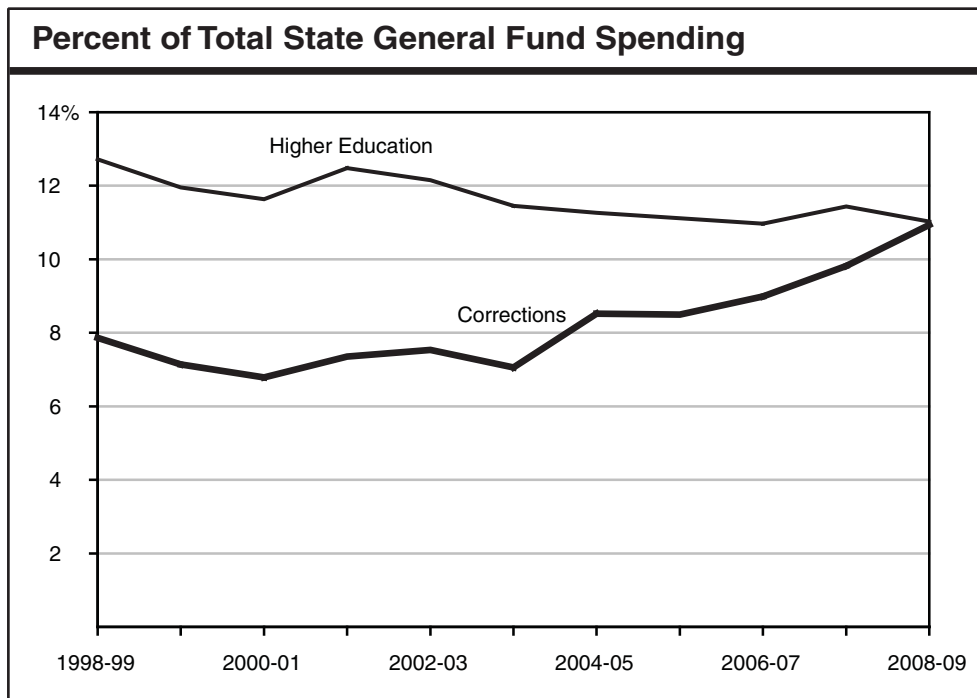


**HIGHER EDUCATION: ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Does the State Spend More on Corrections or Higher Education?**

About a fifth of the state General Fund budget goes to higher education and corrections combined. State spending in these two areas responds to very different cost pressures, so it is not surprise that funding trends could differ. Nonetheless, the question is commonly asked which sector receives more state support. There is no single answer to the question.

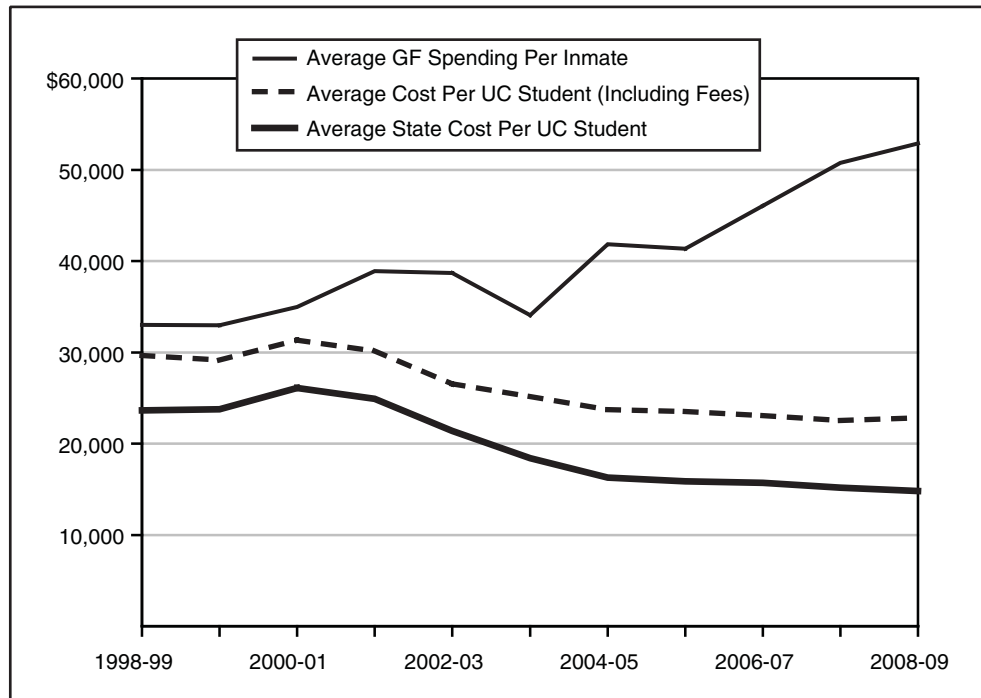
- The share of the state budget going to corrections is about the same as the share going to higher education.**
  - Over the past ten years, the share going to higher education has declined while the share going to corrections has increased.



- These funding trends result largely from increased spending per inmate, as well as a shift in higher education funding that relies more on student fee payments.**

**Does the State Spend More on Corrections or Higher Education? (Continued)**

- As shown below, state spending per inmate adjusted for inflation has increased by almost two-thirds over the past ten years. This is largely the result of federal court orders to improve inmate health care, negotiated increases in compensation for correctional employees, and increased spending on rehabilitation programs.
- Over the same period, state spending per student enrolled at the University of California has declined by about one-third. This amount has partly been backfilled with increases in student fee payments. (The state's other higher education segments have experienced similar shifts.)



**Higher education enrollment has far exceeded prison caseload.**

- In 2008-09, the state's inmate population was about 171,000 inmates, reflecting average annual growth of about 0.6 percent over the past decade.
- For higher education, the state enrolled about 1.4 million full-time equivalent students in 2008-09, reflecting average annual growth of about 2.3 percent over the past decade.

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This is one of a series of issue briefs examining important questions about higher education funding in California. For more information on this topic, or to request other briefs from this series, contact the Legislative Analyst's Office Higher Education section at (916) 319-8339, or visit our Web site at [www.lao.ca.gov](http://www.lao.ca.gov).