

Published Tuition and Fees at Public Colleges and Universities in New England, 2019-20

In many ways, the world has changed significantly since the onset of COVID-19 earlier this year. Certain aspects of life as we previously knew it are either temporarily or permanently altered. The higher education industry has certainly not been immune to pandemic-induced change. Indeed, postsecondary institutions have been among the most affected entities during the current global health crisis. From abrupt campus evacuations and rapid shifts to remote learning in spring 2020 to a reshaping of learning modalities, admissions practices, academic calendars, and traditions in fall 2020, higher education looks quite different today than it did at the start of the year.

This report provides an in-depth picture of tuition and required fees published by two- and four-year public postsecondary institutions in New England. The data in this report are from the 2019-20 academic year. They therefore reflect the state of higher education prior to COVID-19. While the implications of many of our findings have always been significant, with pandemic-induced economic uncertainty and shifts to remote or hybrid modalities of learning, perhaps the most significant function of the tuition and fees data presented here is that it offers a reference against which we will later be able to measure the potential impact of COVID-19 on the cost of higher education in the region moving forward.

New England's colleges and universities have already had to become more nimble and efficient as they confront the global pandemic. They will need to remain agile and streamlined in a post-COVID-19 era to adequately respond to the changing needs of a broader array of students, including adult learners, who are more likely to pursue short-term, online methods of gaining industry-validated knowledge and skills rather than attend traditional two- and four-year institutions. According to [Strada Education's COVID-19 Work and Education Survey](#), as of September 16, 2020, 45% of respondents in New Englanders stated that they lost their jobs or income due to the pandemic, and 49% felt that pursuing more education or training would help them get a good job. At the same time, American's educational preferences are shifting. Strada's survey also indicates that 68% of adults in the U.S. who are considering enrolling in education prefer non-degree pathways—a figure that is up 18 percentage points over a year ago. Additionally, 53% of respondents said that they would prefer online education and training programs over in-person choices. With many of New England's two- and four-year institutions adopting remote or hybrid models during the current health crisis, and with many individuals still finding two- and four-year programs appealing, the region's postsecondary institutions remain relevant and valuable—even during a pandemic.

Although many of New England's postsecondary institutions have abandoned originally scheduled tuition increases in response to uncertainty regarding enrollment during the pandemic, tuition and fees in the region nevertheless continue to rise. For people considering postsecondary education—especially during times of economic anxiety and recession—the decision often hinges on cost and the anticipated value of their degrees upon completion. Public colleges and universities are an essential part of each state's economy and remain the most accessible option for incoming students seeking a two- or four-year degree. It is our hope that the data presented here on the region's tuition and fee practices, along with changing public perceptions about higher education, can be used to help shape policymakers' and institutional leaders' decisions for the 2020-21 academic year and beyond.

How Many Students Enroll at Public Institutions in New England?

There were **482,616** undergraduate students enrolled at public two- and four-year postsecondary institutions across New England in fall 2018. This figure represents a decline of **1.64%**, or **6,972 undergraduates**, over the previous year.

Of the total number of undergraduates in the region (at both public and private institutions), just under half (48%) enrolled in four-year private not-for-profit colleges.

Nearly one-third (30%) enrolled in four-year public colleges. Slightly more than one-fifth (22%) enrolled in two-year public colleges.

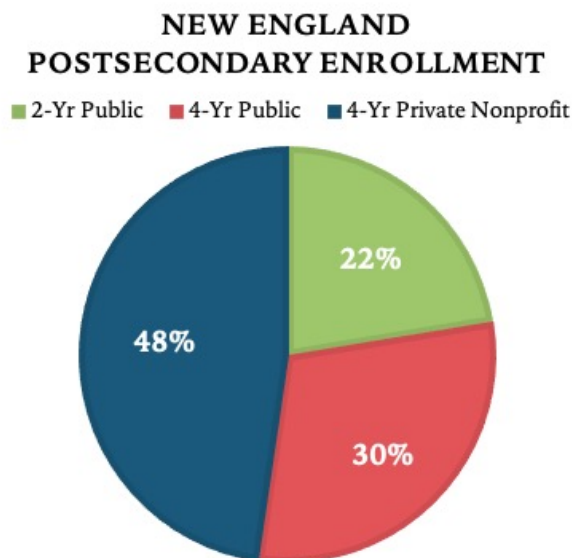


Chart Source: NEBHE analysis of IPEDS data.

Where Do Students Enroll?

The decision of where to enroll is a big one, with cost of attendance being the [primary factor](#) for many students. For most students, enrolling at a public institution in one’s own state is often the most cost-effective option. For others, in-state tuition and fees may be higher than the cost of attending a private institution.

In 2018-19, the academic year with the most recent enrollment data available, Vermont and New Hampshire had the highest proportions of out-of-state student enrollment—70.2% and 68.3%, respectively—compared to a regional average of 51.7%. New Hampshire’s high share of out-of-state students may be at least partially explained by the “SNHU Effect.” Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) is not only one of the nation’s fastest-growing universities in the U.S. due to its rapidly expanding online programs available to students nationwide, but it also uses an open enrollment policy that helps further boost their enrollment.

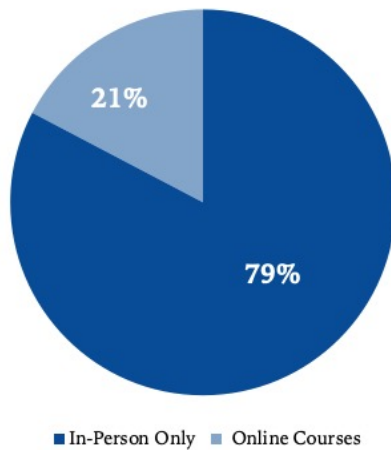
Vermont and New Hampshire also had a lower share of in-state enrollment compared to the regional average. While low in-state enrollment inflates average costs of attendance generally, since out-of-state students typically pay more to attend an institution than in-state residents, other factors may also account for the higher in-state tuition and fees in New Hampshire. State funding for higher education has been declining across the country since the 2008 recession and remains below historic levels amid the uncertainty caused by COVID-19. According to the [2019 State Higher Education Finance](#) (SHEF) report, 0% of New Hampshire’s state education funding is allocated for public higher education—placing the state dead last in the U.S. in terms of public higher education state funding as a percentage of the state’s education appropriations. As a consequence, students at New Hampshire’s public colleges and universities must shoulder the majority of the cost of their education. According to the SHEF report, the student share of total revenue at New Hampshire’s public institutions in 2019 was just shy of 80%—34 percentage points higher than the national average.

Online Education in New England

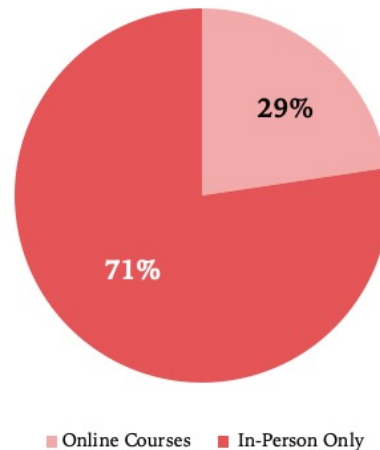
Many of New England’s postsecondary students attend classes online or in a hybrid format. In fall 2018, 102,642 (24.5%) of the 418,990 students at New England’s two- and four-year public schools were [enrolled](#) in distance courses for some or all of their course load.

Four-year public institutions saw slightly fewer students opt for online education programs, with 50,137 (20.9%) of 239,447 enrolling in some or all online courses. At two-year public colleges in the region, 52,505 (29.2%) of 179,543 students were enrolled in some or all distance education courses.

Distanced Education Enrollees at New England's Four-Year Public Institutions



Distanced Education Enrollees at New England's Two-Year Public Institutions



Source: NEBHE analysis of IPEDS data.

What is the Price of Tuition and Fees at Public Institutions Before Financial Aid?

Before financial aid, in-state tuition and fees cost students an average of \$5,498 at public two-year institutions and \$12,881 at public four-year institutions.

Since the 2018-19 academic year, average in-state tuition and fees have decreased by 2% at public two-year institutions and increased by 8% at public four-year institutions. Since 2014-15, average in-state tuition and fees at community colleges and at four-year colleges in New England have increased by 20% and 25%, respectively.

