UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE)

Net Price Calculator Quick Start Guide

January 2018

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Chapter

1

Introduction

The following instructions are designed to take you through the steps required to configure and host a customized version of the U.S. Department of Education's Net Price Calculator application on your institution's website. The Net Price Calculator template is available at http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/netpricecalculator/.

In accordance with the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA), as amended (20 U.S.C. § 1015a), beginning on October 29, 2011, each postsecondary institution in the United States that participates in Title IV federal student aid programs and enrolls full-time, first-time degree- or certificate-seeking undergraduate students is required to post a net price calculator on its website. This calculator uses institutional data to provide **estimated** net price information to current and prospective students and their families based on a student's individual circumstances.

In order to assist institutions in meeting this obligation, the U.S. Department of Education has designed and developed a fully functional net price calculator template available to all Title IV postsecondary institutions for use on their websites. The latest version of the Department's Net Price Calculator template uses data for the most recently completed academic year and updated versions of the template are planned to release in January annually.

> Since the Net Price Calculator is based on data from actual full-time, first-time undergraduate students who have attended your institution, you cannot use data for an academic year that has not yet been completed.

Using both institution-provided and student-entered data, this calculator will allow prospective students to calculate an estimated net price at the institution, defined as cost of attendance minus grant and scholarship aid, based on what similar students paid in a previous year. The template was developed with input from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Technical Review Panel (TRP), which met on January 27-28, 2009, and included 58 individuals representing the federal government, state governments, student financial aid and institutional research offices at postsecondary institutions from all sectors, association representatives, and others. There was also a 30-day public comment period following the meeting of the TRP from which additional feedback was received.

Institutions may use either the Net Price Calculator template developed by the U.S. Department of Education or develop their own calculator, so long as it includes "at a minimum the same data elements" found in the Department's template. A list of minimum required elements and frequently asked questions is available online at https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/Section/Net_price_calculator.

1.1 Net Price Calculator Process Overview

The template has two options for creating a customized Net Price Calculator:

1. **Template**: This option will guide users through a simple step-by-step process for entering the information required for the Net Price Calculator. This template only allows users to enter information for one Net Price Calculator at a time, as described in Using the Net Price Calculator Template.

2. **Bulk Upload Tool**: This option requires users to input their data in a text document and upload it to the website. This tool can be used to produce an output file for one or more Net Price Calculators at a time, as described in Using the Bulk Data File Upload Tool.

The Net Price Calculator template is comprised of two components for both of the options referenced above. They include:

1. **Institution application**: Institutions input the data used to calculate estimated institutional net price via the web-based application or the bulk upload tool. This includes cost of attendance data (including values for tuition and required fees, books and supplies, room and board, and other related expenses) and the median amount of grant and scholarship aid awarded to full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students by living and residency category and Expected Family Contribution (EFC) range.

2. **Student application**: Based on the data entered by the institution, a customized net price calculator is generated for use on the institution's website. The calculator includes questions pertaining to dependency status, income level, and living arrangements to get an estimated net price for attending the institution.

Determining a student's dependency status	Determining a student's approximated EFC	Determining the student's cost of attendance
A student's dependency status is determined based on the following: • Age: If the student's age is greater than 23, then the student's dependency status is **Independent** • Marital status: If the student is married, then the student's dependency status is **Independent** • Children: If the student has dependent children, then the student's dependency status is **Independent with dependent children** If a student does not meet any of these criteria, the student's dependency status is considered **Dependent** for the purpose of the calculator. The student's dependency is then used to help determine the approximated EFC.	The calculator uses a look-up table populated with data compiled from FAFSA applications to identify a median EFC based on the following: • Dependency status • Number in family • Number in college • Income level The approximated EFC is used to identify the median amount of grant and scholarship aid, as was entered by the institution.	The calculator determines the appropriate cost of attendance to display based on the student's: • Eligibility for in-state/in-district tuition • Planned living arrangements

1.2 Section 508 Compliance

The U.S. Department of Education's Net Price Calculator template complies with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. § 794d). The current amendment went into effect June 21, 2001 and requires that federal agencies make their electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities. The U.S. Department of Education's Net Price Calculator template was designed to fully integrate with any additional adaptive equipment or software that may be required.

1.3 JavaScript

In order to use both the institution and student Net Price Calculator applications, you must have JavaScript enabled in your browser. Instructions for this process are available for three browsers: Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, and Google Chrome.

Internet Explorer

To enable JavaScript in **Internet Explorer**, please follow the instructions below:

1. Click the **Tools** menu.
2. Select **Internet Options**.
3. Click the **Security** tab.
4. Click the **Custom Level** button.
5. Scroll down until you see the "Scripting" section.
6. Select the "Enable" radio button under "Active Scripting."
7. Click the **OK** button.

Mozilla Firefox

To enable JavaScript in **Mozilla Firefox**, please follow the instructions below:

1. Click the **Tools** drop-down menu.
2. Select **Options.**
3. Check the boxes next to Block pop-up windows, Load images automatically, and **Enable JavaScript**.
4. **Refresh your browser** by right-clicking anywhere on the page and selecting Reload, or by using the Reload button in the toolbar.

Google Chrome

To enable JavaScript in **Google Chrome,** please follow the instructions below:

1. On the "Settings" page, click the **Show advanced settings**.
2. Click the **Chrome** menu icon on the browser toolbar.
3. Select Allow all sites to run **JavaScript** (recommended) in the "**JavaScript**" section.

1.4 Hints & Tips

Below are some helpful hints and tips for using the Net Price Calculator template.

- For assistance with any questions or problems related to system usage, refer to the Net Price Calculator Help Desk contact information located at the top of the screen. The Help Desk for this template is available Monday-Friday from 8am-4pm EST and may be reached toll-free at 1-877-299-3593 or at npc@inovas.net.

- Use the button at the top right of the screen to access the Quick Start Guide for Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox.

- Use the link at the bottom of the home page to view the additional available resources found at the Net Price Calculator Information Center, available at https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/Section/Net_price_calculator.

1.5 Browser Compatibility

The Net Price Calculator is designed to work with Internet Explorer, 10.0 and above, Mozilla Firefox, 42.0 and above, and Chrome 46.0 and above.

Continue to Chapter 2: Using the Net Price Calculator Template to use the Template;
Or to Chapter 3: Using the Bulk Data File Upload Tool to use the Bulk Upload Tool.

Chapter

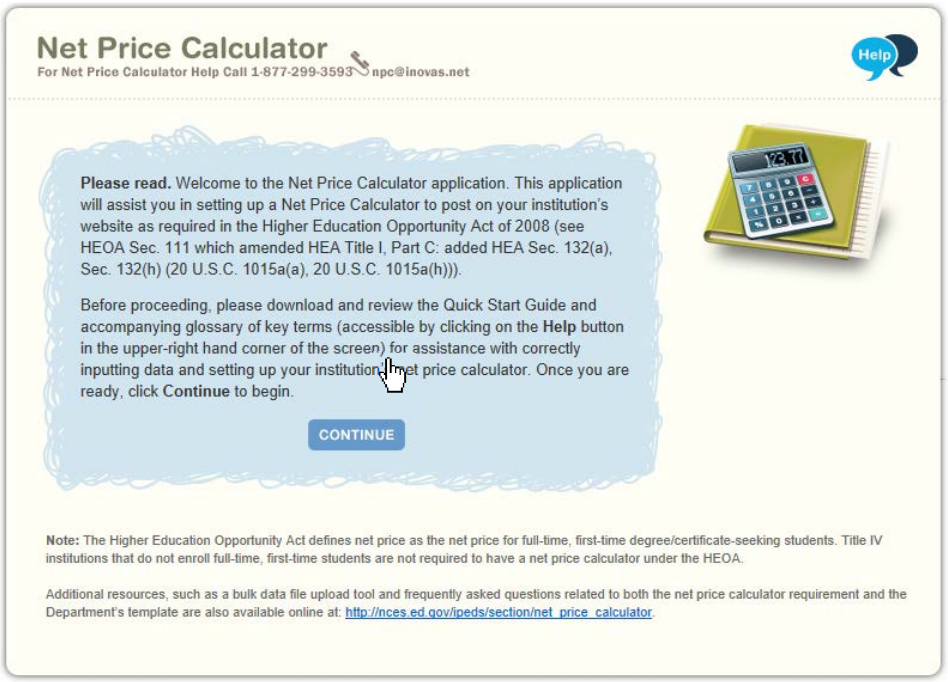
2

Using the Net Price Calculator Template

This chapter contains detailed instructions for completing the Net Price Calculator Template, available at http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/netpricecalculator.

2.1 Getting Started

On the Net Price Calculator home page, shown below, carefully read the welcome message then click **Continue** to get started.



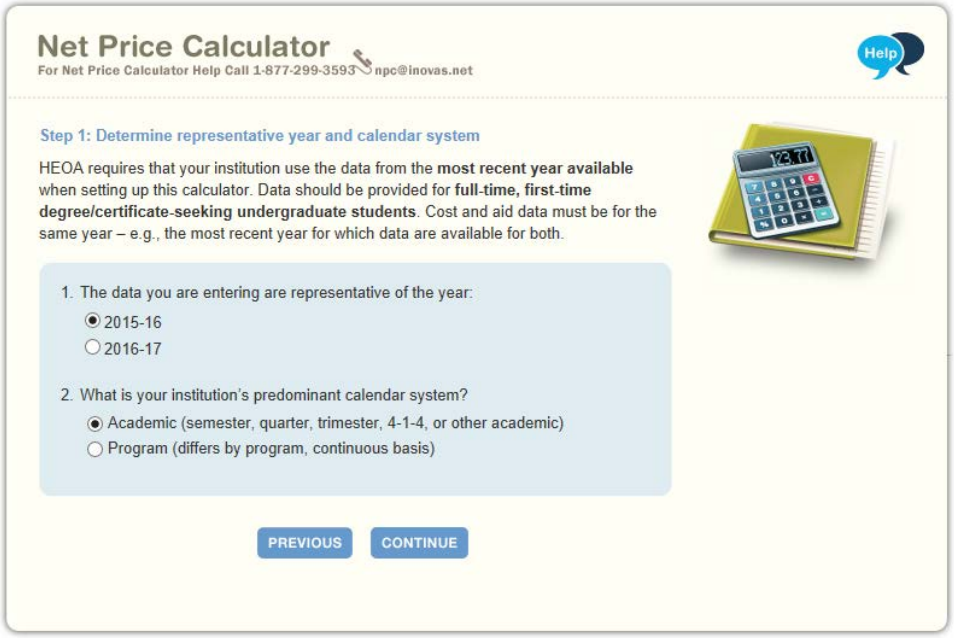
2.2 Enter Institutional Data

You must complete all screening questions applicable to your institution. The screens displayed will vary based on the predominant calendar system selected in Step 1, Question 2. Your responses here will determine which data elements you will be required to provide in the subsequent data input tables.

