

Virtual Fair. The Tom Joyner Virtual College Fair, sponsored by the popular talk show host, returns this year so that students of all income levels can "tour" prospective colleges

and universities, and access information about college preparation, entrance requirements and financial aid. Visit, <http://virtualcollegefair.blackamericaweb.com/Latest/the-tom-joyner-virtual-college-fair-returns.html>.

Accountability in American Education, ed. by Kevin Carey and Mark Schneider (Palgrave Macmillan); 355 pages: \$95. Essays are by

academics and entrepreneurs on learning, faculty and financing.

"Best Value Colleges 2011" from The Princeton Review and *USA Today*. Previously a book, the lists are now available on both websites. *USA Today* also features an interactive map with stats on the schools. Best value public: U. of Virginia. Best value private: Swarthmore C. See www.princetonreview.com and <http://bestvaluecolleges.usatoday.com>. ■

FINANCIAL AID MATTERS

Brown U. Increases Tuition. Brown U. will increase tuition and fees by 3.5 percent for the next school year to \$53,136, according to *The Brown Daily Herald*. That's slightly less than the average 4.3 percent increase over each of the last five years. "We're so tuition dependent," said Provost David Kertzer. And, "students expect the same level of academics" as other elite schools with larger endowments. However, Brown's financial aid budget will increase by 8 percent to maintain the current level for the 43 percent of students who receive aid. And enrollment will increase by 1.8 percent to 6,000 undergrad students.

Princeton Increases Tuition, Just a Tad. In what the university says is the lowest increase in 45 years, the Princeton U. trustees approved a tuition increase of 1 percent "in recognition of the challenging economic environment that continues to affect students and their families." At the same time, the university noted, Princeton's endowment and fundraising did well. Undergraduate charges for 2011-12 will be \$37,000 for tuition and no increase for room and board. This year, Princeton set another record year for applications, 27,115. Last year, Princeton admitted 8.8 percent of applicants, the lowest percentage ever.

U. of South Cuts Tuition. Here's a news flash. Some colleges are cutting tuition. In an effort to make college more affordable, the U. of the South in Seawane, Tennessee, is cutting tuition and fees for the fall by 10 percent.

"Higher education is on the verge of pricing itself beyond the reach of more and more families," said John M. McCardell, Jr., vice chancellor and president. Our goal is to make an outstanding liberal arts education more accessible to qualified students."

This year, U. of the South, which has produced 25 Rhodes Scholars, received 3,000 applications and expects a freshman class of about 425 students.

Yale Shifts Aid Formula. Yale U. will increase its total aid budget by 8 percent this year to \$117 million. About 57 percent of Yale students receive financial aid. But parents earning between \$130,000 and \$200,000 will be expected to pay an average of 15 percent of their incomes, up from 12 percent, in part, to make more aid available for low-income students. Yale students will pay \$52,700 for tuition, room and board in the next school year.

Complete College Challenge Grants. A new \$10 million program for the states was announced the end of February "designed to inspire and enhance efforts to significantly boost college completion and close attainment gaps." Governors from all 50 states are invited to submit proposals to win one of ten \$1 million, 18-month implementation grants. Funding comes from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and grants will go to those who develop statewide strategies to reduce the time it takes to complete a degree. See, <http://www.completecollege.org>. ■

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Further Entries to CB's Annual Survey. Colleges continue to submit information for CB's annual trends survey.

- DePauw U. noted it had a smaller first-year class in 2010, 635 first-year students selected from 3,006 accepted from 5,347 applicants. It used a wait list of 232 students and admitted 96 students from its wait list. Earl Macam, director of admission, noted "a large percentage of students apply using the Common Application."

- Southern Vermont C. had a larger first-year class in 2010 compared to 2009 with 193 students from 580 applicants, more than the previous year. It accepted 459 students. Elaine Garrett, assistant director of admissions, noted there were "earlier applications; increased anxiety over aid and eventual job placement."

Toledo Retention Rises. Over the past two years, the U. of Toledo increased its admissions standards and has attracted higher performing students. But that led to decreased enrollment numbers, 2 percent fewer than last year, for a total of 21,108 students. However, better prepared students translated into a higher first-to-second semester retention rate, up to 87 percent from 80 percent last year. "We kept the admissions standards high," Lloyd Jacobs, UT president, told the *Toledo Blade*. "I think we are moving in the right direction."

UT also operates a "Blue & Gold" program which pays tuition and fees for low-income students from Ohio high schools with at least a 3.0 GPA. Retention for these students increased from 78 percent last year to 92 percent this year after Toledo focused more intensively on helping students with the lowest ACT scores or who showed indications that they were falling behind.

Meanwhile, the fall-to-spring undergraduate retention rate at nearby Bowling Green U. is 90 percent, according to the *The BG News*.

Most Influential on Twitter. Yes, it's a brave new world. Colleges themselves are twittering. And according to *U.S. News and World Report*, here, in rank order, are the top 12 most influential colleges on Twitter: Stanford U., Syracuse U., Harvard U., U. Wisconsin-Madison, U. California-Berkeley, Butler U., Tufts U., Temple U., U. of Minnesota, U. of Texas at Austin, Marquette U. and Indiana U. Bloomington. ■

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SCHOLARSHIP SCOOPS

Volunteers Rewarded. The Kohl's Cares Scholarship Program rewards young volunteers ages 6-18 who work to improve their communities. More than 2,100 students will receive over \$415,000 in scholarships. *Deadline:* March 15. See, www.kohlscorporation.com/CommunityRelations/scholarship-program-information.

Brains & Beauty. ULTA, the nation's largest beauty retailer, is offering a 2011 "Enrich, Empower & Enlighten Scholarship" totaling more than \$100,000 to young women in 13 U.S. cities. Winners are evaluated on community involvement, leadership, academic achievement and educational commitment. *Deadline:* March 18. For more info see, www.ulta.com.

For Students in California, Oregon or Washinton... The Asian Pacific Community

Fund and Verizon have joined to sponsor a Scholarship Awards Program in these three states. *First deadline:* March 30. Go to www.apcf.org for details.

Engineering Essay. A future engineering student who can best answer the question, "How do you envision the workplace of the future?" could win a \$5,000 scholarship from Adecco Engineering & Technical, a management group. *Deadline:* April 15. See, www.scholarshipprograms.org/adeng/.

"Green" Scholarship. Castle Ink, retailer of ink cartridges, will give a \$2,500 scholarship to a student "of all levels of academic achievement" who writes, designs, draws or otherwise produces an inspirational poster about the importance of recycling. *Deadline:* June 30. See <http://www.castleink.com>. ■

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