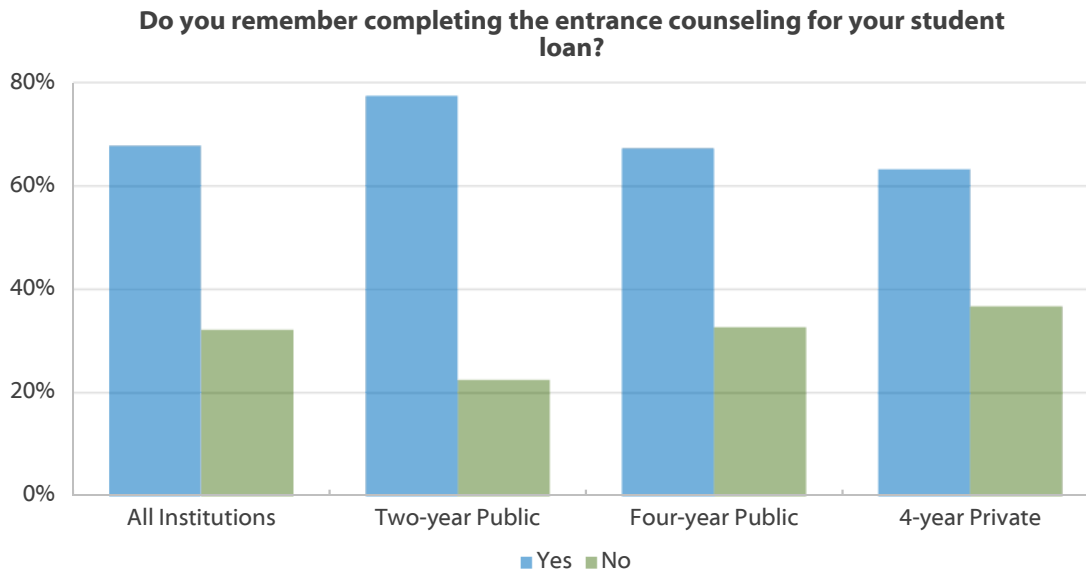


One Third of Public Four-year Students Do Not Remember Completing Entrance Counseling

The Ohio State University administered a survey in 2014 to students attending 52 public and private not-for-profit institutions across the nation. This survey, the National Student Financial Wellness Study, collects data on the financial attitudes and practices of college students.

Sixty-four percent of students use loans to pay for college, and 35 percent report that student loans are the primary way they pay for tuition. Students who borrow federal loans are required to complete student loan counseling - entrance counseling - prior to accessing the funds. Entrance counseling has changed significantly over its 30-year history, starting as a customized in-person experience to what is now a counseling session packed with 28 federally mandated topics conducted mostly through online tools. A poll of the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) member schools conducted in 2012 found that 71 percent reported using the U.S. Department of Education's online tool to satisfy the counseling requirement. Only 20 percent reported that most of their loan counseling was conducted face-to-face.

Several issues with entrance counseling may make it difficult for students to absorb and retain the information being presented. First, entrance counseling occurs just before or at the very beginning of the start of classes, a time that can be overwhelming and distracting for students. In addition to possible timing issues, the number of required topics can lead to information overload, causing students to skim and skip through parts of the counseling.



According to the National Student Financial Wellness Study, almost one third of students at all institutions do not remember completing student loan entrance counseling. Students at two-year institutions were most likely to remember the counseling. Overall, about 80 percent of students who remember entrance counseling reported that it was helpful or somewhat helpful.

Sources: NASFAA member poll: National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, Financial Aid Administrators Discuss Loan Counseling Challenges (2012) (https://www.nasfaa.org/news-item/1907/Financial_Aid_Administrators_Discuss_Loan_Counseling_Challenges); OSU student survey: The Ohio State University Office of Student Life, College of Education and Human Ecology, *National Student Financial Wellness Study: Key Findings Report* (2014) (<http://cssl.osu.edu/posts/documents/nsfws-key-findings-report.pdf>); All else: TG Research, *Effective Counseling, Empowered Borrowers: An Evidence-Based Policy Agenda for Informed Student Loan Borrowing and Repayment*, by Chris Fernandez (2016) (<http://www.tgslc.org/pdf/Effective-Counseling-Empowered-Borrowers.pdf>).

