

WORKSHEET: MAKE YOUR DECISION



Use this worksheet to help you analyze your financial aid offers and choose the right college for you. A quick way to compare offers and determine your net price (overall cost) is to subtract all of your awarded grants and scholarships from your cost of attendance. Keep in mind that colleges have different ways of offering financial aid as well as different costs of attendance.¹

		COLLEGE (FILL-IN)					
		Sample college					
EVALUATE	Pros	Top-rated program, low cost of living					
	Cons	May need a car, limited housing options					
COST OF ATTENDANCE ²	Tuition and fees	\$11,000					
	Housing and food	\$12,000					
	Books and supplies	\$1,500					
	Transportation	\$1,500					
	Miscellaneous	\$2,000					
	Total College Costs (A)³	\$28,000					
GRANT/SCHOLARSHIPS/WORK-STUDY	Institution-based aid	\$7,500					
	Federal Pell Grant	\$6,000					
	State/other grants	\$1,000					
	Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)	-					
	Scholarships	\$1,000					
	Total Grant/Scholarship Aid (B)	\$15,500					
	Your Net Price (Overall Cost) (A – B)	\$12,500					
	Work-Study (Work To Earn)	\$1,000					
LOANS		Offered	Accept/Decline \$	Offered	Accept/Decline \$	Offered	Accept/Decline \$
	Direct Subsidized Loan	\$3,500	Accept \$3,500				
	Direct Unsubsidized Loan	\$2,000	Accept \$2,000				
	Direct PLUS Loan	\$6,000	Decline -				
	Private loan	-	-				
	Total Loan Offer (C)	\$5,500					
SUMMARY	Total Financial Aid (B + C = D)	\$21,000					
	Your Net Cost (Immediate Cost) (A – D)⁴	\$7,000					

¹ Not all colleges participate in all of the financial aid programs listed above.

² To find the average estimated budgets for full-time undergraduate students, visit <https://research.collegeboard.org/media/pdf/trends-in-college-pricing-student-aid-2022.pdf>.

³ For definitions of direct and indirect costs, go to page 11.

⁴ Loans, which are part of the net price, or overall cost, will need to be paid back at a later time. Net cost can be paid using family contributions, earnings and work-study income.



Make Your Decision worksheet is part of the 2024-2025 *Opportunities Preparing for College Guide and Workbook*. This free college planning publication provides students and families with important information and tools to guide their pursuit of postsecondary education. These books are available in English and Spanish. Full PDFs of each *Opportunities* booklet can be downloaded at www.ecmc.org/opportunities.