

# California College Choices

## California's Public Colleges and Universities

California has a three-tiered system of state-financed universities and colleges. These include the University of California, California State University, and Community College systems. Unique information about each system is charted below to help distinguish one from the other. In addition to these public systems, there are over seventy independent, or private, colleges.

<b>University of California (UC)</b> <a href="http://www.ucop.edu/pathways">www.ucop.edu/pathways</a>	<b>California State University (CSU)</b> <a href="http://www.csumentor.edu">www.csumentor.edu</a>	<b>Community Colleges (CC)</b> <a href="http://www.cccco.edu/find/find.htm">www.cccco.edu/find/find.htm</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Top 12.5% of high school graduates.</li><li>• <b>Background:</b> The UC system combines the education of undergraduates with a strong emphasis on graduate programs and world-class research in the sciences and humanities.</li><li>• <b>Students:</b> Over 208,000.</li><li>• <b>Campuses:</b> 10</li><li>• <b>Costs:</b> About \$8,007 in fees; an additional \$12,890 for room and board; \$1,551 for books and supplies per year.</li><li>• <b>Entrance Requirements:</b> A prospective undergraduate must be in the academic top eighth of graduates statewide and have completed 15 required courses.</li><li>• <b>Campus Locations:</b> Berkeley, Davis, Los Angeles, Irvine, Merced, Riverside, San Diego, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, and San Francisco.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Top 33% of high school graduates.</li><li>• <b>Background:</b> The CSU system offers undergraduate education leading to a bachelor's and graduate education leading to a master's with a limited number of doctoral degrees offered.</li><li>• <b>Students:</b> Over 400,000.</li><li>• <b>Campuses:</b> 23</li><li>• <b>Costs:</b> About \$3,797 in fees; an additional \$8,529 for room and board; \$1,566 for books and supplies. per year.</li><li>• <b>Entrance Requirements:</b> A prospective undergraduate must be in the academic top third of graduates statewide and have completed 15 required courses.</li><li>• <b>Campus Locations:</b> Bakersfield, Chico, Channel Islands, Dominguez Hills, East Bay, Fresno, Fullerton, Humboldt, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Maritime Academy, Monterey Bay, Northridge, Pomona, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San José, San Luis Obispo, San Marcos, Sonoma and Stanislaus.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Top 100% of high school graduates.</li><li>• <b>Background:</b> Community Colleges offer a wide range of academic and vocational programs leading to an occupational certificate, a two-year associate of arts or science degree, or a transfer program.</li><li>• <b>Students:</b> Over 2,500,000.</li><li>• <b>Campuses:</b> 109</li><li>• <b>Costs:</b> About \$650 for fees; \$1,250 for books and supplies per year. These estimates assume that a student lives at home.</li><li>• <b>Entrance Requirements:</b> These colleges are open to anyone, including those without a high school diploma. Students can attend anywhere in the state.</li><li>• <b>Campus Locations:</b> 56 in southern California and 53 in central and northern parts of the state.</li></ul>

# Sample Academic Plans

## Choose a Goal — Make a Plan — Keep Your Options Open

You must meet your high school's specific graduation requirements. Remember, these are only sample plans.\*

Educational Goal	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade
<b>High School Graduation</b>	English I Social Science* PE Math Keyboarding Elective/ Science	English II World History PE Algebra Science Computer App.	English III U.S. History ROP Visual & Performing Arts Science Math	English IV Am. Gov't/ Economics ROP Visual & Performing Arts Elective
<b>Competitive Majors and/or Universities</b> (e.g. CSU)	English I Social Science* PE Algebra I Foreign Lang. Lab Science	English II World History PE Geometry Foreign Lang. Lab Science	English III U.S. History Visual & Performing Arts Algebra II Foreign Lang. Lab Science	English IV Am. Gov't/ Economics Visual & Performing Arts Adv. Math Elective/Col Prep Elective/Col Prep
<b>More Competitive Majors and/or Universities</b> (e.g. UC)	English I Social Science* PE Algebra I Elective/Foreign Lang. Lab Science	English II World History PE Geometry Foreign Lang. Lab Science	English III AP U.S. History Visual & Performing Arts Algebra II Foreign Lang. Lab Science	English IV or AP Am. Gov't/ Economics Visual & Performing Arts Advanced Math Elective/Col Prep/ROP Elective/Col Prep/ROP
<b>Most Competitive Majors and/or Universities</b> (e.g. Stanford, UC Impacted Campuses)	English I Social Science* PE Geometry Foreign Lang. Lab Science	English II World History PE Algebra II Foreign Lang. Lab Science	AP English III AP U.S. History Visual & Performing Arts Adv. Math Foreign Lang. Lab Science	AP English IV AP Am. Gov't/ Economics AP Computer Sci AP Math (calculus) Visual & Performing Arts Elective/Col Prep/ROP

