

College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

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Admissions Watch

Early Fall '22 Review

Binghamton Evaluated More Than 50,000 Apps. Binghamton U. in New York (SUNY) was deluged last spring by 50,100 applications for admission. Some 41,700 of them came from prospective first-year students. Now this fall, more than 3,000 first-year students joined the Binghamton student body of 18,600.

Only 35 percent of them come from nearby upstate New York communities, but 450 international students come from 55 countries. Binghamton U. will greet about 900 transfer students, who posted an average GPA of 3.4 at their previous institution. Another 275 SUNY Broome C.C. students were enrolled.

"We look forward to the energy and excitement our new students bring to campus..." said Harvey Stenger, president.

Colorado Celebrates its 149th Academic Year. Colorado C. received 11,026 applications and admitted a little over 11 percent of them. In August, Colorado C. welcomed 553 members of the Class of 2026, plus 31 transfer students. About a quarter of the class identifies as students of color. Incoming students come from 15 countries. About 17 percent of the new class comes from Colorado, 24 percent from the Northeast, 16 percent from the Midwest and 15 percent from the South. Almost 340 students receive financial aid, while 270 receive need-based aid only.

Elon Moves In. In mid-August, 1,715 members of the Class of 2026 moved onto the Elon U. campus in North Carolina. They were greeted by over 400 faculty and staff volunteers, 98 student Orientation Leaders and hundreds of student athletes, SMART mentors and peer educators. The new students came with impressive credentials, a collective high school GPA of 4.07.

It's also Elon's most diverse class, with 19 percent identifying as members of various minority groups, 10 percent the first in their family to go to college and 6 percent international students. The new Elon students gathered for convocation Under the Oaks, a grove of oak trees in the heart of the campus.

Fairfield '26 Shattered Records. Fairfield U. in Connecticut attracted its largest applicant pool, 13,358 applicants. They made their case with an average high school GPA of 3.74. Fairfield plans to enroll 1,340 new students this fall. Among them are the Company Scholars, an elite group of 15 first-year students from Christo Rey and Jesuit high schools "who represent diverse identities and are engaged in academic excellence and community service."

"Fairfield University has once again been blessed with an amazing applicant pool that is focused on academic success, leadership within their communities and a desire for our shared Jesuit values," said Corry Unis, vice president for enrollment management

Harvard Admits a Few from Wait List. More than 83 percent of those offered a spot in Harvard U.'s first-year Class of 2026 indicated they are coming to Cambridge this fall. A "small number" were admitted from its Wait List. Harvard reminded prospective students that more than 400 first-year advisors, 200 advising fellows and 60 resident proctors could help them on their way.

At least 67 percent of the new class applied for financial aid and 24 percent come from families making less than \$75,000 per year, meaning they study tuition free. Women make up 55 percent of the new class. About 30

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Financial Matters

Student Debt Cancellation. In late August, the Biden Administration announced that it will provide "targeted student debt cancellation to borrowers with loans held by the Department of Education. Borrowers with an annual income during the pandemic of under \$125,000 (for individuals) or \$250,000 (for married couples or heads of households) who received a Pell Grant in college will be eligible for up to \$20,000 in debt cancellation.

"Borrowers who met those income standards but did not receive a Pell Grant will be eligible for up to \$10,000 in relief.... The application will be available no later than when the pause on federal student loan repayment terminates at the end of the year."

Nearly eight million borrowers may be eligible to receive relief automatically because relevant income data is already available.

Extension of Pause. The DOE also announced a final extension of the pause on student loan repayment, interest and collection through December 31. "Borrowers should plan to resume payments in January 2023."

Of relevance to future students, the department is also proposing a rule to create a new income-driven repayment plan that will substantially reduce future monthly payments for lower- and middle-income borrowers. It will cut in half, from 10 percent to 5 percent of discretionary income, the amount borrowers will have to pay each month on their undergraduate loans. It will also raise the amount of income that is considered non-discretionary

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EARLY FALL REVIEW

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percent of the new class wants to study social sciences, 19 percent are interested in biological sciences, 15 percent in the humanities, 7 percent in engineering and another 7 percent in computer science, 6 percent in mathematics.