Step 1 – Determine representative year and calendar system (applicable to all institutions)

Only two representative years will be available at any time – currently this includes 2015-16 and 2016-17. Since the HEA requires that the Net Price Calculator be based on data from actual full-time, first-time undergraduate students who have attended your institution, you must select the most recent *completed* academic year for which data are available.

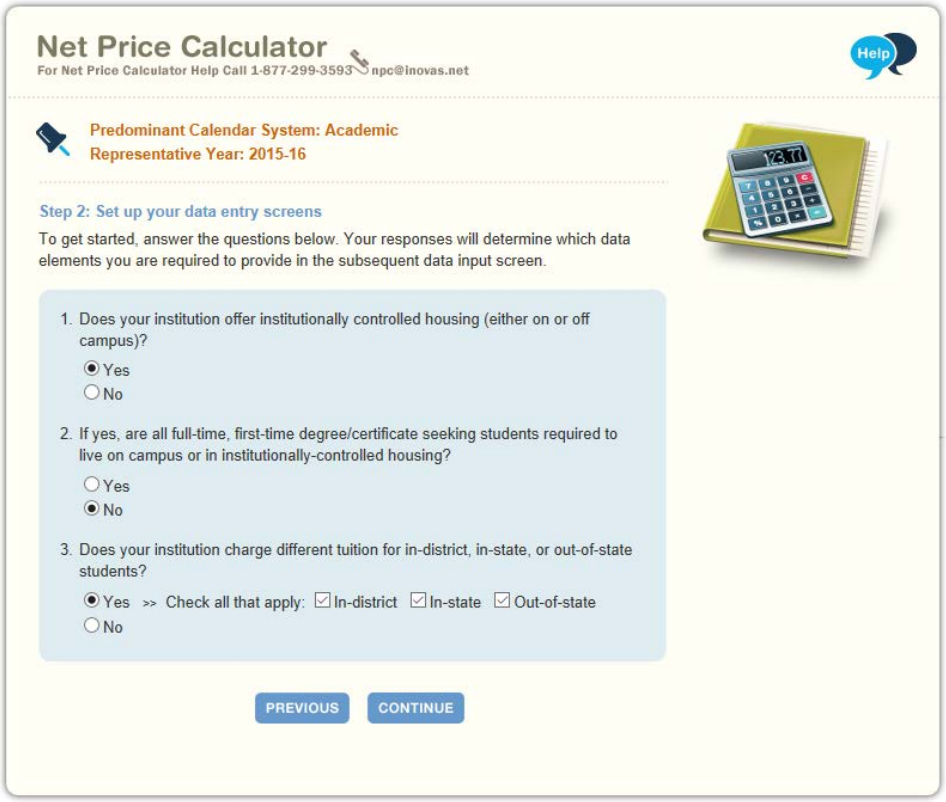
The calendar system selected should be consistent with that reported in the IPEDS. You may find it helpful to discuss this with the office(s) at your institution that complete the IPEDS IC Header survey.



Once you are satisfied with all entries, click **Continue**.

Step 2 – Set up your data entry screens (for academic year tuition reporters - based on your response to Step 1, Question 2)

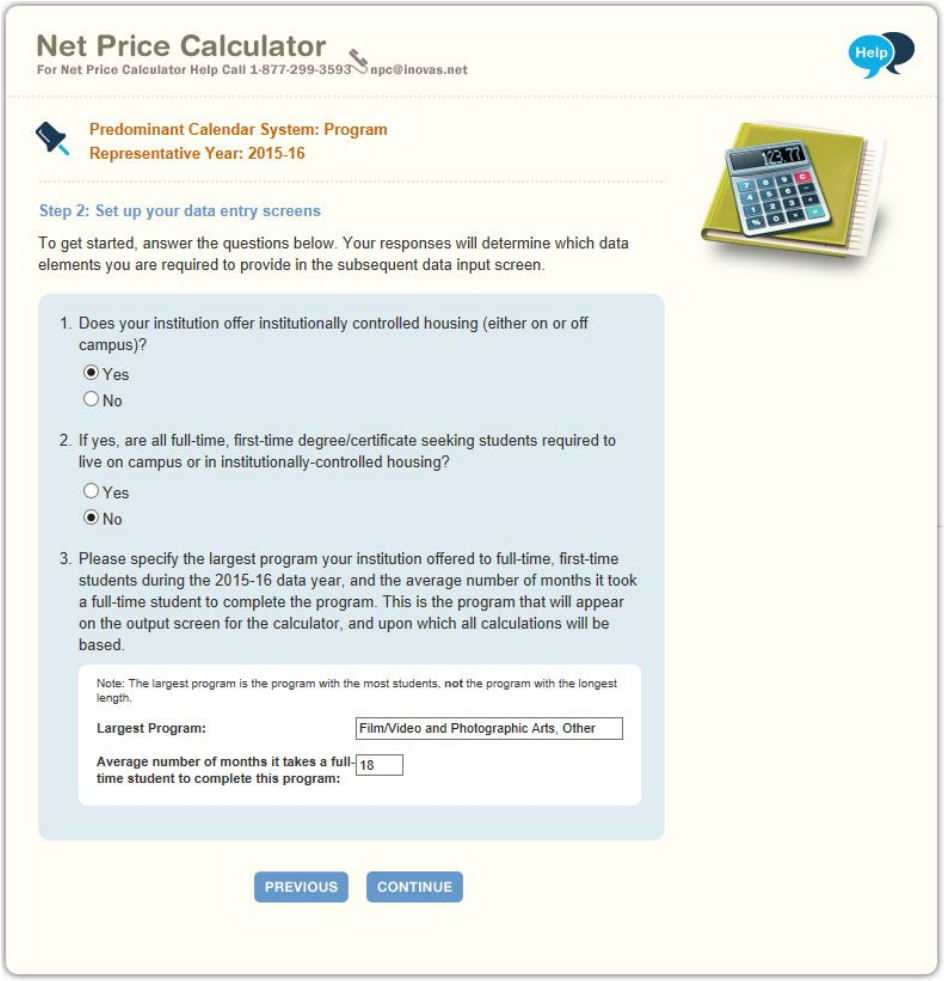
On this screen, you must indicate whether your institution offers institutionally controlled housing (either on or off campus). If your institution does offer this, you must indicate whether all full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students are required to live on campus or in institutionally-controlled housing. Academic reporters are asked to indicate if the institution charges different tuition for in-district, in-state, or out-of-state students.



Step 2 – Set up your data entry screens (for program tuition reporters - based on your response to Step 1, Question 2)

On this screen, you must indicate whether your institution offers institutionally controlled housing (either on or off campus). If your institution does offer this, you must indicate whether all full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students are required to live on campus or in institutionally-controlled housing.

Program reporters are asked to specify the largest program the institution offered to full-time, first-time undergraduate students and the average number of months it took a full-time student to complete the program. This should be reported for the data year indicated in Step 1, Question 1. This is the program that will appear on the output screen for the calculator and is the program upon which all calculations will be based.



Step 3 – Enter your institution's data

When entering data into the tables, you may find it helpful to discuss the data to be input with the office(s) at your institution that complete the IPEDS Institutional Characteristics and Student Financial Aid surveys. Fill in each table as completely as possible.

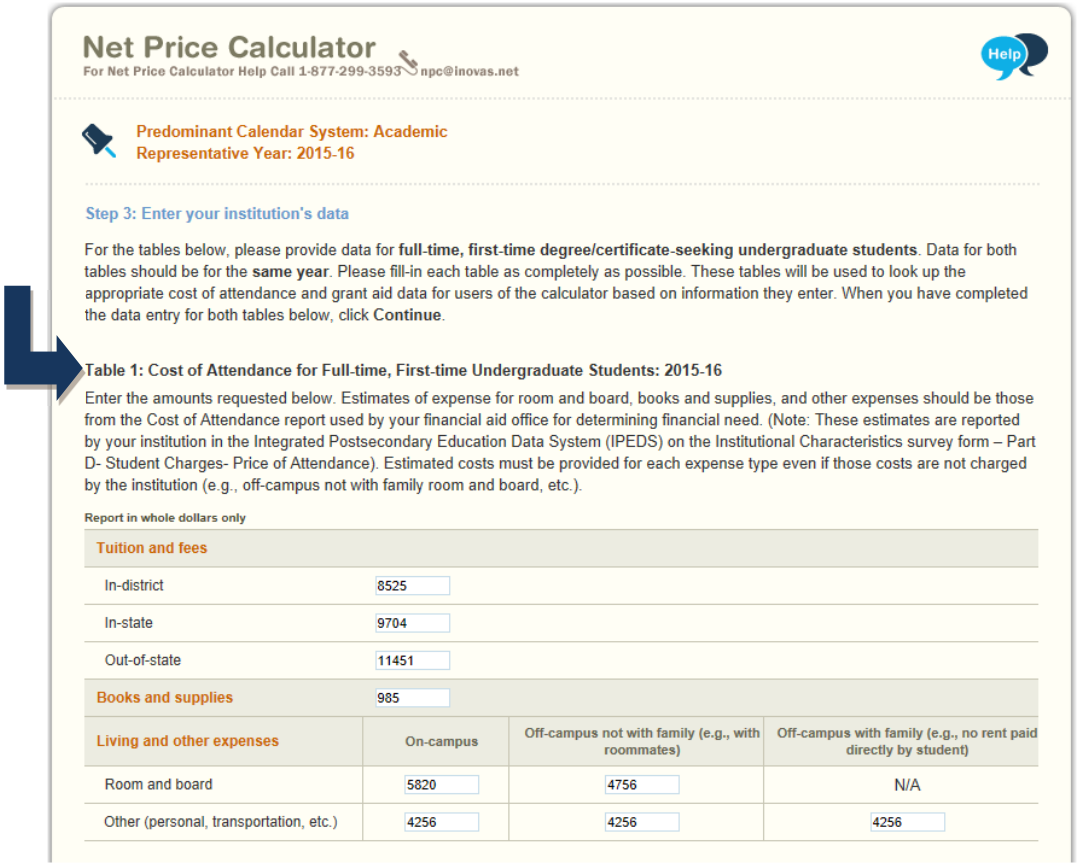
Data in both tables should be for **full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students**, and should be for the **same year** (as indicated in Step 1, Question 1).

