Relying on Pell

About 40 percent of students at public two-year institutions receive federal Pell grants.

Pell Grant recipients by dependency and institution, 2013–14


Public four-year institutions had the highest rate (60 percent) of dependent students receiving a Pell Grant, compared to 41 percent at public two-year institutions. About 22 percent of independent students without dependents at all institutions received a Pell Grant in 2013–14. Independent students with dependents at two-year public institutions were more than twice as likely to receive a Pell Grant (37 percent) as their counterparts at public four-year institutions (18 percent). In the 2013–14 academic year, community colleges, including public four-year, primarily associate degree granting institutions, enrolled 10.5 million credit students, representing 46 percent of all undergraduates. In the same year, about 3.5 million community college students received a Pell Grant, comprising 40 percent of all Pell Grant recipients. The maximum Pell Grant award for that academic year was $5,645—it increased to $5,775 the following year—with the average award for community college students being $3,227.

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