Average In-State Tuition & Required Fees in New England

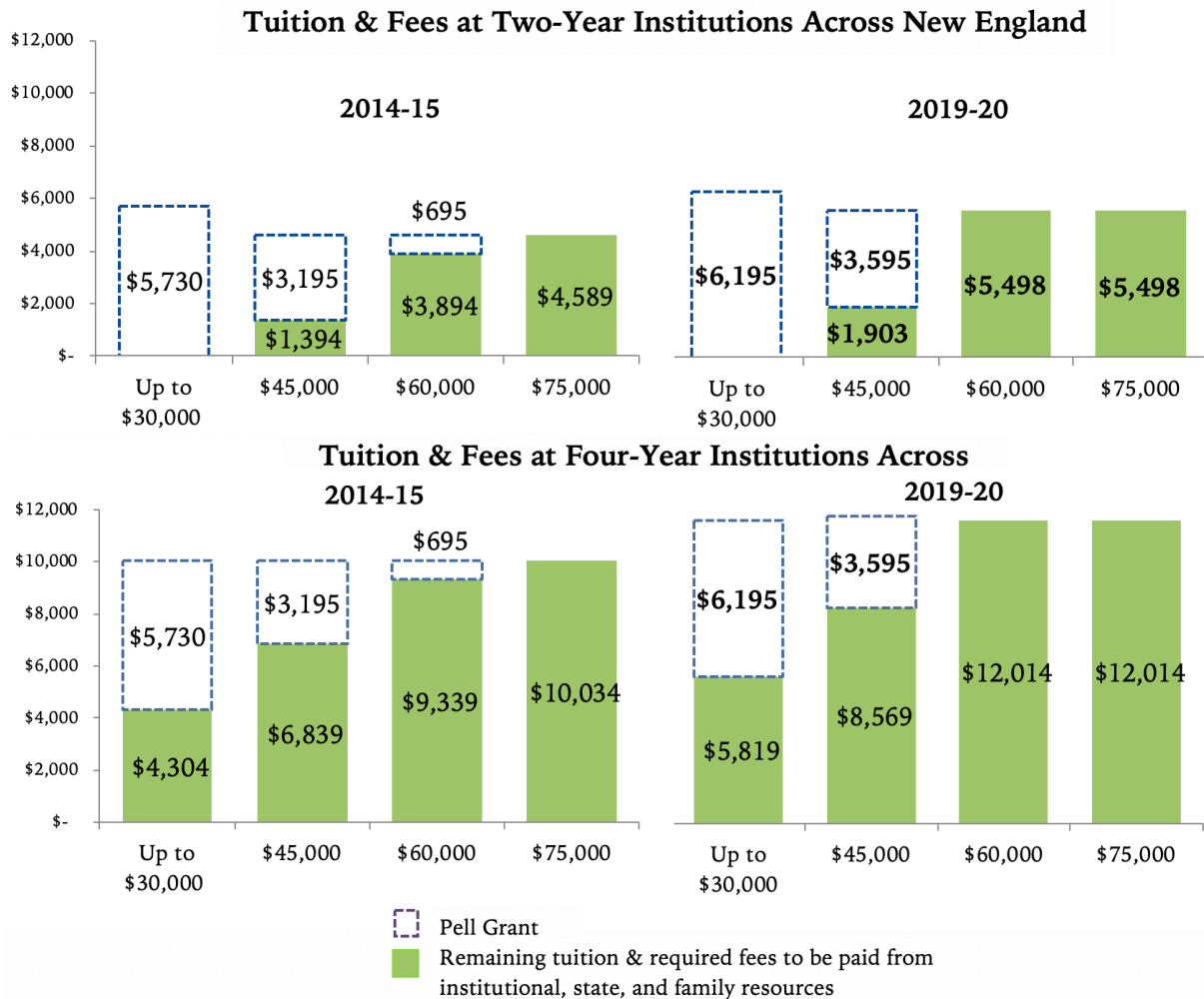
	2019-20	Change from 2018-19	Change from 2014-15
Public Two-year Colleges	\$5,498	-2%	20%
Public Four-year Colleges	\$12,881	8%	25%

Note: Average tuition & required fees are published rates for two semesters of in-state full-time study. Dollar values are not adjusted for inflation and averages are not enrollment-weighted. These figures do not reflect any financial aid (e.g. grants, loans) or living expenses (e.g. room, board), which vary significantly between students.

Source: NEBHE analysis of data from New England institutions and state system offices

How Much Do Public Colleges Cost in New England After Financial Aid?

While a first glance at tuition and fee figures at public colleges may provoke anxiety among prospective students and families, available financial aid lowers out-of-pocket costs significantly. The Federal Pell Grant is one of the largest sources of financial aid and is typically awarded to undergraduate students who demonstrate a significant financial need and do not yet possess a postsecondary degree. Federal Pell is a grant program rather than a loan program.



Note: Pell eligibility is estimated for a family of four with two dependent children and \$0 assets. EFC calculated using 2019-20 formula due.

Source: NEBHE analysis of data from New England institutions and state systems offices, U.S. Department of Education, and U.S. Census Bureau.

These awards do not require repayment, except in rare circumstances. In the 2019-20 academic year, the maximum Federal Pell Grant increased from \$6,095 to \$6,195.

Pell Grant disbursement does not vary much across institutions when compared to other financial aid sources and, therefore, serves as a consistent tool to analyze tuition and fee changes year-over-year as well as provide policymakers with an image of what students must pay after Federal aid. Increasing tuition and fees across the region have surpassed the increase in the Pell Grant, meaning low- and middle-income families must access additional sources of aid (scholarships, state/institutional aid, private loans, family resources) to cover the cost of attendance even after receiving Pell funding.

How Much Pell Aid Are Students Really Getting?

According to the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics, eligible students at New England's two-year institutions received an average Pell Grant of \$3,688 in 2019-20. With two-year colleges charging \$5,498 per year in tuition and fees on average, after factoring in the average Pell amount, the **average out-of-pocket cost of tuition and fees for Pell recipients attending two-year institutions was \$1,810.**

Among those who were awarded Pell grants at New England's four-year institutions, the average amount received was \$4,277. New England's four-year colleges charge an average of \$12,881 in 2019-20; factoring in the average Pell grant for four-year students in New England, the **average out-of-pocket cost of tuition and fees for Pell recipients attending four-year colleges was \$8,604.**

While these figures can help inform the cost of attendance for students receiving Pell Grants, not all students are recipients. Of the 179,543 students enrolled at two-year institutions in New England, 81,772 (46%) received a Pell grant in 2019-20. Of the 239,447 students enrolled at four-year institutions, only 75,116 (31%) were Pell recipients.

Published Tuition and Fees at Public Colleges and Universities in Connecticut, 2019-20

New England's public colleges and universities, some of the most reputable in the country, are also historically among the most accessible option for individuals in the region. However, tuition and fees continue to rise—a fact that may deter many who wish to pursue a college degree. Nevertheless, Connecticut has taken several steps to ameliorate these financial concerns.

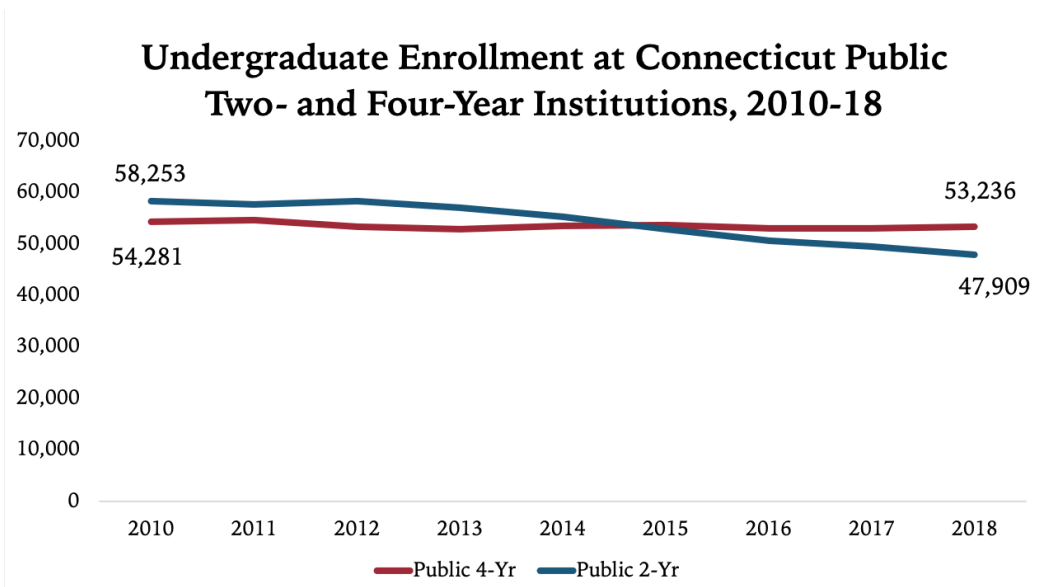
Since 2019, Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) have participated in the [Pledge to Advance Connecticut](#) (PACT), a last-dollar scholarship program to pay for the cost of attending any of the state's 12 community colleges. This year, CSCU president, Mark Ojakian, [announced](#) that interest in the program has been strong. By the July 15, 2020 priority consideration deadline, more than 2,200 students had received \$2.5 million in grant awards. Connecticut's community colleges will continue to accept applications for PACT for the fall semester on a first com, first served basis, until funding for this period is exhausted. CSCU plans to award at least an additional \$1 million in PACT scholarships to eligible students.

How Many Students Enroll at Public Institutions in Connecticut?

In fall 2018, 101,145 undergraduate students were enrolled at two- and four-year public postsecondary institutions in Connecticut. These students represented 67% of all undergraduate students in the state.

Enrollment at Connecticut's public four-year colleges in fall 2018 remained stable from fall 2017 (approximately 53,000 students). Since 2010, however, undergraduate enrollment at Connecticut's public colleges and universities has declined by over 10,000 students due to a drop in community college enrollment—a common pattern in

better economic times. This decline in public undergraduate enrollment since 2010 is a roughly 1% drop and is significantly less than the regional average decline of 9%.



Source: NEBHE analysis of IPEDS data.

What is the Price of Tuition and Fees at Public Institutions in Connecticut?

The average in-state tuition and fees at two-year public colleges in Connecticut is far lower (23%) than the New England average. Tuition and fees at Connecticut’s two-year colleges have remained approximately the same (2% increase) since the 2018-19 academic year.

Since the 2014-15 academic year, in-state tuition and fees at Connecticut’s four-year institutions have grown by 23%, slightly less than the regional average increase of 25%. This is largely due to Connecticut public 4-year in-state tuition and fees remaining steady from 2018-19, whereas the regional average saw an 8% increase.

