



# West Virginia

## Affordability Profile

from

*Affordability of Public Higher Education in SREB States*

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**SREB**

Southern Regional  
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## INTRODUCTION

At the request of the SREB, the Higher Education Policy Institute has prepared a profile of college affordability for each SREB state as well as a synthesis of relevant trends in the SREB region. This project was designed to “take the temperature” of college affordability in the South in order to provide a policy tool that can assist state policy-makers in assessing the current and prospective dimensions of the affordability issue and the need for state policy initiatives or interventions.

The major finding of this analysis is that the SREB states have lost ground in college affordability. For most students and families in the South, the cost of paying for college has outstripped family income and inflation. Several promising initiatives have been put in place by individual states, but many are not directed at the students and families most adversely affected by declining affordability and none are commensurate with the magnitude of the problem. One consequence is greater reliance on loans to finance college and growing indebtedness of students and graduates.

Whatever its causes, the trend toward reduced college affordability undermines the efforts of SREB states and colleges and universities to address the changing demography of the region and undercuts progress towards educational attainment goals and economic development requirements of the SREB member states. It is mathematically impossible for most SREB states to reach national and international workforce competitiveness without improving college access and attainment rates of low-income groups and of ethnic groups with lagging college participation rates. However, if current trends continue, declining affordability will constrain the college enrollment of these potential students and prevent states from reaching educational levels needed to provide opportunity for individuals and a competitive work force in the knowledge-based global economy.

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## West Virginia

### Public Higher Education Affordability Profile

In order for students to enroll in community colleges in West Virginia, they, or their families, would need to pay on average 19 percent of their annual income for college expenses, including living expenses, each year after taking into account all forms of grant aid, based on the current college expenses and current levels of aid. This is higher than the SREB average.

On a per-student basis, West Virginia's state grant program that has both a need and non-need requirement has an award amount greater than the SREB average. The state also has a non-need based state grant program with an award greater than the SREB average.<sup>1</sup>

The average amount of student loan aid received by full-time, first-time students in West Virginia is more than the SREB average; average loan aid per-borrower has increased rapidly over time.

	West Virginia			SREB	U.S. Average
	Pre-Recession	Recession	Post-Recession	Post-Recession	Post-Recession
<b>Family Ability to Pay</b>					
Percent of income needed to pay for college expenses minus financial aid:					
at technical colleges	N/A	N/A	13%	14%	9%
at community colleges	N/A	15%	19%	16%	27%
at public 4-year colleges (category 1)	N/A	22%	19%	27%	41%
at public 4-year colleges (category 2)	N/A	20%	22%	25%	19%
<b>Strategies for Affordability</b>					
<b>State Grant funding</b>					
Need-Based grants per student	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$204	\$276
Grants that have a need and non-need based requirement per student*	\$287	\$338	\$434	\$98	\$142
Non-Need based grants per student	\$331	\$530	\$559	\$345	\$145
At lowest-priced colleges, the share of income that the families with the lowest income need to pay for tuition	21%	16%	19%	18%	20%
<b>Reliance on Loans</b>					
Average amount of student loan aid received by full-time, first-time students attending public institutions	\$3,979	\$3,988	\$5,281	\$5,094	\$5,361
*As defined by NASSGAP, see Technical Guide. Grant requirements in this category vary widely by state -- some have a substantial merit component and others have a modest merit component.					
Note: Pre-Recession year data is from 2003-04; Recession year data is from 2006-07 on all variables except Estimated cost of postsecondary education where data is from 2008-09 (2007 data was unavailable for this variable); Post-Recession year data is from 2011-12. All dollar amounts have been adjusted into Constant 2013 dollars.					
N/A: Data not available.					

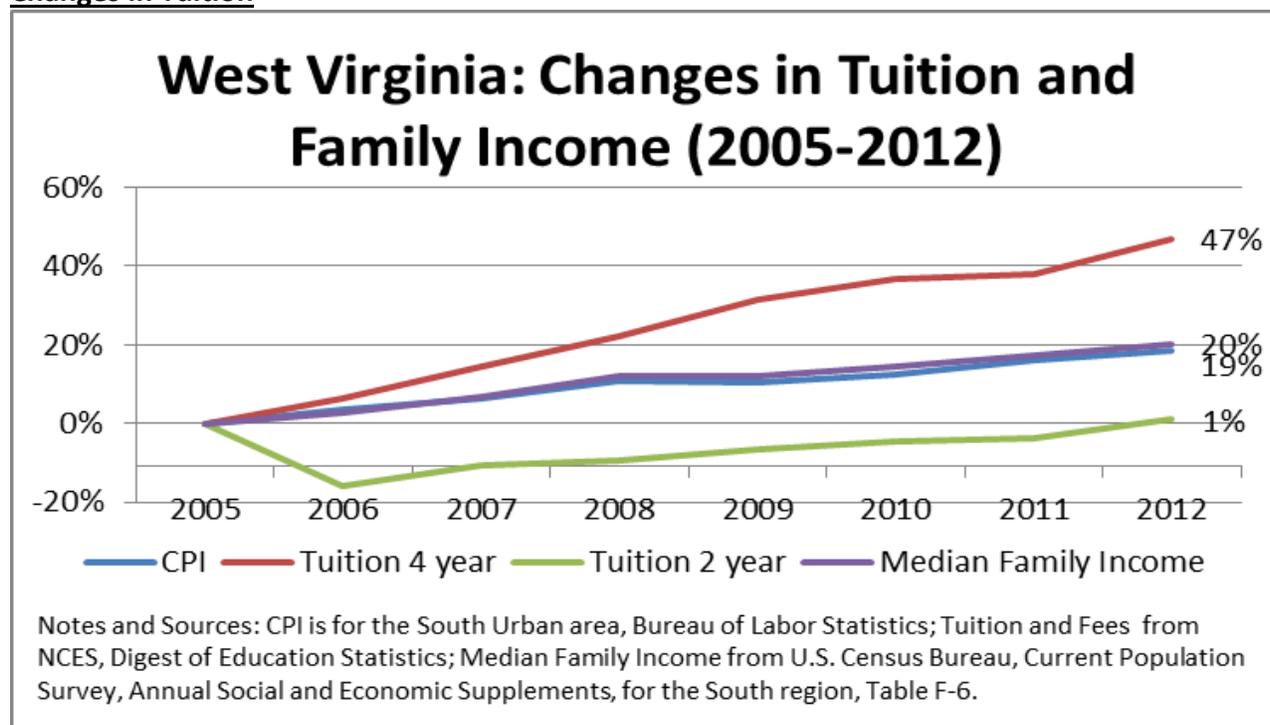
<sup>1</sup> State officials in West Virginia consider the West Virginia Grant as a need-based grant but requiring a 2.0 GPA and 24 completed hours for renewal. The NASSGAP national survey classifies the West Virginia Grant Program as a "needs-based *and* non-need-based program" because of the GPA requirement.

