

IT'S A PLAN

WHAT DO I GET FOR MY MONEY?

Comparing costs and outcomes for public, private for-profit, and online certificate programs

Students will learn the difference between public and private, for-profit colleges that offer certificate programs; they will consider the implications of media/television advertisements with respect to colleges; and they will compare and contrast the costs and outcomes associated with each type of institution.

AGENDA

10 minutes: Brainstorm & Definitions

20 minutes: Group work

10-20 minutes: Closing discussion

MATERIALS

White board or poster paper for brainstorming

[Instructions & Discussion Tips](#) (pages 3-4)

[List of Oregon colleges and universities](#) (pages 5-6)

[Student's Handout of Definitions, Instructions, & Notes](#) (page 7)

[Data Chart & Graphing Templates](#) (pages 8-12)

SOURCES & MORE INFORMATION

<http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

<http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Search.aspx>

The Low-down on For-Profit Colleges: <http://www.nacacnet.org/issues-action/LegislativeNews/Pages/For-Profit-Colleges.aspx> (from the *National Association for College Admissions Counseling*)



INSTRUCTIONS

OPENING BRAINSTORM

Ask students to name as many colleges as they can think of for which they've seen a television commercial. Write these on the white board/poster paper. Once you have a fairly comprehensive list, ask them to:

1. Identify what time of day and type of programming are playing when the ads are on air
2. Use the list of [Oregon Colleges and Universities](#) to determine if the colleges they've seen ads for are public; private, not-for-profit; or private, for-profit.
3. Ask students if they see any patterns in which types of colleges advertise and when
4. Define terms:
 - Types of colleges: public; private, not-for-profit; and private, for-profit
 - Types of credentials: certificate, AA, BA/BS, etc.
 - Financial information: cost of attendance, net price, grants, loans, default rate

GROUP WORK

THE SET-UP

Tell students that this activity is narrowly focused—only considering certificate programs and comparing them across just a few of Oregon's many colleges. It is designed to provide them with the tools necessary to make informed decisions about their own college choices. Remind students that this activity relies on past data so they are not the correct costs for the year they will enroll in school. Also, the activity uses information for the average student, which means there will always be some students whose costs are greater and there some whose costs are less. They may choose to do this again with their own specific data when they've selected a group of colleges to which they would like to apply.

1. Break students into groups of 4 or fewer.
2. Provide each group with one copy of the data sheet for each student and one set of blank graphs & the instruction sheet to share.
3. Assign (or allow students to choose) one field of study from among the five choices: Cosmetology, Auto Mechanic, Culinary, Paralegal, Medical Assistant.

COMPLETING THE ACTIVITY

Encourage students to divvy up the work such that each student draws at least one graph. Students should have a copy of the written directions and important terms/notes, but the following instructions should be also be given verbally:

1. Using the data chart, choose four colleges or universities that offer the group's assigned certificate program; if possible, be sure to select at least one college of each type: public, private, for-profit.
2. For each of those four schools, complete the data chart.
3. Use the blank graph pages to create bar graphs comparing tuition & fees; loans, out-of-pocket expenses, & net price; default rates; and graduation rates.
4. In your groups, discuss your first impressions of what you're noticing from these graphs. Make special note of any differences or similarities you are seeing with respect to the type of school.



INSTRUCTIONS

DISCUSSION

After students have spent some time in their groups talking about their observations, ask them to post/share their graphs with the whole class. Then, lead them in a discussion with the goal of encouraging students to be thoughtful as they make college selections. (Remember that the goal is not to push students to make any particular college choice but to provide them with informed decision-making skills to ultimately select the best-fit college for them.)

