Institute Market Pulse: Fall 2023 Goals

A Report of the Institute for Higher Education

Winter 2023

THE INSTITUTE FOR
HIGHER EDUCATION
AT THE BEACH

In our mission to advance higher education and the institutions that serve—and how they serve—students, The Institute for Higher Education is committed not only to offering groundbreaking professional education opportunities, but also to offering new insights into the state of the current market environment.

In this, our second in a series of Market Pulse reports, we seek to provide an objective and unbiased perspective, offering practitioners context for their own institutional situations. We wanted to understand the broad enrollment goals colleges and universities are working toward for Fall 2023.

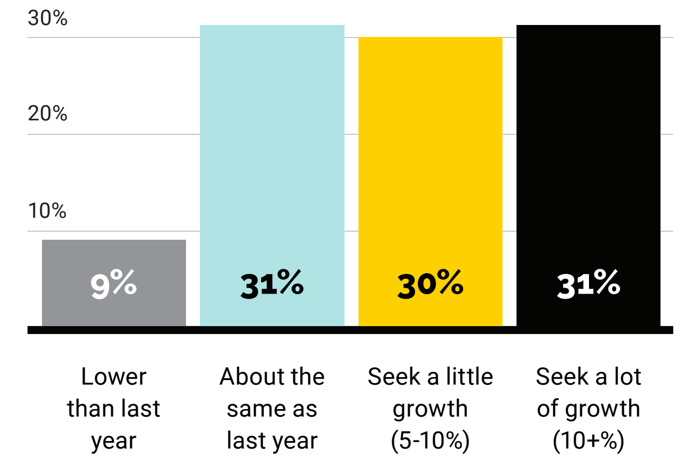
Over the course of four weeks, October 12 – November 9, 2022, we surveyed vice presidents of enrollment management and directors of admission at non-profit four-year colleges and universities about their objectives and strategy in enrolling first-time, first-year students into their Fall ’23 class. The 104 respondents represented institutions with a solid distribution in enrollment size, control, geography, and selectivity.*

This is what we learned.

Students, aid, tuition: meeting enrollment targets is impacted by more than one factor.

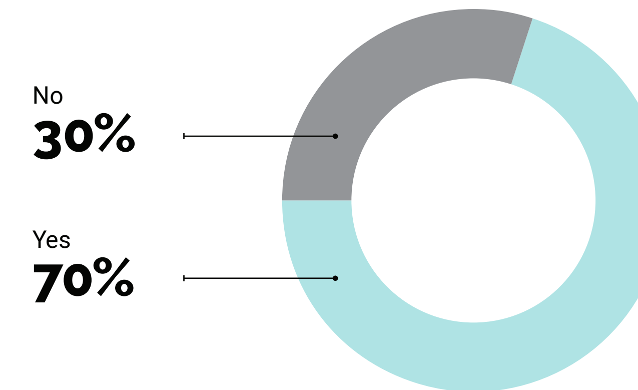
QUESTION 1

Are your Fall 2023 first-time, first-year enrollment goals *(relative to last year)*:



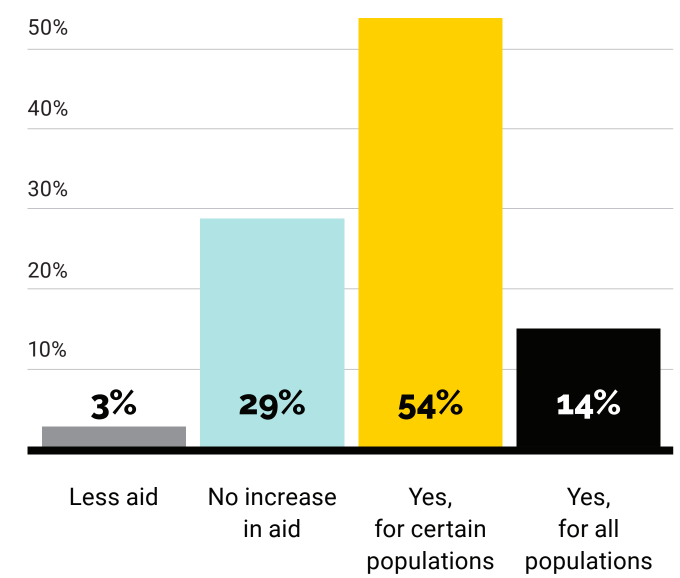
QUESTION 2

Are you seeking to increase your out-of-state enrollment for Fall 2023?



