

Graduate Cost of Attendance Survey (GCOAS) 2026 Instrument

University of California Office of the President

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Cover Letter and Statement of Consent

What is the Graduate Cost of Attendance Survey?

The University of California Office of the President is conducting the Graduate Cost of Attendance Survey for a sample of graduate and professional students across all UC campuses.

The survey helps the University understand the changing expenses students face. Results are used to improve graduate funding, services, and cost estimates for prospective students.

Time to Complete

The survey takes about 15 minutes to complete.

If you are interrupted, you may return later using the survey link sent to your email.

Prizes

As a thank-you for participating, prize drawings will be held once each week while the survey is open.

When you complete the survey, you will automatically be entered for a chance to win a prize in the remaining drawings.

Prizes total \$6,000 and include:

- Six \$500 Amazon gift cards
- Forty \$75 Amazon gift cards

The earlier you respond, the more chances you have to win. Winners will be notified by email.

To enter the prize drawings without completing the survey, send an email to GradCostofAttendance@ucop.edu with **COAS Prize Entry** in the subject line and include your full name and student ID in the body of the email.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation is voluntary.

Choosing whether or not to participate will not affect your grades, your relationship with UC, or any benefits to which you may otherwise be entitled. Your responses will not be used in any decisions regarding employment.

You may stop the survey at any time or skip any questions you do not wish to answer, except for a small number of questions used to route you to the appropriate sections of the survey.

Benefits

You may not receive a direct benefit from participating.

However, your responses help the University better understand graduate student expenses and improve funding policies, services, and cost information.

To see how previous survey results have been used, visit the GCOAS survey website for prior surveys, administration details, and reports.

Protecting Your Privacy

This survey is confidential, not anonymous.

Your name and email address are used only to send survey invitations and reminders. This information is available only to survey administration staff and will be deleted from survey datasets after the survey closes.

Your student ID will be used to link survey responses with other University records, including demographic, enrollment, graduation, applicant, and post-baccalaureate data. These data are used for analysis and reporting.

Survey results will be reported only in aggregate form. Any identifiable information collected for this study will be kept confidential.

When information is stored on secure third-party platforms or transferred through secure file transfer services, confidentiality will be maintained in accordance with University of California privacy and security policies.

Information will be disclosed only when required by law. Public reporting will be reviewed to help ensure that individual identities cannot be determined. Records will be retained in accordance with UC's Record Retention Schedule.

Questions or Concerns

If you have questions about this study or how responses will be used, please contact survey staff at GradCostofAttendance@ucop.edu.

consent

Consent to Participate

By selecting "Agree," I am providing my consent to this survey research effort, as described above.

Agree (1)

Disagree (2)

Survey Instructions

Before you begin

Report your costs for the 2025–26 academic year. For recurring expenses, use a usual month during your current enrolled academic period; for food, use a usual week during that same period. If you are between periods, use your most recent enrolled period in 2025–26.

What should I report for one-time or occasional costs?

Report the total amount you paid or expect to pay during the 2025–26 academic year.

Whose costs should I include?

Include the share you pay for yourself and any dependents you support.

Whose payments should I leave out?

Report only the portion you personally paid or were responsible for. Do not include amounts paid by someone else on your behalf, such as a parent, spouse or partner, roommate, or other family member, unless a question specifically asks about that.

What if I do not know the exact amount?

Give your best estimate.

Should I include expenses that are not listed?

Only include expenses specifically requested in each question. At the end of the survey, you will have space to describe additional necessary expenses not covered elsewhere.

Living Situation

hometype

During your current term, where do you live most of the time?

- With parent(s) or other relative(s) in housing they provide (1)
- University apartment or house (2)
- University dormitory or residence hall (3)
- Off-campus non-university apartment, house, or room that you rent (4)
- Home you own or are buying (5)
- Cooperative housing (6)
- No consistent place to sleep (e.g., couch surfing, living in car, no local home) (7)
- Other (please specify): (8) _____

Skip To: marriage If hometype = 7

wholive

During your current term, who do you live with most of the time? Check all that apply.