Class composition: 27.6 percent Asian American, 14.4 percent African American, 11.9 percent Latinx, 3.6 percent Native American and Native Hawaiian. International students make up 15.3 percent of the class. First-generation students account for 19.4 percent. Fourteen members of the new class are U.S. military veterans.

Marquette Rebounds. Marquette U. in Milwaukee welcomes its Class of 2026, about 21 percent larger than the one that came in Fall 2021. Roughly 30 percent of the new class identifies as a student of color, 10.5 percent more than last year. The number of African American students increased by 32 percent. The average high school GPA of new students is 3.57, the same as last year. The average SAT score of those who submitted scores was 1275. Additionally, 14 percent of the Class of 2026 has committed to Marquette's Honors Program.

North Carolina State's New Class Comes from 43 Countries. N.C. State U. received the most first-year applications in its history, nearly 40,000. It accepted 46.9 percent of them. In the end, about 5,600 students matriculated this fall. They posted an average high school weighted GPA of 4.31. About 52 percent of the new class is made up of women. NC State students are coming from 43 countries.

The University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. Meanwhile, UNC Chapel Hill welcomed 4,455 students, including 939 transfer students and international students from 85 different countries. First-generation students account for about 18 percent of the new class. Of those who reported class rank, 73.6 percent of first-year students were ranked in the top 10 percent of their high school class.

Northwestern Class of 2026 Represents 73 Countries.. Northwestern U. in Illinois attracted 91,086 applications last cycle for a class of 2,620 first-year students. NU's Class of 2026 includes students from 73 countries. The average debt that students carry when they graduate from Northwestern has fallen by 47 percent over the past decade to \$16,000. About half of the NU graduates leave with no debt.

While SAT scores were not required last year, those who submitted them posted an average of 1478 on the two-part SAT. New students also posted a 4.29 high school GPA. Some 97 percent of Northwestern graduates

Inside the Military Academies

Air Force Apps Fall 20 Percent. First-year applications to the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs fell by 20 percent last admissions cycle. Still, competition to get in is tough. This year 8,393 people submitted Academy applications and 1,071 were admitted. Before the pandemic, about 10,000 applied per year. In 1988, 16,500 people applied to the Academy.

According to Col. Arthur Wayne Primas, Jr., director of admissions, both West Point and the U.S. Naval Academy have seen similar drops in applications during the pandemic years.

Coast Guard Embraces Largest Number of New Women. Meanwhile, 43 percent of incoming students at the U. S. Coast Guard Academy's Class of 2026 is comprised of women, an Academy milestone. About 38 percent of the incoming class comes from underrepresented minority groups, plus nine cadets from diverse nations. This class was among the first to get started in the 2022-2023 academic year. The students showed up for Day One, June 27, for Swab Summer.

Rear Adm. Bill Kelly, academic superintendent, promised, "We are committed to your success, and we will ensure you live, learn and grow in the safest and most inclusive environment possible.... The 200-week journey that will ultimately lead to your commission... starts today! I challenge you to fully commit to rising above whatever challenges you may face as you begin your training and education." ■

are employed or enrolled in graduate school within nine months of graduation.

Oklahoma Class of 2026 Breaks Records. The U. of Oklahoma welcomed 4,700 students to the Class of 2026, the largest freshman class in history. The class also boasted higher GPAs than other incoming freshmen and more students reporting they are underrepresented minorities.

RPI's Largest First-Year Class. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute is matriculating its largest first-year class, 2,110 students, up from 1,500 last year. Deanna Cohen, media spokesman for the university said, "This class is one of the most diverse ever, and includes the most women in an entering class (625), as well as the most underrepresented minorities (378)... Nearly 10 percent of the class [comes] from the Western regions of the US."

Richmond "Incredibly Accomplished." About 860 first-year students make up the Class of 2026 at the U. of Richmond in Virginia. Roughly 26 percent of its new class are "students of color," while 12 percent

are first-generation college students and 10 percent international students, coming from 27 countries.