### A Closer Look at Family Ability To Pay

	Average Income in Group	Technical Colleges		Community Colleges	
		Net Price	Percent of Income needed to pay net college Price	Net Price	Percent of Income needed to pay net college Price
Income \$0-\$30,000	\$16,931	\$7,049	42%	\$7,175	42%
Income \$30-\$48,000	\$38,771	\$4,748	12%	\$7,676	20%
Income \$48,000-\$75,000	\$60,527	\$5,552	9%	\$9,445	16%
Income \$75,000-\$110,000	\$90,721	\$520	1%	\$9,679	11%
Income \$110,000 and Above	\$174,353	N/A	N/A	\$7,703	4%
	Average Income in Group	Public Four Year 1		Public Four Year 2	
		Net Price	Percent of Income needed to pay net college Price	Net Price	Percent of Income needed to pay net college Price
Income \$0-\$30,000	\$16,931	\$6,366	38%	\$8,217	49%
Income \$30-\$48,000	\$38,771	\$7,266	19%	\$8,539	22%
Income \$48,000-\$75,000	\$60,527	\$10,179	17%	\$11,034	18%
Income \$75,000-\$110,000	\$90,721	\$11,706	13%	\$11,711	13%
Income \$110,000 and Above	\$174,353	\$12,859	7%	\$13,061	7%

- Low-income families (those with incomes less than \$30,000 per-year) would need to pay on average 42 percent of their income to attend community colleges, even after taking into account all types of grant aid.
- Middle-income families (those earning between \$48,000 and \$75,000 per-year) would need to pay on average 16 percent of their income to attend community colleges, even after taking into account all types of grant aid.

## Changes in Tuition



Since 2005, tuition at public four-year institutions in West Virginia has been growing much more rapidly than either inflation or family income. However, tuition at public two-year institutions has stayed around the same.

### Other Contextual Information:

- By 2020, the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce predicts that 55 percent of jobs in the state will require a postsecondary education or above, below the Southern average (59 percent) and far below the U.S. average (65 percent).
- Thirty-five percent of students in West Virginia are enrolled in public four-year category 1 institutions, 45 percent at category 2 four-year institutions, 18 percent are enrolled in the community college sector, and 2 percent are enrolled in technical colleges.
- In 2012, 25 percent of children in West Virginia were living in poverty. This is down slightly from 2004 when 26 percent were living in poverty.
- In 2012, state investment in need-based grant aid at public colleges in West Virginia was 23 percent as compared to the federal investment (Pell Grants).

Note: Category 1 four-year institutions are those that award at least 30 doctoral degrees in 5 different areas. Category 2 includes all other four-year institutions.

List of Institutions by Type

**Category 1 Public Four-Year Institutions**

West Virginia University

**Category 2 Public Four-Year Institutions**

Bluefield State College

Concord University

Fairmont State University

Glennville State College

Marshall University

Shepherd University

West Liberty University

West Virginia State University

West Virginia University Institute of Technology

**Two-Year With Bachelor's**

Potomac State College of West Virginia University

West Virginia University at Parkersburg

**Community College**

Blue Ridge Community and Technical College

Bridgemont Community and Technical College

Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College

Kanawha Valley Community & Technical College

Mountwest Community & Technical College

New River Community & Technical College

Pierpont Community and Technical College

Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College

West Virginia Northern Community College

**Technical Centers**

Benjamin Franklin Vocational Center

Boone County Career & Technical Center

Cabell County Vocational-Technical Center

Carver Vocational Center

Fred W. Eberle Technical Center

Garnet Career Center

James Rumsey Technical Institute

Marion County Vocational-Technical Center

McDowell County Vocational-Technical Center

Mercer County Vocational-Technical Center

Mineral County Vocational-Technical Center

Monongalia County Technical Education Center

Putnam County Vocational-Technical Center  
Raleigh County Academy of Careers and Technology  
Ralph R. Willis Vocational-Technical Center  
Roane-Jackson Technical Center  
Wood County School of Practical Nursing

