

North Carolina

College Affordability Profile

College affordability continues to be a concern for students and their families in North Carolina, particularly those in lower income groups. This, along with declining birth rates and other factors, makes maintaining enrollment challenging for postsecondary institutions. Decreasing or stagnant enrollment will, in turn, make reaching state education attainment goals and improving students' employment outcomes more difficult. This 2019 college affordability profile provides updated data on how affordable different types of public institutions are for North Carolina families at various income levels.

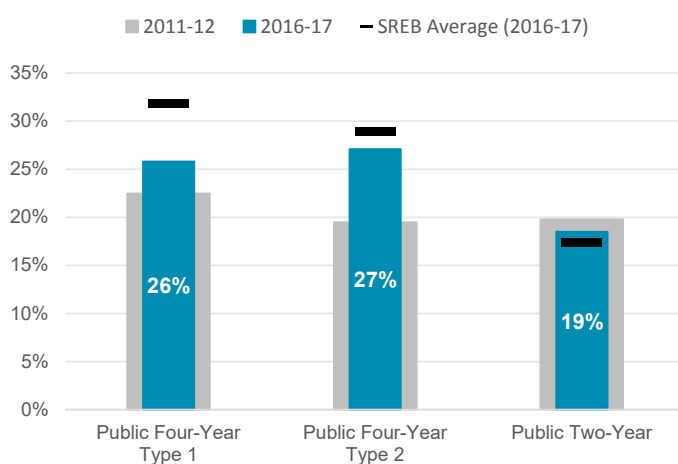
Percentage of Average Family Income Required to Attend College Full Time

In 2016-17, the percentage of family income required to pay for college in North Carolina was **lower than SREB average** for **four-year Type 1 and Type 2 institutions**.

Families in North Carolina paid a higher percentage of their family income in 2016-17 for a full-time student to attend four-year institutions than in 2011-12.

Families in North Carolina needed, on average, 26% of their income in 2016-17 to pay for educational expenses for a full-time student at four-year Type 1 institutions and 27% at four-year Type 2 institutions.

In 2016-17, families in North Carolina needed to pay, on average, 19% of their income to cover educational expenses at two-year institutions.

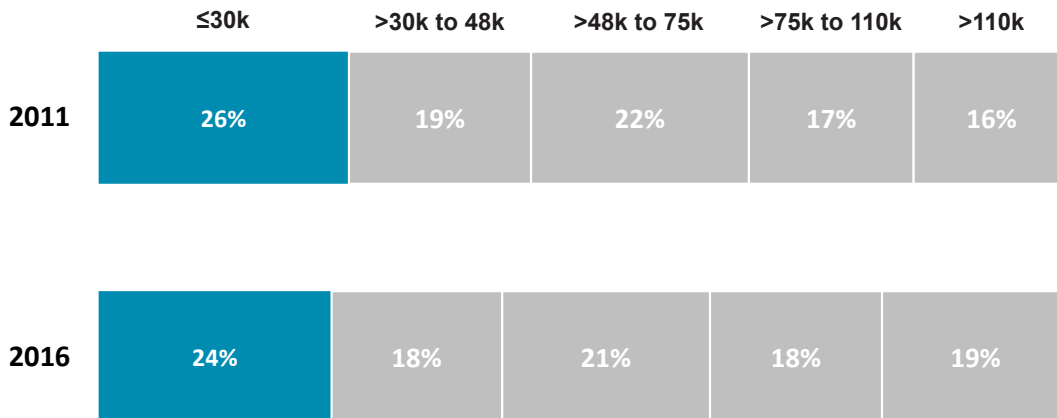


U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Student Financial Aid Files and Directory Files 2011 and 2016, 12-Month Enrollment Instructional Activity Files 2012 and 2017. American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Samples 2011 and 2016. Institutional types based on SREB-State Data Exchange categories.

SREB College Affordability Profiles detail data and trends specific to each SREB state to assist policy-makers with decisions on postsecondary affordability and attainment. For additional resources, including recommendations of the Commission on College Affordability in the South and the SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, visit <https://www.sreb.org/AffordabilityProfiles>.

