

Understanding the Costs Of College

Lesson Type: Group
Time Length: 35 minutes
Grade Levels: 11th-12th

Purpose + Outcome: Students learn about the real cost of attending college by comparing costs for a community college, California State University, University of California institution, and an independent college. Students will have a more realistic idea of how much it will cost them to attend each of the three institutions.

As a teacher or counselor, this lesson will help you answer the following questions:

- How can I help students understand how much college costs?
- How can I help students understand the different components of college costs?

Materials

- Student Handout [Print in advance](#)

Technology Recommendations

- Instructor Computer with Projector
- Each student needs a computer.

What are *Discussion Opportunity* questions?

Discussion Opportunity questions are large or small group process questions meant to enhance student learning. They are not necessary to teach an effective lesson, but highly recommended if time permits.

A note about creating accounts on www.californiacolleges.edu

It is recommended that both teachers and students create an account on the website. This allows students to save all survey and assessment results, save items to a Portfolio and use the online journaling functions. This lesson assumes students have accounts. If students do not have accounts, they can still participate in the activity, but will not be able to save their work on the site.

Activity (35 minutes)

This activity takes approximately 30-35 minutes from start to finish once students are at their computers. Give each student a handout before beginning.

Approximate Time Breakdown

Steps 1-2: 5 minutes

Step 3: 10 minutes

Step 4: 15 minutes

Reflection: 5 minutes

Welcome and Context

In today's activity, students will compare the costs of attending the four different types of institutions: community college, UC, CSU, and independent colleges.

Step 1: Go to www.californiacolleges.edu and login.

Step 2: After students have logged in and changed their passwords, workshop leaders are encouraged to take five minutes to go to each student computer to ensure students are logged in properly. Break the class up into small groups and ask them to discuss the following question(s) while you go to every computer. Post the question(s) on the board:

- How much does it cost to attend college for one year?
- What are you paying for when you pay for college?

Step 3: "Before we get started, can someone tell me a UC school? A CSU? Ok, what an independent college is? Clarify that independent colleges are also known as private colleges. What are some examples of private colleges in California?"

Write their responses on the board. Then, write down a couple of the colleges listed below if they were not already shared. Briefly just share where the colleges are and encourage them to research the schools in the next step or on their own time.

"Ok, now let's see how much it costs to go to college. Get started by clicking on **College Planning** → **Explore Postsecondary Schools** → California Independent Colleges → you will be taken to a list of independent institutions → select one institution from the list below you are interested in by clicking on the name of the college → click on **Save to Portfolio**."

If students are not familiar with any of these independent colleges, encourage them to take a few minutes to read about each college when you click on the link.

- Claremont McKenna College (CMC): Claremont
- Loyola Marymount University (LMU): Los Angeles
- Pepperdine University: Malibu
- Pitzer College: Claremont
- Santa Clara University: Santa Clara (northern California)
- University of Redlands: Redlands

Step 4: “Now we are going to conduct a price comparison using the attached worksheet.”

*NOTE: This is not the end of the lesson. The student handout includes the Price Comparison Worksheet for the rest of the lesson.

Reflection (5 mins)

Post the following question on the screen or board: How does the Price Comparison Worksheet impact how you think about your college options?

If students have accounts on www.californiacolleges.edu, direct them to use the online journaling tool below. If not, students can type their response in Word, or handwrite.

- Make sure you’re signed in to www.californiacolleges.edu.
- Click on “Your Portfolio” box on the right side of the screen.
- Click on “Your Journal.”
- Click “Add journal entry.”
- Write journal entry by responding to the questions on the screen.
- Click “Save.”

Adaptations

- Time permitting students can select a UC and CSU they are really interested in attending. To do that after selecting the independent college, direct students to Click the “back” arrow twice → University of California → you will be taken to a list of UC institutions → select one institution you are interested in by clicking on the name of the college → click on **Save to Portfolio**.
- Repeat the previous step to save a CSU.
 - If time does not allow this step, encourage students to save a specific UC and CSU they are interested in on their own time.



CALIFORNIA COLLEGE
GUIDANCE INITIATIVE

Student Handout Financial Aid

Understanding the Costs Of College

Student Name: _____

Step 1: Go to www.californiacolleges.edu and login.

Step 2: Consider these questions: How much does it cost to attend college for one year? What are you paying for when you pay for college?

Step 3: Get started by clicking on **College Planning** → **Explore Postsecondary Schools** → California Independent Colleges → you will be taken to a list of independent institutions → select one institution from the list below you are interested in by clicking on the name of the college → click on **Save to Portfolio**.

Claremont McKenna College (CMC)
Loyola Marymount University (LMU)

Pepperdine University
Pitzer College

Santa Clara University
University of Redlands

Step 4: Now we are going to conduct a price comparison using the attached worksheet.

Reflection

Your teacher will give you instructions to respond to the prompt.