If your institution's predominant calendar system is 'Academic,' then data in both tables should be reported using a 9-month calendar. If your institution's predominant calendar system is 'Program,' then data in both tables should be entered for the entire length of your largest program (as indicated in Step 2, Question 3).

The example tables in this step are for an academic year tuition reporter with institutionally-controlled housing and variable tuition rates for in-district, in-state, and out-of-state students. This is simply an example of one version of the data input tables and is not representative of the information required from all institutions. Certain columns (e.g., on-campus housing, variable tuition rates, etc.) will not be displayed if you have indicated that your institution does not offer these options in Steps 1 and 2.

Table 1: Cost of Attendance for Full-time, First-time Undergraduate Students

In this table, you must enter the estimated expenses for tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, and other expenses (personal, transportation, etc.). These estimates are reported by your institution in the IPEDS Institutional Characteristics survey on the Part D – Student Charges – Price of Attendance screen. Estimated costs must be provided for each expense type even if those costs are not charged by the institution (e.g., off-campus not with family room and board, etc.).



Net Price Calculator

For Net Price Calculator Help Call 1-877-299-3593 npc@inovas.net

Help

Predominant Calendar System: Academic
Representative Year: 2015-16

Step 3: Enter your institution's data

For the tables below, please provide data for **full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students**. Data for both tables should be for the **same year**. Please fill-in each table as completely as possible. These tables will be used to look up the appropriate cost of attendance and grant aid data for users of the calculator based on information they enter. When you have completed the data entry for both tables below, click **Continue**.

Table 1: Cost of Attendance for Full-time, First-time Undergraduate Students: 2015-16

Enter the amounts requested below. Estimates of expense for room and board, books and supplies, and other expenses should be those from the Cost of Attendance report used by your financial aid office for determining financial need. (Note: These estimates are reported by your institution in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) on the Institutional Characteristics survey form – Part D- Student Charges- Price of Attendance). Estimated costs must be provided for each expense type even if those costs are not charged by the institution (e.g., off-campus not with family room and board, etc.).

Report in whole dollars only

Tuition and fees			
In-district	8525		
In-state	9704		
Out-of-state	11451		
Books and supplies	985		
Living and other expenses	On-campus	Off-campus not with family (e.g., with roommates)	Off-campus with family (e.g., no rent paid directly by student)
Room and board	5820	4756	N/A
Other (personal, transportation, etc.)	4256	4256	4256

Table 2: Grants and Scholarships for Full-time, First-time Undergraduate Students

In this table, you must enter the median amount of need and non-need grant and scholarship aid awarded to full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students. This table is organized by residency and living arrangement (as applicable to your institution), and Expected Family Contribution (EFC) range. If you have fewer than three (3) observations for a cell, leave the cell blank. The system will calculate and insert the average of the surrounding cells. In the bottom row of the table, report the median amount of grant or scholarship aid for students with an unknown EFC (e.g., they did not file a FAFSA or apply for need-based financial aid).

Table 2: Grants and Scholarships for Full-time, First-time Undergraduate Students: 2015-16

Enter the amounts requested below. Data should represent the **median** amount of both need and non-need grant and scholarship aid **from Federal, State, or Local Governments, or the Institution (exclude private source grant or scholarship aid and work-study programs)** awarded to **full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students** with the indicated living and residency category for each Expected Family Contribution (EFC) range. If you have fewer than three (3) observations for a cell, leave the cell blank. The system will calculate and insert the average of the surrounding cells. In the bottom row of the table, report the median amount of grant or scholarship aid for students for whom you do not know an EFC (e.g., they did not file a FAFSA or apply for need-based financial aid).

Report in whole dollars only

	In-district			In-state			Out-of-state		
EFC Range ($)	On-campus	Off-campus not with family	Off-campus with family	On-campus	Off-campus not with family	Off-campus with family	On-campus	Off-campus not with family	Off-campus with family
0	5550	3789			5960	5743		8650	
1-1,000		3621	3568				4859		7658
1,001-2,500			2525		4902	4954			
2,501-5,000	4238			3587			3496		
5,001-7,500		1684	1723					1987	
7,501-10,000		842	920						684
10,001-12,500			709	656					432
12,501-15,000									
15,001-20,000									
20,001-30,000									
30,001-40,000									
>40,000									
Non-FAFSA filers/unknown EFC									

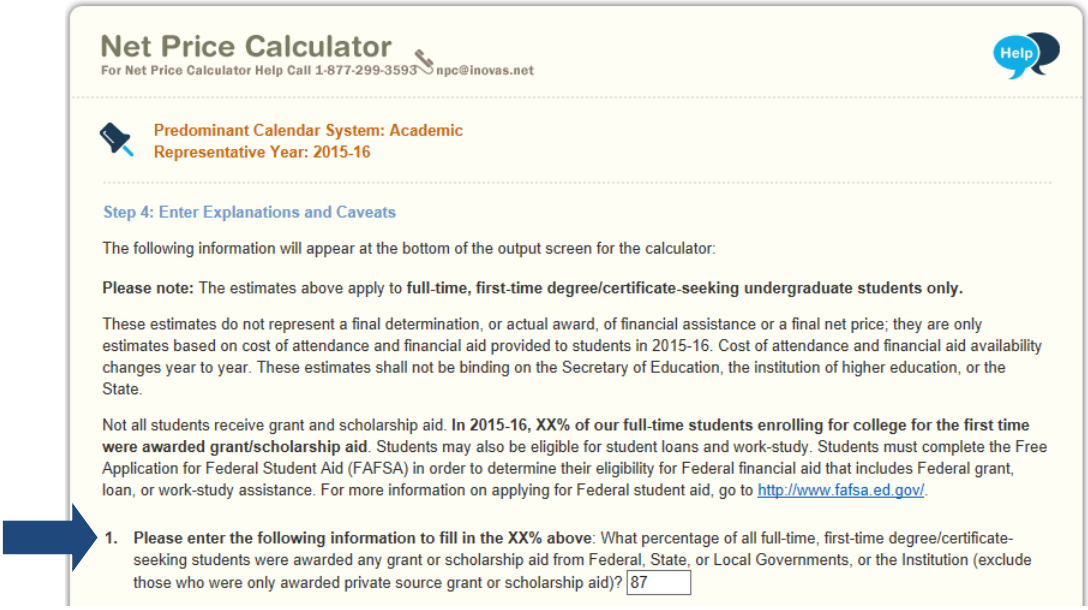
PREVIOUS CONTINUE

Blank cell averaging is used for the Grants and Scholarships table (Table 2, shown above). This means that when one or more cells are left blank the system will calculate and insert an appropriate value based on the surrounding cells. In order for this functionality to work, data must be entered in at least two cells per column of the Grants and Scholarships table for EFC ranges '0' to '30,001 - 40,000'. Do not enter zeros where you do not have data; it is important that these cells are left blank for this calculation to be accurate.

Once you are satisfied with all entries, click **Continue**.

Step 4 - Enter Explanations and Caveats

On the next screen, you must enter the percentage of all full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students who were awarded any grant or scholarship aid from Federal, State, or Local Governments, or the Institution during the relevant data year (Question 1, shown below).



Net Price Calculator

For Net Price Calculator Help Call 1-877-299-3593 npc@inovas.net

Help

Predominant Calendar System: Academic
Representative Year: 2015-16

Step 4: Enter Explanations and Caveats

The following information will appear at the bottom of the output screen for the calculator:

Please note: The estimates above apply to **full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students only.**

These estimates do not represent a final determination, or actual award, of financial assistance or a final net price; they are only estimates based on cost of attendance and financial aid provided to students in 2015-16. Cost of attendance and financial aid availability changes year to year. These estimates shall not be binding on the Secretary of Education, the institution of higher education, or the State.

Not all students receive grant and scholarship aid. **In 2015-16, XX% of our full-time students enrolling for college for the first time were awarded grant/scholarship aid**. Students may also be eligible for student loans and work-study. Students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in order to determine their eligibility for Federal financial aid that includes Federal grant, loan, or work-study assistance. For more information on applying for Federal student aid, go to http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/.

1. **Please enter the following information to fill in the XX% above**: What percentage of all full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students were awarded any grant or scholarship aid from Federal, State, or Local Governments, or the Institution (exclude those who were only awarded private source grant or scholarship aid)? 87

In addition, you may use this section to enter any additional information you wish to display in the form of Explanations and Caveats at the bottom of the student calculator output screen. Review the on-screen instructions carefully for information on the recommended use and placement of each *optional* Explanation field, as shown below.

2. Would you like to add explanations to appear on the output screen (e.g., exclusions, URL for your financial aid web site, assumptions regarding room and meal-plan type; range of credits; level of personal expenses; etc.)? Please enter text for institutional explanations below. When you are done, click Continue.

Explanation #1, which appears at the end of first paragraph on the output screen, is optional but can be used to describe any groups excluded from the calculator (e.g., athletes, students receiving employee tuition remission grants).