Distribution of Average Family Income

Data on cost of attendance are collected using five income categories. In North Carolina, students from families that **made less than \$30,000** accounted for **the largest percentage of families in 2011 and 2016**.



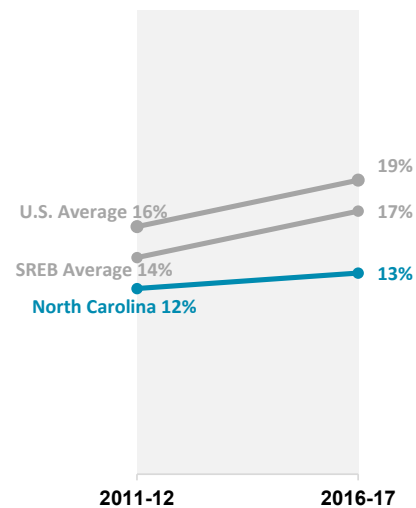
Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Student Financial Aid Files and Directory Files 2011 and 2016.

Percentage of Income Required for Tuition at Lowest-Priced Colleges for Families Making Less Than \$30,000

The percentage of income required for tuition and fees at the lowest-priced public institutions **remained stable from 2011-12 to 2016-17** for North Carolina families making less than \$30,000.

For families making less than \$30,000, the cost of tuition and fees at the lowest-priced public institutions averaged 13% of income in 2016-17, compared to 12% in 2011-12.

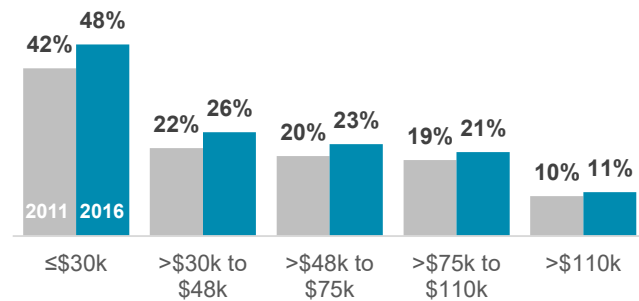
The percentage of income for North Carolina families making less than \$30,000 was lower than the SREB and national averages in 2011-12 and 2016-17.



U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Student Charges Data Files and Directory Files 2010 and 2015, 12-Month Enrollment Instructional Activity Data Files 2012 and 2017. American Community Survey Public Use Micro Sample Files 2011 and 2016.

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

North Carolina families in the **lowest income category** were the **most affected** by the increase in net price **at four-year Type 1 institutions**.



U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Student Financial Aid Files and Directory Files 2011 and 2016, 12-Month Enrollment Instructional Activity Files 2012 and 2017. American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Samples, 2011 and 2016. Institutional types based on SREB-State Data Exchange categories.

The increase in the percentage of income needed to pay for four-year Type 1 institutions in North Carolina was larger for families making less than \$30,000 than for any other income category.

Families making less than \$30,000 in 2011 needed 42% of their income to pay for educational expenses. In 2016 it was 48%.

Families making over \$110,000 only needed 10% of their income in 2011 and 11% in 2016 to cover expenses at these institutions.

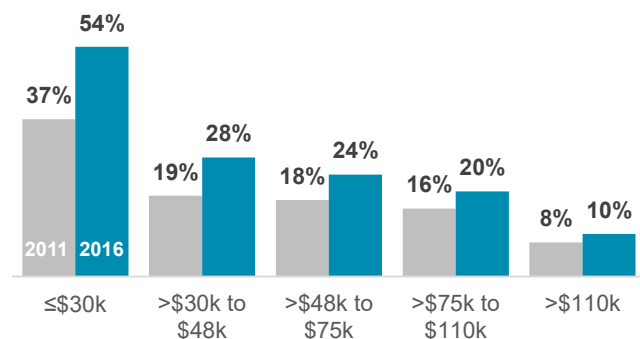
Net Price as a Percentage of Income, Public Four-Year Type 2 Institutions

North Carolina **families making less than \$30,000** were the **most affected** by the rising **cost of attendance at four-year Type 2 institutions**.

The increase in the percentage of income needed to pay for four-year Type 2 institutions in North Carolina was larger for families making less than \$30,000 than for any other income category.

