2020-21 State Net Price Calculator (NPC) Guidelines

60x30TX

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

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2020-21 STATE NET PRICE CALCULATOR

Program Authorization and Purpose

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) is required to provide an accessible tool for estimating the cost of attendance (COA) for full-time entering first-year students attending institutions of higher education in Texas (see Texas Education Code (TEC), Section 61.0777). General rules concerning the uniform standards for the publication of COA information as well as a tool (Net Price Calculator - NPC) to compute an estimated COA can be found in Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Chapter 21, Subchapter PP.

Institutional Participation

Public institutions of higher education are **required** to participate in the annual NPC update process by providing the required institutional information to estimate the COA. Private/Independent institutions of higher education in Texas approved to participate in the Tuition Equalization Grant (TEG) and Texas College Work-Study (TCWS) Programs are strongly **encouraged** to participate in the NPC tool.

Principles

The State's NPC is intended to be as consumer-friendly and easy to understand as possible. The questions, information, and interface are designed with the end-user in mind. The user is presented with bottom-line estimates of both potential COA and financial aid options based on current year information provided by the financial aid offices at the participating institutions. The NPC was designed to increase institutional transparency and offer families a realistic picture of the comparable COA figures across institutions. It should not be used as a calculator for institutional recruitment or enrollment management. The NPC can be found on the College For All Texans website.
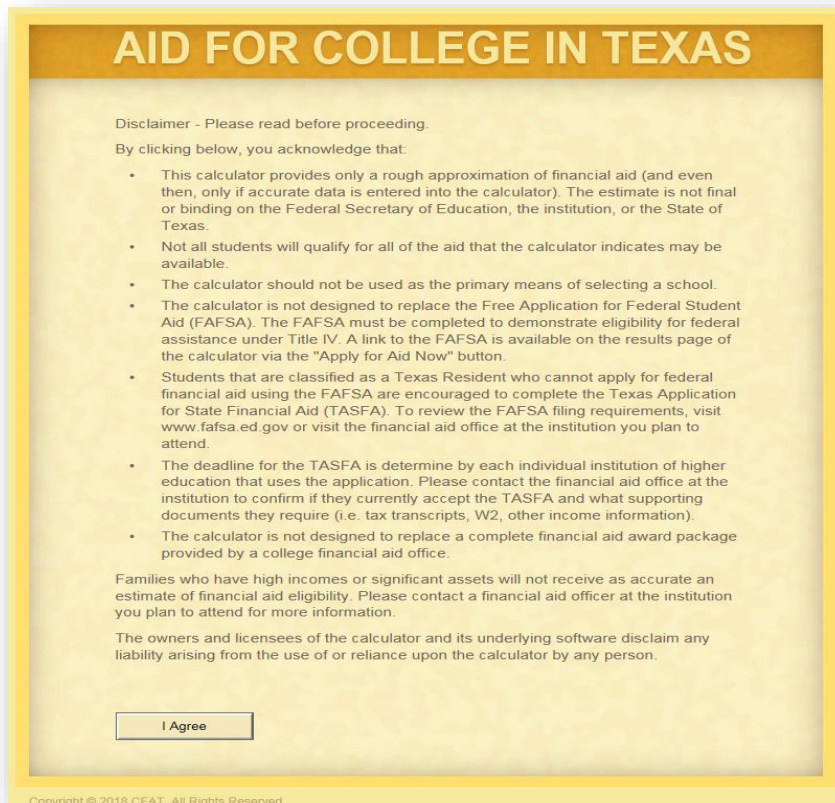
Net Price Calculator Portals

The Administration Application (institutional webpage) is located at: Institution Admin Tool. The THECB assigns participating institutions a unique administrative username and password to access the necessary modules and tables for configuration on the administration site.

NOTE: If the institution's Director of Financial Aid is unable to access the site, contact Financial Aid Services through CONTACT US (select "Financial Aid Question" as the Contact Reason).

THECB Estimator Administration Login

Please enter your username and password to login:

Username: [   ]

Password: [   ]

[Submit]

The Estimator Application (public webpage) is located at: Net Price Calculator tool. This application link is advertised for end-users (students and parents) on the College for All Texans website, and should also be posted on each participating institution's website in a prominent location.

AID FOR COLLEGE IN TEXAS

Disclaimer - Please read before proceeding.

By clicking below, you acknowledge that:

- This calculator provides only a rough approximation of financial aid (and even then, only if accurate data is entered into the calculator). The estimate is not final or binding on the Federal Secretary of Education, the institution, or the State of Texas.
- Not all students will qualify for all of the aid that the calculator indicates may be available.
- The calculator should not be used as the primary means of selecting a school.
- The calculator is not designed to replace the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA must be completed to demonstrate eligibility for federal assistance under Title IV. A link to the FAFSA is available on the results page of the calculator via the "Apply for Aid Now" button.
- Students that are classified as a Texas Resident who cannot apply for federal financial aid using the FAFSA are encouraged to complete the Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA). To review the FAFSA filing requirements, visit www.fafsa.ed.gov or visit the financial aid office at the institution you plan to attend.
- The deadline for the TASFA is determine by each individual institution of higher education that uses the application. Please contact the financial aid office at the institution to confirm if they currently accept the TASFA and what supporting documents they require (i.e. tax transcripts, W2, other income information).
- The calculator is not designed to replace a complete financial aid award package provided by a college financial aid office.

Families who have high incomes or significant assets will not receive as accurate an estimate of financial aid eligibility. Please contact a financial aid officer at the institution you plan to attend for more information.