"Our students are incredibly accomplished," said Stephen Dupaul, vice president for enrollment management. One new student climbed Mount Kilimanjaro, another speaks five languages, yet another was called a "Hero" and received a Medal of Merit from the Boy Scouts of America for saving a life in Alaska.

"When reviewing applications, we consider everything we can learn about a student to understand better who they are, the choices they have made and how they might impact our community. To be competitive for admission, students need both rigorous curriculum and top grades—but our entering students hit those marks and even more."

South Carolina's Record New Class. The U. of South Carolina fielded more than 42,000 applications for the Class of 2026, and enrolled about 6,200 of them this fall, according to Scott Verzyl, vice president of enrollment and dean of admissions. The new class is the largest in school history. Verzyl added that the new class at USC is also the most diverse. Also, the new class at USC Upstate includes nine high school valedictorians. The new students scored an average of 1020 on the SAT and posted an average high school GPA of 3.9.

Tulane Admitted Two-Thirds of its Class Through ED. Tulane U.'s analysis of its Class of 2026 revealed that it received nearly 46,000 applications and admitted only 9.8 percent of them. Two-thirds were admitted through Tulane's two Early Decision programs, most of them through EDI. Another 2,249 students were admitted via its Early Action program.

Tulane's analysis of other competitive colleges stated that Brown U. admitted 896 students early out of the total 2,546 admitted. Yale U. admitted 800 applicants through Early Action, a little less than half of its final class.

Wash U. Enrolls 20 Percent Pell Eligible. Washington U. in St. Louis attracted 33,214 applications for its Class of 2026. In the end, 1,826 first-year students from across the globe enrolled. About 20 percent of the incoming class is Pell Grant eligible. And 15 percent will be the first in their family to attend college. Over half of the class identify as students of color. International students make up 11 percent of the new class

"We've been working hard at this [increasing Pell students] for a long time," said Ronné Turner, vice provost for admissions and financial aid. "It is incredibly exciting to reach this goal and welcome students from all of these wonderfully diverse backgrounds." ■

FINANCIAL MATTERS

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income and therefore protected from repayment. And the rule will forgive loan balances after 10 years of payment, instead of the current 20 years under many income-driven repayment plans, for borrowers with original loan balances of \$12,000 or less.

The proposed plan will fully cover the borrower's unpaid monthly interest, so that, unlike with current income-driven repayment plans, a borrower's loan balance will not grow so long as they make their required monthly payments.

Also, the department is proposing changes to the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program that will make it easier for borrowers working in public service to gain loan forgiveness.

Finally, the department plans to reinstate and improve a rule to hold career programs accountable for leaving their graduates with unaffordable debt. It also plans to publish an annual watch list of programs with the worst debt levels in the country.

"Today, we're delivering targeted relief that will help ensure borrowers are not placed in a worse position financially because of the pandemic, and restore trust to a system that should be creating opportunity, not a debt trap," said U. S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona.

Tuition Chases Inflation. Tuition rose at a historically low rate during the first year of the pandemic. And many schools tried to hold the line in 2021-22. But those days are over. Inflation has hit a 40-year high and tuition is on the rise again. For example, Iowa's three publics will post a 4.25 increase. That means Iowa students and families have to cough up an extra \$331-\$355 a year, according to *Money* magazine.

Harvard increased its tuition by 3 percent. A year at Harvard now costs \$76,763. Students from families earning under \$75,000 pay nothing. Baylor U. in Texas increased its tuition by 3 percent for the 2022-23 school year. Yale is up 4 percent, to \$80,700. Stanford increased tuition 4.25 percent, Syracuse rose by 4.5 percent.

Northwestern increased its tuition by 4.6 percent. Western Washington grew by just 2.4 percent, but it boosted its health care services fee by 17.9 percent. Penn State increased its tuition by 5 percent.

Some Hold the Line. Some universities continue to hold the line on inflation, including Purdue U. in Indiana and 10 Virginia publics that responded to their governor's appeal. That doesn't include the U. of Virginia that earlier voted a 4.7 percent increase. Financial aid for low-income students grew to off-set increases at these schools.

