

Cost of Attendance

Julie Wittmis – Texas Woman's University



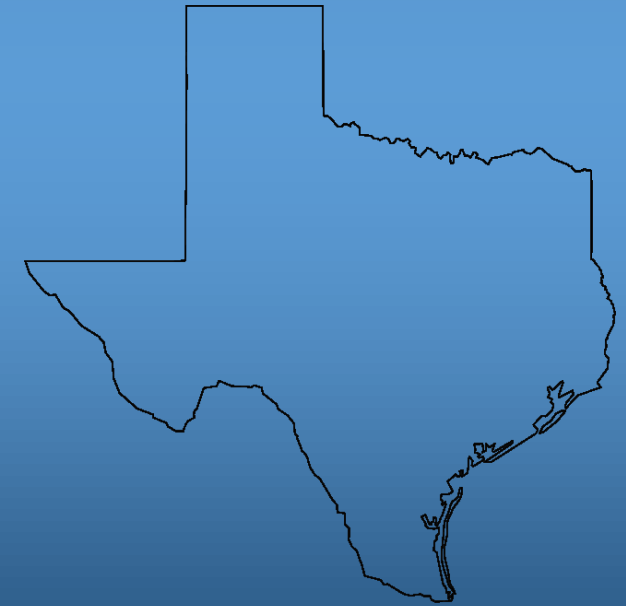
What is Cost of Attendance?

- Established in Higher Education Act of 1965
 - Section 472
- Establish a limit to the total aid a student may receive
- Component of Pell Grant Calculation
- Used to establish a student's financial need:
$$\begin{array}{r} \text{Cost of attendance (COA)} \\ - \text{Expected family contribution (EFC)} \\ \hline = \text{Need} \end{array}$$



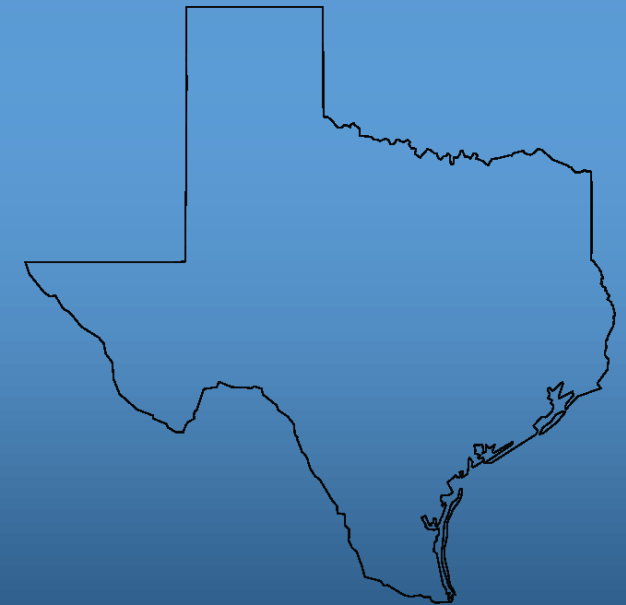
Establishing COA

- Develop realistic budgets
- Accurate cost projections
- Not intended to be an enrollment management tool
- Budgets for different categories and different student situations



Establishing COA

- **Institutional or direct costs**
 - Fixed and set by school (e.g., tuition and fees)
- **Non-institutional or indirect costs**
 - Not set by school (e.g., off-campus room and board)
 - Reflect local market conditions



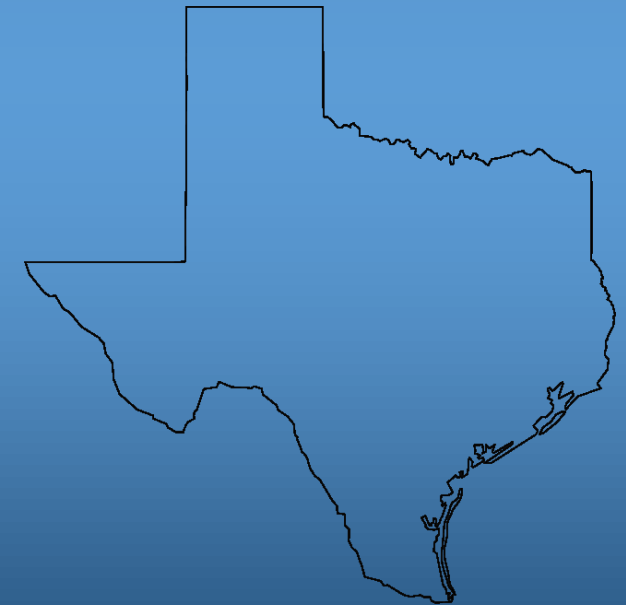
Establishing COA

- **Primary sources**

- Sensitive to specific student circumstances and provide data on actual student expenses
 - Example: student surveys