Families making less than \$30,000 in 2011 needed 37% of their income to pay for educational expenses. In 2016 it was 54%.

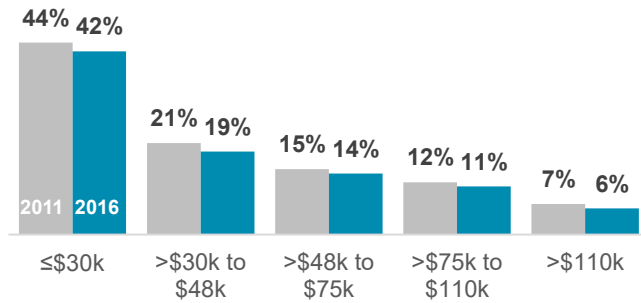
Families making over \$110,000 only needed 8% of their income in 2011 and 10% in 2016 to cover expenses at these institutions.



U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Student Financial Aid Files and Directory Files 2011 and 2016, 12-Month Enrollment Instructional Activity Files 2012 and 2017. American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Samples, 2011 and 2016. Institutional types based on SREB-State Data Exchange categories.

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

The **percentage of income** that North Carolina families needed to pay for educational expenses at two-year institutions **decreased slightly** from 2011 to 2016.



U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Student Financial Aid Files and Directory Files 2011 and 2016, 12-Month Enrollment Instructional Activity Files 2012 and 2017. American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Samples, 2011 and 2016. Institutional types based on SREB-State Data Exchange categories.

The decrease in the percentage of income needed to pay for two-year institutions in North Carolina was larger for families in the lowest two income categories.

At North Carolina's public two-year institutions, families making less than \$30,000 in 2011 needed 44% of their income to pay for educational expenses. In 2016 it was 42%.

Families making over \$110,000 only needed 7% of their income in 2011 and 6% in 2016 to cover expenses at these institutions.

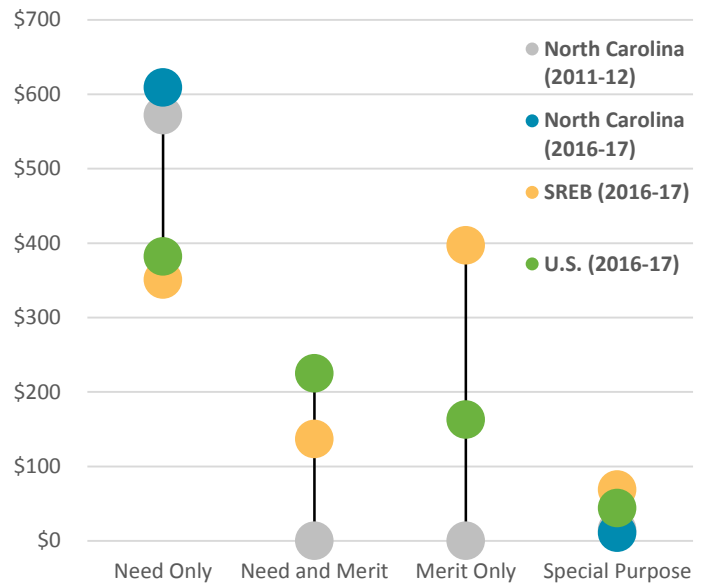
State Financial Aid Per Student

North Carolina awarded **more need-based aid in 2016-17** per full-time-equivalent (FTE) student than the SREB and national averages. **Need-based aid also increased** from 2011-12 to 2016-17.

	Need Only	Need and Merit	Merit Only	Special Purpose
North Carolina (2011-12)	\$572	\$0	\$0	\$15
North Carolina (2016-17)	\$609	NA	NA	\$11
SREB Average (2016-17)	\$351	\$137	\$397	\$69
U.S. Average (2016-17)	\$382	\$225	\$163	\$44

The state spent \$572, on average per undergraduate FTE student on need-based aid in 2011-12 compared to \$609 in 2016-17. The SREB average in 2016-17 was \$351 and the national average was \$382.

North Carolina spent \$11, on average, per FTE for special purpose financial aid in 2016-17, less than the SREB average for special purpose aid of \$69 and the national average of \$44.