Average In-State Tuition & Required Fees at Public Institutions

		Change from 2019-20	Change from 2018-19	Change from 2014-15
Two-year				
Connecticut	\$4,476	2%		16%
New England	\$5,498		-2%	20%
Four-year				
Connecticut	\$12,250	0%		23%
New England	\$12,881		8%	25%

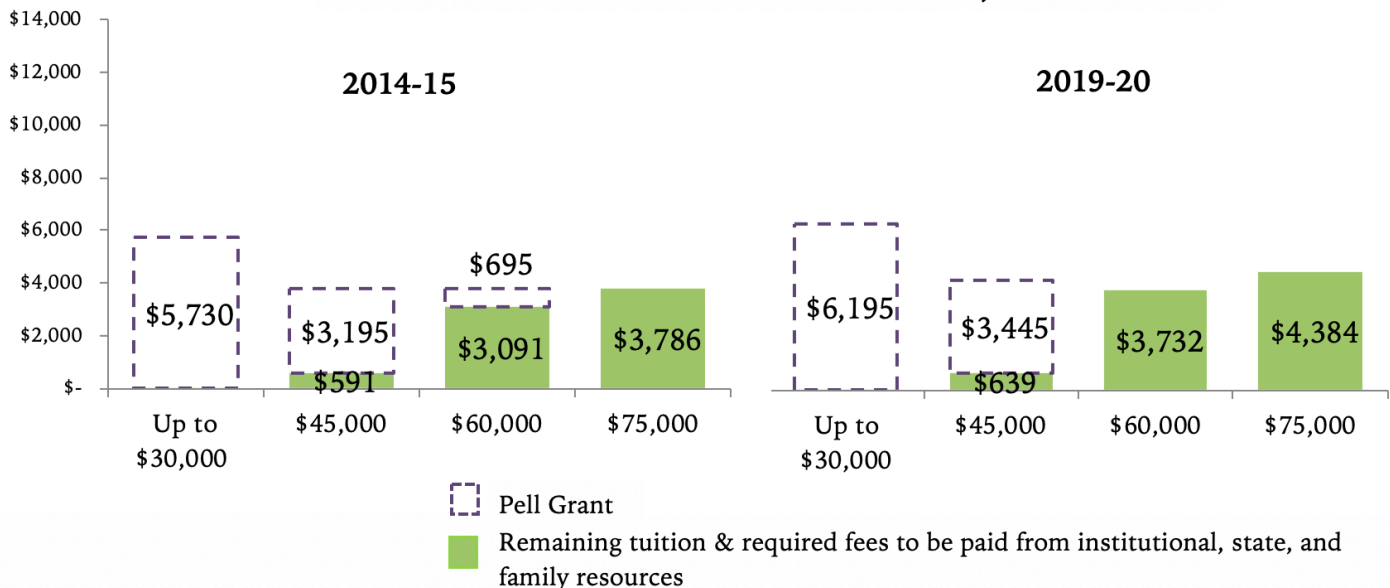
Note: Average tuition and required fees are published rates for two semesters of in-state, full-time study. Dollar values are not adjusted for inflation, and averages are not enrollment-weighted. These figures do not account for financial aid and living expenses, which vary among students. Source: NEBHE analysis of data from New England institutions and state system offices.

How Much Do Public Colleges Cost in Connecticut After Financial Aid?

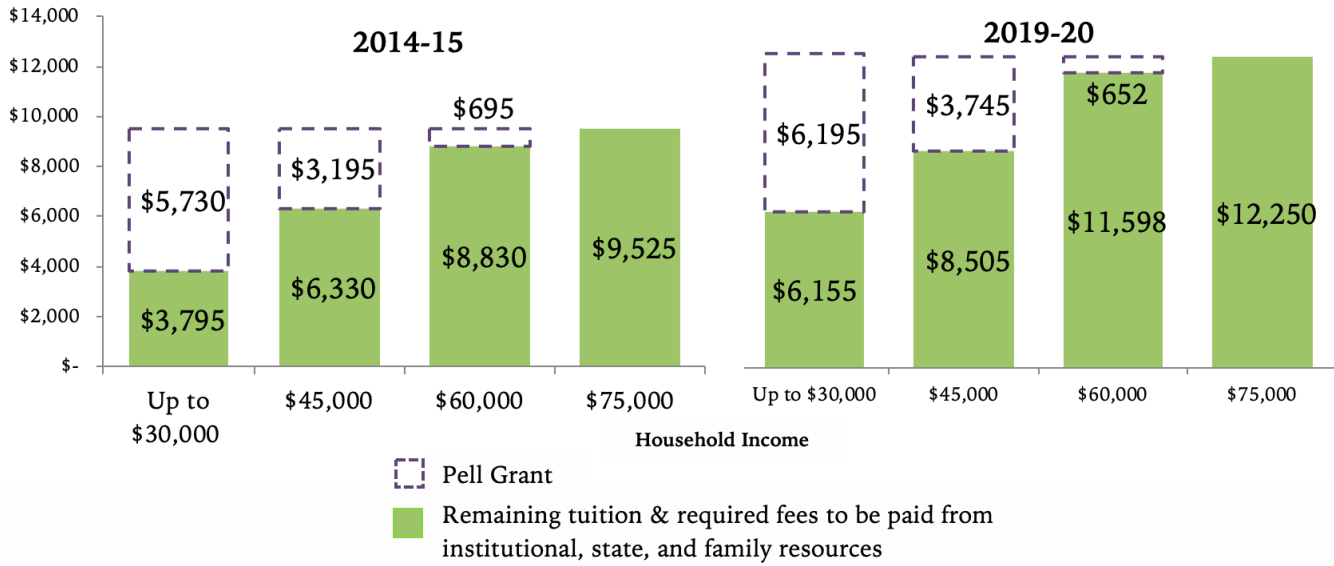
The growth in tuition and fees at Connecticut’s public institutions has outpaced increases in Pell Grant funding. This mismatch leaves students with a greater gap between Federal aid and the cost of attendance.

While students were eligible to receive a maximum Pell Grant of \$6,195 for AY 2019-20, not all students qualified for this full amount. In Connecticut, the average Pell Grant afforded to students at two-year colleges was \$3,482. At public four-year colleges, Connecticut students received an average of \$4,433. After grant aid, education at New England’s public institutions can become affordable for students of varied backgrounds.

Tuition & Fees at Two-Year Institutions, Connecticut



Tuition & Fees at Four-Year Institutions, Connecticut



Note: Pell Grant eligibility is based on a family of four with two dependent children and \$0 assets. EFC calculated using 2019-20 formula due. Source: NEBHE analysis of data from New England institutions and state system offices, U.S. Department of Education, and U.S. Census Bureau.

Published Tuition and Fees at Public Colleges and Universities in Maine, 2019-20

New England's public colleges and universities, some of the most reputable in the country, are also historically among the most accessible option for individuals in the region. However, tuition and fees continue to rise—a fact that may deter many who wish to pursue a college degree. Nevertheless, Maine has taken several steps to ameliorate these financial concerns.

In June 2019, state lawmakers introduced [H.P. 303](#), which created the Maine Student Loan Debt Relief Program. Under the program, certain Maine residents who study at in-state institutions of higher education and agree to live and work in Maine for five years following graduation are eligible for zero-interest loans up to \$10,000 per year for a maximum of five years. For students who live and work outside of Maine upon graduation, loans bearing an annual interest rate of the prime rate of interest plus 2% are available. The bill is still active, but no action was taken on it during the 2020 legislative session before the legislature adjourned *sine die* on March 17 due to COVID-19.

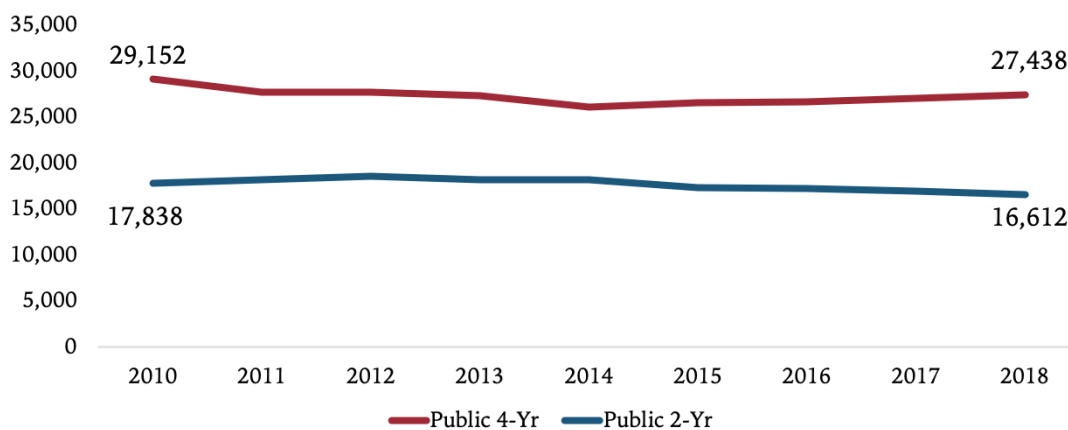
How Many Students Enroll at Public Institutions in Maine?

In fall 2018, 44,050 undergraduate students were enrolled at Maine's public two- and four-year—71% of all undergraduate students in Maine.

Of those undergraduates attending a public institution, approximately 27% enrolled at public two-year institutions, while 44% enrolled at public four-year colleges.

Since 2010, enrollment in Maine's public colleges and universities has declined by 6.7%. This decline is lower than the regional average decline of 9%.

Undergraduate Enrollment at Maine Public Two- and Four-Year Institutions, 2010-18



What is the Price of Tuition and Fees at Public Institutions in Maine?

Maine’s public two- and four-year colleges have some of the lowest average tuition and fee rates in New England. The in-state and out-of-state rates at the University of Maine System (UMS) have undergone little significant change since the 2014-15 academic year due to tuition freezes that, after a historic sixth year, have [ended](#) in order to keep up with inflation, leading to a 3% increase across UMS campuses for the 2019-20 academic year.

Tuition and fees at Maine Maritime Academy and UMS institutions are both factored into the average changes at public four-year institutions, making average changes appear higher than the tuition freezes at UMS might suggest.