The owners and licensees of the calculator and its underlying software disclaim any liability arising from the use of or reliance upon the calculator by any person.

[I Agree]

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Overview of the Institution's Administrative Site

Administrative Site Log In – All institutions participating in one of the state financial aid programs have been assigned a unique username and password to access the administrative site. Once logged in, institutions can view and update information using the options listed under **Estimator Setup**.

NOTE: If the institution's Director of Financial Aid is unable to access the site, contact Financial Aid Services through CONTACT US (select "Financial Aid Question" as the Contact Reason).
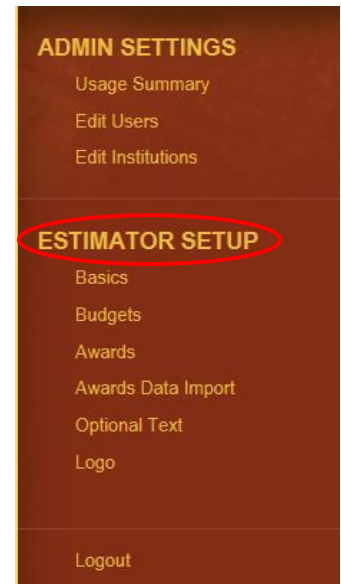
- **Basics** – Introductory information concerning how the application can be used to submit and configure NPC data.

- **Budgets** – These costs are loaded **automatically** into the NPC from the College Student Budget (CSB) System. Changes or updates to the CSB are loaded into the NPC daily through an automated script.

- **Awards** – There are two tables used by the NPC to configure the award amounts the end-user will see on the results page: one table is for *dependent* students and the other is for *independent* students. Each table sets an estimated basic financial aid package for students within Expected Family Contribution (EFC) ranges, including award amounts for grants/scholarships, loans, and a median grant/scholarship. These amounts are independently configurable based on EFC range, residency status, and living arrangements.

- **Awards Data Import** – The institution's award information for dependent and independent populations should be entered into separate spreadsheet templates. After all data fields are completed, both the dependent and independent spreadsheets must be saved in .CSV format and uploaded into the NPC. A Comma Separated Values (CSV) file, sometimes referred to as "Character Separated Values" or Comma Delimited Files" is a plain text file that contains a list of data where the comma character is mostly used to separate (or delimit) data. Once the data is successfully uploaded into the NPC, the data tables can be viewed in **Awards**.

  - It is recommended that the awards table template(s) be used to initially populate the awards tables. Once populated, the specific data fields can be updated manually under the **Awards** section. Click within the table and use the backspace button to delete the existing data. The new value can then be entered into the table. The field will turn green, indicating the information has been updated. The **Save Changes** button will then activate so the updated information can be saved. Updates can also be made by importing an updated award template.

- *New* **Optional Text** – Participating institutions are **required** to use the **Optional Text** section to communicate specific information to the end-user concerning the institution's:
  - Caveats and disclaimers, as indicated in the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA)
  - Packaging policies, processes, philosophies, etc.

🛑 **STOP: PERCENTAGE OF COHORT THAT RECEIVED GRANT AID**

Participating institutions are **required** to include the percentage of its cohort (full-time, first-time students) that received grant aid under the "Optional Text" section to meet the federal Net Price Calculator requirements in accordance with the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA).

Note: Optional text for each institution chosen by the end-user will be displayed under the institution's name at the bottom of the results page.

- **Logo** – Participating institutions are encouraged to upload their institution's logo into the NPC. Logos must be limited to a .JPEG image (typically used for photographs, still images, etc.) or .GIF image (typically used for animations, simple images, transparency, etc.) no larger than 50x50 pixels. Images larger than 50x50 pixels will be distorted on the results page. If the end-user selects the institution on the public site, the institution's logo and name will appear at the top of the results page as a header for the information specific to the institution. The logo and institution name also serve as a hyperlink to the institution's financial aid office landing page of the institution's website.

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Logout

NPC Components

There are three components that are used to create the output/results on the NPC:

1. Estimated Student Budgets or Costs of Attendance (COA)

The College Student Budget (CSB) is a database system separate from the NPC that is used to collect data from the institutions. All institutions in Texas participating in a state financial aid program(s) are required to submit COA figures for the upcoming year to the CSB database.

2. Estimated Expected Family Contribution (EFC)

The simplified formula (no assets) of the Federal Methodology (FM) calculation is used to compute an estimated EFC within the NPC. No EFC information is displayed for the end-user. This data is generated by the THECB.

3. Estimated Award or Packaging Information

Institutions participating in the NPC must upload and maintain estimated annual award table information for the active award year in the NPC. **(See steps below)**

Importing NPC Annual Award Data

1. Log into the Institution Admin Tool and click **Awards Data Import**.

2. Download the **Dependent** and **Independent** Excel templates.

3. Populate your institution's award data information using the **blue** cells. (Instructions are available underneath each template)

4. Save each award template file in a .CSV (Comma Delimited) format.

5. Use the **Browse** button to select the corresponding .CSV template.

6. Click the **Upload Dependent/ Independent Student Awards CSV File** button.

7. The values from the template will populate in a table. Review the data carefully.

8. Once validated, click **Save** and the information will be stored in the THECB database and available for the NPC calculation.

9. Test the NPC by submitting several scenarios through the live NPC tool to view the output/results.

PLEASE NOTE: Only institutions that have successfully uploaded required information are **activated** and can be viewed by the end-user on the public site. Institutions that have not previously participated but would like to participate must contact Financial Aid Services through CONTACT US (select "Financial Aid Question" as the **Contact Reason**).