National Association of State Student Grant & Aid Programs 2012 and 2017 annual survey (results for public institutions only). U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System Instructional Activity File, 2012 and 2017, and Directory File, 2011 and 2016.

Student Borrowing at Public Institutions

In 2016-17, North Carolina graduates **borrowed more than the SREB and national averages** to earn degrees **at public four-year institutions**.

	North Carolina 2011-12	North Carolina 2016-17	SREB Average 2016-17	US Average 2016-17
Four-Year Type 1	\$18,289	\$21,466	\$21,546	\$21,139
Four-Year Type 2	\$18,859	\$23,177	\$22,198	\$19,115
Two-Year	\$8,290	\$9,985	\$9,693	\$9,356

U.S. Department of Education, College Scorecard, 2011 and 2016. U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 12-Month Enrollment Instructional Activity Data Files 2012 and 2017 and Directory Files 2011 and 2016.

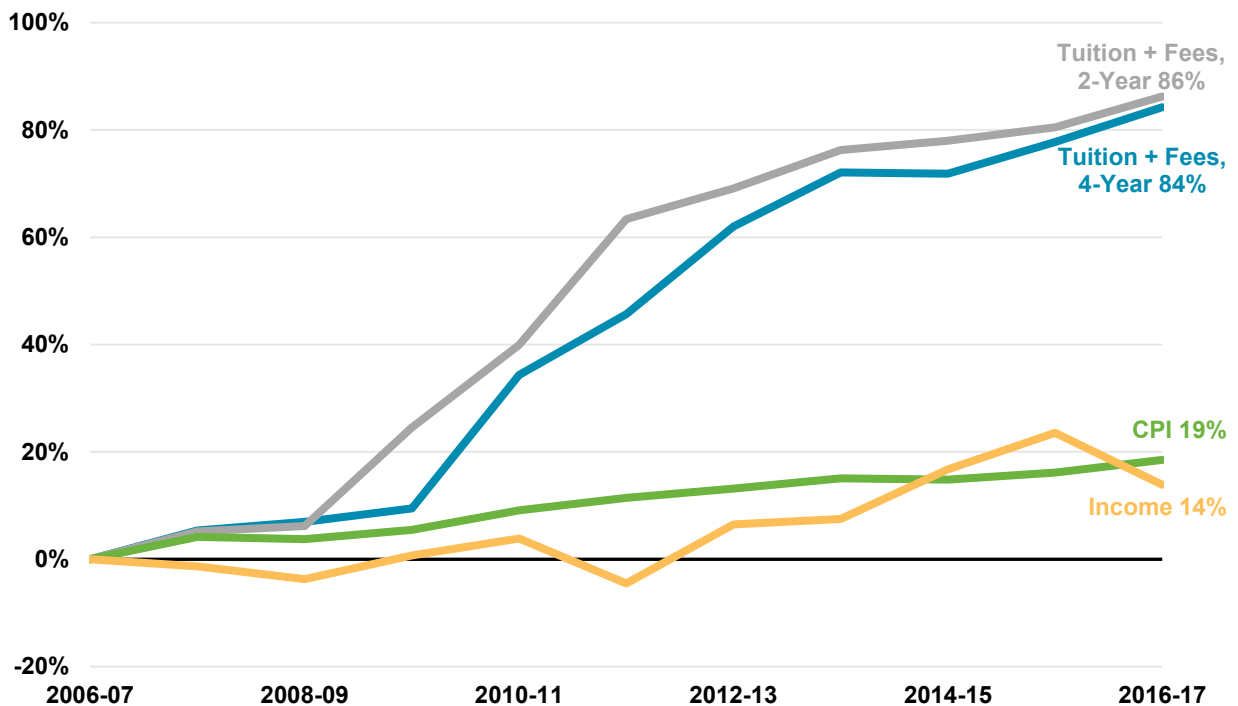
Graduates who sought a degree or certificate from four-year Type 1 universities in North Carolina in 2016-17 borrowed, on average, \$21,466 and graduates of four-year Type 2 institutions borrowed \$23,177. These amounts were higher than average amounts borrowed in 2011-12 and the national average in 2016-17.