Average In-State Tuition & Required Fees at Public Institutions

		Change from 2019-20	Change from 2018-19	Change from 2014-15
Two-year				
Maine	\$3,653	1%		6%
New England	\$5,498		-2%	20%
Four-year				
Maine	\$9,677	3%		10%
New England	\$12,881		8%	25%

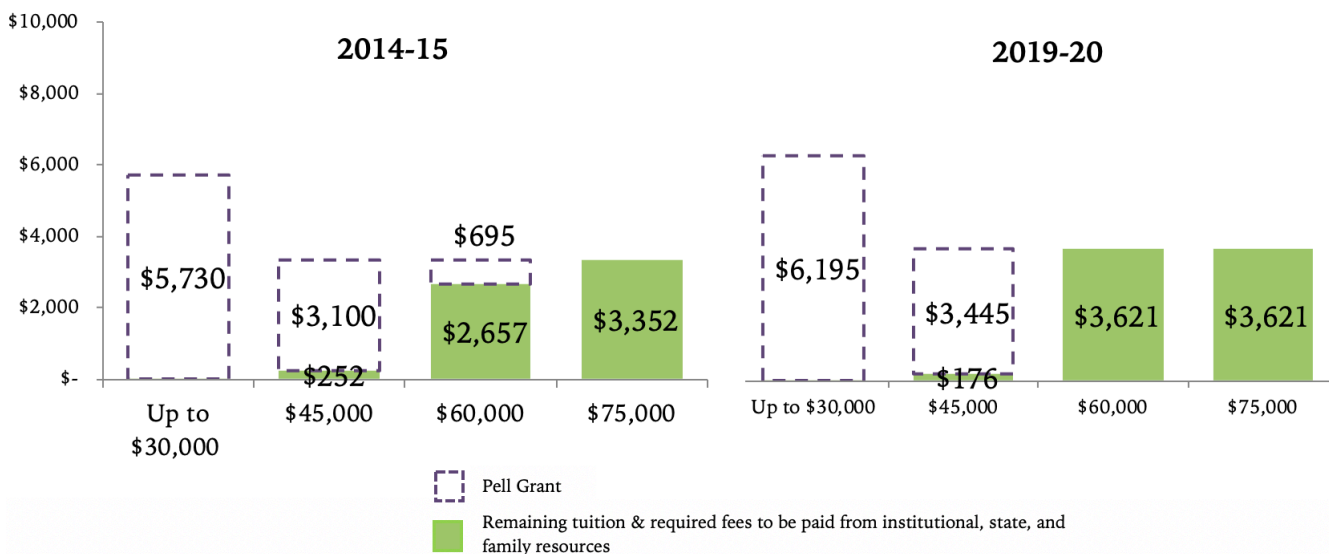
Note: Average tuition and required fees are published rates for two semesters of in-state, full-time study. Dollar values are not adjusted for inflation, and averages are not enrollment-weighted. These figures do not account for financial aid and living expenses, which vary among students. Source: NEBHE analysis of data from New England institutions and state system offices.

How Much Do Public Colleges Cost in Maine After Financial Aid?

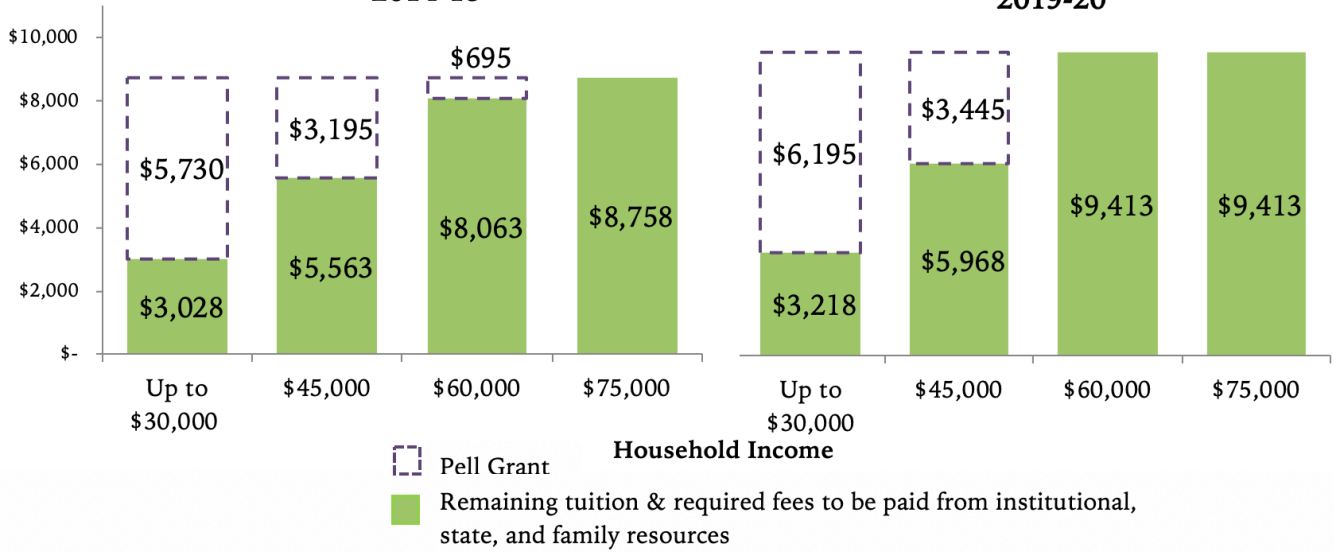
While tuition and fees have remained relatively stable at public institutions in Maine, students still experience a gap between federal aid and the cost of attendance. To combat this issue, in April 2019, UMS announced that one in four undergraduate students would receive free tuition for the spring semester through the [Maine State Grant](#), a legislative grant program, and the [UMS Promise Initiative](#), an institutional grant program. Through these scholarship programs, UMS hopes to make college more affordable, lower the student debt burden, and encourage UMS students to remain in Maine after graduation.

While students can receive a maximum Pell Grant of \$6,195, not all students qualify to receive this amount. In Maine, the average Pell Grant for students at two-year institutions was \$4,263. Maine’s four-year public college students received an average of \$4,186. After grant aid, education at New England’s public institutions can be quite affordable.

Tuition & Fees at Two-Year Institutions. Maine



Tuition & Fees at Four-Year Institutions, Maine



Note: Pell Grant eligibility is based on a family of four with two dependent children and \$0 assets. EFC calculated using 2019-20 formula due. Source: NEBHE analysis of data from New England institutions and state system offices, U.S. Department of Education, and U.S. Census Bureau.

Published Tuition and Fees at Public Colleges and Universities in Massachusetts, 2019-20

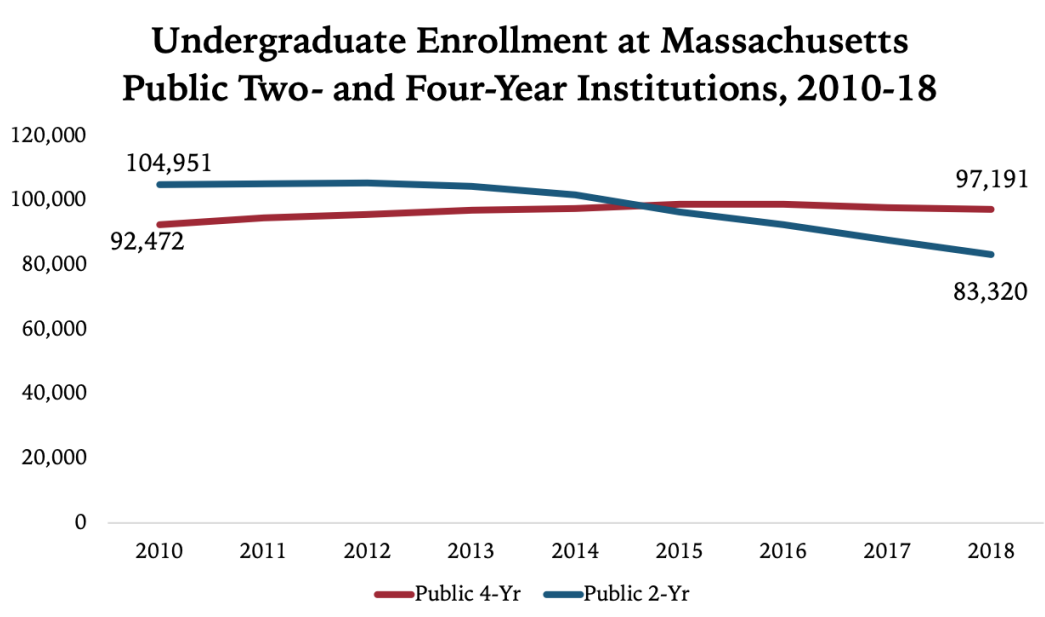
New England's public colleges and universities, some of the most reputable in the country, are also historically among the most accessible option for individuals in the region. However, tuition and fees continue to rise—a fact that may deter many who wish to pursue a college degree. Nevertheless, Massachusetts has taken several steps to ameliorate these financial concerns.

During the current legislative session, lawmakers introduced [H.1211](#), a bill that would establish a finish line grant program to encourage college completion in Massachusetts. Under the program, the cost of tuition and fees for one year other than the first would be completely covered for students enrolled in a program leading to an associate or bachelor's degree at a Massachusetts public institution of higher education. The scholarships would be available to residents of the Commonwealth in need of financial assistance, whose family income is less than 175% of median family income in Massachusetts. The bill, currently pending in the legislature, has been referred to the Joint Committee on Higher Education.

How Many Students Enroll at Public Institutions in Massachusetts?

In fall 2018, 180,511 students were enrolled at Massachusetts public colleges and universities. Of this group, over one half of the students (54%) attended a four-year public institution, while 46% attended a two-year public college. Around one half (49%) of undergraduate students in Massachusetts enrolled at private institutions.

Since 2010, enrollment at Massachusetts public colleges and universities has declined by 9.4%. This decline is slightly greater than the regional average decline of 9%.



Source: NEBHE analysis of IPEDS data.

What is the Price of Tuition and Fees at Public Institutions in Massachusetts?

At Massachusetts community colleges, average tuition and fees are slightly higher than average tuition and fees across New England’s two-year institutions.

