



North Carolina College Affordability Profile

September 2016

To support the work of the SREB's member states and its Commission on College Affordability, SREB commissioned the Higher Education Policy Institute to prepare a college affordability profile for each SREB state, as well as a synthesis of relevant trends in the SREB region. These profiles detail college affordability data and trends specific to the state to assist policymakers in assessing the dimensions of the affordability issue and the need for state policy initiatives or interventions.

In addition to this state profile, other affordability resources from SREB include:

- *Shared Responsibility for College Affordability*, the Commission's final report and executive summary
- *College Affordability: Trends in the SREB Region*
- *College Affordability: SREB Technical Report*
- *College Affordability Policy and Practice Review: A Statewide Framework*
- *College Affordability: Promising State Policies and Practices*
- *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*

Each of these documents is available at [SREB.org/Affordability](https://www.sreb.org/Affordability).

North Carolina College Affordability Profile

What Percentage of Family Income Is Required to Attend College Full Time?

Families in North Carolina would need to pay 19.2 percent of their income to pay for educational expenses at a public two-year institution in the state. This is higher than the SREB average and higher than the national average.

Families in North Carolina would need to pay 25.4 percent of their income to pay for educational expenses at a public four-year non-research institution in the state. This is lower than the SREB average and lower than the national average

	North Carolina, 2008	North Carolina, 2013	SREB Average, 2013	U.S. Average, 2013
Public Four-Year Category 1	13.0%	22.5%	29.0%	29.9%
Public Four-year Category 2	15.0%	25.4%	27.3%	27.4%
Public Two-Year	14.8%	19.2%	17.2%	18.6%
Public Technical	NA	NA	NA	NA

How Much Is Spent Per Student on Financial Aid?

In North Carolina, need-based aid per student is \$669. This is higher than the SREB average and higher than the national average. Aid based on criteria other than need is \$14 per student. This is lower than the SREB average and lower than the national average.

	North Carolina, 2004	North Carolina, 2007	North Carolina, 2013	SREB Average, 2013	U.S. Average, 2013
Need Only	\$207	\$358	\$669	\$338	\$474
Other	\$2	\$14	\$14	\$480	\$210

For Families Making Less Than \$30,000, What Percentage of Income Is Required for Tuition at Lowest-Price Colleges?

Twenty-six percent of families in North Carolina make less than \$30,000 per year. For a student in these families, tuition at the lowest-priced public colleges would require 13 percent of income. This is lower than the SREB average and lower than the national average.

	2008	2013
Percentage of Families	25%	26%
Tuition	\$1,310	\$2,179
Income	\$17,548	\$17,162
Percentage of Income	7%	13%
SREB Average	11%	16%
National Average	14%	18%

How Much Do Graduates Borrow?

Graduates from public four-year research universities in North Carolina have borrowed, on average, \$22,591 in 2013. This is lower than the SREB average and higher than the national average.

	North Carolina, 2008	North Carolina, 2013	SREB Average, 2013	U.S. Average, 2013
Public Four-Year Category 1	\$15,695	\$22,591	\$22,959	\$20,980
Public Four-year Category 2	\$17,218	\$11,022	\$11,082	\$10,906
Public Two-Year	\$7,655	N/A	N/A	N/A
Public Technical	\$20,408	N/A	N/A	N/A

A Closer Look at Family Ability to Pay

SREB’s Commission on College Affordability defined *affordability* as the relationship of the price required to attend higher education — or the net price — relative to family income.

Net price = tuition and required fees plus room and board, minus grant aid students receive from the federal or state government or the institution.

Net Price as a Percentage of Income, Public Four-Year Category 1 Institutions, 2013

Annual Income	Average in This Income Level	Percentage of Families in This Income Level	Net Price	Percentage of Income Needed
\$0 - \$30,000	\$17,162	26%	\$6,716	39%
\$30,000 - \$48,000	\$39,111	18%	\$8,731	22%
\$48,000 - \$75,000	\$60,868	22%	\$12,582	21%
\$75,000 - \$110,000	\$90,987	17%	\$17,855	20%
\$110,000 and above	\$187,498	17%	\$19,993	11%

At public four-year Category 1 institutions in North Carolina, families making less than \$30,000 would need 39 percent of their income to cover educational expenses for a student. For families making between \$30,000 and \$48,000 per year, 22 percent of income would be needed.