Tuition and fee estimates are based on 15 credit hours per semester.

Explanation #2, which appears after the URL for the FAFSA site, is optional but can be used to provide 1) instructions on how to access your institution's financial aid web site, 2) possible advice on how to use this estimate (e.g., particular factors, such as the year of the estimate, to keep in mind when comparing with estimates from other institutions, expenses you include that other institutions may not), or 3) notification of any major planned changes to cost or grants that could affect the validity of these estimates.

For additional information on our institutional grants, please contact the Office of Student Financial Services at (877) 299-3593

Explanation #3, which appears at the very end, is optional but can be used for any other explanations or caveats you want to include, such as explaining parameters underlying cost estimates (e.g., number of credits covered by tuition estimate, room and board plan included in on-campus estimate, fees included in "required fees", expenses covered in "other expenses" and how this value was calculated); explaining of types of costs not reflected (e.g., differential tuition rates associated with certain academic programs or guaranteed tuition plans); or explaining types of grants not included, (e.g., private scholarships, employee tuition remission, ROTC scholarships not included); defining financial terms students may not be familiar with; or other caveats.

Off-campus housing estimates are based on an average of rental properties in the area.

PREVIOUS CONTINUE

Once you are satisfied with all entries, click **Continue**.

Step 5 - Create Calculator

A summary screen will be displayed detailing the data you have provided throughout the calculator. For Table 1, the summary also includes calculated cost of attendance totals for each applicable category, as shown below.

Net Price Calculator

For Net Price Calculator Help Call 1-877-299-3593 npc@inovas.net

Help

Step 5: Create Calculator

You have completed the data entry for the Net Price Calculator. Please review the information you have provided. You can click Modify to return to Step 1 and edit this information, or if you are happy with the current selections, click Continue to produce a zip file containing the files necessary to run the Net Price Calculator on your institution's website. (For detailed instructions on downloading, extracting, and hosting the application on your institution's website, please refer to the Quick Start Guide included with this template.)

Representative Year	2015-16
Predominant Calendar System	Academic
Institutionally Controlled Housing	Yes
Housing Restrictions for Full-Time, First-Time Undergraduates	No
Tuition Based on Residency Status	Yes (In-district, In-state, Out-of-state)

Table 1: Cost of Attendance for Full-time, First-time Undergraduate Students: 2015-16

Tuition and fees			
In-district	$8,525		
In-state	$9,704		
Out-of-state	$11,451		
Books and supplies	$985		
Living and other expenses	**On-campus**	**Off-campus not with family (e.g., with roommates)**	**Off-campus with family (e.g., no rent paid directly by student)**
Room and board	$5,820	$4,756	N/A
Other (personal, transportation, etc.)	$4,256	$4,256	$4,256

In-district	
On-campus	$19,586
Off-campus not with family (e.g., with roommates)	$18,522
Off-campus with family (e.g., no rent paid directly by student)	$13,766
In-state	
On-campus	$20,765
Off-campus not with family (e.g., with roommates)	$19,701
Off-campus with family (e.g., no rent paid directly by student)	$14,945
Out-of-state	
On-campus	$22,512
Off-campus not with family (e.g., with roommates)	$21,448
Off-campus with family (e.g., no rent paid directly by student)	$16,692

In addition, the summary data for Table 2 includes any additional amounts calculated using blank cell averaging, as shown below. These amounts are indicated with a ‡ symbol.

Table 2: Grants and Scholarships for Full-time, First-time Undergraduate Students: 2015-16

	In-district			In-state			Out-of-state		
EFC Range ($)	On-campus	Off-campus not with family	Off-campus with family	On-campus	Off-campus not with family	Off-campus with family	On-campus	Off-campus not with family	Off-campus with family
0	5550	3789	3985 ‡	5053 ‡	5960	5743	5069 ‡	8650	8081 ‡
1-1,000	5375 ‡	3621	3568	4858 ‡	5658 ‡	5518 ‡	4859	8117 ‡	7658
1,001-2,500	4938 ‡	3200 ‡	2525	4369 ‡	4902	4954	4335 ‡	6784 ‡	6601 ‡
2,501-5,000	4238	2526 ‡	2169 ‡	3587	4499 ‡	4653 ‡	3496	4652 ‡	4910 ‡
5,001-7,500	3958 ‡	1684	1723	2610 ‡	4338 ‡	4533 ‡	3160 ‡	1987	2797 ‡
7,501-10,000	3873 ‡	842	920	1633 ‡	4289 ‡	4497 ‡	3058 ‡	1179 ‡	684
10,001-12,500	3851 ‡	620 ‡	709	656	4276 ‡	4488 ‡	3031 ‡	966 ‡	432
12,501-15,000	3846 ‡	565 ‡	656 ‡	412 ‡	4273 ‡	4486 ‡	3024 ‡	913 ‡	369 ‡
15,001-20,000	3844 ‡	547 ‡	638 ‡	331 ‡	4272 ‡	4485 ‡	3022 ‡	895 ‡	348 ‡
20,001-30,000	3843 ‡	539 ‡	630 ‡	294 ‡	4272 ‡	4485 ‡	3021 ‡	887 ‡	338 ‡
30,001-40,000	3843 ‡	536 ‡	627 ‡	278 ‡	4272 ‡	4485 ‡	3021 ‡	884 ‡	334 ‡
>40,000	0 ‡	0 ‡	0 ‡	0 ‡	0 ‡	0 ‡	0 ‡	0 ‡	0 ‡
Non-FAFSA filers/unknown EFC	0 ‡	0 ‡	0 ‡	0 ‡	0 ‡	0 ‡	0 ‡	0 ‡	0 ‡

‡ Indicates that the number shown was generated/inserted by the system.

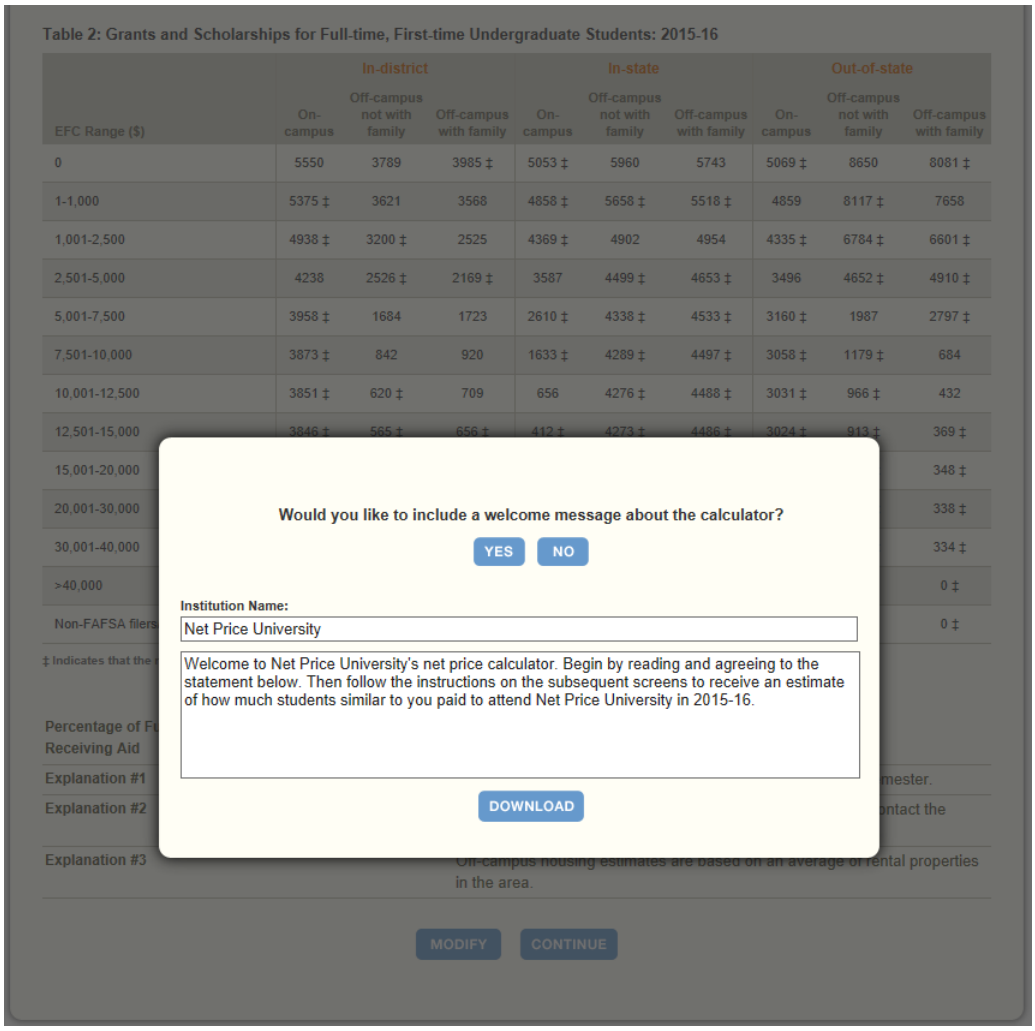
Percentage of Full-Time, First-Time Undergraduates Receiving Aid	87%
Explanation #1	Tuition and fee estimates are based on 15 credit hours per semester.
Explanation #2	For additional information on our institutional grants, please contact the Office of Student Financial Services at (877) 299-3593
Explanation #3	Off-campus housing estimates are based on an average of rental properties in the area.

MODIFY CONTINUE

You can click **Modify** to return to Step 1 and edit this information as needed, or if you are satisfied with your responses, click **Continue** to generate your institution's Net Price Calculator.

Once you click **Continue** an additional option will open allowing you to include a welcome message with your calculator. This message includes your institution's name, the relevant data year, and any additional introductory information you wish to provide about the calculator. If utilized, this message will appear in a pop-up window displayed to users when they access the student calculator opening screen.

To include a welcome message with your calculator, select **Yes**; then, enter the institution name and modify the default message as desired, as shown below. When you are finished, click **Download** to generate your institution's Net Price Calculator. Otherwise, click **No** to download the files without including a welcome message.



