

## National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

Organization within the U.S. Department of Education that is focused on collecting and analyzing education data

[www.nces.ed.gov](http://www.nces.ed.gov)

### Fast Facts

Compilation of statistical answers to education FAQs

[nces.ed.gov/fastfacts](http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts)

### Digest of Education Statistics

Annual compilation of national education statistics covering prekindergarten to graduate school

[nces.ed.gov/programs/digest](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest)

### Condition of Education

Integrated collection of indicators about trends in enrollment, student progress, student achievement and other outcomes, and student and institution characteristics

[nces.ed.gov/programs/coe](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe)

### Surveys and Studies

#### Baccalaureate and Beyond (B&B)

Longitudinal tracking of college seniors

[nces.ed.gov/surveys/b&b](http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/b&b)

#### Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS)

Longitudinal tracking of college freshmen

[nces.ed.gov/surveys/bps](http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/bps)

#### Career/Technical Education Statistics (CTES)

Collection of statistics relating to career and technical education

[nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes](http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes)

#### High School and Beyond (HS&B)

Longitudinal tracking of high school seniors and sophomores

[nces.ed.gov/surveys/hsb](http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/hsb)

#### Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)

Annual data collection from postsecondary institutions

[nces.ed.gov/ipeds](http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds) and [nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter](http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter)

#### National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS)

Quadrennial study of how undergraduate, graduate and professional students paid for postsecondary education

[nces.ed.gov/surveys/npsas](http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/npsas)

#### Projections of Education Statistics

[nces.ed.gov/programs/projections](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/projections)

#### State Education Data Profiles

[nces.ed.gov/programs/stateprofiles](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/stateprofiles)

## NCES Data Tools

### Data Analysis System (DAS)

Tool for generating custom analyses of education statistics

[nces.ed.gov/das](http://nces.ed.gov/das)

### PowerStats and QuickStats

Simplified visual interfaces for analyzing education statistics

[nces.ed.gov/datalab](http://nces.ed.gov/datalab)

### Quick Tables & Figures

Tool for finding NCES tables, figures and charts

[nces.ed.gov/quicktables](http://nces.ed.gov/quicktables)

### College Navigator

College search tool based on IPEDS data

[nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator](http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator)

### Tips on Using the NCES Data Analysis System

Advice on avoiding common problems in crafting the right data queries and correctly interpreting the results

[www.finaid.org/educators/ncesdastips.phtml](http://www.finaid.org/educators/ncesdastips.phtml)

## FinAid.org

### Student Financial Aid Policy Analysis

Compilation of student aid policy papers by Mark Kantrowitz

[www.finaid.org/studentaidpolicy](http://www.finaid.org/studentaidpolicy)

### Cohort Default Rates (CDR)

Compilation of resources about student loan default rates

[www.finaid.org/cdr](http://www.finaid.org/cdr)

### FAFSA Application Statistics

Analysis of U.S. Department of Education statistics about the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

[www.finaid.org/fafsastats](http://www.finaid.org/fafsastats)

### GAO Student Aid Policy Papers

U.S. Government Accountability Office student aid analysis

[www.finaid.org/gao](http://www.finaid.org/gao)

### Student Financial Aid Calculators

[www.finaid.org/calculators](http://www.finaid.org/calculators)

### Student Loan Debt Clock

[www.finaid.org/studentdebtclock](http://www.finaid.org/studentdebtclock)

## U.S. Department of Education

### Federal Student Aid Data Center (FSA Data Center)

Links to federal student aid statistics, including FAFSA application statistics, cohort default rates, loan volume  
[www.fsadatacenter.ed.gov](http://www.fsadatacenter.ed.gov)

### Annual Plans and Reports

[www2.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/index.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/index.html)

### Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE)

[www2.ed.gov/finaid/prof/resources/data/ope.html](http://www2.ed.gov/finaid/prof/resources/data/ope.html)

## U.S. Census Bureau

### Educational Attainment

[www.census.gov/hhes/socdemo/education](http://www.census.gov/hhes/socdemo/education)

