Choose Your School Wisely

A key appeal of for-profit colleges is they accommodate flexible schedules, but this does not make up for their failings.

The Cost of a Degree is Higher at For-Profit Colleges
The average cost of attending a four-year for-profit college has surpassed the cost at both state and private non-profit colleges.

For-Profits Spend Less per Student
Nonprofit and public universities invest more capital per student on instructional costs while For-Profits spend significantly less on instructional costs.

Graduation Rates are Lower at For-Profit Colleges
Graduation rate for private for-profit universities is 22%. This is less than half of its private nonprofit counterparts and public colleges.

For-Profits Target Minorities and Lower Incomes
More than a quarter of low-income black female students entering college for the first time attended for-profit colleges during the 2008 academic year.

96% of Students at For-Profit Colleges Take on Student Debt
Compared to other types of schools, for-profit colleges have long had by far the highest student borrowing rates and the largest share of defaulted borrowers.
For-profit colleges and universities have been around since the 1920s and enrollment is on the rise by a staggering 236 percent over the decade from 1998-99 through 2008-09, far outpacing modest growth in public and private nonprofit institutions. For-profit colleges provide accessible degree and course options, which make them the right choice for many students, but there is a downside.

Private For-Profit College
Private for-profit colleges are owned and operated by businesses. Like any business, they are ultimately accountable by law for the returns they produce for shareholders. The financial performance of these companies is closely tracked by analysts and by investors.

Private Non-Profit College
Private, often termed ‘Independent’ institutions operate to serve its unique mission as defined by its founders. Many private, nonprofit colleges and universities affiliate with subsets of like-minded or similarly located institutions and are governed by its own board of directors or trustees.

Public College
Public colleges and universities are typically operated under the supervision of state governments and are funded, in part, by tax dollars and subsidies from the state. These institutions often offer discounted tuition to students considered residents of the state.