! Critical Information - The zip file downloaded in this step constitutes the only copy of the student application customized with your institution's data. This data is not retained anywhere on the ED server, so make sure you have saved these files locally, tested them, and are satisfied with the application before closing your browser window.

2.3 Save and Extract your file

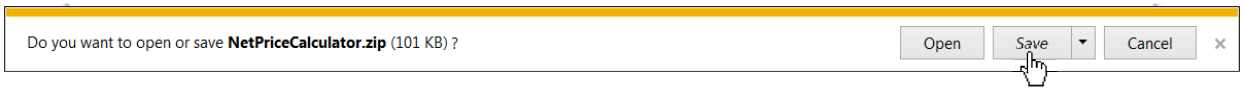
Your download is a zip file, also called a compressed folder, containing the images and HTML code needed to run the customized Net Price Calculator on your institution's website. You must save this file to your computer and extract the file before attempting to upload it to your institution's website.

Step 1 – Save your file

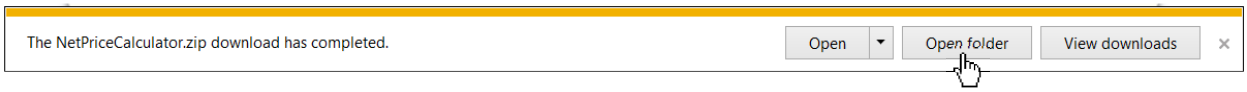
The first step is to save the Net Price Calculator zip file. Instructions for this process are available for three browsers: Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, and Google Chrome.

Internet Explorer

If you receive the prompt shown below, click **Save**.



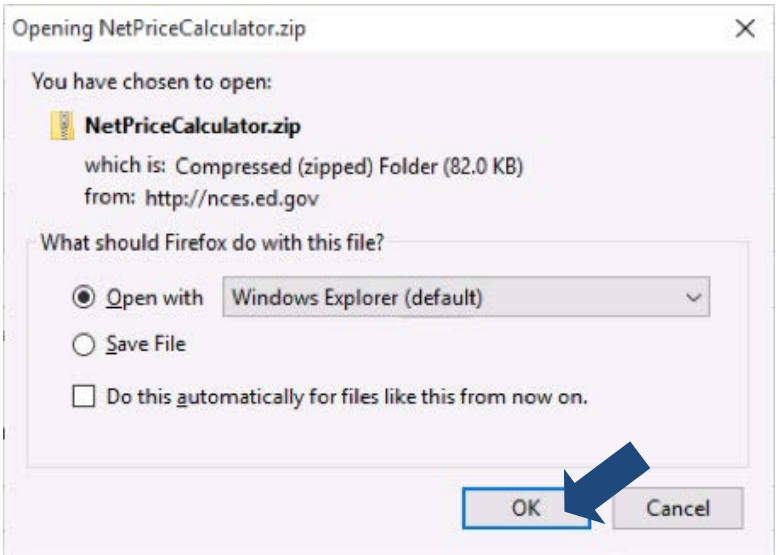
Then click on **Open Folder**, as shown below, to view the downloaded zip file.



If you do not know where the download is located on your computer, you may click on the **Tools** menu in your browser then click on **View Downloads** (Ctrl+J).

Mozilla Firefox

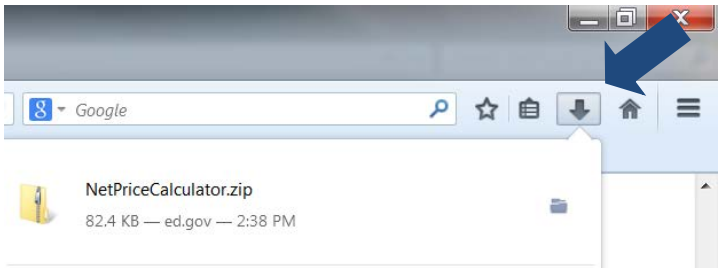
If you receive the prompt shown below click **OK** to open the file.



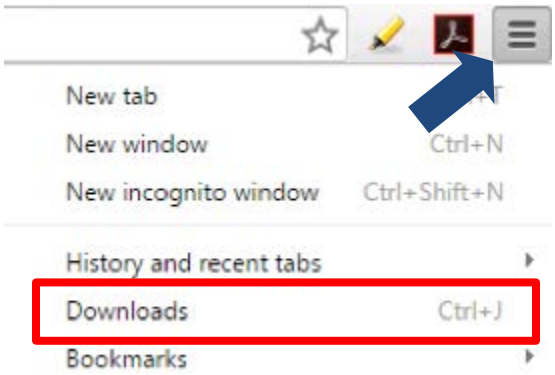
Google Chrome

If you see the prompt shown below, click the arrow button to view the file in the dropdown menu. Then click the file to download the Net Price Calculator zip file.

If you do not receive the prompt, shown below, you may click on the download arrow on the top right side of your browser to access your download. Click on the icon to the right of the file name to open the folder containing your saved zip file.

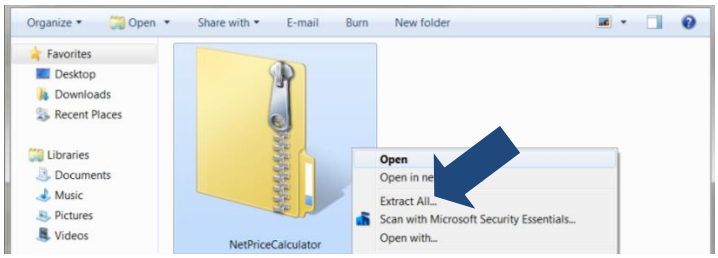


If you do not know where the download is located on your computer, click on the icon in your browser. Then click on **Downloads** (Ctrl+J) to open the file, as shown below.

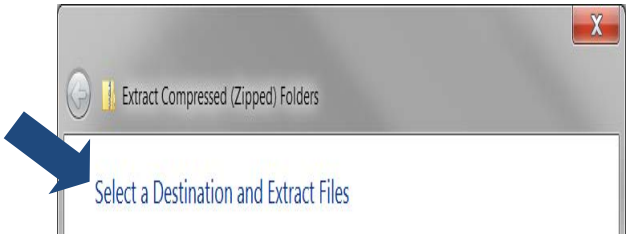


Step 2 – Extract your file.

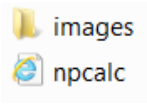
Once you have opened the folder containing your download, you must extract (or unzip) the zip file to view the student application. To do this, right-click the downloaded file and choose "Extract all."



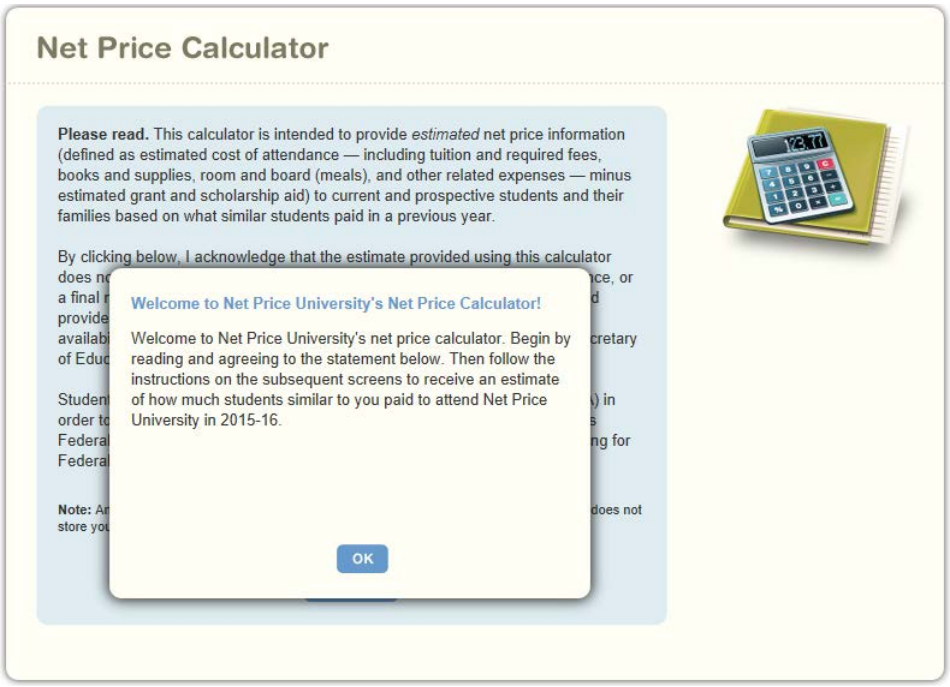
While extracting the files, be sure to preserve the structure of the directory. In the example shown below, this is done automatically. When using WinZip, you will need to make sure that the box marked "Use Folder Names" is checked.



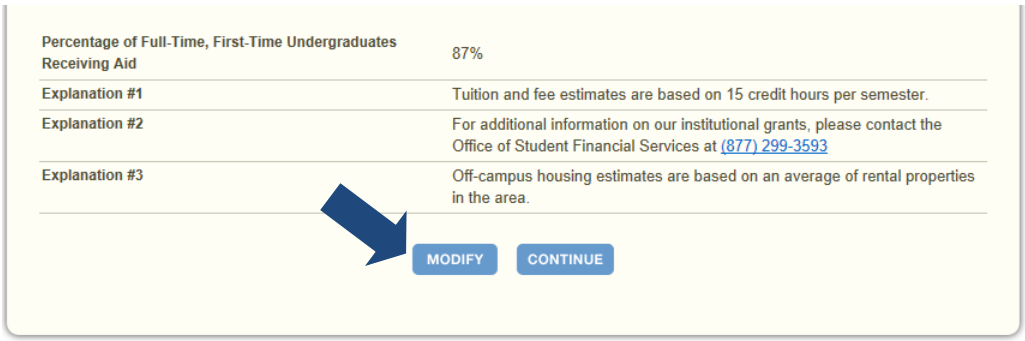
You may preview a local version of your institution's customized Net Price Calculator at this time by double-clicking the HTML document that appears as a browser link within the extracted folder, as shown below.