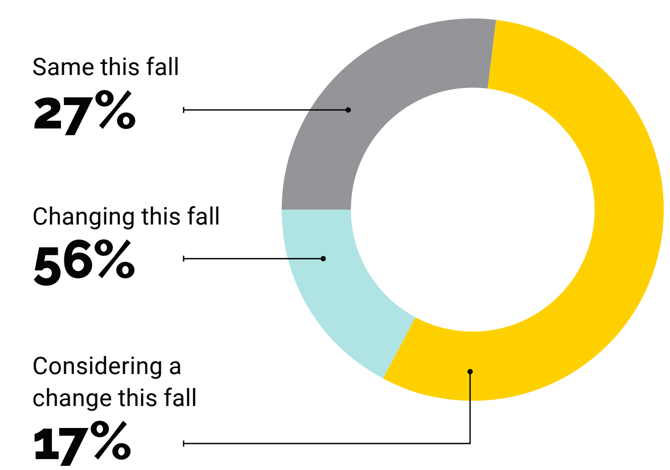
QUESTION 3

Are you planning to modify your aid strategy for your Fall 2023 first-time, first-year class?



QUESTION 4

How are you approaching tuition?



Where are enrollment targets?

There was an almost even split between respondents who indicated they sought a lot of enrollment growth (31%), a little growth (30%), and about the same enrollment as last year (31%). Nine percent of respondents had goals lower than last year. When asked if they were seeking to increase out-of-state enrollment, 70% indicated they were. As one would expect, respondents reporting to seek enrollment growth were more likely to report seeking to increase out-of-state enrollment.

At right are the categories of institutions that were more likely to report each response.

What does aid strategy look like?

Just over half of respondents (54%) planned to increase aid across certain populations, with another 29% planning no increase in aid. Fourteen percent indicated a plan to increase aid across all populations, while 3% would be providing less aid. As expected, those reporting “growth” enrollment goals were more likely to report increasing aid across certain or all populations.

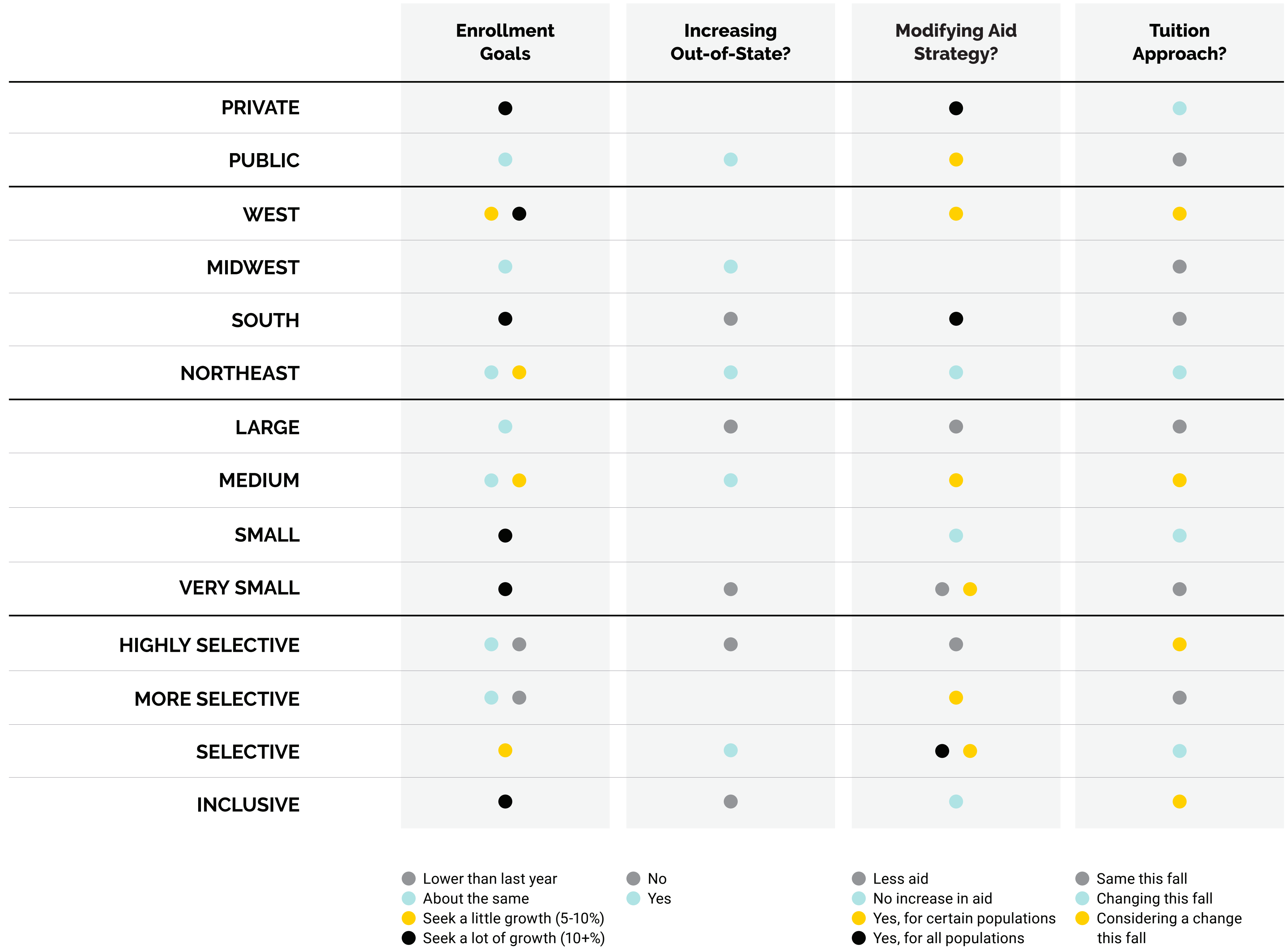
The institutions at right more likely to report each response.