\* This course requirement will vary from district to district

**AP (Advanced Placement):** College-level classes offered at high school.



## Getting the Job Done — Student Activity

From your middle and high school, get a list of clubs, sports, and other extracurricular activities that will be available to you. In the left column, list at least one school-based activity you would like to be involved in each year. See if there are restrictions on participation. For example, some activities may be open only to juniors or seniors or you may need to have a certain grade point average.

Also, find some activities outside of school that interest you. These might include a job, a community college class, job shadowing, scouting, sports, or involvement in a church youth group. Talk to your friends, make some phone calls, and see what might work for you! List these under the "Outside Activities" column.

	School-Based Activities (e.g., Club)	Outside Activities
Middle School:	_____	_____
	_____	_____
Freshman:	_____	_____
	_____	_____
Sophomore:	_____	_____
	_____	_____
Junior:	_____	_____
	_____	_____
Senior:	_____	_____
	_____	_____

**GPA:** The basic rule is to get the highest grades in the most challenging courses. Many colleges use only the grades earned in college-prep courses to compute GPAs. Grades earned in PE and some electives may not count. Advanced Placement classes could raise a GPA because each letter grade may be worth an additional point.

"I remember middle school. Everyone thought that our freshman year wouldn't count. But then we found out your freshman year does count. I wish I'd known that before."

– Dean, 10th grade student

**Tests:** College-bound students typically take different placement tests. The PSAT is preparation for the SAT and is usually taken in the sophomore or junior year.

The SAT or ACT are taken in the junior and senior years. If students have high test scores, they may be able to apply to college with a lower GPA. California community colleges do not require admission tests, but they do have placement examinations for English and mathematics.

**Course Requirements:** Even ninth grade is important because ninth-grade classes can count toward college course requirements. For example, students need four years of English to apply to either CSU or UC schools. Also, classes taken in ninth grade will prepare students for higher level courses, not to mention high school graduation.



## For a four-year college, expect to take at least:

<b>Language Arts (English)</b>	4 years	<b>Science (Laboratory)</b>	2 or 3 years
<b>Mathematics</b>	3 years	<b>Foreign Language</b>	2 or 3 years
<b>History/Social Science</b>	3 years	<b>Visual and Performing Arts</b>	1 year

More selective schools generally require the same number of courses but expect that students will take higher level courses, such as an Honors English course.



## OTHER RESOURCES

### California Colleges

[www.californiacolleges.edu](http://www.californiacolleges.edu)

This site showcases over 200 California Colleges and helps with college planning, financial aid, career exploration, and provides "ask an expert."

### Preparing for College

[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

[www.learnmoreindiana.org](http://www.learnmoreindiana.org)

# Paying for College

Commencement is a beginning, not an end. Having a post-high school goal is essential. To prepare for that goal, whatever it may be, students and parents need to learn the basics, use resources well, and start early.

Because a college education is a major purchase, just like a new car or house, the following section will focus on financial planning for college. **This section includes helpful information but none as vital as the fact that college is affordable.** With savings, scholarships, loans, and grants, there are many ways to pay for a college education.

## Learn the Basics

Many families dream of their student attending college but are very concerned about costs. Paying for college can be a challenge, but there are financial aid opportunities for everyone. Don't disqualify your student by not applying for aid. Almost everyone who attends college needs some form of financial assistance. In this section, we look first at the basic cost of a college education and then different ways of paying for it.