### Enrollment

[www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/school.html](http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/school.html)

### Postsecondary Students, Costs and Financial Aid

[www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/sch\\_cost.html](http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/sch_cost.html)

### Statistical Abstract of the United States

[www.census.gov/compendia/statab](http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab)

## Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

### Earnings by Education

[www.bls.gov/cps/earnings.htm#education](http://www.bls.gov/cps/earnings.htm#education)

### Employment and Unemployment by Educational Attainment

[www.bls.gov/cps/demographics.htm#education](http://www.bls.gov/cps/demographics.htm#education)

### School Enrollment

[www.bls.gov/cps/demographics.htm#enroll](http://www.bls.gov/cps/demographics.htm#enroll)

## Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

### President's Budget

Key data in education appendix and supplemental materials  
[www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget)  
[www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/index.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/index.html)

## U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)

### Electronic Data-Gathering, Analysis and Retrieval (EDGAR)

Securitization prospectuses and quarterly/annual reports for student loans and education lenders  
[www.sec.gov/edgar.shtml](http://www.sec.gov/edgar.shtml)

## Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

### IRS Tax Statistics

[www.irs.gov/taxstats/index.html](http://www.irs.gov/taxstats/index.html)

## Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance

ACSFA was established by Congress to advise it on student aid policy. Periodically publishes statistical and policy analyses.  
[www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/acsfa/edlite-index.html](http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/acsfa/edlite-index.html)

## American Council on Education (ACE)

The American Council on Education (ACE) represents the chief executives of all U.S. accredited, degree-granting institutions

### Center for Policy Analysis

[www.acenet.edu/AM/Template.cfm?Section=CPA](http://www.acenet.edu/AM/Template.cfm?Section=CPA)

### Online Information Center

[www.acenet.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/OnlineResources/InfoCenter](http://www.acenet.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/OnlineResources/InfoCenter)

## American Institutes for Research (AIR)

[www.air.org/focus-area/education](http://www.air.org/focus-area/education)

## Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE)

[www.ashe.ws](http://www.ashe.ws)

## Business-Higher Education Forum (BHEF)

Coalition of business, higher education and foundation leaders that proposes solutions to the nation's education challenges  
[www.bhef.com](http://www.bhef.com) and [www.StrategicEdSolutions.org](http://www.StrategicEdSolutions.org)

## Center for Higher Education Policy Analysis (CHEPA)

Goals focused on improving postsecondary education (including outreach, access, retention and student aid)  
[www.usc.edu/dept/chepa](http://www.usc.edu/dept/chepa)

## Center for the Study of Higher Education (CSHE)

Postsecondary education policy research center at Pennsylvania State University  
[www.ed.psu.edu/educ/cshe](http://www.ed.psu.edu/educ/cshe)

## Chronicle of Higher Education

### Almanac Issue (Published Last Friday in August)

Annual compilation of education statistics  
[www.chronicle.com](http://www.chronicle.com) – Click on “Facts & Figures”

## College Board

### Trends in Student Aid

[trends.collegeboard.org/student\\_aid](http://trends.collegeboard.org/student_aid)

### Trends in College Pricing

[trends.collegeboard.org/college\\_pricing](http://trends.collegeboard.org/college_pricing)

### Education Pays

[trends.collegeboard.org/education\\_pays](http://trends.collegeboard.org/education_pays)

### Advocacy & Policy Center

[advocacy.collegeboard.org](http://advocacy.collegeboard.org)

## College Savings Plan Network (CSPN)

### 529 Plan Data

[www.collegesavings.org/529PlanData.aspx](http://www.collegesavings.org/529PlanData.aspx)

## Committee for Education Funding

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

## Education Policy Institute (EPI)

Independent research and public policy organization with a special emphasis on student access and persistence  
[www.educationalpolicy.org](http://www.educationalpolicy.org)  
[www.studentretention.org](http://www.studentretention.org) (Student Retention Microsite)  
[www.educationalpolicy.org/epss](http://www.educationalpolicy.org/epss) (Student Success Microsite)