- Spouse or partner (1)
- Children or other dependents under age 18 (2)
- Dependents age 18 or older (3)
- Parent(s) or other relatives who are not your dependents (4)
- Unrelated housemate(s) or roommate(s) (5)
- Other person or people (please specify) (6) _____
- None of the above — I live alone (7)

Skip To: marriage If wholive = 7

roommate

During your current term, do you share a bedroom with someone who is not your spouse, partner, or dependent?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I don't have a bedroom to sleep in (3)

*Display this question:
If roommate = 1*

roommate_num

How many people, excluding yourself, share your bedroom?

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 or more (5)

marriage

Which of the following describes your current marital or partnership status?

- Never married (1)
- Married (2)
- Registered domestic partner (3)
- Unregistered domestic partner (4)
- Separated (5)
- Divorced (6)
- Widowed (7)

children

During the 2025–26 academic year, do you have any children or other dependents, other than a spouse or partner, for whom you provide at least 50% of financial support?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Display this question:

If children = 1

children_age

How many dependents do you have in each age group?

For each age range, enter a whole number. Enter 0 if none.

- Ages 0–5: (1) _____
- Ages 6–12: (2) _____
- Ages 13–17: (3) _____
- Ages 18 or older: (4) _____

Display this question:

If children = 1

childcaretypes

In a usual month, which of the following best describes your child care or dependent care costs?

- I have no child care or dependent care costs (1)
- I pay the full child care cost myself (2)
- I pay part of the cost, and someone else or a subsidy pays part (3)
- I do not personally pay, but someone else or a subsidy pays all of the cost (4)

Display this question:

If *childcare*types = 2

Or *childcare*types = 3

childcarecost

In a usual month, how much do you personally pay for child care or other dependent care for any dependents you support?

Enter whole dollars only. Enter 0 if none. Best estimate is okay.

Display this question:

If *childcare*types = 3

Or *childcare*types = 4

childcaresub

In a usual month, who pays any part of those child care or dependent care costs? Select all that apply.

University, government, employer, or nonprofit subsidy, voucher, or grant (1)

A co-parent, spouse or partner, or other family member (2)

Other assistance (please specify) (3) _____

Display this question:

If *In a usual month, who pays any part of those child care or dependent care costs? Select all that...*
q://QID878/SelectedChoicesCount Is Greater Than 0

Carry Forward Selected Choices from "childcaresub"

childcaresubcost

In that same usual month, how much of your child care or dependent care cost is paid by each of the following?

Enter whole dollars only. Enter 0 if none. Best estimate is okay.

University, government, employer, or nonprofit subsidy, voucher, or grant (1)

A co-parent, spouse or partner, or other family member (2)

Other assistance (please specify) (3) _____

Housing Expenses

house_intro

The next questions ask about your housing arrangement during your current enrolled academic period and your housing costs in a usual month during that period.

If a question asks about annual fees or moving costs, report the total amount you paid or expect to pay during the 2025–26 academic year.

Include only the portion you personally paid or were responsible for, including costs for yourself and any dependents you support.

If you live in university-owned housing, you will not be asked to report those housing costs. We will use standard graduate student housing rates for your campus instead.

Display this question:

If hometype = 1

Or hometype = 4

Or hometype = 5

Or hometype = 6

Or hometype = 8

house_zip

For your current term, what is the 5-digit ZIP Code where you stay most often?

Display this question:

If hometype = 1

Or hometype = 4

Or hometype = 5

Or hometype = 6

Or hometype = 8

rent

In a usual month, how much do you personally pay for housing where you live most often?

Include rent, mortgage principal and interest, or regular payments you make to parents or other relatives for housing.

If utilities are billed with your housing payment, include them here.

Enter whole dollars only. Enter 0 if none. Best estimate is okay.

