
X. Expenditures: Overview of Per Student Funding

Slow growth in the university's operating expenditures has resulted in lower per student resources than at peer institutions. In addition, the issue of constrained resources has been further exacerbated by wide variations in per student resources among the CUNY colleges.

Key Findings

- Since 1980, CUNY's growth in operating expenditures has averaged only 2% per year, in part due to recent decreases at the senior colleges, which represent over half of CUNY's total expenditures.
- This funding pattern results in a per student expenditure level that is lower in the senior and hybrid colleges than peer institutions.
- However, while overall expenditures per FTE are low, this varies significantly between and among the senior, hybrid, and community colleges. Generally, while colleges with strong enrollments have increased their overall operating expenditures compared to colleges with slower enrollment growth due to increase in tuition revenue, these colleges also show lower per student expenditures, as some of these new tuition revenues have been diverted to help fund schools with weaker enrollments.

Expenditures per FTE* at CUNY's four-year colleges fall below national spending levels. Due to the university's resource allocation process, expenditures per FTE vary widely across campuses of the same type, particularly at hybrid colleges (see Tables 23 & 24).

Table 23
Senior Colleges (1997)

<i>Average**</i>	\$9,754
<i>Standard Deviation</i>	\$503
<i>National Average</i>	\$13,696
<i>Peer Average</i>	\$10,685
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City	\$16,172
Lehman	\$10,615
Brooklyn	\$9,988
Queens	\$9,770
Hunter	\$9,537
Baruch	\$9,407
York	\$9,207

Table 24
Hybrid Colleges (1997)

<i>Average</i>	\$8,802
<i>Standard Deviation</i>	\$1,942
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Medgar Evers	\$11,672
Staten Island	\$8,202
NYC Tech	\$7,932
John Jay	\$7,404

Source: CUNY

- Resource allocation in the senior colleges is not linked to enrollment; instead, the level of resources at each college is based on historical operating budgets.
- Of the senior colleges, City College spends significantly more per student than peer and national averages (see Table 23). These high levels are driven in part by special programs such as engineering and Sophie Davis; however, declining enrollment also brings up City College's per student expenditures.
- Expenditures per FTE in the hybrid colleges are less consistent than the senior colleges (see Table 24). These colleges have far fewer resources per student than the senior colleges and they fall well below the national and peer averages, with the exception of Medgar Evers.

* Expenditures per FTE are calculated with full-time equivalent students. Campus figures include an estimate of expenditures tracked through the Research Foundation, which are usually attributed to Central Administration in CUNY financial statements. Per student expenditures exclude scholarships and fellowships, transfers and auxiliary expenditures.

** This average excludes CCNY, whose expenditures per FTE are higher because of high-cost, low-enrollment programs such as Sophie Davis.

There is somewhat less variation in the community colleges, whose expenditures per FTE exceed national and peer averages. However, the resource allocation process still seems to provide lower per student funding to colleges that have successfully increased enrollments (see Table 25).

Table 25
Community Colleges (1997)

<i>Average</i>	\$7,079
<i>Standard Deviation</i>	\$1,308
<i>National Average</i>	\$6,682
<i>Peer Average</i>	\$6,779
Bronx	\$8,921
Hostos	\$8,417
LaGuardia	\$8,067
Queensbrough	\$7,148
Kingsborough	\$5,884
BMCC	\$5,849

Source: CUNY

- Four of the six community colleges exceed both national and peer averages.
- Generally, schools with the lowest per student expenditures have experienced increasing enrollment without a corresponding increase in allocation.
- The reverse is true for schools with high per student spending.
- These differences are driven by CUNY's resource allocation process, which often shifts revenues generated by community colleges like BMCC, with growing enrollments, to support other schools that are experiencing difficulty, such as Hostos.

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