Students at two-year colleges borrowed, on average, \$9,985 in 2016-17, more than the average amount in 2011-12 and more than the SREB and national averages in 2016-17.

Changes in Tuition and Fees, CPI, and Household Income

Compared to the Consumer Price Index and household income, **tuition and fees** at North Carolina public colleges and universities **increased substantially** between 2006-07 and 2016-17.

Over that decade, the CPI increased by 19% and median household income in North Carolina increased by 14%, while tuition and fees increased by 84% at four-year institutions and 86% at two-year institutions.

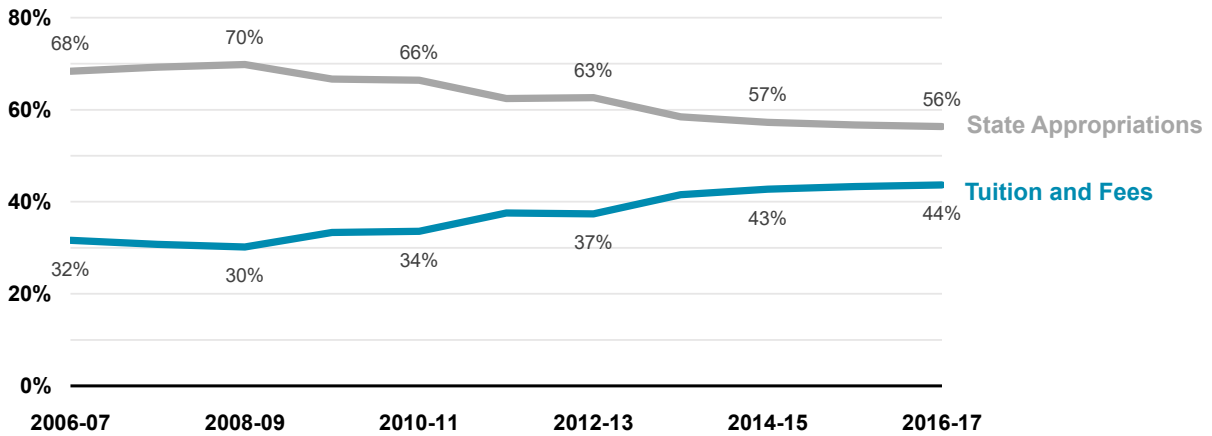


Sources: Consumer Price Index retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis: Bureau of Labor Statistics, South urban area, 2017. Tuition and fees retrieved from the U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Institutional Characteristics Files, 2006 to 2016. Median household income in current dollars retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements, South region, 2019.

State Appropriations vs. Tuition and Fees: Share of Funding

Operational funds consisted **mostly of state appropriations** for North Carolina's **public four-year institutions** in 2016-17.

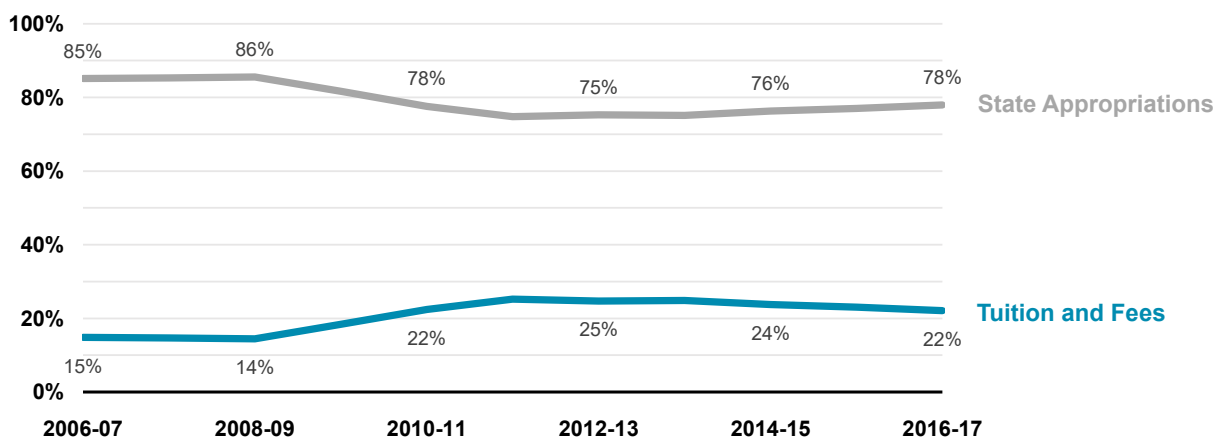
In 2016-17, state appropriations at North Carolina's four-year institutions made up 56% of total funds available for operations of the state's public institutions, while state appropriations supplied the remaining 44%. In comparison, state appropriations provided 68% in 2006-07.