- How does the Price Comparison Worksheet impact how you think about your college options?

Price Comparison Worksheet

Step 1: This worksheet will help you compare the cost of attending the private college you saved to your Portfolio to a CSU and a UC. Below is an example that illustrates the cost to attend Cal Poly Pomona. Review the items under **Expenses**.

Cal Poly Pomona > Costs & Financial Aid

Cal Poly Pomona
3801 West Temple Avenue
Pomona, CA 91768-2557
Official telephone: (909) 869-7659
Fax number: (909) 869-2292
Website: www.csupomona.edu
Screen last updated on: September 1, 2010

The financial aid information below is valid for the **2010** academic year.

FINANCIAL AID OFFICE
Financial aid officer: Diana Minor, Director of Financial Aid
Contacting the office: 909 869-3700, 909 869-4757 (fax), finaid@csupomona.edu
FAFSA number: 001144

EXPENSES

Undergraduate tuition:	\$4,884; \$16,044 out-of-state
Comprehensive tuition/room/board fees:	\$20,914
Tuition notes:	comprehensive tuition/room/board fees
Additional required fees:	\$629
Book fees:	\$1,500
Miscellaneous expenses:	\$2,556
Other expenses:	Personal and transportation expenses.
Combined room and board expenses:	\$12,536

APPLYING FOR AID

Required form	Priority date	Rolling?	Closing date
FAFSA	March 2	yes	N/A

Step 2: To begin your comparison, click on **Your Portfolio** → **College Planning Portfolio** → **Postsecondary Plans** → scroll down to **Saved Colleges and Postsecondary Schools** and click on the independent school you saved to your Portfolio. Then, click on **Costs and Financial Aid**.


Scroll down to **Expenses** and record the information in the chart on the next page.

Step 3: Then, click on **Your Portfolio** → **College Planning Portfolio** → **Postsecondary Plans** → scroll down to **Saved Colleges and Postsecondary Schools** and click on the Independent/Private college you saved to your Portfolio. Then, click on **Costs and Financial Aid**.

Scroll down to **Expenses** and record the information in the chart on the next page. Please note that the financial information for each college depends on how often the colleges update the information, and how they present it. If you find that the information is incomplete or is hard to read, raise your hand!

PRICE COMPARISON CHART: ESTIMATE HOW MUCH IT COSTS TO GO TO COLLEGE

Expense	CSU: <u>Cal Poly Pomona</u>	UC Campus: <u>UC Davis</u>	Independent College (write below):	Community College
Undergraduate tuition	\$4,884	\$9,402		\$780
Additional required fees	\$629	\$2,582		\$92
Combined room & board <i>This is the fee for living on campus. If you plan to live at home, eliminate this expense. If a range of fees is posted on the website, select the lowest fee.</i>	\$12,536	\$12,498		Varies (students usually like at home or with family)
Book fees	\$1,500	\$1,601		\$600
Miscellaneous expenses (personal items, health insurance e.g.)	\$2,556	\$3,176		Varies
Other expenses (travel e.g.) <i>Estimate this cost depending on how much you think it will cost you to get to campus.</i>	\$1,000	\$1,000		Varies
TOTAL ESTIMATED EXPENSES	\$23,105	\$28,256		Starting at \$1,472

 Reflection Opportunity: What types of financial aid do you think you can receive to attend college? To learn more, review the handout, **Applying for Financial Aid**.

APPLYING FOR FINANCIAL AID

THE BASICS YOU NEED TO KNOW

WHAT IS FINANCIAL AID?

***** Financial aid refers to scholarships, grants, loans, and work-study assistance to help students pay for college. The federal and state governments, and colleges distribute financial aid.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships and grants are the same type of financial aid. They are gifts. You do not have to pay any of the money back.

LOANS

Loans are financial aid you will have to pay back after you finish school. There are many types of loans. All loans accrue interest, which you are responsible for paying.

WORK-STUDY

Work-study is financial aid you must work for. You will be allotted a specific amount of money that you can earn by obtaining a work-study job on campus. If do not get a work-study job, you will not earn your work-study financial aid amount.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID?

You must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible after January 1 of your senior year of high school. Some, but not all colleges, also require you to complete the CSS/PROFILE. Refer to college financial aid websites for CSS/PROFILE due dates. You may also be required to submit tax return forms. Refer to college financial aid websites for more information.

FAFSA ONLINE
www.fafsa.ed.gov

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I SUBMIT MY FAFSA?

You will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) that confirms the information you submitted. You will receive your SAR within four weeks of submitting your FAFSA. When you submit your FAFSA, you will indicate which colleges your FAFSA should be submitted to. Only those those colleges will receive your FAFSA. The FAFSA helps colleges determine your need for financial aid.

***** You will receive your financial package around the same time you receive an acceptance letter.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
www.californiacolleges.edu

Click on Financial Aid Planning → Financial Aid 101