The following questions can be used to help guide the discussion. Following each question is brief statement about things to encourage students consider during the discussion:

- Why does any of this data matter when selecting a college?
 - ◇ *Many factors are important when choosing a college, including cost and graduation rates.*
 - ◇ *Net price is often not the same as “sticker price,” and affordability is most likely going to be determined by net price.*
 - ◇ *Graduation rates are one measure of how successfully students complete degrees or certificates.*
 - ◇ *Default rates can be an indicator of employability—students who are employed are better able to pay back student loans than those who aren’t. But remember that students who don’t graduate are also expected to pay back loans and those who don’t are counted in the school’s default rates.*
- Why might it matter if the college you attend is accredited?
 - ◇ *Consider the lack of opportunities for federal and state financial aid and possibilities for transferring credits to another college or university, as well as potential job prospects.*

- ◇ Why might it concern us that a school does not make information about their graduation rates publicly available?
 - ◇ *Accredited schools are required to provide this information. Unaccredited schools that don’t provide the information might have low numbers.*
- ◇ If you know you will graduate from your college program, should you care what the average graduation rate is? Why or why not?
 - ◇ *Graduation rates might be indicative of support systems available on campus.*
- This activity focused on certificate programs that you can earn at public community colleges or **private, for-profit** career colleges. Similarly, four-year colleges and universities are usually either public or **private, not-for-profit**. What is the difference between a for-profit and not-for-profit private school? How would you go about finding the cost of attendance, graduation rates, and other information for any four-year colleges you are interested in attending?
 - ◇ *See definitions but also note that not-for-profit private colleges often offer additional grant/scholarship aid for students.*
 - ◇ *Use the links provided in this document to find data for other colleges and universities.*
- Each college sets its own living costs. The range selected by these schools is fairly big (\$1,545 to \$7,042), and even schools in the same city have set varying amounts. Why do you think that is? How will knowing that help you make good decisions when thinking about the cost of attendance at colleges you are considering?
 - ◇ *Schools can use the cost of living calculation as a way to “control” their cost of attendance figures.*

INSTRUCTIONS

DISCUSSION (continued)

- For this activity, the cost of living figures are for Oregon students, going to Oregon colleges, while living at home with their parents or guardians. How might the numbers change if an Oregon student goes to college in another state? How might they change if an Oregon student goes to college in Oregon but lives on campus or lives off campus with their friends?
 - ◇ *For public schools, the tuition rates are often higher for out-of-state students.*
 - ◇ *The cost of living will be greater for students who do not live with their parents/guardians because expenses like rent will need to be factored in to the budget.*
- The range in average net price for this group of colleges is relatively large—what might cause such a difference?
 - ◇ *Differences in tuition fees, cost of living allowances, and estimates for books and other expenses all play a role in average net price for schools.*
 - ◇ *Some colleges and universities can provide institutional grant/scholarship aid for students, which lowers the average net price.*
 - ◇ *Unaccredited colleges and universities are not eligible to award federal or state grant aid, so their net price will often be higher.*
- Why might tuition/books at some of the online colleges be so much higher than at the public and/or brick & mortar private, for-profit schools?
 - ◇ *Colleges, especially private ones, are able to set their own tuition fees. Like most businesses, for-profit colleges set fees that the market will bear.*
- Why might some of the colleges not offer federal or state-funded grant aid? If you can afford to go to the school without financial aid, are they a good option? What other questions should you ask yourself when making that decision?
 - ◇ *Most colleges that don't offer federal or state aid are not accredited*
 - ◇ *Most accredited colleges will not accept transfer credits from unaccredited colleges*
- Why might some programs cost so much more the same thing? For example, Kaplan University is almost 12 times the cost of Ashworth. What questions can you ask of the admissions representatives at those schools to find out the answer?
 - ◇ *Remember that colleges get to set their own rates!*
 - ◇ *Review the definition of a for-profit college, paying special attention to the point about these colleges being in the business of making money for shareholders.*
 - ◇ *Remember that public colleges receive some funding from the state, so they don't have to collect the majority of their revenues through tuition dollars.*
 - ◇ *Not all schools are the same, so it's not exactly correct to say that you'll get the same experience/quality from one school to another. Some things, like smaller class sizes, simply cost more money to offer but might be a better fit for some students.*
- What does the loan default rate mean? Why do you think some people pay close attention to that number?
 - ◇ *Defaulting on a loan means that the borrower has failed to repay it.*
 - ◇ *A school's default rate is the percentage of alumni (both graduates and non-graduates) who have failed to repay their loans.*
 - ◇ *High default rates might indicate that alumni are finding it difficult to get jobs.*