There are several factors that influence the cost of a basic college education. Being familiar with these and how they increase or decrease the college costs will help families to make informed decisions and plan accordingly.

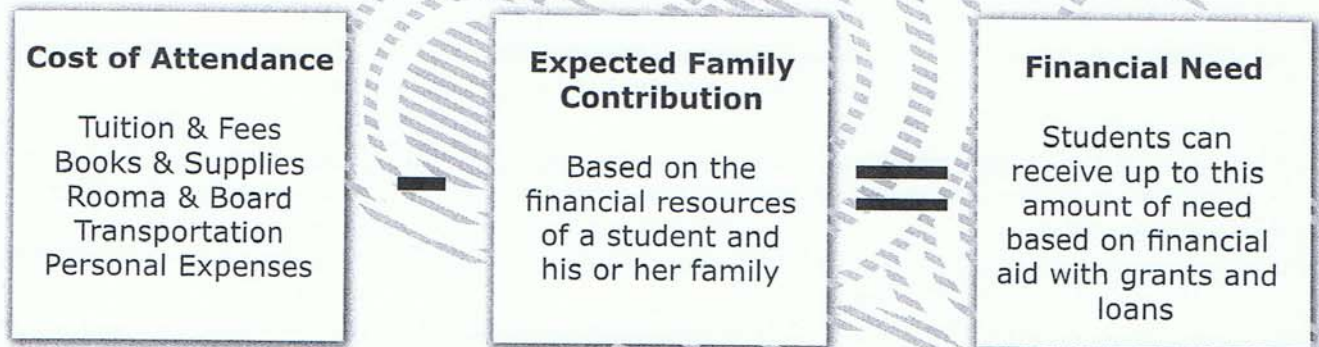
- **Type of School:** Public schools are usually less costly than private ones, but attending an out-of-state public school may be just as expensive as a private school.
- **Time:** The longer a student stays, the more it costs. Advanced placement classes or community college classes during high school might help ensure that a student graduates in four years or less.
- **Location:** This affects the cost of housing, food, and transportation. On-campus housing provides room and board; off-campus living involves expenses for rent, utilities, commuting, and food. Living away from home may include the cost of visits.

Expenses	CC	CSU	UC	Independent
<b>Educational</b>				
Tuition & Fees	\$650	\$3,797	\$8,007	\$35,000
Books & Supplies	\$1,250	\$1,566	\$1,551	\$2,000
<b>Living</b>				
Room & Board		\$8,529	\$12,890	\$15,000
Transportation	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500
Personal Expenses (variable)	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,400</b>	<b>\$17,392</b>	<b>\$25,948</b>	<b>\$55,500</b>

\*NOTE: Figures are 2008-2009 estimates. Specific figures should be obtained from the Financial Aid Office of a specific college.  
 CC = Community Colleges; CSU = California State University system; UC = University of California system; Independent = private colleges.  
 CSU campus Fees/Costs: [www.calstate.edu/SAS/fa\\_coa.shtml](http://www.calstate.edu/SAS/fa_coa.shtml)

# Financial Need

Learning about financial aid for college is valuable because there are financial aid opportunities for everyone. Only by not applying is a student disqualified. Students and families who complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) receive a report that tells them what the expected family contribution (EFC) is and what types of aid are available to the student. Also, the family contribution remains the same, regardless of the cost of attendance for a particular school.



## Two Types of Financial Aid

Federal and state governments, as well as private sources, offer help. Some are based on need or specific interest, others on academic performance. About 70% of the student aid that is awarded each year comes from the U.S. Department of Education.

### 1. Gift Aid does not need to be repaid:

- a. Grants are awarded on the basis of need.
- b. Scholarships are awarded on academic merit, need, and/or other criteria.

### 2. Self-Help Aid must be repaid or earned:

- a. Student Loans are special loans available to students and their parents.
- b. Work may include work-study or part-time employment.

## Scholarships

Scholarships are another source of money for college and they are not all based on need or high academic standing. Your local high school is often the best single source of information on scholarships. There is need for caution on scholarships, however.

The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators and consumer groups caution students about paying for services from scholarship search organizations because many free services are available. Be an educated consumer, check out free services first.