Net Price as a Percentage of Income, Public Four-Year Category 2 Institutions, 2013

Annual Income	Average for This Income Level	Percentage of Families in This Income Level	Net Price	Percentage of Income Needed
\$0 - \$30,000	\$17,162	26%	\$8,653	50%
\$30,000 - \$48,000	\$39,111	18%	\$10,080	26%
\$48,000 - \$75,000	\$60,868	22%	\$13,700	23%
\$75,000 - \$110,000	\$90,987	17%	\$17,139	19%
\$110,000 and above	\$187,498	17%	\$17,854	10%

At public four-year Category 2 institutions in North Carolina, 50 percent of income would be needed to cover educational expenses for a student in a family making less than \$30,000. For families making between \$30,000 and \$48,000, 26 percent of income would be needed.

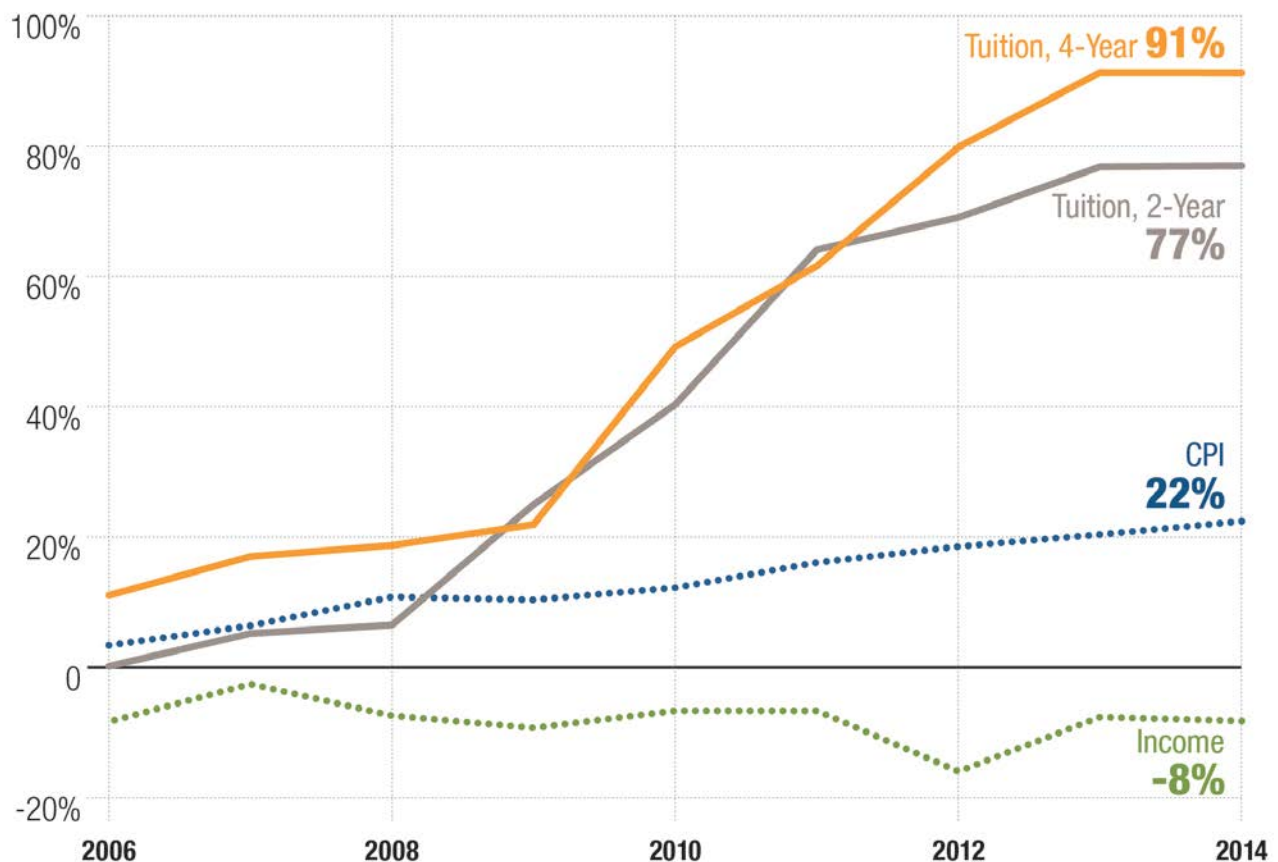
Net Price as a Percentage of Income, Public Two-Year institutions, 2013