OREGON'S ACCREDITED COLLEGES

PUBLIC

Blue Mountain Community College
Central Oregon Community College
Chemeketa Community College
Clackamas Community College
Clatsop Community College
Columbia Gorge Community College
Eastern Oregon University
Klamath Community College
Lane Community College
Linn-Benton Community College
Mt Hood Community College
Oregon Coast Community College
Oregon Health & Science University
Oregon Institute of Technology
Oregon State University
Oregon State University-Cascades
Portland Community College
Portland State University
Rogue Community College
Southern Oregon University
Southwestern Oregon Community College
Tillamook Bay Community College
Treasure Valley Community College
Umpqua Community College
University of Oregon
Western Oregon University

PRIVATE, NOT-FOR-PROFIT

Concordia University
Corban University
George Fox University
Gutenberg College
Lewis & Clark College
Linfield College
Mount Angel Seminary
Multnomah University
National University of Natural Medicine
New Hope Christian College
Northwest Christian University
Oregon College of Art and Craft
Oregon College of Oriental Medicine
Pacific Northwest College of Art
Pacific University
Portland Actors Conservatory
Reed College
University of Portland
University of Western States
Warner Pacific College
Western Governors University
Western Seminary
Western University of Health Sciences: College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific Northwest
Willamette University

Learn more: oregongoestocollege.org/itsaplan



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OREGON'S ACCREDITED COLLEGES

PRIVATE, FOR-PROFIT

Abdill College

Academy of Hair Design

American College of Healthcare Sciences

Aveda Institute Portland

Beau Monde Academy of Cosmetology

Birthingway College of Midwifery

Carrington College

College of Cosmetology

College of Emergency Services

College of Hair Design Careers

Concorde Career College

East West College of the Healing Arts

Everest Institute

IITR Truck School

Institute of Technology

Montessori Institute Northwest

Northwest College School of Beauty

Oregon Culinary Institute

Pacific Bible College

Paul Mitchell the School

Phagans Beauty College

Pioneer Pacific College

POCA Technical Institute

Roseburg Beauty College

Sage School of Massage & Esthetics

Springfield College of Beauty

Summit Salon Academy

Sumner College

Source: [Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission](#)

Learn more: oregongoestocollege.org/itsaplan



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WHAT DO I GET FOR MY MONEY?

In this activity, you will compare and contrast different types of colleges and some important criteria that will help you when making a decision about what colleges could be a good fit for you. Remember that these data are all averages. Your own personal circumstances will differ, so you should not expect these numbers to be YOUR numbers when you apply/enroll.

HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

TYPES OF COLLEGES

Public: run by the state, these colleges and universities receive some of their funding from state or local taxes, just like public elementary and high schools. As a result, in-state students generally pay lower tuition than students from out-of-state.

Private, not-for-profit: these colleges and universities are operated as non-profit organizations and run by a board of trustees. They receive most of their funding from student tuition and endowments. Most receive some government support for financial aid, but they also often spend their own resources to provide additional grants and scholarships for students.

Private, for-profit: these colleges are run by companies and are responsible to investors and stockholders. They are privately run, and like most businesses, they exist (at least in part) to earn money for their owners. Some are eligible to receive government support for financial aid, but very few of them also spend their own money to provide additional grants and scholarships to assist students.

Online: these may be run by public or private colleges

FINANCIAL TERMS

Cost of Attendance: the total amount of attending college for one year at any particular school. Generally, it includes tuition, books, fees, travel costs, room, and board.

Net Price: the Cost of Attendance minus any grants or scholarships you earn, this is the amount you are responsible for paying each year. It could include out-of-pocket costs, loans, and work study.

Grant Aid: money you get for college that you do not have to pay back, it is usually awarded because of financial need

Loan: money you borrow to attend college; you must pay it back after you leave school (even if you don't graduate)

Default: failure to pay back your student loans when they are due

INSTRUCTIONS

In your group, select four colleges that offer your assigned certificate program. If possible, choose 1 college from each type: public; private, for-profit; online.