- **Secondary sources**

- Verify student data and validate final budget figures
 - Examples: published sources, faculty/staff, community sources, and various indices



Establishing COA

- General concepts
 - Federal Pell Grant Program
 - Always use full-time, full-year COA
 - All other Title IV programs
 - Typically based on full-time, full-year COA
 - Adjusted for summer as needed
 - Adjusted for less-than-full-time enrollment and less-than-full-year attendance



Allowable Costs

- Tuition and fees
- Books and supplies
- Room and board
- Transportation



COA Component – Tuition and Fees

- Amounts normally assessed students carrying same academic workload, as determined by institution
- May include costs for rental or purchase of equipment, materials, or supplies required of all students in same program of study



COA Component – Room and Board

- Different allotments for different student scenarios
 - Students without dependents living at home with parent(s)
 - Students without dependents living in institutionally-owned or operated housing
 - Students living in on-base military housing or in off-base housing for which a military basic housing allowance is provided
 - All other students



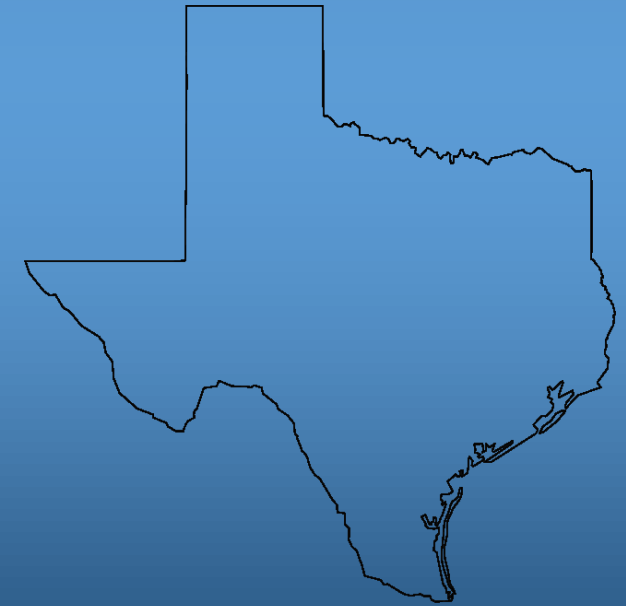
COA Components – Etc.

- Books and Supplies
 - Actual or estimated amount for the aid period
- Transportation
 - Gas, maintenance, bus fare
- Miscellaneous & Personal Expenses
 - Clothing, toiletries, etc.
- Personal computer rental or purchase
 - Reasonable purchase, may be done case by case



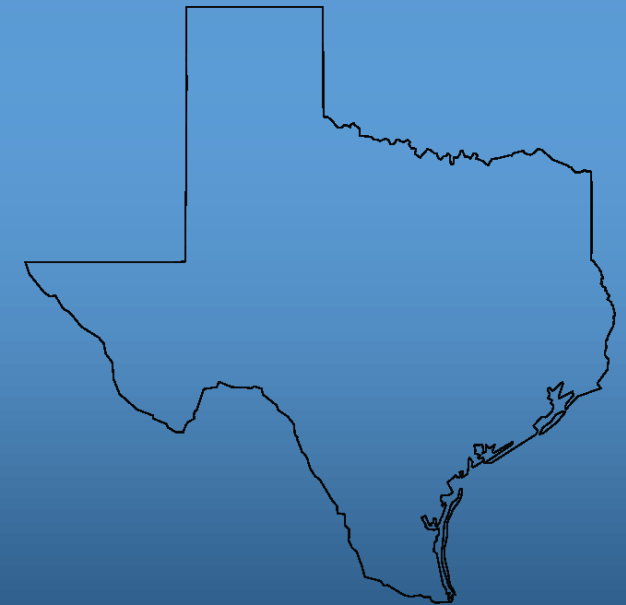
COA Components - Specialized

- Dependent Care
- Professional License or Credential
- Study Abroad
- Work Experience & Cooperative Education
- Disability Related Expenses
- Educational Loan Fees



COA Restrictions

- **Certain cost components are excluded for students who are:**
 - Enrolled less than half time
 - Enrolled in correspondence programs
 - Incarcerated



COA Recalculations

- **Rules differ among Title IV programs:**
 - Federal Pell Grant, Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant (IASG), and Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant programs
 - Campus-based programs
 - Federal Direct Student Loan Program



Non-Title IV Aid and COA

- Prepaid tuition plans (529) have no effect on COA
- State-provided non-Title IV aid designated to cover a specific COA component may be excluded from estimated financial assistance (EFA), if also excluded from COA, and vice versa



Questions?