Display this question:

If hometype = 1

Or hometype = 4

Or hometype = 5

Or hometype = 6

Or hometype = 8

utilitystatus

In a usual month, do you personally pay any utility bills separately from your rent, mortgage, or other regular housing payment for the place where you live most often?

These include gas/electricity, water, trash, landline, internet, and similar utilities.

Yes (1)

No, all utilities are included in my rent, mortgage, or other regular housing payment (2)

No, I do not personally pay separate utility bills (3)

Display this question:

If utilitystatus = 1

utilitycost

In a usual month, how much do you personally pay for utilities billed separately from your housing payment?

Include gas/electricity, water, trash, landline, internet, and similar utilities. Do not include cell phone service or streaming subscriptions.

\$0 (1)

\$1 to \$49 (2)

\$50 to \$74 (3)

\$75 to \$99 (4)

\$100 to \$124 (5)

\$125 to \$149 (6)

\$150 to \$199 (7)

\$200 to \$249 (8)

\$250 to \$299 (9)

\$300 to \$349 (10)

\$350 or more; please enter the actual dollar amount: (11)

Display this question:

If hometype = 5

HOA

During the 2025–26 academic year, what total amount did you pay or expect to pay for homeowners association fees, property taxes, homeowners insurance, and other required housing-related fees for your home?

Enter whole dollars only. Enter 0 if none. Best estimate is okay.

Display this question:

If hometype = 1

Or hometype = 4

Or hometype = 6

Or hometype = 8

rentersinsurance

During the 2025–26 academic year, what total amount did you pay or expect to pay for renter’s insurance for the place where you live most often?

Enter whole dollars only. Enter 0 if none. Best estimate is okay.

moving

During the 2025–26 academic year, did you pay or expect to pay any of the following to get or keep housing? Check all that apply.

Application or screening fees (1)

Security deposit (2)

Advance rent before move-in (3)

Moving or relocation costs (4)

Utility setup fees (5)

Temporary lodging while searching or between leases (6)

Storage costs (7)

Other (please specify) (8) _____

None of the above (9)

Skip To: food_intro If moving = 9

Display this question:

If During the 2025–26 academic year, did you pay or expect to pay any of the following to get or kee...
q://QID846/SelectedChoicesCount Is Greater Than or Equal to 1

Carry Forward Selected Choices from "moving"

moving_cost

During the 2025–26 academic year, what total amount did you pay or expect to pay for each housing-related cost you selected?

Enter whole dollars only. Enter 0 if none. Best estimate is okay.

Application or screening fees (1) _____

Security deposit (2) _____

Advance rent before move-in (3) _____

Moving or relocation costs (4) _____

Utility setup fees (5) _____

Temporary lodging while searching or between leases (6)

Storage costs (7) _____

Other (please specify) (8) _____

None of the above (9) _____

Food Expenses

food_intro

The next questions ask about food assistance received during the 2025–26 academic year and food spending in a usual week during your current enrolled academic period.

For groceries and other food prepared or eaten at home, include food obtained through CalFresh (SNAP) or other food assistance benefits.

Include only the portion you personally paid or were responsible for, including costs for yourself and any dependents you support.

food_aid

During the 2025–26 academic year, did you receive food assistance from any of the following? Check all that apply.

CalFresh/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (1)

Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC) (2)

Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP) (3)

Community food bank or meal provider (4)

UC basic needs center (5)

Other (please specify) (6) _____

I did not receive food assistance (7)

food

In a usual week, what is your total cost for groceries and other food prepared or eaten at home for yourself and any dependents you support?

Do not include restaurant meals, takeout, delivery, vending purchases, or non-food household items here. Include groceries covered by CalFresh (SNAP) or other food assistance benefits.

\$0 (1)

\$1 to \$49 (2)

\$50 to \$99 (3)

\$100 to \$149 (4)

\$150 to \$199 (5)

\$200 to \$249 (6)

\$250 to \$299 (7)

\$300 to \$349 (8)

\$350 to \$399 (9)

\$400 or more; please enter the actual dollar amount: (10)

In a usual week, how much do you personally pay for meals, snacks, takeout, delivery, and other food bought away from home for yourself and any dependents you support?