Should inflation continue at a significant rate, many colleges, even those that already increased tuition, will need to budget in current inflation losses. Schools will look to their state legislatures and tuition discounting strategies to avoid big cuts. But the current increases come as families are being hit on multiple economic fronts.

Dartmouth Ends Student Loans. Dartmouth C. in New Hampshire removed loans from its undergraduate financial aid packages. It is replacing them with expanded scholarships and grants. Students from families earning less than \$125,000 are eligible for Dartmouth's need-based aid. This move will save families about \$22,000 over four years.

Other Ivy League colleges with similar policies include Brown U., Columbia U., Harvard U., the U. of Pennsylvania and Yale U.

Rule Change Helps Grandparents Who Contribute to 529s. Beginning in the 2024-25 school year, grandparents will be able to make contributions to the 529s they own without negatively impacting their grandchildren's eligibility for financial aid. Congress recently made the change when it eliminated the question about outside contributions, as part of its overhaul of the FAFSA.

"That worry is gone now with the new rules," Stuart Siegal, president of FAFSAassist, told Bloomberg.com.

Georgia State's Micro-Grants Boost Retention. More than 16,000 Georgia State students who faced hardships that might have caused them to stop- or drop-out before graduating have received Panther Retention Grants that average about \$1,000. Preference is given to students who are close to graduating.

The Panther Retention Grant also inspired Georgia state legislation that will provide up to \$2,500 to students in need who completed 80 percent of their degree programs.

According to Timothy M. Renick, executive director of the National Institute for Student Success at Georgia State and who helped design the data-driven program, only 30 percent of students who leave the university for financial reasons before graduating ever return. That could add up to thousands of students. However, 85 percent of students who receive a Panther Retention Grant graduate within one year.

"With a bachelor's degree in hand, these individuals will earn hundreds of thousands of dollars more on average over the course of their careers, contributing more to local economies and the tax base," Renick said.

More Debt Relief. In June, nearly 200,000 former students who were defrauded by various for-profit colleges had \$6 billion in federal loans forgiven by the Biden Administration. These include students who attended campuses run by Dream Center, which folded in 2019, and by Career Education which ran vocational programs at 100 campuses.

The New York Times reported that some of the students who were granted relief also attended the U. of Phoenix, Grand Canyon U. and DeVry. Repayment was granted to former students who submitted a borrower defense application to the U.S. Department of Education prior to June.

Reuters reported that 43 million Americans still have student loan debt. ■

COUNSELOR'S BOOKSHELF

College Admission 101: Expert Advice for the New Challenges in Admissions, Testing, Financial Aid and More by Robert Franek; Third Edition; The Princeton Review, ISBN 978-0-593-45057-4; \$12.99.

"The Community's College," by Robert L. Pura and Tara L. Parker; AAC&U; paperback;

ISBN: 9781642674255; \$35. "...the ways community colleges continue to serve as powerful catalysts for social and economic mobility for students...families...and the communities in which they are located."

The Interim: A Guide to Transition Leadership in Higher Education by Daniel J. Bernardo;

Washington State U. Press; 192 pages; ISBN 978-0-87422-413-9; \$29.95.

New Web Sites. One web site, myclasstracker.com, helps "students stay on top of assignments, key deadlines, daily tasks and extracurricular activities..." \$28.99.

The American Association of Retired Persons has new scholarships for caregivers. See: www.aarp.org/caregiving/financial-legal/info-2017/scholarships-for-family-caregivers.html. ■

CURRICULUM CAPSULES

Antioch U. and Otterbein Launch Affiliation.

Antioch U.—which concentrates on graduate and adult education programs and is separate, but cooperative, from Antioch C., the experimental undergraduate school—has teamed up with Otterbein U. The two Ohio institutions hope to create a national university system. But for now, they are building out Otterbein's graduate and workforce training capability.

Both universities have a strong record for advancing social justice, democracy and the “common good” and will continue that mission. The two schools will share a common graduate program, while keeping their separate undergraduate operations. It will allow them to “expand degree offerings, to offer programs in more locations nationwide, to provide innovative learning modalities including online, low-residency and hybrid settings.”

