

Texas In-State Tuition: What You Need to Know



In 2001, then-Governor Rick Perry signed the Texas Dream Act, [House Bill \(H.B.\) 1403](#), which provides the state's eligible undocumented students, including DACA recipients, with access to in-state tuition and state financial aid. Out-of-state tuition rates are typically three times higher than in-state rates, on average. Thanks in part to this law making higher education more affordable, approximately 59,000 undocumented students are currently enrolled in higher education in Texas and are poised to be important parts of the state's future workforce.

> State of Play of In-State Tuition in Texas

There have been multiple attempts to repeal this law since 2001, including in 2023, but each has failed. In April 2022, a federal judge in Texas [ruled](#) that the University of North Texas cannot charge out-of-state U.S. students higher tuition than is charged to undocumented Texas students, who qualify for in-state tuition rates as per the 2001 Texas law. UNT lawyers [have appealed](#) the decision. While the decision does not directly impact undocumented students, it could have [significant implications](#) for the future of the 2001 law.

> Requirements for In-State Tuition for Dreamers in Texas:

1. Graduated from a public or private high school or received the equivalent of a high school diploma in Texas;
2. Resided in Texas for at least three years as of the date the person graduated from high school or received the equivalent of a high school diploma;
3. Register as an entering student in an institution of higher education not earlier than the 2001 fall semester; and
4. Provide an affidavit stating that the individual will file an application to become a permanent resident at the earliest opportunity the individual is eligible to do so.

> A Comparison of In-State Tuition vs. Out-of-State Tuition in Texas

Institution	UT Austin	Texas A&M	UH
In-State Tuition	\$13,576	\$11,285	\$10,093
Out-of-State Tuition	\$48,712	\$41,226	\$22,285

**The amounts detailed above are the cost of undergraduate business degrees at each university. Tuition rates are based on 12 credit hours for the 2023-24 school year.*

> Benefits of Keeping In-State Tuition for Dreamers

- According to the American Immigration Council, repealing in-state tuition for undocumented students in Texas could result in the state losing more than [\\$461 million every year](#). This includes \$244.4 million in lost wage earnings and \$216.9 million in additional spending power annually.
- Undocumented students with some college education create an additional [\\$46.4 million](#) in economic activity in Texas every year. And those who do earn a bachelor's degree increase their earning potential by 57%.

> TheDream.US Student Narratives

Because of the Texas in-state tuition policy, [TheDream.US](#) is able to support Texas Dreamers to attend one of seven in-state colleges and universities. TheDream.US is the nation's largest scholarship provider for Dreamers and has funded more than \$45 million in scholarships in Texas - funding that would be imperiled by a change in state law. **Thanks to the Texas Dream Act and TheDream.US support, new doors of opportunity have opened for Texas Dreamers to achieve their higher education and career goals and put their degrees to work in the state.**

- TheDream.US has awarded **more than 1,500 scholarships** to Texas Dreamers and **400 Scholars have graduated** from college and are now putting their degrees to work to strengthen the state and country.
- Among TheDream.US Texas graduates, **25% are now working in education**, including as teachers, while **23% are in business and entrepreneurship positions**; **17% are working in science, math, and tech occupations**; and **14% in health and medicine fields**.
- **More than half** the currently enrolled TheDream.US Scholars in Texas are pursuing degrees in **Science, Math & Tech or Health and Medicine** - all essential fields for Texas's future.

Some of TheDream.US Texas Scholars and alumni include:

- **Alejandra, who will graduate from UT-Rio Grande Valley with a nursing degree in May 2023:** "Because of the Texas Dream Act, I qualified for in-state tuition and was able to pursue my dreams of higher education. I will graduate from the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley with a bachelor's in nursing. Without the Texas Dream Act, I wouldn't have been able to afford college or be ready to put my degree into practice to help the larger community ... My hometown of McAllen carries some of the highest levels of obesity in the United States and desperately needs more health professionals. My nursing background will allow me to make a difference immediately."
- **Elizabeth is a former TheDream.US Scholar and graduate of the University of Houston now working for a tech company:** "I have worked hard to study engineering, take charge, and craft my career how I desire. I'm just one of many DACAmented engineers spearheading the energy and electrical industry across the US. As one of many of these workers, I wish to continue to build my skills and become a future leader in this fast evolving industry. Help protect our future, so that we can protect your children's prosperous future."
- **Alexis wants to use his degree in Biomedical Engineering and reinvest in his community:** "When I arrived in the U.S. at the age of 5, living in a family member's garage, I would have never imagined I'd be able to someday become a biomedical engineer. Through hard work, discipline, and the support of selfless teachers, my dream became a reality ... Having now established a career, I look forward to reinvesting my money, skills, and education in the place I call home."