Since 2018-19, tuition and fees at Massachusetts public community colleges and public four-year institutions have increased by 3%. Since the 2014-15 academic year, costs of attendance have slowly grown for both two- and four-year public institutions, largely due to fees, which represent the bulk of college costs. Over time, however, we see a somewhat significant increase: 23% for two-year institutions and 25% for four-year colleges and universities.

Average In-State Tuition & Required Fees at Public Institutions

	2019-20	Change from 2018-19	Change from 2014-15
Two-year			
Massachusetts	\$6,648	3%	23%
New England	\$5,498	-2%	20%
Four-year			
Massachusetts	\$12,333	3%	25%
New England	\$12,881	8%	25%

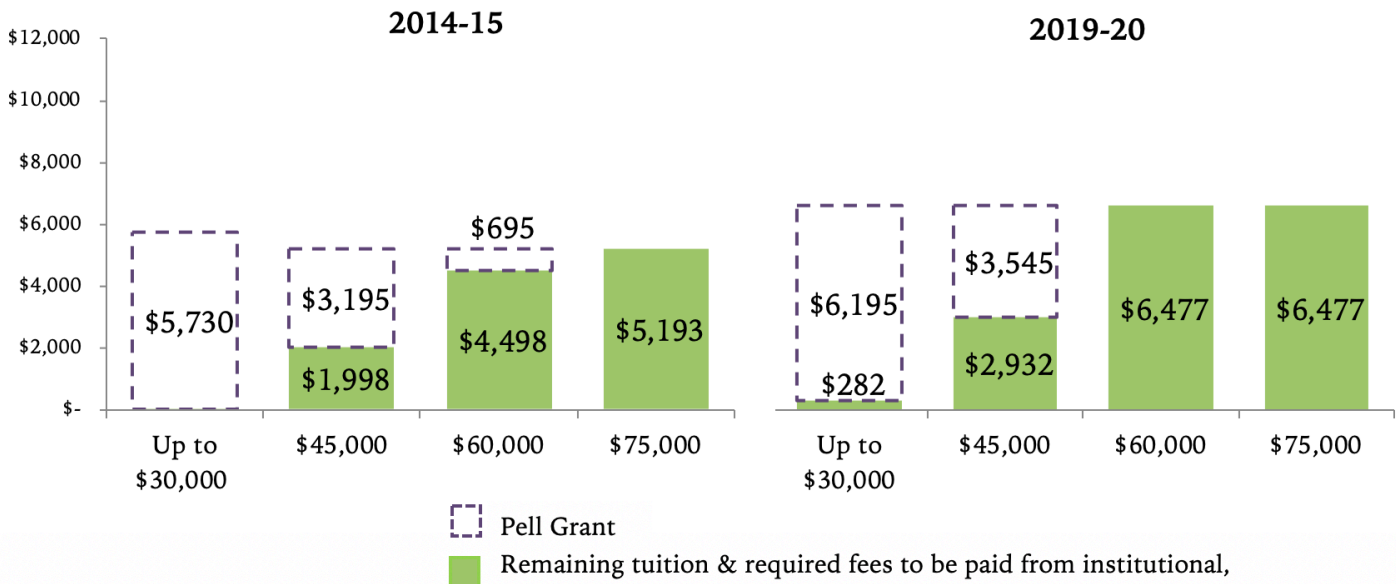
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How Much Do Public Colleges Cost in Massachusetts After Financial Aid?

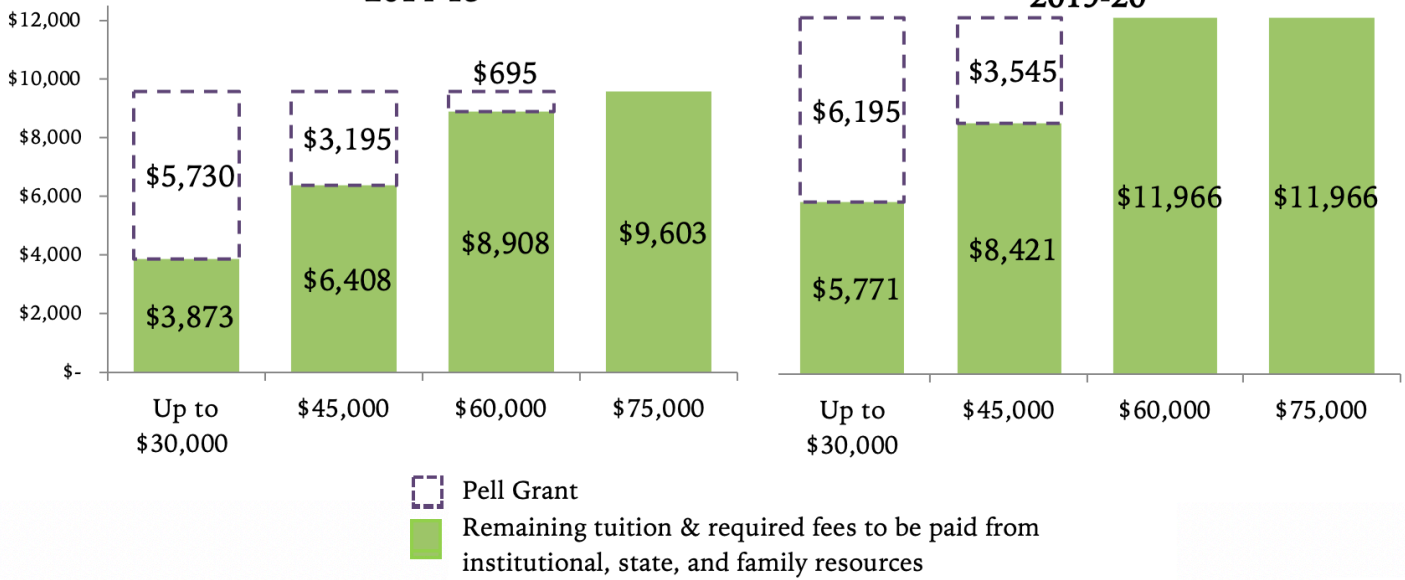
Since 2014-15, tuition and fees increases in Massachusetts have outpaced that for Pell Grant funding, requiring low- and middle-income families to secure institutional, state or family resources to cover the cost of attendance.

For the 2019-20 academic year, the maximum Pell Grant is \$6,195, though not all students will qualify to receive the maximum amount. In Massachusetts, the average Pell Grant award for students at two-year institutions was \$3,665. For students at four-year public institutions, the average Pell Grant was \$4,335. After grant aid, education at New England’s public institutions can become affordable for students of varied backgrounds.

Tuition & Fees at Two-Year Institutions, Massachusetts



Tuition & Fees at Four-Year Institutions, Massachusetts 2014-15



Note: Pell Grant eligibility is based on a family of four with two dependent children and \$0 assets. EFC calculated using 2019-20 formula due. Source: NEBHE analysis of data from New England institutions and state system offices, U.S. Department of Education, and U.S. Census Bureau.

Published Tuition and Fees at Public Colleges and Universities in New Hampshire, 2019-20

New England's public colleges and universities, some of the most reputable in the country, are also historically among the most accessible option for individuals in the region. However, tuition and fees continue to rise—a fact that may deter many who wish to pursue a college degree. Nevertheless, New Hampshire has taken several steps to ameliorate these financial concerns.

During the 2020 legislative session, New Hampshire lawmakers passed [HB-1582-FN](#), which established a tuition waiver at any institution in the university system of community college system of New Hampshire for a child of a totally and permanently disabled veteran. The new law also requires the university and community college systems to award college credit for military training courses completed and to increase flexibility in application and course registration procedures for veterans.

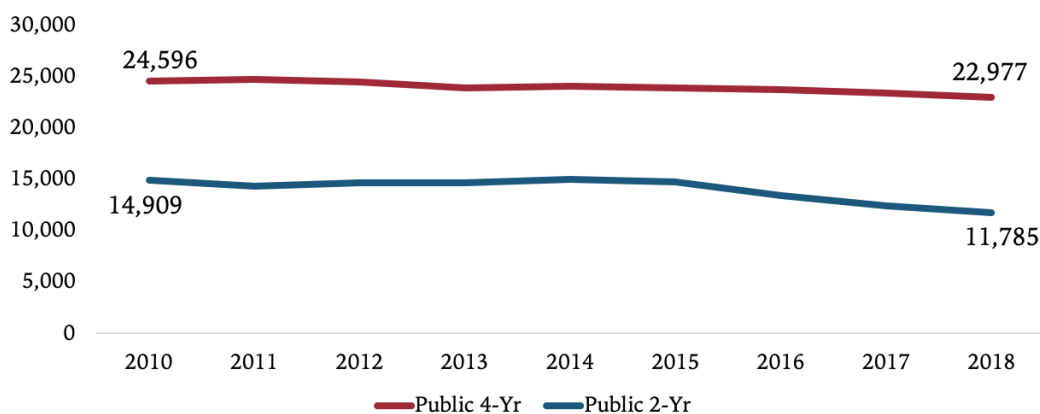
Additionally, in June 2020, Gov. Chris Sununu [announced](#) \$6 million in tuition assistance for New Hampshire's community colleges. Student who can demonstrate a financial impact due to COVID-19 are eligible to receive a grant to cover costs associated with tuition and fees at the state's community colleges in the fall 2020 semester.

How Many Students Enroll at Public Institutions in New Hampshire?

In fall 2018, 34,762 undergraduate students were enrolled at New Hampshire's public two- and four-year institutions. This figure represents a 13.6% decline from 2010 enrollment figures.

Approximately 73% of all undergraduate students were enrolled at New Hampshire's private institutions due to the large population of students from across the country enrolled online at Southern New Hampshire University. Only 26% of undergraduate students enrolled at the state's public institutions. New Hampshire has one of the lowest rates of high school graduates who plan to attend college in-state in the country.

