

The Importance of Pell Grants for UC Students

Pell Grants Expand College Opportunity for Low-Income Students at UC

- At UC, more than 82,000 students—35 percent of all undergraduates and 41 percent of California undergraduates—qualify for Pell Grants.
- UC enrolls a higher percentage of Pell Grant recipients than public or private peer institutions.

Pell Grants Lead to Success

- 83 percent of UC Pell Grant recipients graduate within six years, at rates similar to non-Pell Grant recipients.
- Within five years of graduating, Pell Grant recipients earn an average income higher than their parents' combined income during the time they attended UC.
- More than one in three UC alumni who come from the bottom 20 percent of income rise to the top 20 percent of income as adults.

Pell Grant Funding is an Essential Part of Student Support at UC

- In 2022-23, UC students received \$1.73 billion in federal aid—of which \$495 million was Pell Grant funding—\$1.28 billion in state aid and \$221 million in private aid, as well as \$2.11 billion from UC's own institutional funds.
- 64 percent of California undergraduates graduate with no student loan debt. For those that do borrow, the average debt at graduation is \$17,200.

Year-round Pell Grants Help UC Students

- Year-round Pell Grants, which were reinstated in the 2017-18 academic year, allow low-income students to receive Pell Grants throughout the entire year, including during summer session.
- Year-round Pell Grants help students accelerate their time to degree completion, while potentially reducing their overall educational costs.
- In summer 2024, nearly 30,000 UC students received \$48.7 million in aid to help cover their summer session.

Why Congress Needs to Double the Pell

- Nearly 7 million of our nation's students rely on federal Pell Grants to help them access and attain a higher education, with nearly 90% of Pell Grant dollars going to students from families earning less than \$50,000 per year.
- The current maximum Pell Grant award does not meet students' needs, forcing them to close financial aid funding gaps by taking out student loans for their remaining expenses.
- At UC, 47 percent of California Pell recipients graduate with debt – compared to 27 percent of California non-Pell recipients.
- Nationally, 70 percent of Pell Grant recipients who graduate from four-year colleges currently have student loan debt.
- While UC Pell Grant recipients, on average, graduate with about \$3,200 less in debt than their peers who borrow, doubling the maximum Pell Grant award will allow UC and universities across the country to stretch institutional aid further, helping even more students find a debt-free path to a degree. When students graduate with enormous debts, they put off taking a risk on a dream job, attending graduate school, purchasing homes, starting a family or making other significant investments in our economy.