

*Although student aid from the federal government has provided grants and loans allowing more students to pursue higher education, meaningful access remains elusive for those of lesser means. Students who belong to historically excluded groups lag in rates of matriculation and graduation. Too often they take on debt burdens that hurt their educational experience and constrain their subsequent careers, while aid allocated on the basis of academic achievement too often is regressive in effect. This Article analyzes the impact of different, and at times conflicting, models guiding federal aid policy. The Article advocates re-establishment of access as the paramount goal, a move that would restore coherence to the student aid regime and enhance college accessibility.*