



March 2008
FS 08-03

Undergraduate Fees at California's Public Colleges and Universities

In the past two decades, fees at California's public colleges and universities have increased substantially. Fees for full-time students at the University of California were \$7,517 in 2007–08 compared to \$4,212 ten years earlier. Fees at the California State University were substantially lower at \$3,521, but still well above the \$1,946 they were in 1997–98.

Fees are likely to rise significantly for the 2008–09 school year. UC has proposed an increase of 7.4% and CSU has proposed an increase of 10%. These increases are included in the baseline figures in the state budget proposed by the Governor in January 2008. However, the Governor's proposal includes a budget-balancing reduction in funding of about \$300 million for each system. It is possible that the systems will raise fees more than currently proposed in order to balance their 2008–09 budgets.

California Community Colleges

Fees in the California Community Colleges in 2007–08 were \$20 per semester unit for California residents. A student taking a full-time load of 15 units for both semesters would pay \$600 for the academic year. Financially-needy students may qualify for the Board of Governor's fee waiver program.

California's community college fees are the lowest in the nation. The state with the next-lowest community college fees is New Mexico where fees are \$909 for 2007–08. Nationally, community college fees for full-time students averaged \$2,737 — more than four times the fees in California.

California State University

In the 2007–08 school year, CSU's fees were \$3,521 for full-time students. This amount consists of \$2,772 in systemwide fees plus campus fees that average \$749. The campus fees help support services such as counseling, student union activities, student government, and recreation.

CSU's fees are much lower than fees at comparable institutions in other states. Fees are less than half of the average for the 15 public universities that CSU compares itself to for faculty salary purposes.

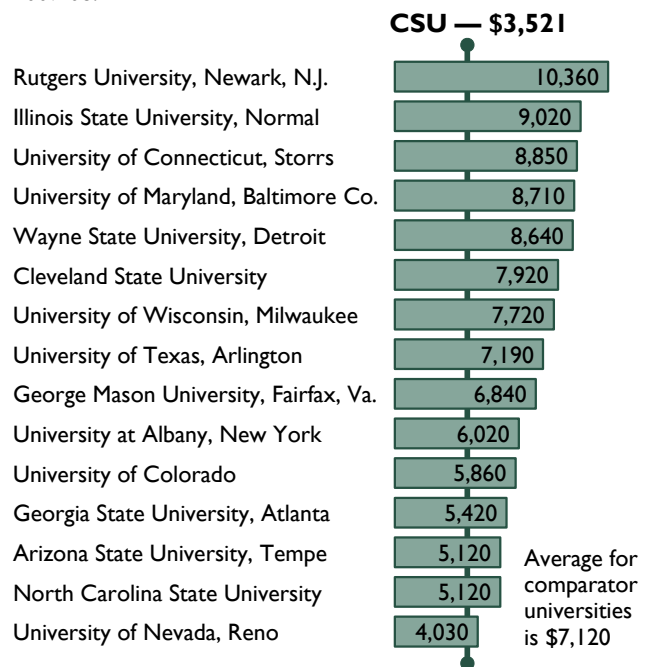
Although CSU's fees are relatively low, fees are only one part of the cost of a university education. Living costs, books, and other expenses are significant. A Commission report on college affordability (CPEC 06-22) showed that fees are only about 20% of the overall cost of attendance at CSU.

University of California

Fees for full-time undergraduates averaged \$7,517 in 2007–08. This consists of \$6,636 in systemwide fees, plus mandatory campus fees averaging \$881. UC requires that all students have health insurance. Many UC students are enrolled at campuses in areas that are not covered by their parents' health plans and

Undergraduate Fees: CSU and Comparable Institutions

Fees for full-time students who are state residents, 2007-08.



Fee data compiled by CSU, Office of the Chancellor, System Budget Office

have to enroll in campus plans that typically cost about \$1,000 annually.

UC's fees are among the lowest of the four public universities that the University of California compares itself to regarding faculty salaries.

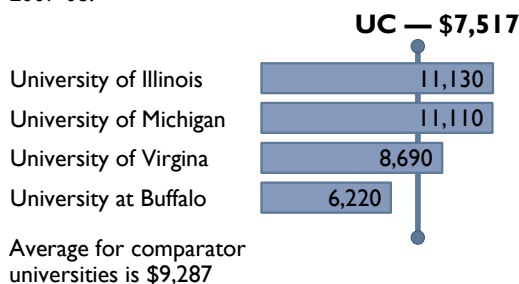
The Outlook for 2008–09

The Governor's proposed 2008–09 budget assumes fee increases of 10% at CSU and 7.4% at UC. The CSU Board of Trustees and the UC Board of Regents will hear fee proposals at their March 2008 meetings that will most likely match the Governor's proposal. The proposed budget has no changes for community college fees.

The budget includes budget-balancing reductions that amount to \$1,500 per full-time equivalent student at UC and \$900 per full-time equivalent student at CSU. The systems have a limited ability to absorb these reductions in funding by cutting operating costs or seeking other revenues, so it is possible they will have to raise fees more than currently proposed in order to balance their budgets.

Undergraduate Fees: UC and Comparable Institutions

Fees for full-time students who are state residents, 2007-08.



Fee data compiled by UC Office of the President, Budget Office

What is a resident student?

All three systems charge higher fees to students who are not California residents. For example, fees for full-time out-of-state students are \$27,137 at UC and \$13,691 at CSU.

CSU and the community colleges determine residency according to state law. Resident students are defined as those who have lived in California for over a year before enrolling and intend to make California their home. A student may show intent to reside in California by obtaining a California driver's license, owning property in the state, or paying California income tax. State law allows nonresident students who have attended a California high school for three years to be considered residents for tuition purposes.

At UC, residency is determined by university policy. Students are generally considered residents if they are financially dependent on their parents and their parents are California residents. Children whose parents are nonresidents may be exempt from nonresident fees if they have attended a California high school for three years.

In addition, students who are have been financially independent of their parents for two years may qualify as California residents if they have lived in the state for more than a year and have demonstrated an intent to make California their permanent home.