

Student-Centered Enrollment Management Principles

Based on research into how students and families experience college pricing,¹ Strada convened a group of forward-thinking enrollment leaders from a cross section of four-year institutions to draft a set of Principles centered on students and public trust. The research findings are clear: Students haven't given up on higher education, but cost confusion erodes their trust in how it's priced. When the cost is hard to understand, people fill in the blanks themselves. Clarity and predictability are what students and families say they want most.

Purpose

The purpose of these Principles is to establish a shared foundation for how institutions, policymakers, and the higher education community think about pricing practices and enrollment management in a changing environment. They are intended to:

- Provide a common starting point for institutions seeking to strengthen price transparency and student trust in overall pricing and financial aid practices.
- Clarify the goals and values that should guide enrollment management strategies, particularly those related to affordability, clarity, and predictability.
- Create a foundation for more specific practices, models, tools, and solutions to emerge at the institutional level.

As higher education leaders explore new approaches in enrollment management, these Principles provide a common reference point. Depending on the institution and its context, solutions could include clearer financial aid offers, earlier cost estimates so students and families know what to expect before they're deep into the application process, and/or pricing and financial aid strategies and practices that prioritize price clarity and transparency. The Principles don't prescribe a single approach. They give institutions a shared foundation to build from.

According to **The Price Transparency Imperative**, a report based on a survey of more than 5,000 individuals, fewer than half of students and parents strongly trust colleges to charge a fair price. And the more confused they are about college costs and the financial aid process, the less they trust the institutions behind it. Learn more at strada.org/PriceTransparencyImperative.

1. Kathryn J. Blanchard and James Dean Ward, "The Price Transparency Imperative," (Indianapolis: Strada Education Foundation, April 2026).

Student-Centered Enrollment Management Principles

The Principles are organized around five core themes: access and affordability, tuition and cost transparency, sustainability of financial aid, value and return on investment, and the use of personal information obtained during the recruitment and enrollment process. The Principles are as follows:

Access and affordability	All students, especially those with limited financial backgrounds and resources, believe that the door to higher education is open and see expanded pathways of opportunity.
Tuition and cost transparency	Students receive clear, up-front pricing information before they are asked to commit to an institution.
Aid and scholarship lifecycle sustainability	Students experience affordability as an ongoing commitment, from recruitment through graduation.
Value and strong return on investment	Students trust higher education institutions to help them pursue meaningful jobs and careers, supported by clear, straightforward communication about completion rates, postgraduation outcomes, and the broader societal and economic benefits of their education.
Use of personal information	Students understand what personal information is collected in the recruitment and enrollment process, why it is collected, how it is used, and how long it is kept. Students are informed about whether and how they can review, correct, or remove their personal information.

A Sector–Led, Collaborative Effort

These Principles reflect a collaborative, field-informed process designed to ensure the framework reflects the realities institutions face today:

- They were created by a national enrollment management advisory group of leaders from four-year institutions, representing admissions, financial aid, registrar, and enrollment strategy functions.
- The process included expert research review, in which advisory group members examined student and family perceptions of college pricing and provided direct feedback on draft concepts throughout 2025.
- The Principles were informed by input from association partners, student and consumer groups,

policymakers at the state and federal levels, research organizations, and other stakeholders, ensuring they reflect perspectives from across the sector.

The Principles are intended to be relevant to all institutional types, and organizations and institutions of all kinds are invited to embrace them.

While institutions cannot coordinate on specific pricing practices, they can align on shared Principles and then individually consider solutions that will work best for their students. These represent a sector-led effort to advance price clarity, predictability, and student understanding, while giving institutions flexibility in how they implement those commitments.

Endorsing Organizations and Institutions

Organizations and institutions may choose to endorse the Student-Centered Enrollment Management Principles as a signal of their commitment to improving price clarity, predictability, and student understanding in college pricing and financial aid.

Endorsing the Principles means that an institution or organization:

- Supports the goals and values reflected in the Principles, including improving transparency and strengthening public trust in higher education pricing practices.
- Commits to considering the Principles, when evaluating or developing enrollment management strategies, pricing approaches, and financial aid policies.
- Recognizes the importance of helping students and families better understand the price and value of college, as early as possible – as a core component of affordability.

The Student-Centered Enrollment Management Principles are now endorsed by a growing coalition of organizations and institutions of higher education. Learn more at strada.org/EnrollmentManagement_Endorsers.

Endorsing the Principles is not a commitment to any specific pricing model or practices, or coordinated action. Institutions operate in different financial, regulatory, and mission contexts, and each institution will determine how the Principles are implemented within its own environment, given its respective mission. Endorsements represent a shared commitment across the higher education community to advance clearer, more understandable pricing practices that better serve students and families.

Enrollment Management Advisory Group

Convened in 2025

<p>Luisa Havens Gerardo, co-chair <i>Vice president for enrollment management</i> The University of Texas at Arlington</p>	<p>John Haller, co-chair <i>Professor and enrollment management consultant</i> University of Miami</p>	<p>Chuck Knepfle, co-chair <i>Vice president for enrollment management</i> Portland State University</p>
<p>Daniel Barkowitz <i>Assistant vice president of student financial assistance and employment</i> University of Miami</p>	<p>Jessie Brown <i>Executive vice president</i> American Council on Education</p>	<p>Adele Brumfield <i>Vice provost for enrollment management</i> University of Michigan</p>
<p>Karen Chen <i>Vice president of enrollment management</i> Oklahoma State University</p>	<p>Rachelle Feldman <i>Vice provost of enrollment</i> The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill</p>	<p>Melanie Gottlieb <i>Executive director</i> American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers</p>
<p>Rachelle Hernandez <i>Vice provost for student affairs</i> Johns Hopkins University</p>	<p>Derek Kindle <i>Vice president for enrollment management</i> University of Oregon</p>	<p>Stacey Kostell <i>Vice president of enrollment</i> Northwestern University</p>
<p>Joseph Montgomery <i>Interim associate vice president for enrollment management</i> North Carolina A&T University</p>	<p>Mary Parker <i>Vice president for enrollment management and chief enrollment strategist</i> University of Florida</p>	<p>Angel Perez <i>Chief executive officer</i> National Association for College Admission Counseling</p>
<p>Melanie Storey <i>President and chief executive officer</i> National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators</p>	<p>Tony Strode <i>Director of undergraduate recruitment and outreach</i> University of North Texas</p>	<p>Forrest Stuart <i>Vice president for enrollment management</i> Lafayette College</p>