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Colleges endowments plunge

By [Laura Diamond](#)

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Colleges in Georgia — and across the nation — saw their endowment fortunes plummet by about 19 percent during the 2009 fiscal year, affecting the amount officials can spend on student scholarships and other programs.

Some Georgia endowments fell more than the national average — including a 26 percent decline at Georgia Tech, a 23 percent drop for the University of Georgia Foundation and a 21 percent loss for Emory University, according to a survey released today by the Commonfund Institute and the National Association of College and University Business Officers.

“Everything is down and it has hurt us,” said Tom Landrum, senior vice president for external affairs at UGA. “You have to decide what are your priorities for the university and do the best you can to take care of those critical areas.”

Landrum said institutional scholarships, such as the Charter Scholarship for freshmen, remained

As a result, many colleges have laid off employees, halted hiring and furloughed workers. Colleges also raised tuition and mandatory student fees.

Students are more concerned about a college's overall budget than endowments.

"This is part of the larger budget picture, but it is not as direct as a hike in fees or tuition," said Katie Barlow, president of UGA's student government association.

Georgia Tech's student body president, Alina Staskevicius, said students are chiefly concerned about colleges maintaining quality academic programs.

John B. Carter Jr., president of the Georgia Tech Foundation, said endowments that have existed for years have exceeded expectations and are able to sustain payouts for scholarships and other needs.

Many foundations determine endowment payouts using a "rolling average" typically over a three- 1TJET10 us.5 539.

Institution/Foundation	2009 Endowment	2008 Endowment	% change
Emory University	\$4.33 billion	\$5.47 billion	-21%
Georgia Tech Foundation	\$944.3 million	\$1.27 billion	-26%
The University of Georgia Foundation	\$456.1 million	\$592.6 million	-23%
Agnes Scott College	\$230.6 million	\$307.4 million	-25%
Medical College of Georgia Foundation	\$90.5 million	\$121.3 million	-25%
Georgia State University Foundation	\$75.8 million	\$98.6 million	-23%
Georgia Southern University	\$31.7 million	\$38.4 million	-18%
Spelman College	\$284.7 million	\$351 million	-19%
Morehouse School of Medicine	\$56.1 million	\$60.4 million	-7%

Source: 2009 NACUBO-Commonfund Study of Endowments

Note: Percent change includes investment returns, expenditures, withdrawals and gifts. Percentages and endowments are rounded.