FEBRUARY 2026

STUDENT PRICE INDEX (SPI) UPDATE

The February 2026 Central Washington University Student Price Index (CWU SPI) shows a 1.2% increase in the cost of living compared to January 2026. The most notable price changes were observed in beer, gasoline, and groceries. While beer and groceries prices both increased by about 8–9% during the month, gasoline prices experienced the largest increase, rising by 13.0%. This sharp rise was likely driven by interruptions in supply from some of the world's largest oil producers, which reduced global crude oil availability and pushed fuel prices higher, along with seasonal fuel adjustments. Overall, the CWU SPI increased more than both the Pacific Northwest CPI and the National CPI, which recorded a increase of 0.5% and 0.3%, respectively.

INFLATION RATES

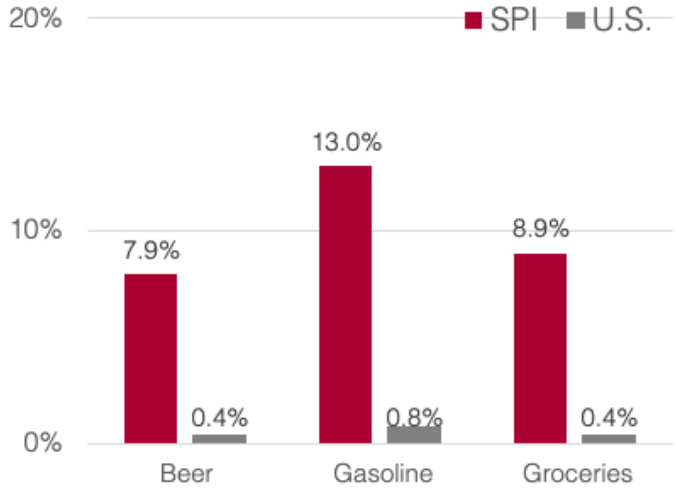
ANNUAL

Central Washington University Student Price Index (SPI)	**-5.0 %**
Pacific Region (CPI)[1]	**2.9 %**
United States (CPI)[2]	**2.4 %**

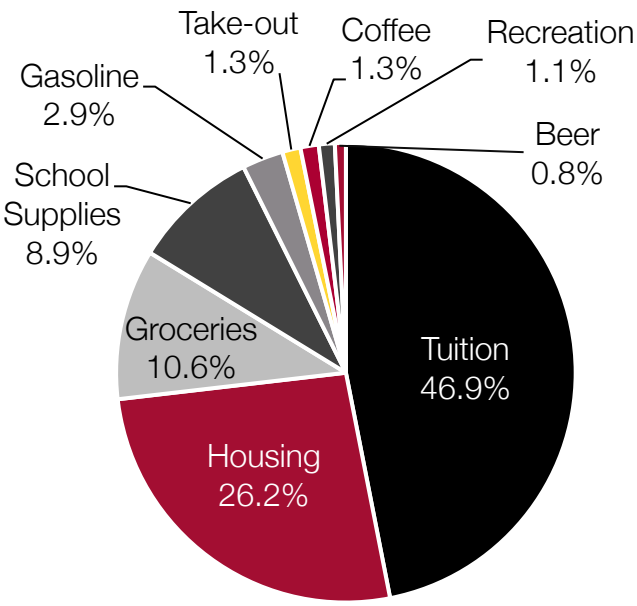
MONTHLY

Central Washington University Student Price Index (SPI)	**1.2 %**
Pacific Region (CPI)[1]	**0.5 %**
United States (CPI)[2]	**0.3 %**

MAIN CONTRIBUTORS (MONTHLY)



CATEGORIES AND WEIGHTS



Last update: Fall 2022

1. Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index, Pacific Division (AK, CA, HI, OR, WA).
2. Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index, All Urban Consumers

THE SPI PROJECT

This project, led jointly by the Economics Association and the Department of Economics at CWU, develops a price index of the cost of college living in Ellensburg, Washington. Based on the campus-wide survey, each month the members of the Economic Association collect prices of items typically consumed by CWU students from various stores in Ellensburg to calculate the SPI index and inflation rates. This index's strength lies in identifying the change in prices students in Ellensburg face.

Contributors

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