How are institutions approaching tuition?

A quarter—27%--are keeping tuition the same for this coming fall, but the majority (56%) will be changing it. Another 17% are considering a change for future years. At right are the institutional attributes of the respondents more likely to report each response.

FOR FALL ’23 FIRST-TIME, FIRST-YEAR ENROLLMENT:

MORE LIKELY TO REPORT...



Institutional Location

Given the nature of the survey questions and the demographic shifts impacting enrollment behaviors and patterns, it is instructive to view the data on a regional basis.

WEST

A growth-focused region. Respondents from these institutions were more likely to report seeking enrollment growth, both "a little" and "a lot," and to be increasing aid across certain populations. Additionally, 42% indicated they were changing their approach to tuition this coming fall, with the same percentage considering a change for future years.

MIDWEST

Maintaining the status quo. In this region, respondents were more likely to report having enrollment goals that were about the same as last year and keeping tuition the same for this coming fall.

SOUTH

Growing. Somewhat more likely to report seeking a lot of enrollment growth, respondents in the South were also more likely than average to report increasing aid across all populations and keeping tuition the same for this coming fall.

NORTHEAST

Making adjustments. Respondents in the northeast were more likely to report having goals about the same as last year—or to be seeking a little growth. They were also more likely to report planning a strategy that includes no increase in aid and a change in tuition for this coming fall.

What about price?

As they are an integral factor in how and whether an institution will achieve enrollment goals, the survey asked general questions about anticipated financial aid strategy and tuition approach. Of the 29% of respondents who anticipated their institutions providing no increase in aid, nearly a quarter (23%) expected to keep tuition the same for this coming fall. Another 50% expected to be changing it for the fall, with the remainder responding, "considering a change for future years."

What were some characteristics of institutions represented by the "no planned increase in aid" respondents?

No increase in aid, no change in tuition:

71% INCLUSIVE ADMISSIONS SELECTIVITY

No increase in aid, changing tuition:

47% NORTHEAST

33% SMALL

67% PRIVATE

27% MEDIUM

53% SELECTIVE

FINAL THOUGHTS

This point-in-time survey provides a new view into the targets and broad strategies institutions have planned for the Fall 2023 first-time, first-year class. It can be instructive to gauge one's own objectives and strategy within this context.

We invite you to gain much deeper context and fresh perspective at the Institute for Higher Education. Learn innovative strategies, gain fresh ideas, and see topics not covered anywhere else: **join us at the Institute for Higher Education at Clearwater Beach, June 4-8, 2023.**

About the survey

Data in this report reflects responses from 104 non-profit four-year colleges and universities. The survey was conducted online via email invitation to vice presidents of enrollment management and directors of admission at non-profit four-year colleges and universities across the U.S. over four weeks, October 12 – November 9, 2022.

Demographics of respondent institutions referenced in this report are based upon Carnegie Classifications and Barron's. The institutional profiles of survey respondents follow.

ENROLLMENT

Small (500-1,999)	37%
Medium (2,000-4,999)	25%
Large (5,000-9,999)	22%
Very Small (<500)	16%

SELECTIVITY

Selective	59%
Inclusive	25%
Highly Selective	7%
More Selective	6%
Elite	3%
Special	1%

CONTROL

Private Non-profit	64%
Public	36%

REGION

South	36%
Midwest	28%
Northeast	25%
West	12%

Learn more about the Institute and how we help higher education professionals advance, bring innovation to colleges and universities, and work to expand access to higher education.

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