The new system will also offer “tailored workforce education programs with badges, certificates and other credentials to learners and business partners nationwide,” said John Comerford, Otterbein president.

California State U. Channel Islands' New Dance Studies Major.

California State U. Channel Islands in Ventura County has launched a new Dance Studies major in its Performing Arts program. The major also provides students with the athletic training and technique necessary for dance performance. And graduates will be qualified to be dance education therapists, social workers or talent agents.

Georgia Southern Inaugurates More Rapid Special Education Advanced Degree.

Georgia Southern U. has created an Accelerated Bachelor's to Masters (ABM) program “to assist undergraduate special education students with earning an advanced degree in special education in less time.” The program permits juniors and seniors to take courses that transfer into the university's M.Ed program. The degree allows graduates to enter the field at a higher salary, in addition to giving them specialized knowledge and experience.

Hope to Teach. Hope C. in Western Michigan is working with the Holland Public Schools to launch a partially-free teacher preparation program. Eligible students will complete their first two years toward a bachelor's degree while still in high school by taking courses on the Hope campus.

Their final two years at Hope C. will be dedicated to earning a Bachelor of Education degree. The Holland Public Schools will cover

the cost of tuition, books and fees for the first two years. Students will need to apply for financial aid for the two years on campus.

“Hope to Teach” hopes to increase diversity in the teaching profession since nearly half of Holland Public Schools students are Hispanic and Latino. The current program is capped at three students per year, but is expected to grow. Students are chosen based upon their high school GPAs and teacher recommendations.

Niagara Agrees to Train Orthodox Students in Early Education Skills.

Niagara U. in upstate New York and Brooklyn's Institute for Career Advancement signed an agreement in which Niagara will provide online training in Early Education for the Institute's Ultra-Orthodox students.

Pacific's Dental Virtual Reality Learning.

The U. of the Pacific in California has teamed up with the Arthur A. Dugoni School of Dentistry in San Francisco to “create groundbreaking virtual reality simulations that could

change the future of dental education.”

In a high-tech, interactive simulated dental room students will get “a really in-depth view of what's going on,” said Keely Canniff, project manager. “You can pick up objects and interact with the tools.” Canniff added, “These students will save lives in the future because of this training.”

St. Philip's C.'s New Cybersecurity Engineering BAT.

St. Philip's C. in Texas announced that it will offer a Bachelor of Apply Technology (BAT) in Cybersecurity Engineering. The new program was approved by the Alamo Colleges District Board of Trustees and will be available to members of the surrounding communities. San Antonio is ranked second, behind Washington DC, as the nation's leading city for cybersecurity activity. Graduates will have “limitless opportunities here at home.”

Louisiana Ends Remedial Courses.

Louisiana college students will no longer be required to take remedial courses in English and mathematics. Instead, they will take for-credit classes in those areas that give them more intensive support. ■

TESTING TABS

Test Optional. This fall, 1,830 colleges and universities will be standardized test-free in their admissions decisions, according to FairTest. That includes the U. of North Dakota and other North Dakota state colleges. The N.D. State Board of Education voted to make permanent its temporary policy against the tests. Doing otherwise would've put the state's public colleges at a “huge admissions disadvantage,” according to Andrew Armacost, U. of North Dakota president.

One recent study of 5,000 students by EAB, a company which consults with colleges on enrollment management issues, found that 15 percent of students applied to a specific college because it was test optional. That number rose to 24 percent for black students and 21 percent for Hispanic students. Other studies show that the policy has less impact on college choice.

Meanwhile, MIT has ended its testing waiver and reinstated the standardized test requirement, saying that the tests gave it insight on how well a student would perform in college, particularly in mathematics.

AP Score Transparency Reduced. In 2021, the College Board stopped disclosing some breakdowns of AP scores by ethnicity. It also removed similar past data points from its website. The test has come under criticism by various groups who are disturbed by the racial disparities.

