

→ Fast Facts



The state of higher education

- Number of college students in the United States: 20,427,711.¹
- Percentage of four-year college graduates leaving with debt: 66 percent.
- Average debt: \$20,000 or more.
- Average number of credit cards per student: 4.6.
- Percentage of community college students who drop out before sophomore year: 50 percent.
- Percentage of college students taught by adjuncts or graduate students: 73 percent.²

1. Digest of Education Statistics, Table 197. Total fall enrollment in degree-granting institutions, by attendance status, sex of student, and control of institution: Selected years, 1947 through 2009. National Center for Education Statistics, nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d10/tables/dt10_197.asp (retrieved April 11, 2011).

2. Professor X, *In the Basement of the Ivory Tower: Confessions of an Accidental Academic* (New York: Viking, 2011).



Usability.gov

Usability.gov is a one-stop source for Web designers to learn how to make Web sites more usable, useful, and accessible. The site addresses a broad range of factors that go into Web design and development. Its guidelines, templates, and discussion of best practices provide information on how to enhance Web sites for all users, including those with disabilities. It provides a systematic visual plan to guide you through a user-centered design process.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, usability.gov (retrieved April 8, 2011).



How much data is that?

When we discuss quantities of data, we tend to use measurements many do not truly understand or firmly grasp: 100 megabytes, ten gigabytes, etc. A brief but handy chart (cited) provides approximate example measurements to help put these numbers into context. For example, a telegram is about 100 bytes; a small novel is about one megabyte. Some measurements are still beyond ordinary comprehension: one yottabyte is approximately equal to one quadrillion gigabytes. Now you know.

"How much data is that?" Focus editors, www.focus.com/fyi/information-technology/how-much-data (retrieved April 11, 2011).



Value of UK libraries

A jointly commissioned report by the British Research Information Network and Research Libraries UK presents qualitative value findings that may also be of use to American libraries promoting their collections and services at research institutions. The study identifies characteristics of library provision that support research in successful UK universities and departments. The study found that good libraries help institutions to recruit and retain top researchers. Libraries help researchers win research grants and contracts. Libraries promote and exploit new technologies and new models of scholarly communication. Repositories increase the visibility of institutions and raise their research profile. Outward-facing libraries contribute to institution-wide initiatives. Specialist staff work in partnership with academic departments. Libraries are a physical manifestation of the values of the academy and of scholarship. Easy access to high-quality content is a key foundation for good research.

"The Value of Libraries for Research and Researchers." Research Information Network and Research Libraries UK, www.rin.ac.uk/our-work/using-and-accessing-information-resources/value-libraries-research-and-researchers (retrieved March 24, 2011).

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