Your institution's customized Net Price Calculator will open to the welcome page, as shown below.



If after previewing the calculator you wish to modify any of the data provided for your institution, you may return to your browser, modify the data, and download new files. If you wish to modify your data but closed your browser window, you must repeat the process outlined in this guide to generate a new version of the Net Price Calculator for your institution.



Continue to Chapter 4: Uploading the Application.

Chapter

3

Using the Bulk Data File Upload Tool

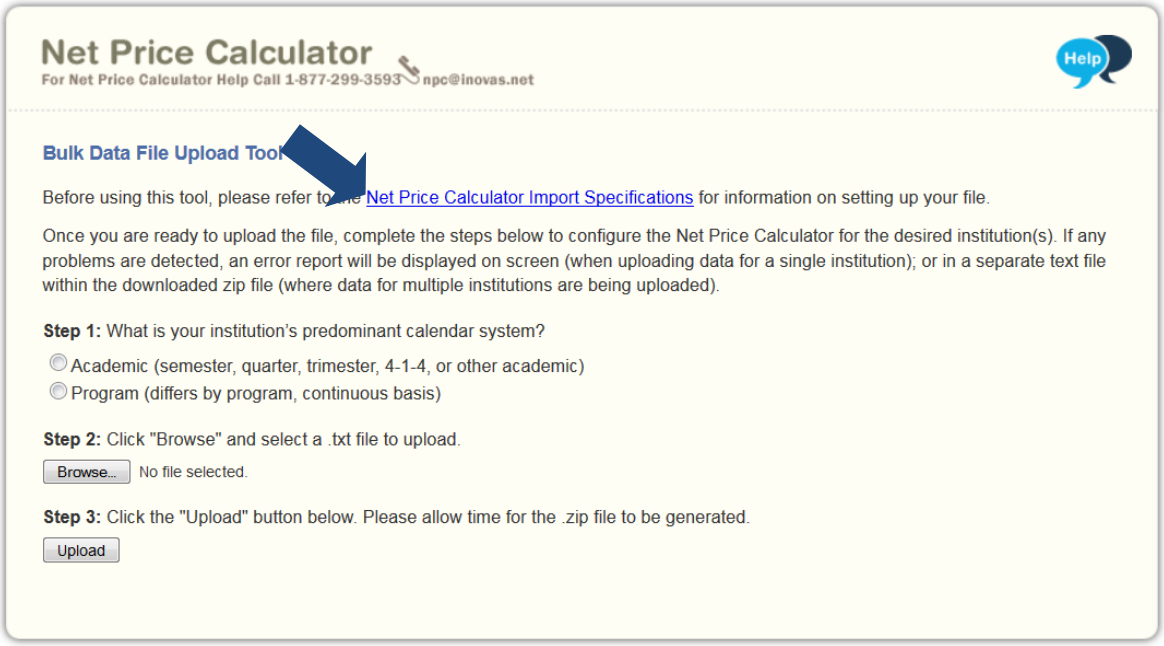
This chapter contains instructions for how to use the Net Price Calculator bulk data file upload tool, available at http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/netpricecalculator/upload.aspx.

The Bulk Data File Upload Tool is available to create one or more Net Price Calculators. To use this tool, create a text document using the format outlined in the import specifications provided and upload the document at the Bulk Data File Upload Tool website using the instructions outlined below.

3.1 Getting Started

The import specifications for creating and uploading a text document are available in Excel format from the link on the main page of the Bulk Data File Upload Tool website.

Click on the link for "Net Price Calculator Import Specifications" to get started and open or save the file.



3.2 Net Price Calculator Import Specifications

This Excel document is a guide for creating the necessary text file to use the Tool – it is not a template. An explanation for how to follow the import specifications is provided in this section.

With the Net Price Calculator Import Specifications file open, select the tab for your institution's predominant calendar system from the bottom of the screen. You may select "Academic" or "Program". The calendar system selected should be consistent with that reported in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). You may find it helpful to discuss this with the office(s) at your institution that complete the IPEDS IC Header survey.

In column A, the headings for each section of the specifications are listed, as shown below:

	A	B	C	D	E
1		**Field Name**	**Description**	**Start**	**Length**
2	Institution Information	Institution Number (Unit ID)	Enter a unique identifier for the institution.	1	6
3		Section 01	Enter '01'	7	2
4		Institution Name	Enter the nameof your institution. *(Required if Welcome Message is included.)*	9	100
5		Institution Banner	Enter the name of a .JPG or .giff file that has the graphics to be used for the banner. This file must be placed in the images directory generated by the application. *(Optional)*	109	100
		Data year	Provide the academic year that represents the data you will enter. Current options include 2013-14 or 2012-13.	209	7
7		Percentage of students	Enter the percentage of full-time, first-time studetns who received any grant or scholarship aid from Federal, State, or Local Government, or the Institution.	216	3
8		Welcome Message	Include a message to appear in a pop-up window displayed to users when they access the student calculator opening screen. *(Optional)*	219	1000

Each section will be represented by one line in the text file. The specifications contain the Field Name (column B) and Description (column C) of the required data for that section.

	A	B	C	D
1		**Field Name**	**Description**	**Star**
2		Institution Number (Unit ID)	Enter a unique identifier for the institution.	
3		Section 01	Enter '01'	
4		Institution Name	Enter the nameof your institution. *(Required if Welcome Message is included.)*	
	ation	Institution Banner	Enter the name of a .JPG or .giff file that has the graphics to be used for the banner. This file must be placed in the images directory generated by	

The first two fields (eight digits total) must be entered for each section for the file to be accepted. The two required fields are: the institution's six-digit IPEDS Unit ID and the two-digit section number. Skipping any of the required lines will result in errors upon upload.

	A	B	C	D	E
1		**Field Name**	**Description**	**Start**	**Length**
2	**Institution Information**	Institution Number (Unit ID)	Enter a unique identifier for the institution.	1	6
3		Section 01	Enter '01'	7	2
4		Institution Name	Enter the nameof your institution. *(Required if Welcome Message is included.)*	9	100
5		Institution Banner	Enter the name of a .JPG or .giff file that has the graphics to be used for the banner. This file must be placed in the images directory generated by the application. *(Optional)*	109	100
6		Data year	Provide the academic year that represents the data you will enter. Current options include 2013-14 or 2012-13.	209	7
7		Percentage of students	Enter the percentage of full-time, first-time studetns who received any grant or scholarship aid from Federal, State, or Local Government, or the Institution.	216	3
8		Welcome Message	Include a message to appear in a pop-up window displayed to users when they access the student calculator opening screen. *(Optional)*	219	1000

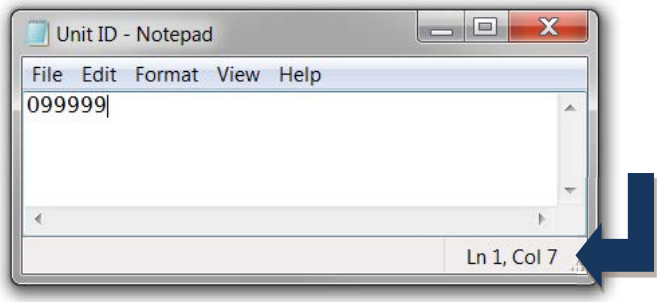
The start position (column D) and length (column E) are provided for each field. These numbers represent the location and the length of the required data. For example, the Unit ID should start at position "1," and the maximum length for this field is six characters.

3.3 Creating a Text Document

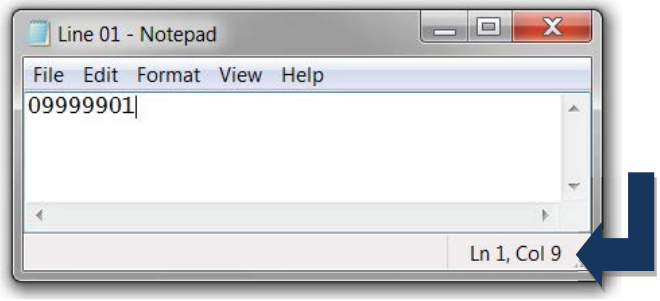
The following examples are provided to assist users with creating the text document needed to use the Bulk Data File Upload Tool. To begin, use a basic text editor that displays the line number and column number in the status bar. A new document should begin at "Ln 1, Col 1."

Use the instructions outlined in the import specifications document for your predominant calendar system to enter all necessary information in a text document.

As described in the import specifications, each line should begin with the institution's six-digit IPEDS Unit ID. If the information has been entered correctly, the cursor will be at the start position for the next field at Col 7 of the same line, as shown below:



The two-digit section number should then be entered as indicated in the Description column of the import specifications document. This is shown in the example below:



The rest of the text document should be completed in the manner demonstrated above using the import specifications to enter in the necessary institution information, cost of attendance data, grants and scholarships data, and explanations and caveats.