- 1) Complete the chart for the four schools you've chosen, using the formulas shown in the top row
- 2) Use the blank graph templates to draw bar graphs. Color the graphs different colors or with different shading to indicate what type of college each school is. Fill in the key on your graph to match. (Note: one sample is shown for the Net Price graph to help because it requires a two-part bar; all other graph pages will use one-part bars)
- 3) Discuss your observations as a group.

HELPFUL HINTS

- In most states, including Oregon, **cosmetology** licenses require that students take their courses in person. Therefore, no online programs are available. (If you find an online program, it will not be accredited and will not lead to licensure in Oregon, so it is not a good choice.)
- On the chart, schools that offer \$0 in grant aid are not accredited. Therefore, students are not eligible for federal or state financial aid, including grants and loans. Schools that have no numbers listed for grant aid and/or graduation rates do not make this information easily available. You may not be able to complete all graphs for these schools.
- If you calculate a negative Net Price, this means that the average student receives enough grant aid and loans to cover the cost of attending the college while living at home with their family. Your bar graph will include no out-of-pocket expenses.

If you're interested in finding the most recent information or for other colleges, visit nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator.



DATA FOR GRAPHS

Name of College	City	Type	Cosmetology	Auto Mechanic	Culinary	Paralegal	Medical Assistant	1			2			3		4
								Tuition/Books	Cost of living, when with family	Estimated cost of attendance = Tuition/Books + Cost of Living	Average grant aid	Estimated Average Net Price = Cost of Attendance - Grant Aid	Average Federal Loan	Estimated out-of-pocket cost = Net Price - Loan	Default Rate	
Blue Mountain Community College	Pendleton	public	X	X			X	\$5,936.00	\$2,676.00		\$3,896.00	\$6,628.00			24.2%	39%
Mt Hood Community College	Gresham	public	X	X	X		X	\$6,162.00	\$2,625.00		\$4,326.00	\$5,906.00			24.0%	48%
Portland Community College	Portland	public	X	X	X		X	\$5,098.00	\$2,985.00		\$4,939.00	\$6,968.00			20.3%	34%
Southwestern Oregon Community College	Coos Bay	public	X	X	X		X	\$6,684.00	\$2,190.00		\$4,946.00	\$5,595.00			21.2%	34%
Treasure Valley Community College	Ontario	public	X	X		X	X	\$7,800.00	\$4,070.00		\$4,095.00	\$7,192.00			26.6%	18%
Umpqua Community College	Roseburg	public	X	X		X	X	\$5,790.00	\$3,000.00		\$4,675.00	\$3,975.00			38.5%	28%
Le Cordon Bleu	Portland	for profit			X			\$13,350.00	\$3,108.00		\$4,661.00	\$5,157.00			24.0%	58%
Phagans Central Oregon Beauty College	Bend	for profit	X					\$18,862.00	\$3,032.00		\$4,636.00	\$5,379.00			8.6%	78%
Culinary Institute	Wilsonville	for profit			X		X	\$14,097.00	\$2,790.00	\$16,887	\$5,034.00	\$10,736.00	\$1,117		22.2%	70%
Roseburg Beauty College	Roseburg	for profit	X					\$15,750.00	\$3,230.00		\$4,115.00	\$6,499.00			21.7%	79%
Abdill Career College	Medford	for-profit			X	X		\$15,262.00	\$1,545.00		\$2,290.00	\$4,080.00			16.0%	64%
Academy of Hair Design	Salem	for-profit	X					\$18,880.00	\$3,285.00		\$3,931.00	\$4,794.00			29.1%	68%
Carrington College	Portland	for-profit				X		\$14,692.00	\$7,042.00		\$3,554.00	\$7,481.00			16.4%	65%
College of Cosmetology	Klamath Falls	for-profit	X					\$17,317.00	\$3,100.00		\$3,748.00	\$7,146.00			38.8%	20%
Institute of Technology Inc	Salem	for-profit	X			X		\$17,575.00	\$5,731.00		\$3,293.00	\$6,577.00			13.9%	75%
Ashworth College		online	X			X		\$1,089.00	\$3,360.60		\$0.00	none available			n/a	n/a
Escoffier Online International		online		X				\$4,300.00	\$3,360.60		\$0.00	none available			n/a	n/a
Kaplan University		online				X		\$12,146.00	\$3,360.60		not readily available	\$8,864.00			17.2%	
San Joaquin Valley College		online				X		\$16,360.00	\$3,360.60		not readily available	\$9,500.00			25.6%	68%



