
WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

2024

The Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (**WAICU**) is the official organization of the 22 private, nonprofit, accredited degree-granting colleges and universities in Wisconsin.

ENROLLMENT

WAICU-member colleges and universities currently enroll more than 51,500 students. Fifty-five percent of the undergraduate students are from Wisconsin.

DIVERSITY

Thirty-one percent of Wisconsin private nonprofit undergraduate students are students of color, compared to 20 percent in the public colleges and universities. Thirty-one percent of all students in WAICU institutions are age 25 or over, compared to 19 percent in the UW System. Twenty-eight percent of WAICU undergraduate students are first-generation.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Students who qualify for the federal Pell Grant (by definition, those with significant financial need) at WAICU-member colleges and universities constitute a higher percentage of undergraduate students, 29 percent, than at the four-year public institutions, 21 percent. Transfer students are also welcomed. In the fall of 2022, 17 percent of new undergraduate students at Wisconsin's private nonprofit colleges and universities were transfer students.

LEVERAGING STATE

TAX DOLLARS

WAICU-member colleges and universities receive no direct operating support from state taxpayers. Their Wisconsin students do qualify for student aid. Private nonprofit higher education is a bargain for state taxpayers. Over four years, the cost to state taxpayers per degree at public institutions is \$129,130, compared to only \$9,898 at WAICU-member institutions.

STATE FUNDING

The Wisconsin Grant is the primary state-funded need-based financial aid program for Wisconsin students attending private nonprofit colleges or universities. The 2022-2023 Wisconsin Grant appropriation of \$28.5 million represents only about 1.50 percent of funding for all higher education.

NET TUITION / OUT-OF-POCKET COSTS

The average price for undergraduate tuition and fees at WAICU-member colleges or universities during 2021-2022 was \$36,094. The average freshman financial aid package was \$31,733, leaving net tuition costs of just \$4,362. For 2021-2022, average tuition at the four-year public institutions was \$8,550. Additional costs for room and board are comparable in the public and private nonprofit sectors.

Ninety-eight percent of full-time degree-seeking undergraduates at private, nonprofit colleges and universities in Wisconsin receive financial aid. Ninety-one percent of undergraduates at WAICU institutions receive grants and scholarships, compared to 75 percent at other four-year, degree-granting, private, nonprofit institutions in the US. Grants, which do not have to be paid back, make up 79 percent of the average financial aid package.

FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION RATES

The four-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time students who began and stayed at a private, nonprofit college or university is 39 percent higher than the rate for students on public campuses. This enables graduates to pay less tuition and start earning sooner.

EDUCATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY

Each year, Wisconsin's private nonprofit institutions produce 13,380 graduates, most of whom remain in Wisconsin. WAICU members award 24 percent of Wisconsin's bachelor's degrees and 34 percent of advanced degrees.

Among bachelor's degrees, private, nonprofit colleges and universities produce 23 percent of business graduates, 26 percent of engineering graduates, and 55 percent of nursing graduates.

At the graduate level, WAICU members produce 36 percent of business degrees, 62 percent of physician assistant degrees, 80 percent of nursing degrees, 57 percent of medical doctor degrees, 38 percent of education degrees, and 100 percent of dentistry degrees.

PERSONAL ATTENTION

The average class size in Wisconsin's private, nonprofit colleges and universities is just 16 students and the student/faculty ratio is under 12:1. This personal interaction is just one reason that the majority of students graduating from private, nonprofit colleges do so in four years.

For more information, contact the
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