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Study: Fresno State ranks 18th in Bang for your Buck Colleges

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FRESNO, Calif. (KFSN) -- A new study released this week ranks Fresno State as one of the top 20 California colleges where students get the most bang for their buck.

Sacramento native Nicole Dominique could have gone to any school of her choice, but chose Fresno State because of its high quality programs and affordability. "I'm able to live and go to school, and not work, so I can focus on my studies -- and it's really been a lot easier down here than if I were to choose a different college to attend."

She believes more students will do the same after a new study by the financial literacy website [NerdScholar](#) ranked Fresno State 18th among California colleges for best education at the most reasonable price.

"First of all, I'm thrilled. Anytime you can be in the top 20 in a positive report, you've got to be happy with that," said Vernie Vinovrski, Fresno State Enrollment Services.

To narrow down the list, researchers chose the top California schools included in the Forbes rankings of American universities, asked a few questions, and crunched the numbers.

"The average student graduating today is facing almost 30-thousand dollars in student loan debt and so we wanted to find the schools provide the biggest bang for students buck," said Danielle Lichliter, Communications Analyst, NerdScholar.

What they found was out of the 40 California colleges they looked into, Fresno State had the lowest net price of them all at just \$5,805 a year -- compared to the more than \$14-thousand students pay at UCLA. But, the Bulldogs also had the highest loan default rate at 7.9 percent, and second lowest graduation rate at 49.4%.

"What I like about the report is I know we're improving in a couple of areas in the future. For example, the graduation rate we're showing right now is scheduled to improve in the next two years by at least 6%. The student default rate, which is already really good, dropped by almost one percent from a year ago," said Vinovrski.