Graph #1: Cost of Tuition + Books + Required Fees at Schools that Offer

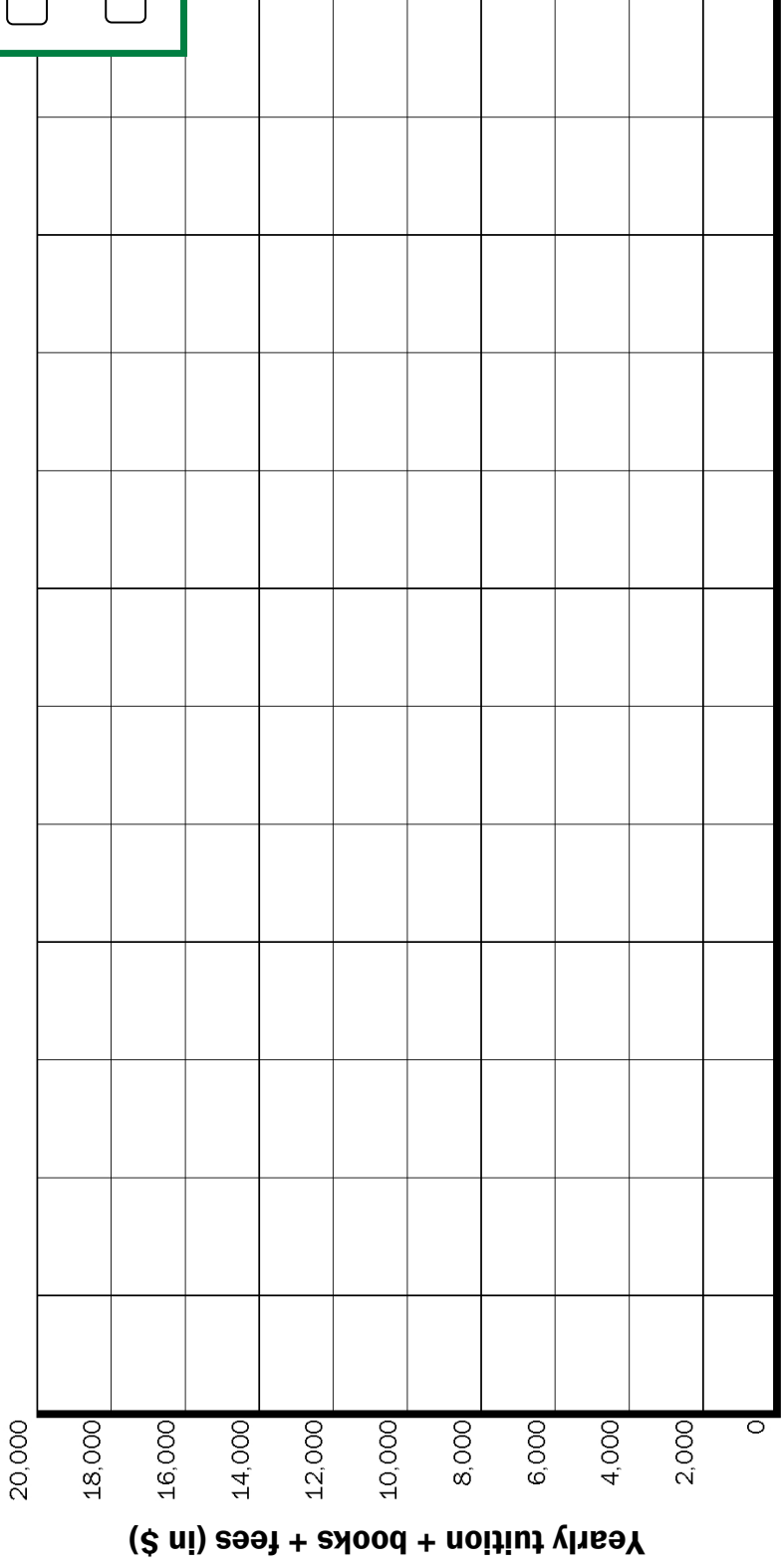
_____ (write in the name of the certificate program)