Undergraduate Enrollment at New Hampshire Public Two- and Four-Year Institutions, 2010-18



Source: NEBHE analysis of IPEDS data.

What is the Price of Tuition and Fees at Public Institutions in New Hampshire?

New Hampshire has one of the lowest per-student funding levels in the country. At the same time, The University System of New Hampshire (USNH) and the Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH) have historically had minimal tuition increases compared with the rest of New England.

For the 2019-20 academic year, however, New Hampshire’s public colleges had significant tuition and fees increases. New Hampshire’s two-year institutions increased tuition by 20% (\$1,31) over the previous year. Four-year colleges increased out-of-state tuition cost by 17% (\$4,379) and fees by 20% (\$454). In-state four-year tuition and fees remained somewhat stable.

Average In-State Tuition & Required Fees at Public Institutions

	2019-20	Change from 2018-19	Change from 2014-15
Two-year			
New Hampshire	\$6,930	24%	35%
New England	\$5,498	-2%	20%
Four-year			
New Hampshire	\$15,893	14%	26%
New England	\$12,881	8%	25%

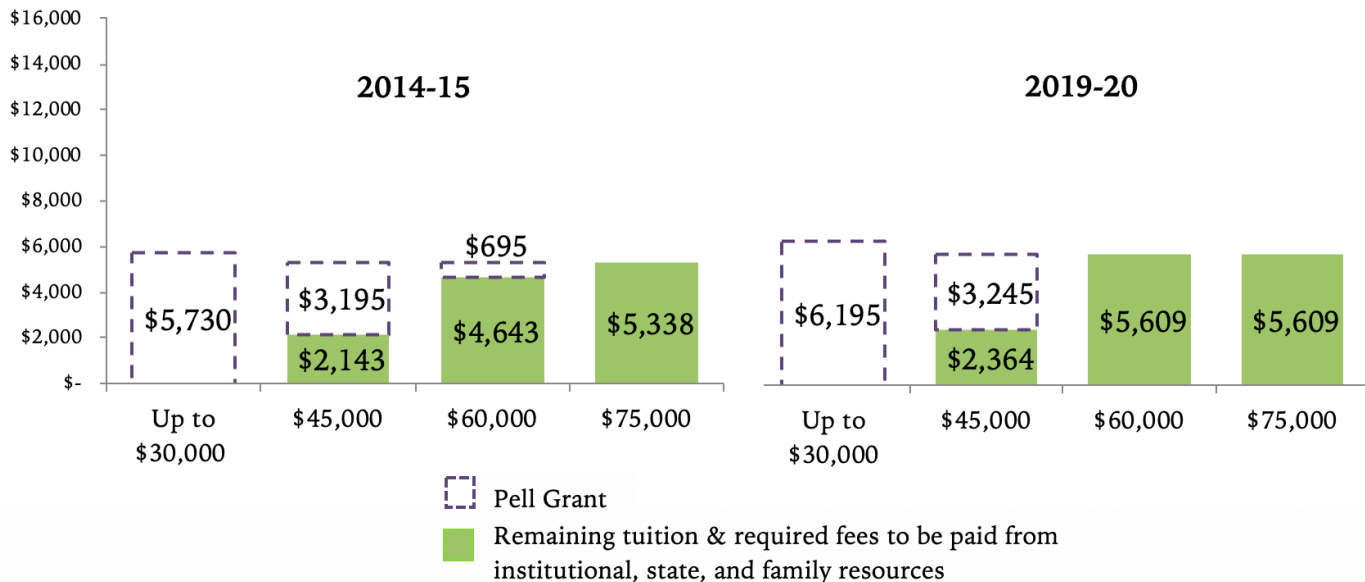
Note: Average tuition and required fees are published rates for two semesters of in-state, full-time study. Dollar values are not adjusted for inflation, and averages are not enrollment-weighted. These figures do not account for financial aid and living expenses, which vary among students. Source: NEBHE analysis of data from New England institutions and state system offices.

How Much Do Public Colleges Cost in New Hampshire After Financial Aid?

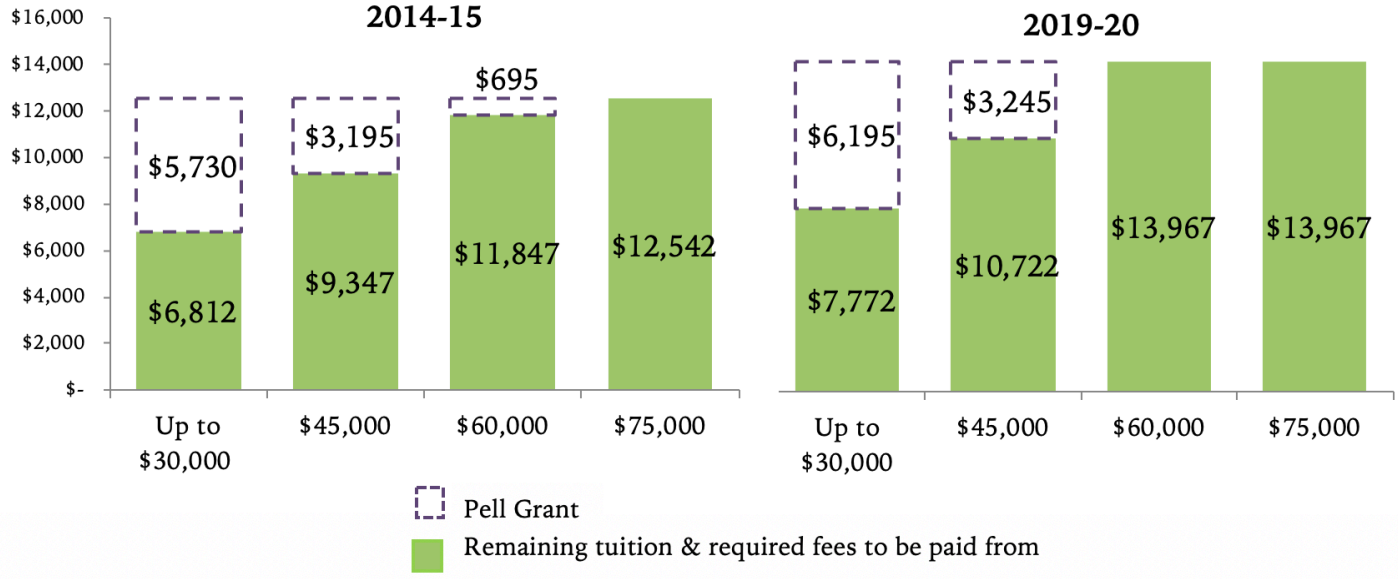
The rise in tuition and fees in New Hampshire has outpaced Pell Grant funding, leaving students and families with a gap in financial assistance to cover the cost of college attendance.

For the 2019-20 academic year, the maximum Pell Grant was \$6,195. That said, not all students will qualify for Pell Grants receive the maximum amount. In New Hampshire, the average Pell Grant for students at two-year colleges was \$3,628. At four-year public institutions, that value was \$3,994.

Tuition & Fees at Two-Year Institutions, New Hampshire



Tuition & Fees at Four-Year Institutions, New Hampshire



Note: Pell Grant eligibility is based on a family of four with two dependent children and \$0 assets. EFC calculated using 2019-20 formula due. Source: NEBHE analysis of data from New England institutions and state system offices, U.S. Department of Education, and U.S. Census Bureau.

Published Tuition and Fees at Public Colleges and Universities in Rhode Island, 2019-20

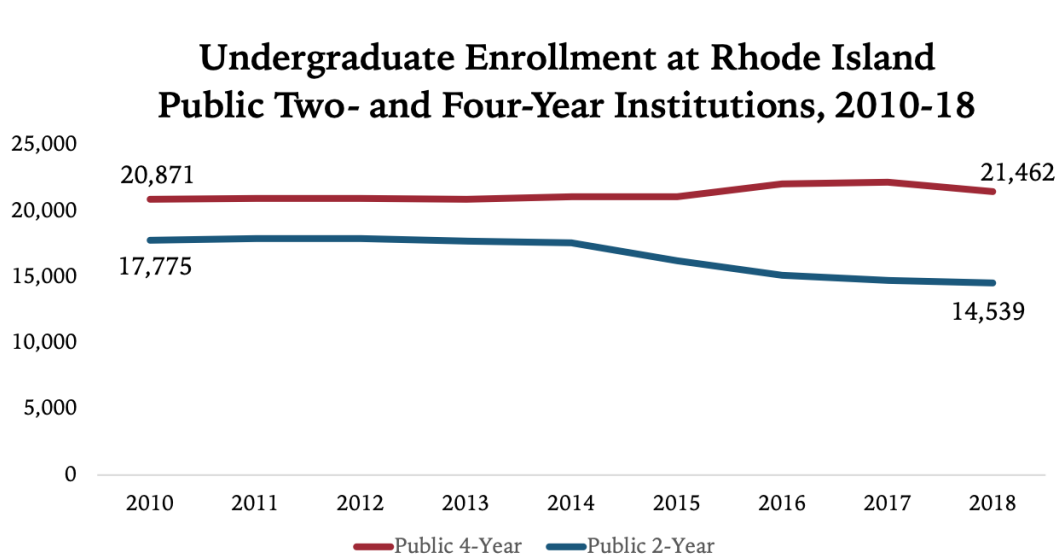
New England's public colleges and universities, some of the most reputable in the country, are also historically among the most accessible option for individuals in the region. However, tuition and fees continue to rise—a fact that may deter many who wish to pursue a college degree. Nevertheless, Rhode Island has taken several steps to ameliorate these financial concerns.

[H.B.7501](#), introduced during the current legislative session, would create a student loan tax credit of up to \$1,000 for state residents who have a student loan who attend(ed) an institution in-state and are working in the state. This bill has gained significant traction and has been referred to the House Finance committee.

How Many Students Enroll at Public Institutions in New Hampshire?