## Education Sector

Independent think tank focused on education policy, using data and analysis to improve student opportunities and outcomes  
[www.educationsector.org/issues/higher-education](http://www.educationsector.org/issues/higher-education)

## Education Trust

Organization focused on improving education access, achievement and attainment and on closing gaps for low-income and minority students  
[www.edtrust.org](http://www.edtrust.org)  
[www.collegeresults.org](http://www.collegeresults.org) (College graduation rates)

## Grapevine

Compilation of data about state support of higher education  
[www.grapevine.ilstu.edu](http://www.grapevine.ilstu.edu)

## Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP)

Non-profit public policy and research institute focused on access and success in postsecondary education  
[www.ihep.org](http://www.ihep.org)

## Lumina Foundation for Education

Independent foundation focused on expanding access and success in postsecondary education  
[www.luminafoundation.org](http://www.luminafoundation.org)

## National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs (NASSGAP)

**Annual Survey Reports**  
Annual surveys of state grant and scholarship programs from 1969-70 to the present  
[www.nassgap.org/viewrepository.aspx?categoryID=3](http://www.nassgap.org/viewrepository.aspx?categoryID=3)

## National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA)

National professional membership organization for college student financial aid personnel

## Journal of Student Financial Aid

Peer-reviewed publication of original research and policy analysis concerning postsecondary student financial aid  
[www.nasfaa.org](http://www.nasfaa.org) Special Init → Journal of Student Financial Aid

## Research Projects and Quick Scan Surveys

[www.nasfaa.org/Advocacy/Research/Reports/Research.aspx](http://www.nasfaa.org/Advocacy/Research/Reports/Research.aspx)

## National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS)

**Info. Center for State Higher Ed. Policymaking and Analysis**  
Collection of state-level higher education data and information, with an emphasis on higher education policy analysis  
[www.higheredinfo.org](http://www.higheredinfo.org)

## National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education

Independent policy-research institute regarding opportunity, affordability and achievement in higher education  
[www.highereducation.org](http://www.highereducation.org)

## Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Comparisons of international education statistics  
[www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org) and [stats.oecd.org](http://stats.oecd.org)

## Pathways to College Network

Alliance of organizations working on improving college access and success for underserved students  
[www.pathwaystocollege.net](http://www.pathwaystocollege.net)

## Postsecondary Connection

State data linking high school preparation with college success  
[www.postseconnect.org](http://www.postseconnect.org) (from [achieve.org](http://achieve.org))

## Postsecondary Education OPPORTUNITY

Newsletter and web site containing public policy data and analysis concerning educational opportunity in higher education  
[www.postsecondary.org](http://www.postsecondary.org) (subscription required)

## Public Agenda

### Their Whole Lives Ahead of Them

Some of the reasons why students drop out of college  
[www.publicagenda.org/theirwholivesaheadofthem](http://www.publicagenda.org/theirwholivesaheadofthem)

### Education Category

[www.publicagenda.org/category/tags/-education](http://www.publicagenda.org/category/tags/-education)

## Sallie Mae (SLM)

### How America Pays for College

[www.salliemae.com/howamericapays](http://www.salliemae.com/howamericapays)

### How America Saves for College

[www.salliemae.com/howamericasaves](http://www.salliemae.com/howamericasaves)

### Nellie Mae Credit Card Studies

[www.nelliemae.com/library/research.html](http://www.nelliemae.com/library/research.html)

## State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO)

### State Quick Facts

[www.sheeo.org/sqf/sqf.htm](http://www.sheeo.org/sqf/sqf.htm)

### State Higher Education Finance (SHEF) – Annual Report

[www.sheeo.org/finance/shef-home.htm](http://www.sheeo.org/finance/shef-home.htm)

### State Postsecondary Data Systems

[www.sheeo.org/sspds/default.htm](http://www.sheeo.org/sspds/default.htm)

### SOAR: SHEEO Online Access to Resources

[www.sheeo.org/SOAR2/soar.asp](http://www.sheeo.org/SOAR2/soar.asp)