Include food from restaurants, cafés, vending machines, campus dining purchases, delivery services (for example, DoorDash or Uber Eats), or takeout. Do not include groceries here.

\$0 (1)

\$1 to \$19 (2)

\$20 to \$39 (3)

\$40 to \$59 (4)

\$60 to \$99 (5)

\$100 to \$149 (6)

\$150 to \$199 (7)

\$200 to \$249 (8)

\$250 or more; please enter the actual dollar amount: (9)

Transportation Expenses

commutedays

In a usual week, how many days do you travel to campus or another required academic location, such as a lab, clinic, school, field site, or teaching site?

- None (1)
- 1 day (2)
- 2 days (3)
- 3 days (4)
- 4 days (5)
- 5 days (6)
- 6 days (7)
- 7 days (8)

Display this question:

If commutedays != 1

communtelength

If you travel to more than one required location, answer the next two questions about the location you visit most often.

How many miles do you usually travel one way to your main required academic location?

- Less than 1 mile (1)
- 1 to 5 miles (2)
- 6 to 10 miles (3)
- 11 to 20 miles (4)
- 21 to 30 miles (5)
- 31 to 40 miles (6)
- 41 to 50 miles (7)
- 51 to 60 miles (8)
- More than 60 miles (9)

Display this question:

If commutedays != 1

commutetime

How long does that one-way trip usually take?

- Less than 5 minutes (1)
- 5 to 14 minutes (2)
- 15 to 29 minutes (3)
- 30 to 44 minutes (4)
- 45 to 59 minutes (5)
- 60 minutes or more (6)

commutemode

During your current term, what types of transportation do you use? Check all that apply.

Include transportation to and from campus or other required academic locations, and for local errands such as groceries, child care, work, or medical appointments.

- Walk (1)
- Non-motorized bike, scooter, skateboard, or similar device (2)
- Personal electric bike or electric scooter (3)
- Rented electric bike or electric scooter (4)
- Car or motorcycle that I drive (5)
- Taxi or app-based rideshare (6)
- Ride in someone else's car, carpool, or vanpool (7)
- Public transportation (8)
- Campus shuttle (9)
- Paratransit or other disability-related transportation service (10)
- Other (please specify) (11) _____

Display this question:

If commutemode = 2

Or commutemode = 3

Or commutemode = 4

Or commutemode = 6

Or commutemode = 7

Or commutemode = 8

Or commutemode = 9

Or commutemode = 10

Or commutemode = 11

Carry Forward Selected Choices from "commutemode"

commutecost

In a usual month, what total amount do you personally pay for each of these local transportation types?

Enter whole dollars only. Enter 0 if none. Best estimate is okay.

Walk (1) _____

Non-motorized bike, scooter, skateboard, or similar device (2) _____

Personal electric bike or electric scooter (3) _____

Rented electric bike or electric scooter (4) _____

Car or motorcycle that I drive (5) _____

Taxi or app-based rideshare (6) _____

Ride in someone else's car, carpool, or vanpool (7) _____

Public transportation (8) _____

Campus shuttle (9) _____

Paratransit or other disability-related transportation service (10) _____

Other (please specify) (11) _____

Display this question:

If commutemode = 5

vehicleexpense

In a usual month, what total amount do you personally pay for driving a car or motorcycle?

Enter whole dollars only. Enter 0 if none. Best estimate is okay.

Loan or lease payment (1) _____

Insurance (2) _____

Gas or charging (3) _____

Parking (4) _____

Tolls (5) _____

Maintenance or repairs (6) _____

Display this question:

If commutemode = 5

vehicleinsurance

During the 2025–26 academic year, what total amount did you pay or expect to pay for vehicle registration?

Enter whole dollars only. Enter 0 if none. Best estimate is okay.

