

The Boston Globe

This Mass. college cracks \$100,000 a year — and others are close behind

By [Camilo Fonseca](#) Globe Staff, Updated April 3, 2025, 3:58 p.m.



A view of the Wellesley College campus. JESSICA RINALDI/GLOBE STAFF

New England has some of the most prestigious universities in the country. Not surprisingly, [it also has some of the most expensive](#), with Wellesley College recently announcing that overall annual costs for undergraduates will surpass \$100,000 in September.

A staggering sum, but other private schools are close behind. At nearly a dozen universities in the region, including Harvard University, Boston College, Tufts University, and Brandeis University, [the total annual cost of attendance will be well above \\$90,000](#) next year.

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Some colleges cost more than \$100,000 a year to attend. But do they, really?

The sticker price of college is (mostly) made up. Here's how the math actually works.

By [Diti Kohli](#) Globe Staff, Updated April 30, 2025, 4:53 a.m.



The eye-popping \$100,000 price tag of some schools is not what it seems. Here's why. ADOBE, ALLY RZESA/GLOBE STAFF

At universities, the academic year ends with a familiar routine: Professors grade final exams. Students pack up their dorms. Universities announce tuition for the next year, almost inevitably higher than the year before.

Those never-ending increases mean that many Americans believe a four-year college degree is so exorbitantly expensive they cannot afford it, which — [some research indicates](#) — deters students from pursuing higher education.

Inflation-adjusted prices at private colleges and universities with very large endowments, by family income

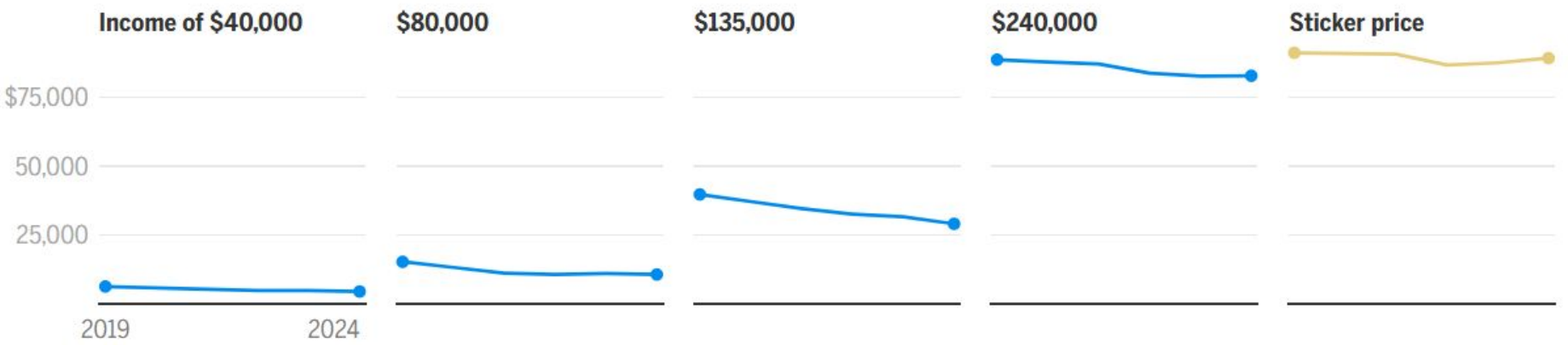


Chart: KIRKLAND AN/GLOBE STAFF • Source: [The Brookings Institution](#)

Inflation-adjusted net prices at public flagship/research intensive colleges and universities, by family income