Key

Public

Private, for-profit

Online



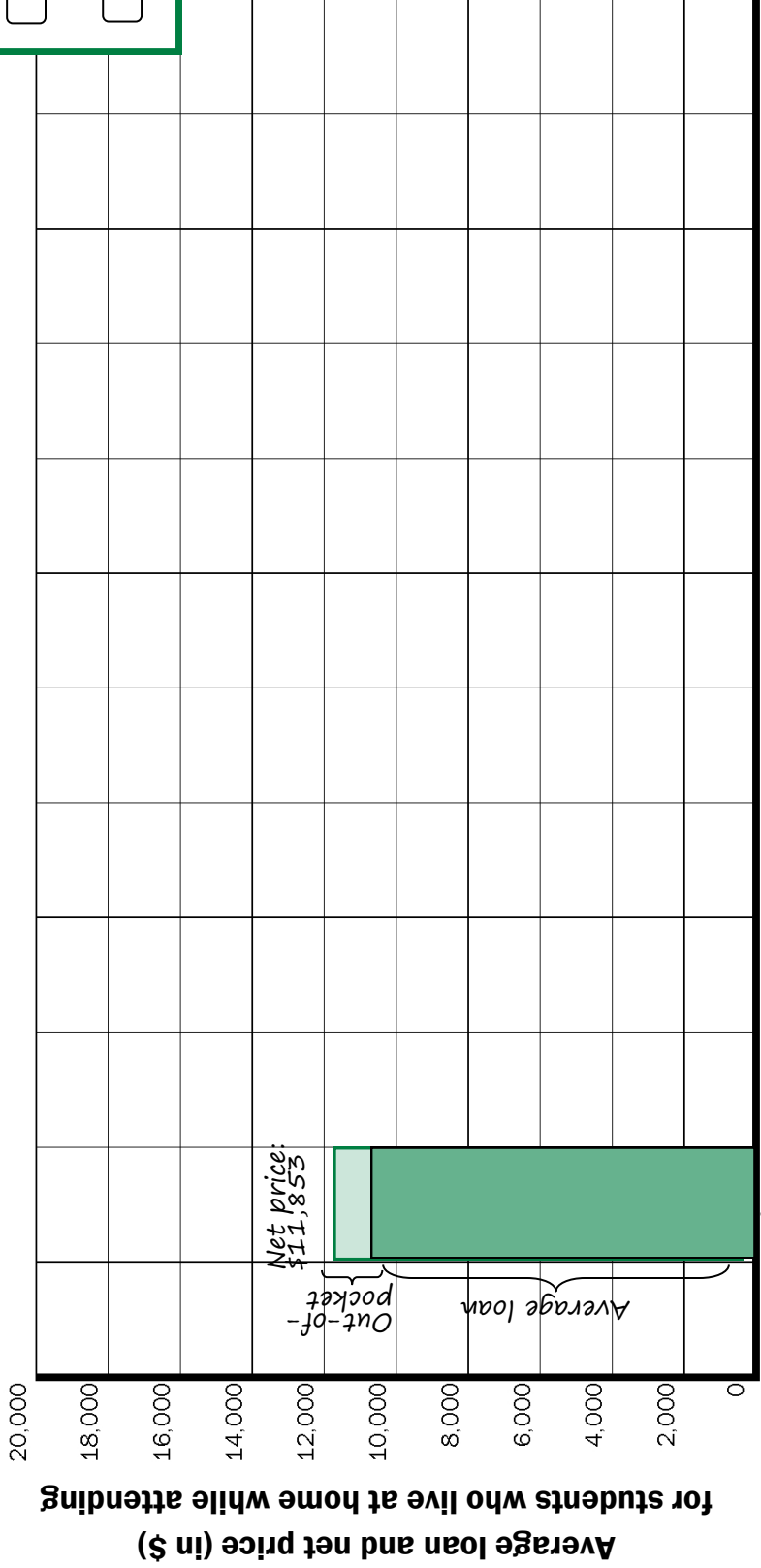
Colleges

Graph #2: Average Net Price (Loan + Out-of-Pocket) for Schools that Offer

_____ (write in the name of the certificate program)

Key

