Increases in College Costs for 2012/2013 Continue to Outpace Inflation

Every October, the College Board releases its Trends in College Pricing report that highlights college cost increases for the current academic year along with trends in the world of higher education. While costs can vary significantly depending on the region and individual college, the College Board publishes average cost figures, which are based on its survey of 3,500 colleges across the country.

To read the Trends in College Pricing 2012 report, visit www.collegeboard.com/trends.

Following are the highlights for four-year public colleges (for both in-state and out-of-state students) and four-year private colleges. Note that the total average cost figure includes tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, transportation, and a small amount for miscellaneous expenses. This figure is often referred to as the "cost of attendance." In each category, college costs outpaced general inflation, which is currently 2.1% through September 2012, according to Consumer Price Index figures published monthly by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Public colleges (in-state students)
- Tuition and fees increased an average of 4.8% from last year to $8,655
- Room-and-board costs increased an average of 3.7% from last year to $9,205
- Total average cost for 2012/2013 is $22,261

Public colleges (out-of-state students)
- Tuition and fees increased an average of 4.2% from last year to $21,706
- Room-and-board costs increased an average 3.7% from last year to $9,205
- Total average cost for 2012/2013 is $35,312

Private colleges
- Tuition and fees increased an average of 4.2% from last year to $29,056
- Room-and-board costs increased an average of 3.7% from last year to $10,462
- Total average cost for 2012/2013 is $43,289

Cost trends
The Trends in College Pricing 2012 report also noted that "The data in this report confirm the widespread perception that published college prices are rising more rapidly than the prices of other goods and services. This is not a new phenomenon, but one that has persisted over the entire 30-year period documented here ... Another very significant issue is that ... incomes have declined over the past decade for families at all levels of the income distribution. In addition, families have not been able to plan for the fluctuations in the value of the assets they have saved to pay for college."
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