In fall 2018, 36,001 undergraduate students were enrolled at Rhode Island's public two- and four-year institutions. Of this group, 40.4% were enrolled at the Community College of Rhode Island.

Total undergraduate enrollment is split almost evenly between public and private institutions, with 52% attending public institutions and 48% attending a private college or university. Since 2010, enrollment in Rhode Island has declined by 22% at public two-year institutions and has increased by 3% at public four-year institutions.



Source: NEBHE analysis of IPEDS data.

What is the Price of Tuition and Fees at Public Institutions in Rhode Island?

Average tuition and fees at Rhode Island’s public two-year institutions have increased slightly (3%) since 2018-19. While tuition and fees may be increasing, Gov. Gina Raimondo’s [Rhode Island Promise Program](#) (RI Promise) offers free community college for eligible in-state students, making postsecondary education more accessible.

Despite cost-saving initiatives and decreased tuition at Rhode Island’s four-year institutions, enrollment has suffered. Rhode Island College experienced a near 5% decline since 2018-19—leaving residents to [suspect](#) that a tuition increase may be on the horizon.

Average In-State Tuition & Required Fees at Public Institutions

	2019-20	Change from 2018-19	Change from 2014-15
Two-year			
Rhode Island	\$4,700	3%	19%
New England	\$5,498	-2%	20%
Four-year			
Rhode Island	\$12,072	5%	20%
New England	\$12,881	8%	25%

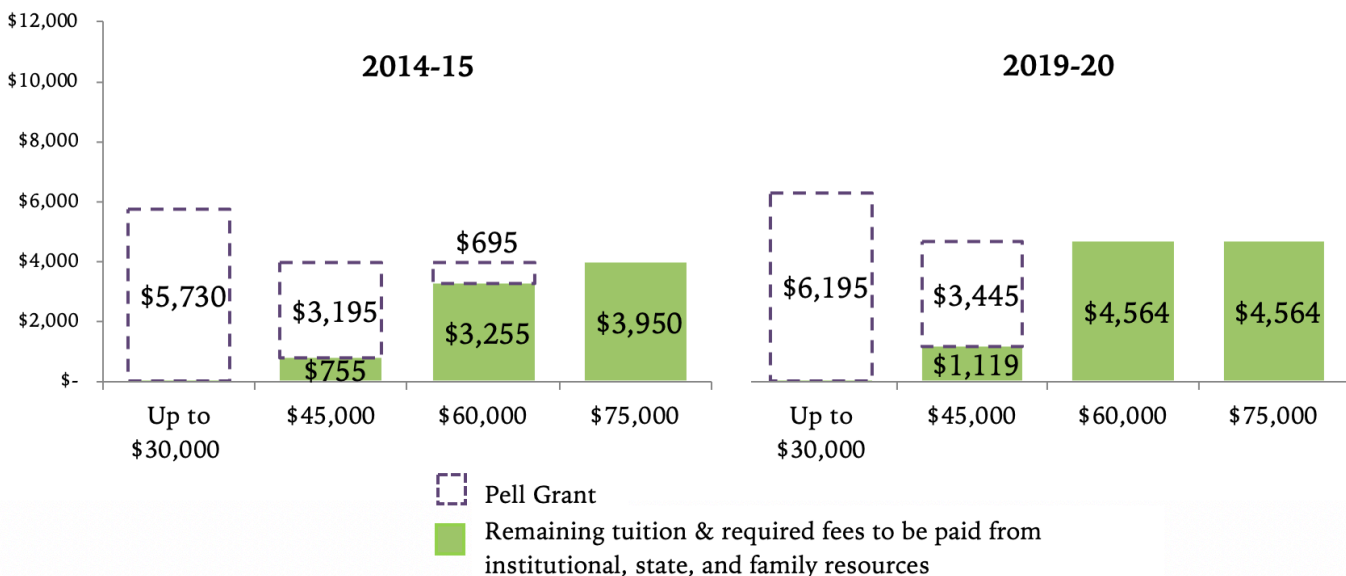
Note: Average tuition and required fees are published rates for two semesters of in-state, full-time study. Dollar values are not adjusted for inflation, and averages are not enrollment-weighted. These figures do not account for financial aid and living expenses, which vary among students. Source: NEBHE analysis of data from New England institutions and state system offices.

How Much Do Public Colleges Cost in Rhode Island After Financial Aid?

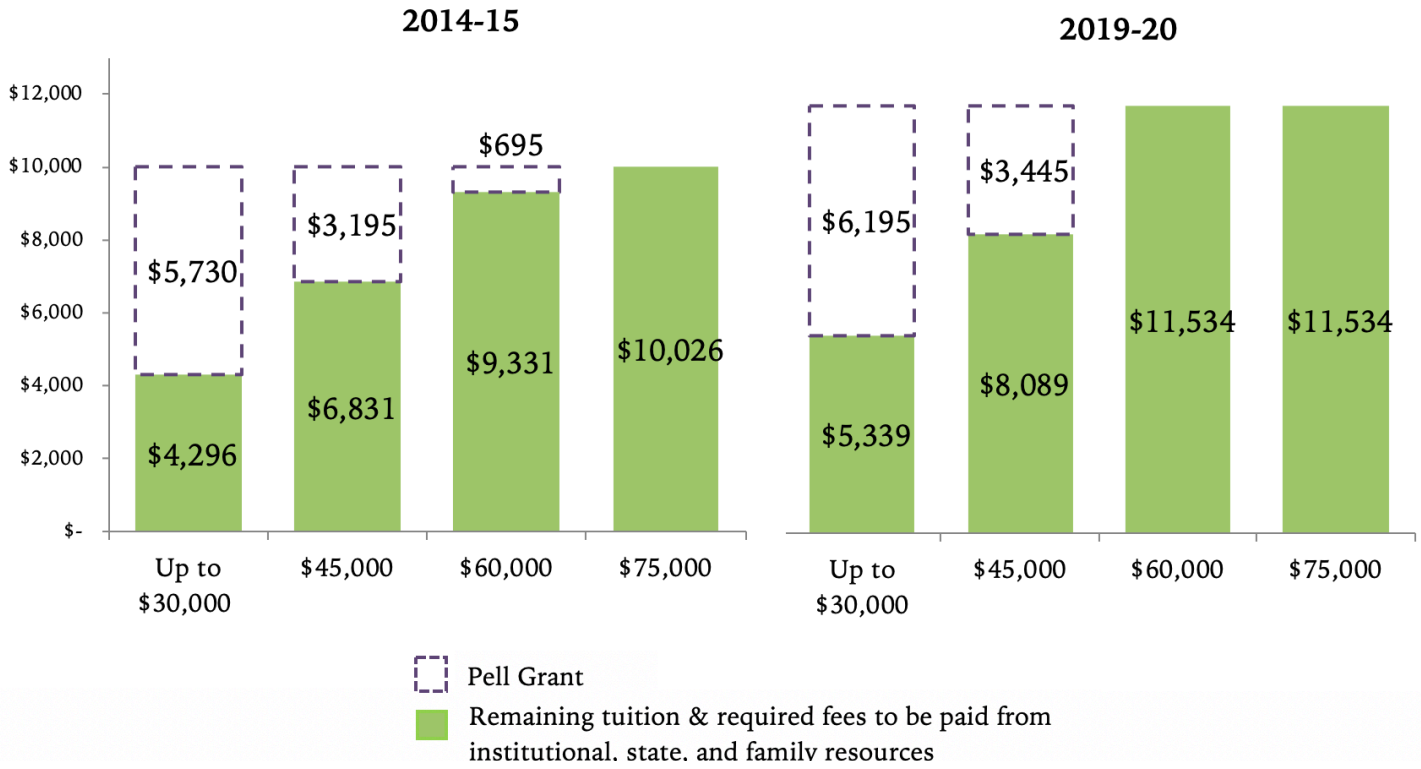
The rise in tuition and fees in Rhode Island have outpaced Pell Grant funding, requiring students and families to seek other forms of financial assistance to cover the cost of college attendance.

For the 2019-20 academic year, the maximum Pell Grant was \$6,195. That said, not all students will qualify to receive the maximum amount. In Rhode Island, students at two-year institutions received an average Pell award of \$3,318. At four-year public institutions, that value was \$4,316. After financial aid and federal grants, attending college at one of New England’s public institutions can be quite affordable for students of all backgrounds.

Tuition & Fees at Two-Year Institutions, Rhode Island



Tuition & Fees at Four-Year Institutions, Rhode Island



Note: Pell Grant eligibility is based on a family of four with two dependent children and \$0 assets. EFC calculated using 2019-20 formula due. Source: NEBHE analysis of data from New England institutions and state system offices, U.S. Department of Education, and U.S. Census Bureau.

Published Tuition and Fees at Public Colleges and Universities in Vermont, 2019-20

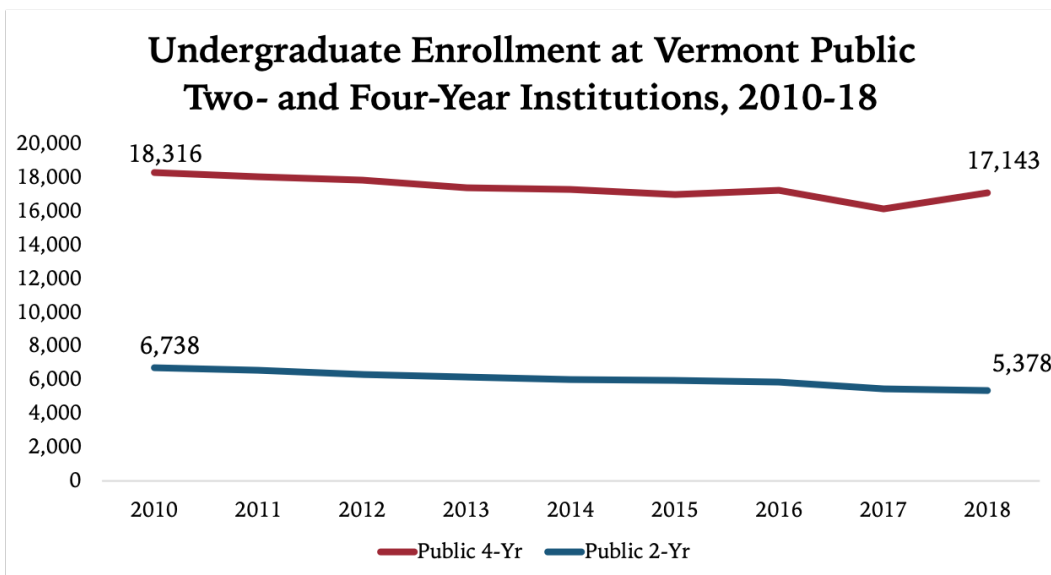
New England's public colleges and universities, some of the most reputable in the country, are also historically among the most accessible option for individuals in the region. However, tuition and fees continue to rise—a fact that may deter many who wish to pursue a college degree. Nevertheless, Rhode Island has taken several steps to ameliorate these financial concerns.