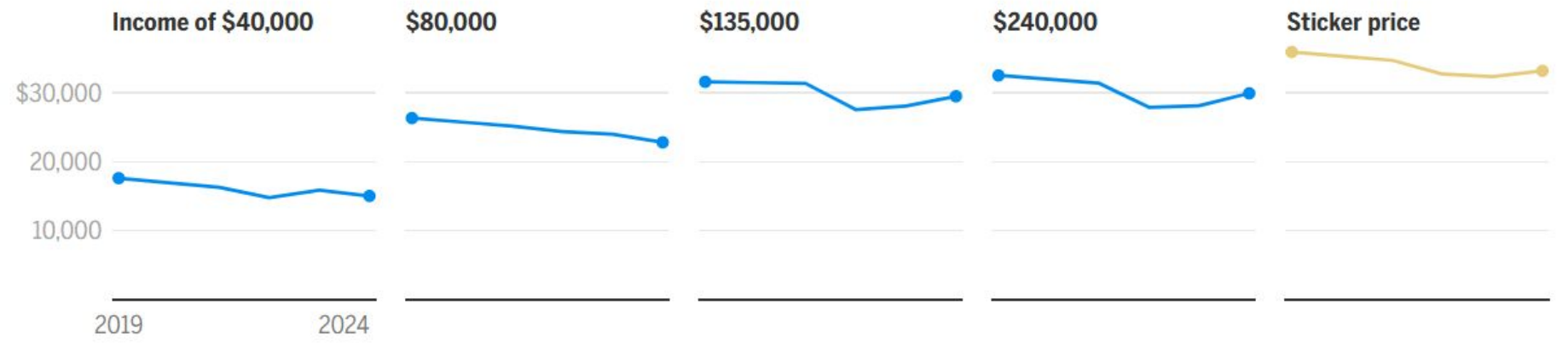
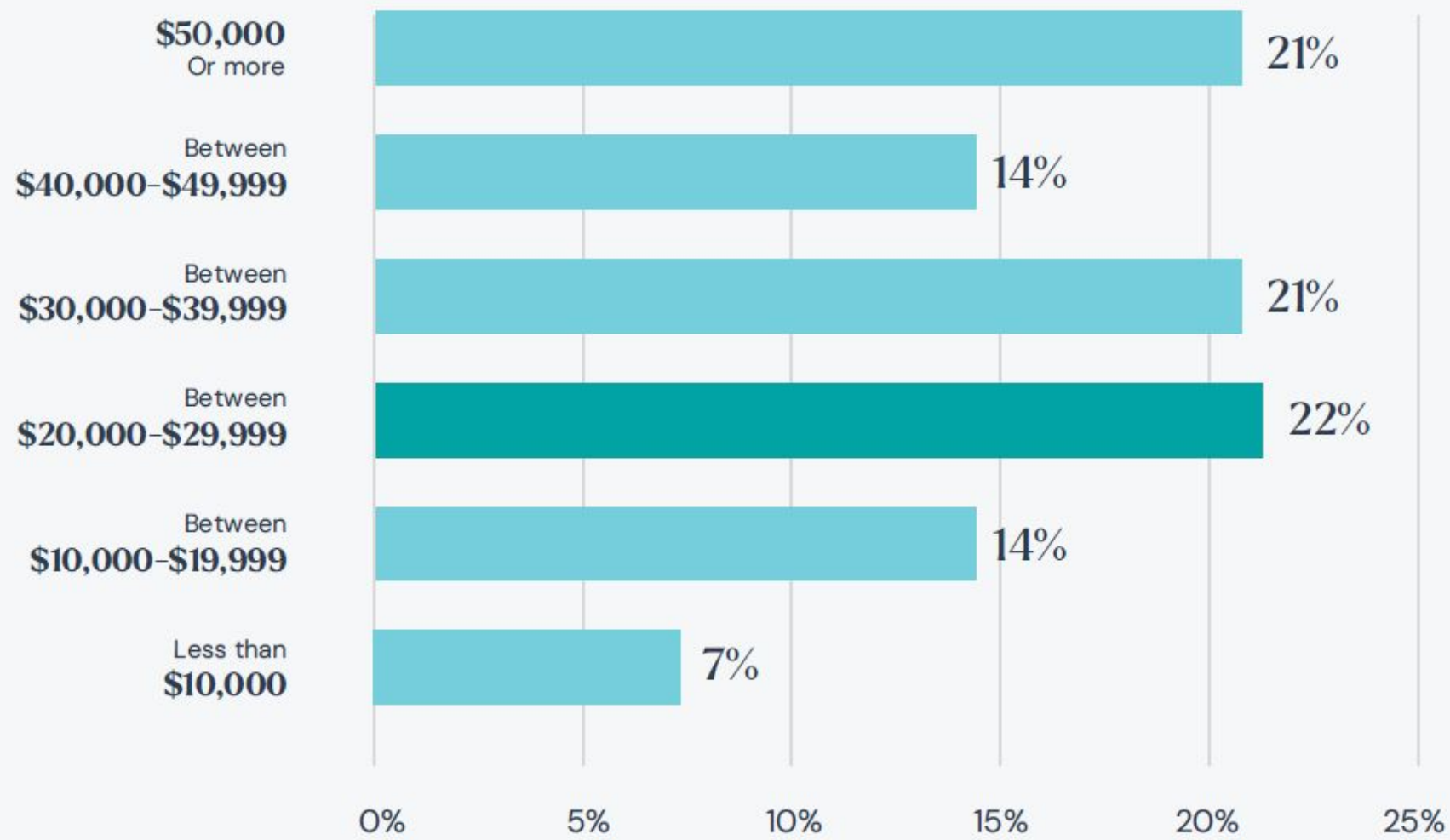


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Figure 4: Including tuition, books, fees, meals, housing, and related costs, how much do you think the average student who lives on campus pays per year to attend a public university or college (a “four-year” college)?



Source: Strada Education Foundation, 2025