Personal and Healthcare Expenses

personal_intro

The next questions ask about recurring personal and health care costs in a usual month during your current term.

Include costs for yourself and any dependents you support. Do not include amounts paid only by another adult in your household.

personal

In a usual month, how much do you personally pay for clothing, shoes, laundry, toiletries, hair care, cleaning supplies, toilet paper, and similar personal-use household items for yourself and any dependents you support?

- \$0 (1)
 - \$1 to \$19 (2)
 - \$20 to \$39 (3)
 - \$40 to \$59 (4)
 - \$60 to \$99 (5)
 - \$100 to \$149 (6)
 - \$150 to \$199 (7)
 - \$200 to \$299 (8)
 - \$300 or more; please enter the actual dollar amount: (9)
-

healthcare

In a usual month, how much do you personally pay for health care costs not covered by insurance for yourself and any dependents you support?

Include costs such as co-payments, prescriptions, contact lenses, glasses, inhalers, allergy medication, and deductibles associated with medical, dental, and mental health care.

- \$0 (1)
 - \$1 to \$49 (2)
 - \$50 to \$99 (3)
 - \$100 to \$149 (4)
 - \$150 to \$199 (5)
 - \$200 to \$249 (6)
 - \$250 to \$299 (7)
 - \$300 or more; please enter the actual dollar amount: (8)
-

recreation

In a usual month, how much do you personally pay for recreation for yourself and any dependents you support?

Examples may include streaming services, gym memberships, event tickets, recreation sports or activity fees, or club memberships.

- \$0 (1)
 - \$1 to \$39 (2)
 - \$40 to \$59 (3)
 - \$60 to \$99 (4)
 - \$100 to \$149 (5)
 - \$150 to \$199 (6)
 - \$200 to \$249 (7)
 - \$250 to \$299 (8)
 - \$300 to \$399 (9)
 - \$400 or more; please enter the actual dollar amount: (10)
-

Phone Expenses

phone

In a usual month, how much do you personally pay for your cellular or mobile phone plan?

Do not include the cost of the phone itself. If you are on someone else's plan, report only the portion you pay.

- \$0 (1)
 - \$1 to \$39 (2)
 - \$40 to \$59 (3)
 - \$60 to \$79 (4)
 - \$80 to \$99 (5)
 - \$100 to \$119 (6)
 - \$120 to \$139 (7)
 - \$140 or more; please enter the actual dollar amount: (8)
-

Books, Supplies, and Technology

computer

During your current term, do you have regular access to a desktop or laptop computer for your coursework, research, teaching, clinical work, or other program requirements?

- Yes, and it meets my academic needs (1)
- Yes, but it does not fully meet my academic needs (2)
- No (3)

Display this question:

If computer = 3

Or computer = 2

computertype

During your current term, what else, if anything, do you use to complete your coursework, teaching, research, or professional training? Check all that apply.

- Tablet (1)
- Phone (2)
- Library, department, or lab computer (3)
- Borrowed computer (4)
- Other (please specify) (5) _____
- None of the above (6)

techtypes

During the 2025–26 academic year, did you pay or expect to pay any unreimbursed costs for any of the following to support your coursework, teaching, research, or professional training? Check all that apply.

- A desktop or laptop computer (1)
- A tablet (2)
- Additional hardware or repairs outside an extended service contract (for example, monitor, hard drive, printer, or repair) (3)
- Additional software (for example, word processing, spreadsheet, graphics, statistical, or programming software) (4)
- Other (please specify) (5) _____
- None of the above (6)

Skip To: books If techtypes = 6

Display this question:

If During the 2025–26 academic year, did you pay or expect to pay any unreimbursed costs for any of the following to support your coursework, teaching, research, or professional training? &Chec... q://QID1315935586/SelectedChoicesCount Is Greater Than or Equal to 1

Carry Forward Selected Choices from "techtypes"

techcosts

During the 2025–26 academic year, what total unreimbursed amount did you pay or expect to pay for each technology item you selected?