In early 2020, the Vermont legislature introduced [S.271](#), an act that would create a tuition-free scholarship program for Vermont residents enrolling at Community College of Vermont with family or individual incomes under \$100,000. The bill has been referred to the Committee on Education. Lawmakers have been conducting business remotely, since August 25. It is yet unclear if further action will be taken on the bill in 2020.

How Many Students Enroll at Public Institutions in Rhode Island?

In fall 2018, 19,521 students were enrolled at Vermont's two- and four-year institutions. In total, 32,451 students enrolled across all postsecondary institutions in the state, meaning that approximately 60% of students attended a public institution.

Since 2010, enrollment at Vermont's public institutions has declined by approximately 10%, a slightly higher rate than the regional average 9% enrollment decline.



Source: NEBHE analysis of IPEDS data.

What is the Price of Tuition and Fees at Public Institutions in Rhode Island?

Since the 2014-15 academic year, tuition and fees have increased by 12% at the Community College of Vermont (CCV) and by 23% at the state’s public four-year colleges. Since the 2018-19 academic year, however, CCV has decreased its tuition and fees by 6%. CCV is one of the only public community colleges in the region to have done so.

Tuition and fees at Vermont’s community and four-year colleges are among the highest in the region, alongside New Hampshire, primarily due to relatively low enrollment.

Average In-State Tuition & Required Fees at Public Institutions

	2019-20	Change from 2018-19	Change from 2014-15
Two-year			
Vermont	\$6,579	-6%	12%
New England	\$5,498	-2%	20%
Four-year			
Vermont	\$15,059	3%	23%
New England	\$12,881	8%	25%

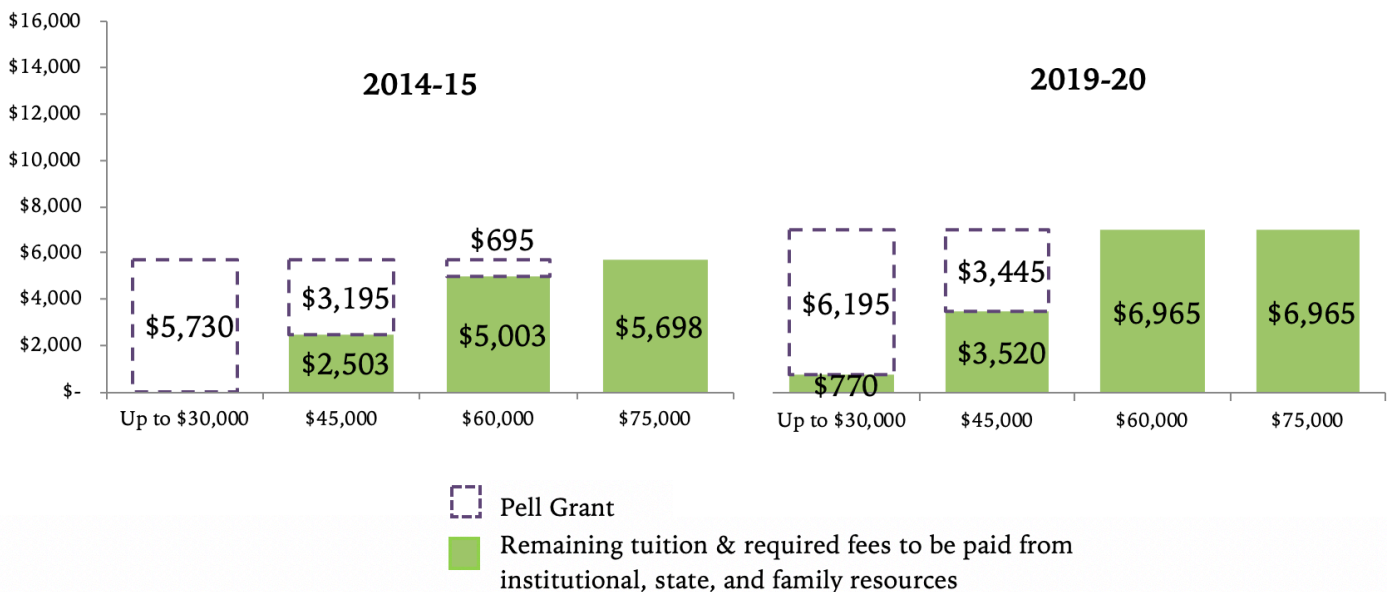
Note: Average tuition and required fees are published rates for two semesters of in-state, full-time study. Dollar values are not adjusted for inflation, and averages are not enrollment-weighted. These figures do not account for financial aid and living expenses, which vary among students. Source: NEBHE analysis of data from New England institutions and state system offices.

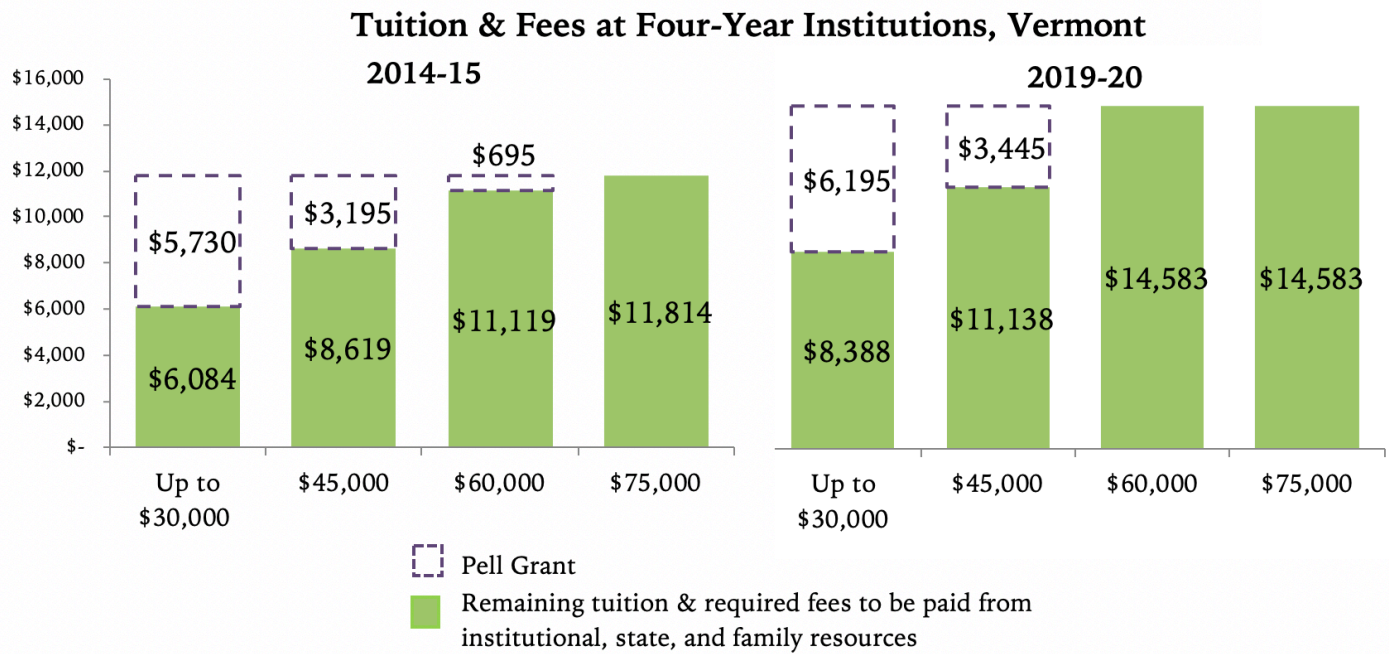
How Much Do Public Colleges Cost in Rhode Island After Financial Aid?

Since 2014-15, tuition and fee increases in Vermont have outpaced Pell Grant funding, requiring low- and middle-income families to secure institutional, state or family resources to cover the cost of attendance. In 2020, for the second year in a row, Vermont’s colleges and universities offered [Vermont Choose Scholarships](#) of \$5,000 to first-year, full-time students who committed to attending a postsecondary institution in the state. Applicants do not need to be residents of Vermont.

For the 2019-20 academic year, the maximum Pell Grant was \$6,195; not all students, however, qualify to receive the maximum amount. In Vermont, students at two-year institutions received an average of \$2,849. Students at Vermont’s four-year public institutions received an average of \$4,268. After financial aid and federal grants, attending college at one of New England’s public institutions can become affordable for students of varied backgrounds.

Tuition & Fees at Two-Year Institutions, Vermont





Note: Pell Grant eligibility is based on a family of four with two dependent children and \$0 assets. EFC calculated using 2019-20 formula due. Source: NEBHE analysis of data from New England institutions and state system offices, U.S. Department of Education, and U.S. Census Bureau.

Questions?

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