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California Postsecondary Education Commission

Resident Graduate Charges at California's Public Universities

California charges students enrolled in academic graduate degree programs more to attend the State's public universities than it charges undergraduate students. The rationale for this differential stems from two principle factors. First, providing graduate courses is generally more expensive than the cost of providing undergraduate courses. Second, while advanced education and training provide substantial societal benefits, students completing academic graduate degrees generally earn higher salaries upon completion of their graduate studies, resulting in more personal financial gain from this level of education.

Both of California's public university systems charge resident graduate students a systemwide enrollment fee, as well as mandatory, campus-based fees. The mandatory campus-based fees vary from campus to campus and help support student services such as counseling, student union activities, student government, and recreational facilities. Through budget actions over the past several years, California has required resident students to pay an increasing proportion of the cost of their education, while nonresident students have been assessed increased "tuition" levels to cover their educational costs.

Under California's Master Plan for Higher Education, both the California State University (CSU) and the University of California (UC) are authorized to offer graduate degree programs. The California State University has been precluded from offering most doctoral degrees independently, with the exception being doctoral-level degrees in Education Administration. The CSU is also authorized to offer doctoral degrees jointly in partnership with a University of California campus or with one of the State's independent colleges and universities.

What does the California State University charge graduate students?

For the 2006-07 academic year, the State University charged full-time resident graduate students (excluding the teacher preparation programs) an average of \$3,781 in mandatory fees. Graduate-level students enrolled in teacher preparation programs pay \$3,601 (\$2,922 in systemwide fees and \$679 in other mandatory fees) annually, which is a \$180 lower state university fee than other CSU graduate students. The \$3,781 in average mandatory fees for CSU graduate students includes \$3,102 in systemwide student fees and an average of \$679 in campus-based fees. The \$3,781 in mandatory CSU student fees is \$580 more than the amount charged to the system's undergraduate resident students. Average fees at the CSU are lower than at each of the 15 public universities with which the CSU compares itself for faculty salary purposes. This amount is well below half the comparison group's average charge for resident graduate students:

University of Maryland, Baltimore County	\$14,498
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Newark	12,859
Wayne State University, Detroit, MI	11,791
Cleveland State University, Cleveland, OH	10,770
University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee	9,622
University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT	9,510
George Mason University, Fairfax, VA	9,225
University at Albany, State University of New York	9,110
University of Colorado at Denver	8,371
University of Texas at Arlington	8,080
Illinois State University, Normal, IL	7,650
Arizona State University, Tempe	6,028
Georgia State University, Atlanta	5,512
North Carolina State University, Raleigh	5,151
University of Nevada, Reno	5,019
Comparison average	8,880
Average CSU graduate mandatory fees	\$3,781

Need- and merit-based student financial aid may reduce the tuition and fee costs identified above and could result in lower costs paid by needy and non-needy graduate students. Student financial aid packages—especially for students enrolled in academic graduate programs—differ significantly among the comparison institutions.

What does the University of California charge graduate students?

For 2006-07, the University of California charged full-time resident graduate students an average of \$8,938 in mandatory fees. This amount includes systemwide student fees of \$7,397 and an average of \$1,541 in campus-based fees. The \$8,938 in mandatory fees for resident graduates is about \$2,086 more than the amount charged California resident undergraduate students. This total is lower than that charged by all four public universities with which the University of California compares itself for faculty salaries, and is \$2,350 less than the average of the comparison group:

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor	\$14,991
University of Virginia, Charlottesville	10,560
University of Illinois at Urbana-Urbana	10,152
University at Buffalo, The State University of New York	9,448
Average of the comparison group	\$11,288
Average University of California graduate mandatory fees	\$8,938

Need- and merit-based student financial aid may reduce the tuition and fee costs identified above and could result in lower costs paid by needy and non-needy graduate students. Student financial aid packages—especially for students enrolled in academic graduate programs—differ significantly among the comparison institutions.

With respect to the UC's professional schools, graduate student fees do not reflect the tuition charged by its professional schools. For example, UCLA's current-year annual professional school tuition charges are: \$25,463 for law school, \$22,030 for medical school, \$26,952 for business school, \$11,749 for nursing school and \$25,583 for dentistry school.

What has the Governor proposed in terms of changes to resident graduate student fees for the 2007-08 fiscal year?

The Governor's 2007-08 budget assumes resident student fee increases of 10% for the CSU and 7% for UC that have not yet been approved by the CSU and the UC governing boards. Both the CSU Board of Trustees and the UC Board of Regents will hear fee proposals that will most likely match the Governor's proposal at their March meetings. Assuming these proposals are enacted (and not accounting for changes in tuition at the comparison institutions), mandatory fees for full-time resident graduate students at the State University would remain lower than at any of the 15 State University public faculty salary comparison institutions. The CSU's resident graduate fees would also be less than half the average amount charged by the comparison group. For full-time resident graduates at the University of California, this scenario would result in annual charges estimated to be about 16% lower than the average amount currently charged by the University of California's public faculty salary comparison institutions.

Who are graduate resident students?

California State law 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 public college or university, and (2) intend to make California their home. A student may demonstrate his or her 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, or paying California personal income taxes.