Source: SREB-State Data Exchange

Operational funds consisted **mostly of state appropriations** for North Carolina's **public two-year institutions** in 2016-17.

In 2016-17, state appropriations at North Carolina's four-year institutions made up 78% of total funds available for operations of the state's public institutions, while net tuition and fees supplied the remaining 22%. In comparison, state appropriations provided 85% in 2006-07.



Source: SREB-State Data Exchange

Additional State Context

Postsecondary Enrollment. In 2016-17, 30% of students in North Carolina were enrolled in public four-year Type 1 institutions, 22% were enrolled at public four-year Type 2 institutions, and 48% were enrolled in public two-year colleges.

First-Year Retention. For the 2016 cohort, 90% of students attending public four-year Type 1 institutions in North Carolina were still enrolled one year later, 84% were retained after the first year in public four-year Type 2 institutions, and 66% were retained at public two-year colleges.

Pell Grants. In 2016-17, 19% of the average cost of attendance in public four-year Type 1 institutions in North Carolina was covered by the average Pell Grant award. The average grant amount covered 21% of costs in public four-year Type 2 institutions and 27% of costs in public two-year colleges.

Education Attainment. In 2017, 49% of North Carolina's working adult population between ages 25 and 64 had a postsecondary credential of value. North Carolina does not currently have an educational attainment goal.

Student Debt. In North Carolina, 56% of the class of 2018 graduated with debt, owing an average of \$26,683.

Sources: Enrollment: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems, 2016. Retention: SREB-State Data Exchange. Pell: U.S. Department of Education: 2016-2017 Award Year Grant Volume by School (2018) and SREB analysis of National Center for Education Statistics student financial aid survey, 2016-17. Educational attainment: State Higher Education Master Plans and Lumina Foundation, "A Stronger Nation," 2019. Student debt: The Institute for College Access & Success, "Student Debt and the Class of 2018" (2019).

North Carolina Institutions by Type

Public Four-Year Type 1

East Carolina University
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
University of North Carolina at Charlotte
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
North Carolina State University at Raleigh

Public Four-Year Type 2

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

Public Two-Year

South Piedmont Community College
Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College
Beaufort County Community College
Bladen Community College
Blue Ridge Community College
Brunswick Community College
Caldwell Community College and 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
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
Southeastern Community College
Southwestern Community College
Stanly Community College
Surry Community College
Alamance 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 Community College

Notes

Type 1 four-year institutions award at least 30 doctoral degrees in five different areas. **Type 2** includes all other four-year institutions. The **public two-year category** includes institutions that primarily award associate degrees; the list may include two-year institutions that award bachelor's degrees. The **technical college category** includes postsecondary institutions that offer programs of less than two years duration below the baccalaureate level and occupational and vocational schools with programs that do not exceed 1800 contact hours. This profile does not report data for the technical college category if less than 3% of students are enrolled in this sector.

Institutions are listed as they were categorized in the 2016-17 Data Exchange Survey and if they submitted the data required for this profile.

This profile is based on data reported to IPEDS by institutions during the 2016-17 academic year. Some IPEDS surveys collect data for the prior academic year; for instance, the 2016-17 Student Financial Aid survey collected data for 2015-16.

Institutions or states may have updated data previously reported, or adjusted methodology to calculate a statistic. As a result, some data in the current profile may differ from data reported in past Affordability Profiles for the same time period.

See the technical guide at SREB.org/Affordability for detailed sources and explanatory notes.