When finished, save your file for use in the next section, 3.4 Uploading Your Bulk Data File. Keep in mind the following information while completing your text document for upload:

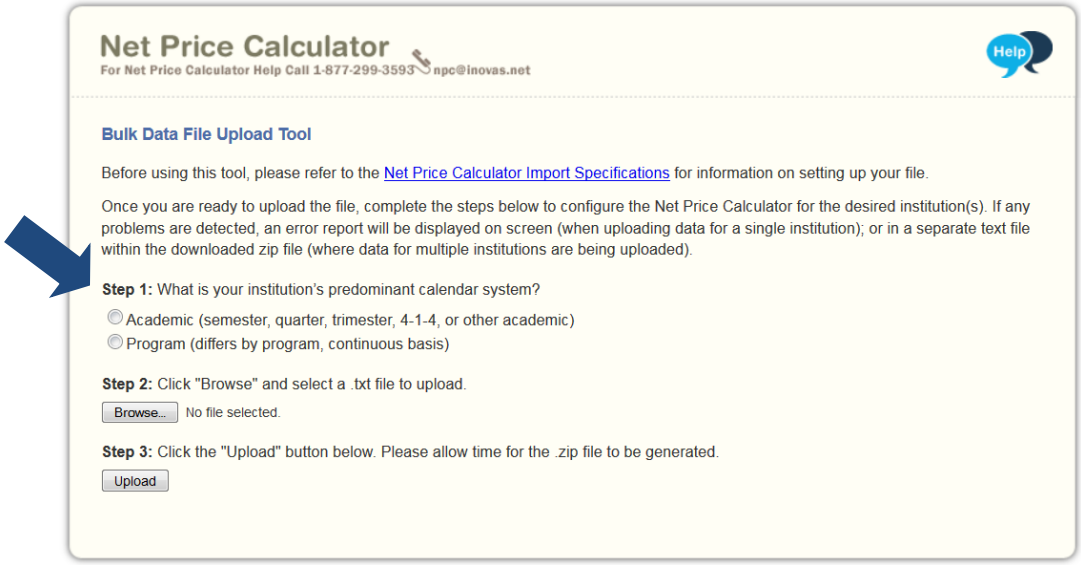
- If the complete length of a specific field has not been utilized, press the space bar to move the cursor to the next field's start position.
- You may skip over providing information which has been marked as optional in the import specifications, but be sure to move your cursor to the next field's start position.

☑ **Tip -** Specifications for multiple Net Price Calculators may be entered in one text document by grouping each into either fourteen complete lines of data for Academic reporters or eight complete lines of data for Program reporters.

! Critical Information - It is the user's responsibility to remain in compliance by answering all required fields.

3.4 Uploading Your Bulk Data File

After you have followed the Net Price Calculator Import Specifications and created your text file for upload, follow steps one through three on the Bulk Data File Upload Tool home page to create your .zip file.



Step 1 – What is your institution's predominant calendar system?

Select the option button for either the Academic or Program calendar system. This should be the same selection as the import specifications tab selected in section 3.2 Net Price Calculator Import Specifications.

Step 2 – Click "Browse" and select a .txt file to upload

Use the "Browse" button to find and select your saved .txt file created in section 3.3 Creating a Text Document.

Step 3 – Click the "Upload" button

Once you have selected your .txt file, click "Upload" to generate your .zip file. Allow some time for the system to generate your file.

3.5 Save and Extract your file

Your download is a zip file, also called a compressed folder, containing the images and HTML code needed to run the customized Net Price Calculator on your institution's website. You must save this file to your computer and extract the file before attempting to upload it to your institution's website.

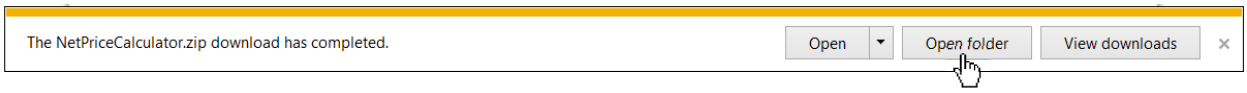
Step 1 – Save your file.

The first step is to save the net price calculator zip file. Instructions for this process are available for three browsers: Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, and Google Chrome.

Internet Explorer

If you receive the prompt shown below, click **Save**.

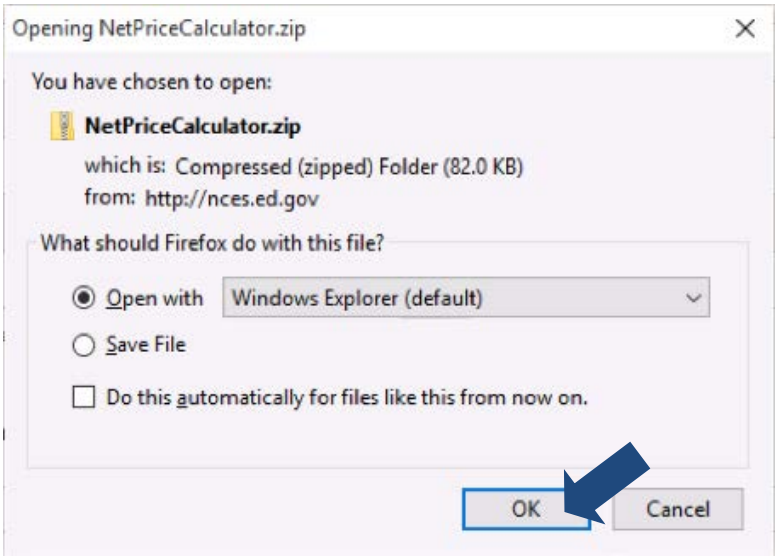
Then click on **Open Folder**, as shown below, to view the downloaded zip file.



If you did not know where the download is located on your computer, you may click on the **Tools** menu in your browser then click on **View Downloads** (Ctrl+J).

Mozilla Firefox

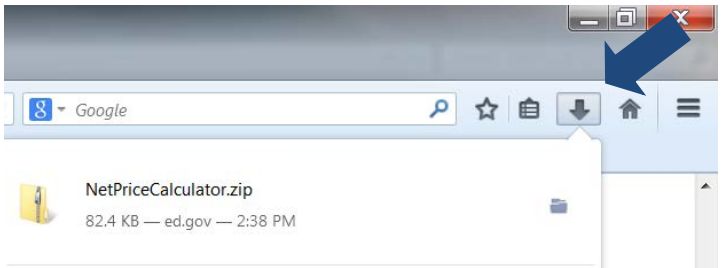
If you receive the prompt shown below click **OK** to open the file.



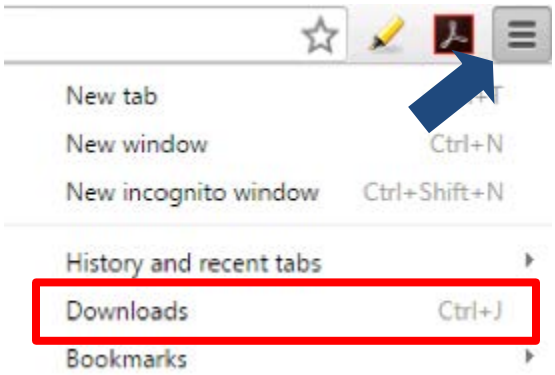
Google Chrome

If you see the prompt shown below, click the arrow button to view the file in the dropdown menu. Then click the file to download the Net Price Calculator zip file.

If you do not receive the prompt, shown below, you may click on the download arrow on the top right side of your browser to access your download. Click on the icon to the right of the file name to open the folder containing your saved zip file.

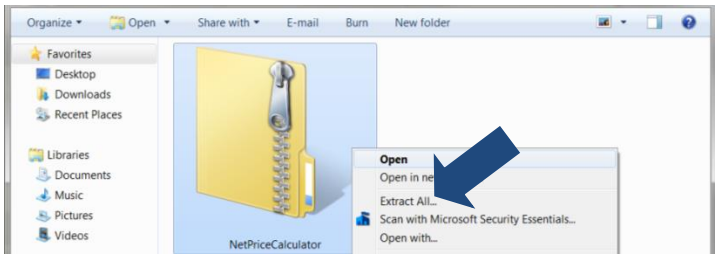


If you do not know where the download is located on your computer, click on the icon in your browser. Then click on **Downloads** (Ctrl+J) to open the file, as shown below.

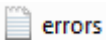


Step 2 – Extract your file.

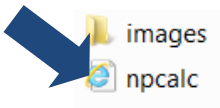
Once you have opened the folder containing your download you must extract (or unzip) the zip file to view the student application. To do this, right-click the downloaded file and choose "Extract all."



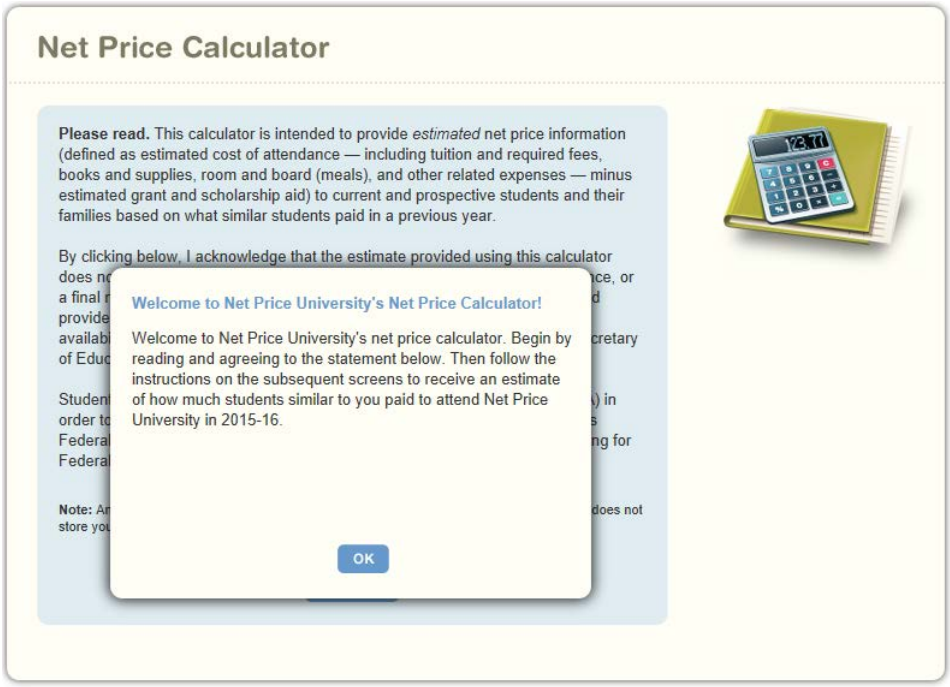
While extracting the files, be sure to preserve the structure of the directory. In the example shown below, this is done automatically. When using WinZip, you will need to make sure that the box marked "Use Folder Names" is checked.

If an  errors text document is present in the downloaded zip-file, it will contain information on any issues that occurred while uploading the bulk data file. If you are using this upload tool to create just one calculator, these errors will instead be displayed at the bottom of the upload tool screen.