- Public
- Private, for-profit
- Online



_____ Colleges

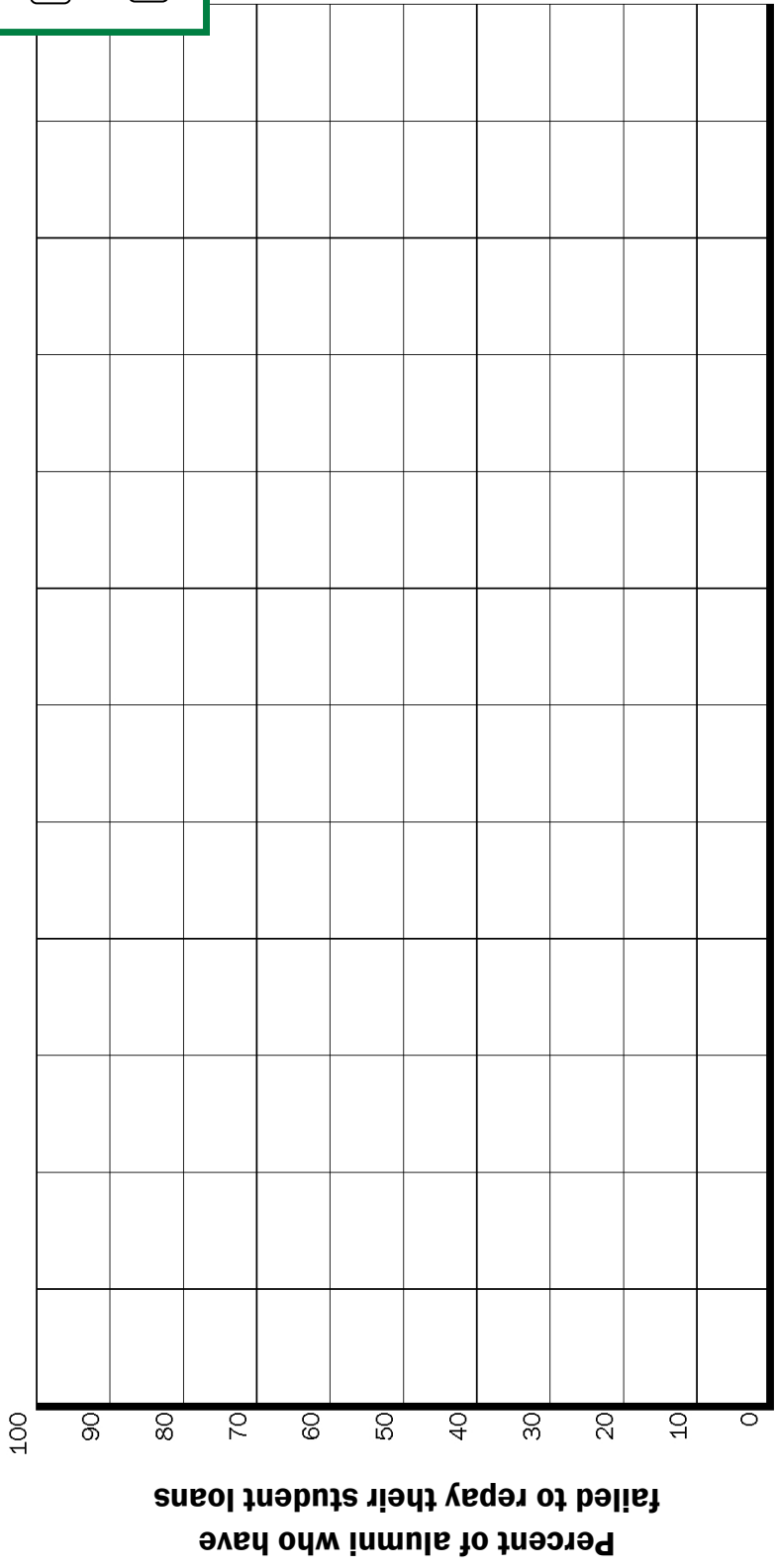


Graph #3: Loan Default Rates for Schools that Offer

Key

- Public
- Private, for-profit
- Online

_____ (write in the name of the certificate program)



Colleges