Enter whole dollars only. Enter 0 if none. Best estimate is okay.

A desktop or laptop computer (1) _____

A tablet (2) _____

Additional hardware or repairs outside an extended service contract (for example, monitor, hard drive, printer, or repair) (3) _____

Additional software (for example, word processing, spreadsheet, graphics, statistical, or programming software) (4) _____

Other (please specify) (5) _____

None of the above (6) _____

books

During the 2025–26 academic year, what total unreimbursed amount did you pay or expect to pay for books and course materials required for your coursework, teaching, research, or professional training?

Examples may include textbooks, manuals, course readers, textbook rentals, or digital textbooks.

\$0 (1)

\$1 to \$49 (2)

\$50 to \$99 (3)

\$100 to \$149 (4)

\$150 to \$199 (5)

\$200 to \$299 (6)

\$300 to \$399 (7)

\$400 to \$499 (8)

\$500 to \$599 (9)

\$600 or more; please enter the actual dollar amount: (10)

Other Graduate and Professional Costs

gradcost_intro

The next four questions ask about unreimbursed graduate or professional expenses during the 2025–26 academic year that were not already covered by grants, fellowships, or similar support. For each item, enter the total amount you paid or expect to pay.

Enter whole dollars only. Enter 0 if none. Best estimate is okay.

gradlicense

During the 2025–26 academic year, what total unreimbursed amount did you pay or expect to pay for licensing, certification, or board exams and related preparation materials?

Examples may include exam registration fees, question banks, test-prep websites, preparation courses, or study subscriptions.

gradPPE

During the 2025–26 academic year, what total unreimbursed amount did you pay or expect to pay for clinical placements, background checks, immunizations, uniforms, personal protective equipment, or other program-required compliance costs?

gradpub

During the 2025–26 academic year, what total unreimbursed amount did you pay or expect to pay for research submissions, publications, or dissemination fees not already reported elsewhere?

Examples may include manuscript submission fees, abstract submission fees, publication or page charges, or poster-printing costs.

gradtravel

During the 2025–26 academic year, what total unreimbursed amount did you pay or expect to pay for research travel, conference travel, or travel to required sites that you did not already report in earlier transportation questions?

Support for People Outside Your Household

familysupport

During the 2025–26 academic year, did you send money or pay bills for parents, siblings, children, or other people who do not live with you?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Display this question:

If familysupport = 1

familycost

During the 2025–26 academic year, what total amount did you send or pay on their behalf?

Enter whole dollars only. Enter 0 if none. Best estimate is okay.

Financial Constraints

costchallenges

During the 2025–26 academic year, did any of the following happen because you did not have enough money to cover your costs? Check all that apply.

Cut the size of your meals or skipped meals (1)

Delayed or skipped medical, dental, or mental health care (2)

Display this choice:

If children = 1

Went without needed child care or dependent care (3)

Paid your housing payment or utilities late (4)

Stayed in or moved to housing with health or safety problems (5)

Other (please specify) (6) _____

None of the above (7)

Other Expenses

othercosts

During the 2025–26 academic year, did you have any necessary expenses not already reported above in any of the following areas? Check all that apply.

- Emergency expenses (1)
- Disability-related expenses (2)
- Unexpected health expenses (3)
- Legal expenses (4)
- Other necessary expense not already reported above (5)
- No additional costs to report (6)

Display this question:

If othercosts = 5

Or othercosts = 4

Or othercosts = 3

Or othercosts = 2

Or othercosts = 1

othercosts_open

Please briefly describe the additional expense(s) you selected above for the 2025–26 academic year.

Closing and Follow-up

other_comments

Please use the space below for any comments you have about this survey, including any problems you may have had or suggestions.

professional_opps

Would you like to be contacted about professional development opportunities related to survey design and analysis, or about giving feedback to improve future surveys and related products?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Display this question:

If professional_opps = 1

professional_email

Please share the best email to reach you.

Submission

Submit

Please click "Submit" to complete the survey.