More students are taking AP courses. In 2011, about 898,000 students signed up for at least one AP exam. By 2021, 1.2 million students took at least one test. Each test requires a \$96 fee, although the College Board gives some test fee reductions. However, fewer minority students take AP classes, and in the past, fewer scored a 5 on one AP exam, only 5 percent compared to 15 percent of white students. Critics fear that the transparency changes will make it more difficult to find out whether these minority groups make or lose progress. ■

More Californians Go Out-of-State for College

According to a recent article in *The Sacramento Bee*, almost 40,000 freshmen left California to go to college in another state, up 27 percent since 2010. The 40,000 represents 22 percent of all California freshmen who began school four years ago. Leading the way where they go are Arizona State U., U. of Oregon, U. of Washington, U. of Nevada-Reno, U. of Arizona. New York attracted 3,000 California freshmen. Massachusetts attracted 2,200 California students.

Mitigating that exodus is the fact that 16,500 students fled other states to go to college in California, a number that's been stable since 2010. ■

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Community Colleges. Community Colleges serve nearly 12 million students and enroll nearly half of all students who go on to complete four-year degrees. Yet they are the least-funded education institution. C.C. trains 80 percent of first-responders and graduates more than half of new nurses and health care workers.

U.S. Logs 103 of 201 Top World Universities. According to the QS (Quacquarelli Symonds) World University Rankings 2023, 103 U.S. universities are ranked in the top 201 in the world.

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology ranks number one, followed by the U. of Cambridge, Stanford U., U. of Oxford, Harvard U., Caltech, Imperial C. London, UCL, ETH Zürich, and the U. of Chicago at number 10.

These are followed by the National U. of Singapore, Peking U., U. of Pennsylvania, Tsinghua U., U. of Edinburgh, EPFL, Princeton U., Yale U., Nanyang Technological U. and Cornell U. at 20.

Disability Programs Spread. Some 11 percent of undergraduates register a disability with their school. Some estimate that the

actual number of students with disabilities could be twice that number. But about one-third of students with mental health disability report that they're unaware of programs designed to help them in their postsecondary education institution.

In 2004, only 25 programs were offered at U.S. colleges. But by 2019, more than 260 colleges and universities offered on-campus transition programs for intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

IntellectAbility is one group that is working to improve services for the students. See www.ReplacingRisk.com.

Skills Gap. According to a recent survey by Epignosis, a learning and development technology company, and SHRM, 50 percent of human resources managers agree that their company is facing a skills gap, and 86 percent agree that closing the skills gap is an important training goal. Additionally, 76 percent of employees agree that they're more likely to stay with a company that offers continuous training. About 83 percent of organizations say that self-management will be among the top in-demand skills in 2022. And 46

percent of companies have specific training in place for new grads who are just entering the workplace.

States with Most At-Risk Youth. According to WalletHub, the personal-finance website, "12.6 percent of young people are neither working nor in school, exposing them to greater risk of poverty and violence." So it ranked the states with the most and the least at-risk youth, or those who are not faring as well as others in their age group, based on 16 key indicators.

States with the most at-risk youth: Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, West Virginia, Wyoming, Arkansas, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Kentucky and the District of Columbia.

States with the least at-risk youth: Minnesota, Hawaii, Virginia, Vermont, Rhode Island, Maryland, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Connecticut and Massachusetts. To view the entire report, see <https://walletHub.com/edu/states-with-the-most-at-risk-youth/37280>.

K-12 Students Still Far Behind. That's what Jill Barshay, a writer for *The Hechinger Report*, told NPR (National Public Radio). She said, according to the research of 8 million students by the nonprofit NWEA, third-graders are performing two years behind schedule because of the pandemic.

She said the good news was that elementary kids "seem to be catching up quite well... They'll be fully caught up in one to two years." Low-income students are "catching up" at the same rate.

College Aspiration Fades for Some Males, Blacks and Latinos? A recent survey of 22,000 members of the high school Class of 2022 by the non-profit YouthTruth, suggests the dream of college is another pandemic casualty for some.

The survey found that the number of "Latino students who want to go to college" fell from 79 percent to 71 percent. The percent of black students who want to go to college dropped from 79 percent to 72 percent. About 76 percent of white students say college is for them.