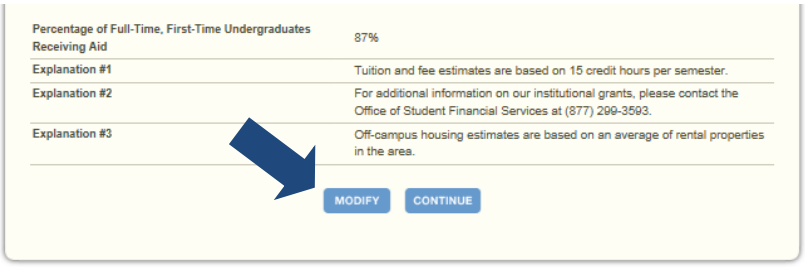
You may preview a local version of your institution's customized Net Price Calculator at this time by double-clicking the HTML document that appears as a browser link within the extracted folder, as shown below.



Your institution's customized Net Price Calculator will open to the welcome page, as shown below.



If after previewing the calculator you wish to modify any of the data provided for your institution, you may return to your browser, modify the data, and download new files. If you wish to modify your data but closed your browser window, you must repeat the process outlined in this guide to generate a new version of the Net Price Calculator for your institution.



Continue to <u>Chapter 4: Uploading the Application</u>.

Chapter

4

Uploading the Application

Once you have downloaded and extracted the necessary files, you are ready to upload the application to your institution's website.

Step 1 – Create a new web folder.

Start by creating a new folder for the Net Price Calculator within your website's home directory. Please note that the name chosen for this folder will be included in the link used to access the application, so a simple name, such as *NetPrice*, is recommended.

! Critical Information - Since the HEA states that institutions must "make publicly available on the institution's website a net price calculator…" the calculator posted to your institution's website must be titled "Net Price Calculator" in order to be in full compliance.

Step 2 – Upload the files.

Move the files extracted in Step 4 of this Quick Start Guide from their previous destination to this new folder, this includes the *npcalc.htm* file and the folder labelled *images* containing all of the necessary graphics.

Step 3 – Verify the application.

The Net Price Calculator should now be accessible on your institution's website! You can verify this by entering the URL into your web browser as follows:

http://[Homepage URL]/[Folder Name]/[File Name]

For example, in the case illustrated above, the URL would look something like this:

http://institutio.edu/NetPrice/npcalc.htm

To change the URL above, you can rename the folder created within your home directory, or you can rename the HTML file within that folder. Be sure to preserve the structure of the directory when making these changes.

Disclaimer: If you choose to modify the HTML code within the files in any way, please be aware that the Net Price Calculator Help Desk will no longer be able to guarantee assistance with any questions or issues regarding system usage.

See Chapter 5 for a Glossary of Terms

Chapter

5

Glossary of Terms

This section defines and explains some of the more common terms found in the system. In addition, you may access the online IPEDS Glossary at https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/VisGlossaryAll.aspx to find definitions for nearly 500 postsecondary-related terms used in the collection of IPEDS data.

Term	*Definition*
Academic year	The period of time generally extending from September to June; usually equated to two semesters or trimesters, three quarters, or the period covered by a 4-1-4 calendar system.
Board charges	Charges assessed students for an academic year for meals.
Books and supplies	The average cost of books and supplies for a typical student for an entire academic year (or program). Does not include unusual costs for special groups of students (e.g., engineering or art majors), unless they constitute the majority of students at an institution.
Calendar system	The method by which an institution structures most of its courses for the academic year.
Continuous basis (calendar system)	A calendar system classification that is used by institutions that allow students to enroll/start classes at any time during the year. For example, a cosmetology school or word processing school might allow students to enroll and begin studies at various times, with no requirement that classes begin on a certain date.
Degree/certificate seeking students	Students enrolled in courses for credit and recognized by the institution as seeking a degree, certificate, or other formal award. High school students also enrolled in postsecondary courses for credit are not considered degree/certificate seeking.

Term	*Definition*
Differs by program (calendar system)	A calendar system classification that is used by institutions that have occupational/vocational programs of varying lengths. These schools may enroll students at specific times depending on the program desired. For example, a school might offer a 2-month program in January, March, May, September, and November; and a 3-month program in January, April, and October.
Expected Family Contribution (EFC)	The Expected Family Contribution (EFC) is the amount a family can be expected to contribute toward a student's college costs. Financial aid administrators determine an applicant's need for federal student aid from the U.S. Department of Education and other sources of assistance by subtracting the EFC from the student's cost of attendance (COA).
Federal grants	Grants provided by federal agencies such as the U.S. Department of Education, including Title IV Pell Grants and Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG). Also includes need-based and merit-based educational assistance funds and training vouchers provided from other federal agencies and/or federally-sponsored educational benefits programs.
Federal work-study program (FWS)	A part-time work program awarding on- or off-campus jobs to students who demonstrate financial need. FWS positions are primarily funded by the government, but are also partially funded by the institution. FWS is awarded to eligible students by the college as part of the student's financial aid package. The maximum FWS award is based on the student's financial need, the number of hours the student is able to work, and the amount of FWS funding available at the institution. This is a type of Title IV Aid, but is not considered grant aid to students.
Financial aid	Federal Work Study, grants, loans to students (government and/or private), assistantships, scholarships, fellowships, tuition waivers, tuition discounts, employer aid (tuition reimbursement) and other monies (other than from relatives/friends) provided to students to meet expenses. This excludes loans to parents.
First-time student (Undergraduate)	A student who has no prior postsecondary experience (except as noted below) attending any institution for the first time at the undergraduate level. This includes students enrolled in academic or occupational programs. It also includes students enrolled in the fall term who attended college for the first time in the prior summer term, and students who entered with advanced standing (college credits earned before graduation from high school).
Full-time student (Undergraduate)	A student enrolled for 12 or more semester credit, or 12 or more quarter credits, or 24 or more contact hours a week each term.

Term	*Definition*
In-district student	A student who is a legal resident of the locality in which he/she attends school and thus is entitled to reduced tuition charges if offered by the institution.
In-district tuition	The tuition charged by the institution to those students residing in the locality in which they attend school. This may be a lower rate than in-state tuition if offered by the institution.
In-state student	A student who is a legal resident of the state in which they attend school and is entitled to reduced tuition charges if offered by the institution.
In-state tuition	The tuition charged by institutions to those students who meet the state's or institution's residency requirements.
Institutional grants	Scholarships and fellowships granted and funded by the institution and/or individual departments within the institution (i.e., instruction, research, public service) that may contribute indirectly to the enhancement of these programs. Includes scholarships targeted to certain individuals (e.g., based on state of residence, major field of study, athletic team participation) for which the institution designates the recipient.
Institutionally-controlled housing	Any residence hall or housing facility located on- or off-campus that is owned or controlled by an institution and used by the institution in direct support of or in a manner related to, the institution's educational purposes.
Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)	The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), conducted by the NCES, began in 1986 and involves annual institution-level data collections. All postsecondary institutions that have a Program Participating Agreement with the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE), U.S. Department of Education (throughout IPEDS referred to as "Title IV") are required to report data using a web-based data collection system. IPEDS currently consists of the following components: Admissions (ADM); Institutional Characteristics (IC); 12-month Enrollment (E12); Completions (C); Human Resources (HR); Fall Enrollment (EF); Graduation Rates (GRS); Graduation Rates 200 (GRS200); Finance (F); Academic Libraries (AL); and Student Financial Aid (SFA).
Loans to students	Any monies that must be repaid to the lending institution for which the student is the designated borrower. Includes all Title IV subsidized and unsubsidized loans and all institutionally- and privately-sponsored loans. Does not include PLUS and other loans made directly to parents.

Term	*Definition*
Median	In probability theory and statistics, a median is described as the numerical value separating the higher half of a sample or population from the lower half. The median of a finite list of numbers can be found by arranging all of the observations from lowest value to highest value and selecting the middle one. If there is an even number of observations, then there is no single middle value; the median is then typically defined as the average of the two middle values.
Off-campus housing	Any housing facility that is occupied by students but is not owned or controlled by the educational institution.
On-campus housing	Any residence hall or housing facility owned or controlled by an institution within the same reasonably contiguous geographic area and used by the institution in direct support of, or in a manner related to, the institution's educational purposes.
Other academic calendar	Category used to describe non-traditional calendar systems at 4-year and 2-year degree-granting institutions. These can include schools that offer primarily on-line courses or "one course at a time."
Other expenses	The amount of money (estimated by the financial aid office) needed by a student to cover expenses such as laundry, transportation, and entertainment. For the purposes of providing pricing data, room and board and tuition and fees should **not** be included here.
Out-of-state student	A student who is not a legal resident of the state in which he/she attends school.
Out-of-state tuition	The tuition charged by institutions to those students who do not meet the institution's or state's residency requirements.
Quarter (calendar system)	A calendar system in which the academic year consists of three sessions called quarters of about 12 weeks each. The range may be from 10 to 15 weeks as defined by the institution. There may be an additional quarter in the summer.
Required fees	A fixed sum charged to students for items not covered by tuition and required of such a large proportion of all students that the student who does not pay the charge is an exception.
Room charges	The charges for an academic year for rooming accommodations for a typical student sharing a room with one other student.
Scholarships	Grants-in-aid, trainee stipends, tuition and fee waivers, prizes, or other monetary awards given to undergraduate students.

Term	*Definition*
Semester (calendar system)	A calendar system that consists of two sessions called semesters during the academic year with about 15 weeks for each semester of instruction. There may be an additional summer session.
State and local grants	Grant monies provided by the state such as Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnerships (LEAP) (formerly State Student Incentive Grants (SSIG); merit scholarships provided by the state; and tuition and fee waivers for which the institution was reimbursed by a state agency. Local government grants include scholarships or gift-aid awarded directly to the student.
Tuition	The amount of money charged to students for instructional services. Tuition may be charged per term, per course, or per credit.
4-1-4 (calendar system)	The 4-1-4 calendar usually consists of four courses taken for four months, one course taken for one month, and four courses taken for four months. There may be an additional summer session.

End of Quick Start Guide