Annual Income	Average in This Income Level	Percentage of Families in This Income Level	Net Price	Percentage Income Needed
\$0 - \$30,000	\$17,162	26%	\$7,449	43%
\$30,000 - \$48,000	\$39,111	18%	\$7,819	20%
\$48,000 - \$75,000	\$60,868	22%	\$8,741	14%
\$75,000 - \$110,000	\$90,987	17%	\$10,290	11%
\$110,000 and above	\$187,498	17%	\$12,548	7%

At public two-year institutions in North Carolina, 43 percent of income would be needed to cover educational expenses for a student in a family making less than \$30,000. For families making between \$30,000 and \$48,000, 20 percent of income would be needed.

North Carolina: Changes in Tuition and Family Income, 2005-2014

Since 2005, tuition at both public four-year and public two-year institutions in North Carolina has been growing much more rapidly than either inflation or family income.



Notes and sources: Consumer Price Index: Bureau of Labor Statistics, South urban area. Tuition and fees: National Center for Education Statistics *Digest of Education Statistics*; Median family income: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements, South region, Table F-6.

Other Contextual Information

- By 2020, the Georgetown Center for the Workforce predicts that 67 percent of jobs in North Carolina will require a postsecondary education or above, higher than the average in the South (59 percent) and just above the U.S. average (65 percent).
- Fifteen percent of students in North Carolina are enrolled in public four-year Category 1 institutions, 25 percent are enrolled in Category 2 four-year institutions and 60 percent are enrolled in community colleges.
- In 2014, 24 percent of children in North Carolina were living in poverty. This is up from 2004 when 20 percent were living in poverty.

North Carolina Institutions by Type

Category 1 Public Four-Year Institutions

North Carolina State University
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Category 2 Public Four-Year Institutions

Appalachian State University
East Carolina University
Elizabeth City State University
Fayetteville State University
North Carolina A&T State University
North Carolina Central University
University of North Carolina at Asheville
University of North Carolina at Charlotte
University of North Carolina at Pembroke
University of North Carolina at Wilmington
Western Carolina University
Winston-Salem State University

Community Colleges

Alamance Community College
Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College
Beaufort County Community College
Bladen Community College
Blue Ridge Community College
Brunswick Community College
Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute
Cape Fear Community College
Carteret Community College
Catawba Valley Community College
Central Carolina Community College
Central Piedmont Community College
Cleveland Community College

Coastal Carolina Community College
College of the Albemarle
Craven Community College
Davidson County Community College
Durham Technical Community College
Edgecombe Community College
Fayetteville Technical Community College
Forsyth Technical Community College
Gaston College
Guilford Technical Community College
Halifax Community College
Haywood Community College
Isothermal Community College
James Sprunt Community College
Johnston Community College
Lenoir Community College
Martin Community College
Mayland Community College
McDowell Technical Community College
Mitchell Community College
Montgomery Community College
Nash Community College
Pamlico Community College
Piedmont Community College
Pitt Community College
Randolph Community College
Richmond Community College
Roanoke-Chowan Community College
Robeson Community College
Rockingham Community College
Rowan-Cabarrus Community College
Sampson Community College
Sandhills Community College
South Piedmont Community College
Southeastern Community College

Southwestern Community College
Stanly Community College
Surry Community College
Tri-County Community College
Vance-Granville Community College

Wake Technical Community College
Wayne Community College
Western Piedmont Community College
Wilkes Community College
Wilson Technical Community College

*Category 1 four-year institutions award at least 30 doctoral degrees in five different areas.
Category 2 includes all other four-year institutions.*