The number of males of all kind who want to go to college dropped from 74 to 67 percent. The number of females who say they want to go to college reached 81 percent. The number of students who intend to go to community college fell from 25 percent to 19 percent. ■

International Affairs

Rice Opens Paris Campus. Rice U. in Houston designated a 16th century building in Le Marais, an historic neighborhood in the heart of Paris, as its new center for student programs, independent researchers and international conferences. According to the university, a revolving group of faculty researchers and graduate students in a variety of fields will occupy the center during the academic year, with small groups of students taking short courses at the center lasting one to three weeks.

"The ambitions of our university and the needs of the future leaders we are educating require global engagement and perspective," said David Leebron, Rice president.

Film Studies in Wales. Wales, the United Kingdom's smallest nation, is making big waves in the film industry. And it is attracting students from the U.S. who want expert training at reduced prices at eight universities. Currently, 500 U.S. students are studying film-making and production skills.

One visiting U.S. admissions counselor reputedly compared the U. of South Wales' film school and its equipment to those in L.A. and New York, "for a fraction of the price."

Lucasfilm's "Willow" was made entirely on sight in Wales.

NU Qatar. Meanwhile, 120 students joined the NU-Q Class of 2026 in Qatar. Northwestern U. in Qatar enrolled students from the U.S., Albania, Austria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Morocco, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Rwanda, South Korea, Sudan, Taiwan, Tajikistan and Zimbabwe.

Ukrainians Study Tuition-Free at U. of Chicago. "UChicago is ready to expand mission efforts and support for displaced students and scholars who are impacted by the war in Ukraine and events across the region," said Paul Alivistos, U. Chicago president.

Most Students Say They Can't Afford to Study Abroad. According to a new survey from Best Colleges.com, 29 percent of currently enrolled undergraduates say they had plans to study abroad that were disrupted by the COVID -19 pandemic and could not go because of cost. However, 72 percent say that they are budgeting for future travel. ■

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NEWS

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Early Options. According to the National Association for College Admissions Counselors (NACAC), about 25 percent of colleges offer the Early Decision option, while 38 percent offer Early Action programs. The yield from Early Decision is 90 percent. The estimated yield for Early Action is about 25 percent or about the same as Regular Decision.

In 2019, only 4 percent of the total college-applying pool applied early. About 6 percent of the highest income students applied early, while only 3 percent of first-generation students did so. However, by 2021 when the pandemic was in full swing, the early group had reached 11 percent of the total pool. That number hit 17 percent of the highest income students, while early applications from first-generation students reached 10 percent.

College No Guarantee of Prosperity. A survey of 1,000 Americans with a college degree by Intelligent.com asks “Is College Worth It?” One-in-seven college grads earn less than the federal poverty threshold, 25 percent earn less than \$30,000 per year, 48 percent say they live paycheck-to-paycheck and the majority do not actually work in their field of study.

Yet according to the 2022 College Confidence Index by GradGuard and College Plus, a survey of 1,500 current and prospective college students and 500 parents, 83 percent of college students are completely, very or somewhat confident “that they will earn enough money to make the cost of college worth it.”

However, only 63 percent of parents of college students feel confident that a college education will allow their children to get a good job, and only 60 percent think it’s worth the investment. And only 36 percent of parents of college students feel confident that they can pay for four years of their child’s college education.

Milwaukee Requires Students to Fill Out FAFSA to Graduate. In order to make students aware of the federal aid for college available to them, the Milwaukee County (Wisconsin) Board of School Directors voted to require all graduating students to fill out

the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).

Research indicates that 91 percent of graduating students who fill out the FAFSA enroll in college the same year, versus 50 percent who enroll who do not complete the form. This year, only 42 percent of Milwaukee’s graduates filled out the form. Alabama, California, Colorado, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland and New Hampshire require students to fill out the form as a condition for graduation.

FINANCIAL

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“Wisconsin ranks 41 nationally in FAFSA completion rates, and the National College Attainment Network estimates that Wisconsin high school students left \$50 million on the table in 2021,” said U. of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Chancellor Mark Mone. ■