Graph #4: Graduation Rates for Schools that Offer

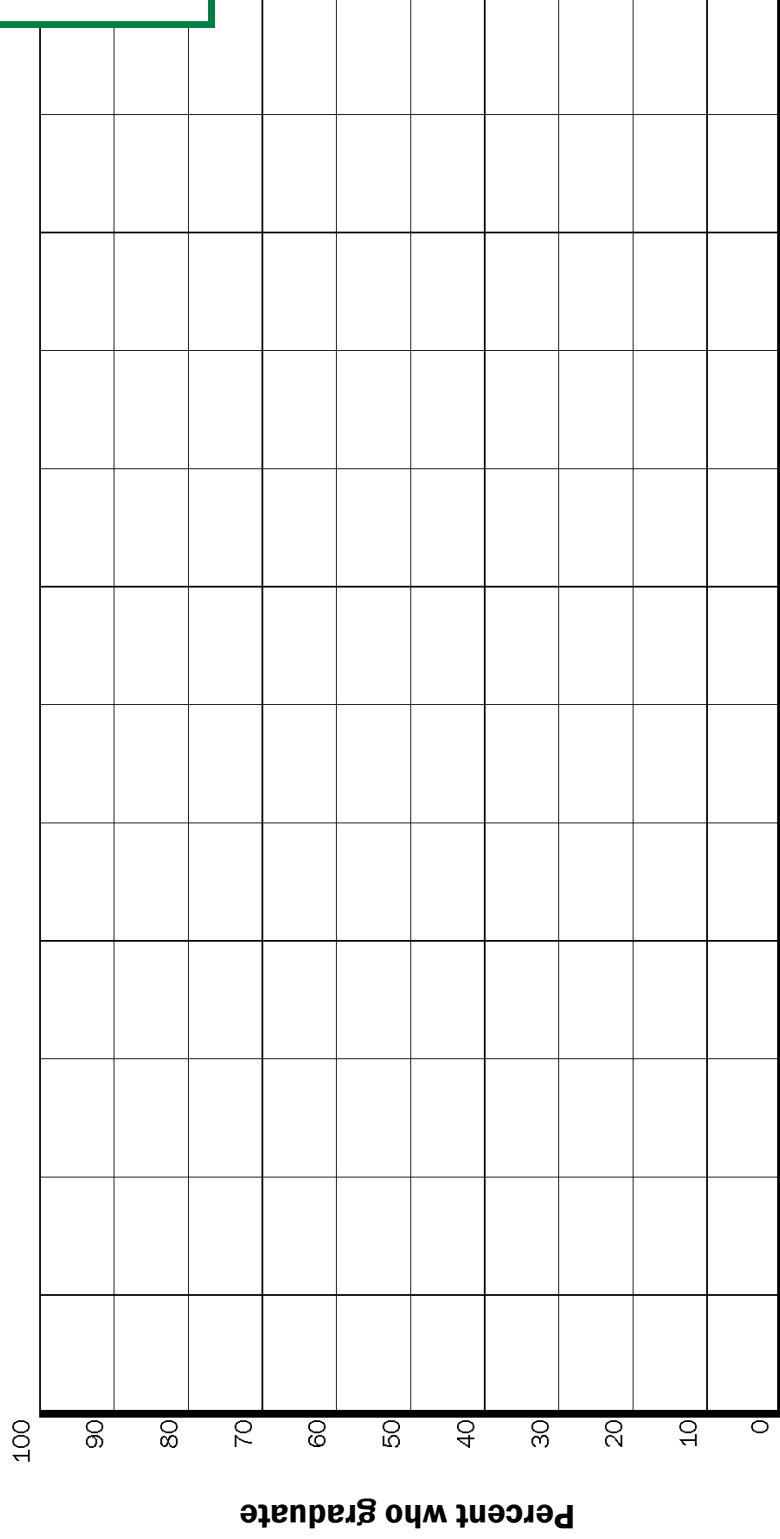
_____ (write in the name of the certificate program)

Key

Public

Private, for-profit

Online



Colleges