### Survey of State Tuition, Fees and Financial Assistance Policies for Public Colleges and Universities

[www.sheeo.org/finance/tuitsurv-home.htm](http://www.sheeo.org/finance/tuitsurv-home.htm)

## Student Lending Analytics

*Independent research and advisory firm focused on education lending with frequent blog posts about education loans*

[www.studentlendinganalytics.com/index.html](http://www.studentlendinganalytics.com/index.html)

[www.studentlendinganalytics.typepad.com](http://www.studentlendinganalytics.typepad.com) (blog)

## The Institute for College Access and Success (TICAS)

### Project on Student Debt

*State and campus-level student debt data*

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

### College InSight (formerly EconomicDiversity.org)

*Data about affordability, diversity and student success*

[www.college-insight.org](http://www.college-insight.org)

## UCLA Higher Education Research Institute (HERI)

### Your First College Year Survey

[www.heri.ucla.edu/yfcyoverview.php](http://www.heri.ucla.edu/yfcyoverview.php)

### CIRP Freshman Survey

[www.heri.ucla.edu/cirpoverview.php](http://www.heri.ucla.edu/cirpoverview.php)

### College Senior Survey

[www.heri.ucla.edu/cssoverview.php](http://www.heri.ucla.edu/cssoverview.php)

## USA Funds

### Research and White Papers

[www.usafunds.org/community/Pages/Resources.aspx](http://www.usafunds.org/community/Pages/Resources.aspx)

## Washington Higher Education Board

*Annual survey of tuition rates for public institutions by state*

[www.hecb.wa.gov/research/issues/tuition.asp](http://www.hecb.wa.gov/research/issues/tuition.asp)

## Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

### State Policy Inventory Database Online (SPIDO)

[www.wiche.edu/node/8690](http://www.wiche.edu/node/8690)

### WICHE Policy and Data Resources

[www.wiche.edu/resources/policy/297](http://www.wiche.edu/resources/policy/297)

## Tips for Using the NCES Data Analysis System

The data analysis system (DAS) is an easy-to-use web-based tool for writing and executing data queries. The trick is in crafting the right query and in correctly interpreting the results.

Be careful about hidden assumptions in the variables:

- Some variables restrict the data set to just dependent students. For example, the DEPINC variable measures the income of parents of dependent students, excluding independent students, while CINCOME is a continuous variable that measures both.
- Other variables restrict the data set to just Bachelor's degree students. For example, the COLLGRAD variable measures whether a student was a graduating senior. It assumes that the degree program (UGDEG) is a Bachelor's degree and that the student completed the degree program (PROGSTAT). Using the COLLGRAD variable will omit Associate's degree and Certificate recipients.
- The NPSAS includes two data sets, one for undergraduate students (UG) and one for graduate and professional students (G1P). Often researchers use just the undergraduate data set and are mystified as to why their data does not match national data for all colleges.
- Both the CENTILE and CENTILE>0 directives generate percentile distributions for a variable, but the latter omits zeros from the distribution.
- Institution level (2-year, 4-year) is not the same as degree program (Associate's degree, Bachelor's degree).
- Some data sources, such as the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), are limited to first-time first-year undergraduate students and exclude transfers.

Read the variable descriptions carefully, especially if they reference another variable for further information. For example, the net cost, effort and need variables in the NPSAS exclude negative values and round up small values to \$10. This prevents calculations of student aid in excess of financial need.

Long-time users of the DAS add or subtract half a point (0.5) to numeric thresholds to test for equality (e.g., "< 1000.5" is the equivalent of "≤ 1000"). The modern DAS includes an "=" checkbox that should have the same effect, but there have occasionally been errors in its implementation.

The weighted sample sizes presented in the DAS reports can themselves be treated as data for analysis, not just the estimates in the report. For example, one can use them to calculate the distribution of recipients as opposed to dollars.

Become a power user of the DAS to save copies of your table parameter files (TPF), making it easier to reproduce results.