

College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

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Admissions Watch

NEARLY 70 PERCENT of students and parents state that the economic downturn has affected their college application decision and stress level, according to a new survey from Princeton Review. The annual "College Hopes & Worries Survey" polled 15,000 students and parents and found that nearly 90 percent said financial aid would be essential to their college selection decision.

In addition, a new *U.S. News* survey found that more than 70 percent of prospective college students altered their college plans, sometimes in drastic ways. Some 53 percent said they were considering a less expensive school, and 24 percent who said they were considering a private college are now likely to attend a public one. Attending a college closer to home was an option expressed by 38 percent, while 21 percent said they plan to live at home while attending college. And 47 percent said they plan to work during their freshman year.

It is not just students and parents who are feeling the impact of the recession. "The economic and fiscal crisis is having a profound impact on public higher education," according to the Association of Governing Board of Universities and Colleges. In a survey released in April, it said public higher education in 14 states is "experiencing their own version of a 'Misery Index.'" These states are Alabama, Arizona, Connecticut, Florida, Kentucky, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah and Virginia. The survey also found "uncertainty surrounding changes in undergraduate tuition charges for the next academic year." Forty percent of boards in 26 states are increasing tuition an average of 6.65 percent, 49 percent in 26 states are "unsure" what changes may occur. At the same time, 66 percent of states surveyed plan to increase institutional sponsored financial aid.

Yet, as Peter Osgood, director of admissions, Harvey Mudd C., said, "There's all kinds of cross currents. It'll take us longer to see what really happened this year."

With all this said, *CB* takes a look at some of the returns from colleges coast to coast from this tumultuous admission season.

Amherst. This year, Amherst C. in Massachusetts received 7,667 applications and made offers to 1,215 for its fall class of 465 students. About 30 percent of the offers went to early decision students.

Barnard's Class of 2013. Barnard C. in NYC, the nation's most selective women's college, admitted 1,241 of its 4,174 applicants, or 29 percent. It expects to seat 570 women in its 2013 class. Among the admitted were 50 valedictorians. It admitted 212 of those students through Early Decision. Last year, Barnard admitted 1,207 from a pool of 4,273.

Claremont Colleges "Just as Selective." "Just when college-bound seniors thought they would finally be cut a break, the 5Cs have proven themselves just as selective as past years," according to news out of Pomona C., one of the 5Cs as the colleges are known. It admitted nearly 16 percent of applicants for the Class of 2013, out of 6,149 apps. The college class should be about 390. ED apps "jumped" 20 percent. Claremont McKenna C. admitted 16 percent of apps, a three percent drop from last year's admit rate. Those accepted: 52 percent female, 48 percent male. Out-of-state students account for 62 percent, international students 14 percent.

Pitzer C. admitted but 20 percent of apps, 822 students. In 2004, it accepted 40 percent. It had 2,079 applications. "There is nothing fair about this process," said Angel Perez, director

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Financial Aid Updates

Opposition to Obama. Last month, *CB* reported on President Obama's education budget proposal to end federal subsidies for private student loans and to tie Pell grants to the rate of inflation. The Obama plan would replace the Federal Family Education Loan Program, which guarantees lenders with repayment up to 97 percent on defaulted loans they make, with the Direct Student Loan Program. This program directly routes loans from the federal government to colleges and universities and is already used by 1,500 schools. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the change would save the federal government close to \$94 billion over the next decade, money that President Obama wants to use for support of more Pell grants.

But a front-page article on April 13 in *The New York Times* reported that opposition to the Obama plan is building in Congress among both Republicans and Democrats. Private lender Sallie Mae has already hired two influential lobbyists with deep ties to the administrations of Presidents Obama and Clinton. And members of Congress with links to lenders that hire employees from their districts and make campaign contributions have expressed doubts about expanding federal power in this way.

In a speech April 24 at the White House, President Obama said he would fight the special interests for "American students and their families." And in a conference call on the same day with *CB* and other education reporters, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan

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of admissions. "You're turning away tons of overqualified prospects."

Scripps C. announced that financial aid would not be cut. The college accepted 31 percent of applications, compared to 42 percent for last year. Laura Stratton, acting director of admissions, said it was, though, "looking for a smaller class."

Finally, Harvey Mudd C. admitted 31 percent of students, and experienced more ED apps. "You would think the recession would draw people to go to public schools..." said Peter Osgood, director of admissions, "but, in this state people hear about budget cuts and how fewer people are going to be admitted, so it drives people back towards private schools as a result. It's not as simple as saying, 'this happened and people went in that direction.' There's all kinds of cross currents. It'll take us longer to see what really happened this year."

Duke's Low Acceptance Rate. Duke U. posted its lowest acceptance rate in history. Only 17 percent of the 4,065 early decision and regular decision applicants were offered spots in the Class of 2013. Last year, Duke offered 3,814 students a place in the Class of 2012, or about 19 percent. Two years ago, the admit rate was 20 percent. "We'll be denying and wait listing people that we may have easily admitted a year or two ago," Christoph Guttentag, dean of undergraduate admissions, said.

Anticipating uncertainty over who will actually enroll, about 1,000 students have been placed on Duke's wait list. Last year, 200 students were admitted off of the wait list.

Emory's Wheel Turns. This year, Emory U. in Georgia attracted 15,611 applications, a 10.5 percent decrease from last year. Its acceptance rate rose 3 percent from nearly 26 last year to almost 29, dean of admission Jean Jordan told the *Emory Wheel*, the student newspaper. "Although we had a smaller pool of applicants this year...the number of high-quality, completed applications was higher than in previous years," Jordan said, "making our review process as difficult or more so than in previous years." The average SAT for admitted students was 1394, the average ACT 31. About 46 percent of the admitted students are "non-white," including students from 57 foreign nations. About 60 percent of these students have applied for financial aid.

Florida Gulf Coast. Florida Gulf Coast U. fielded more than 8,750 applications and admitted 5,309 for 2,050 seats in the fall freshman class. And it has started a wait list. Last year, 20 of the 200 students on the wait list were offered admission, and 12 ended up enrolling.

Some Ivy Bound Tallies

Brown. Brown U. admitted 2,700 or 10.8 percent of its applicants.

Columbia. The acceptance rate at Columbia U. in New York City grew slightly this year to 8.92 percent, from 8.71 percent last year.

Dartmouth. Dartmouth C. attracted 18,130 applications for the Class of 2013, 10 percent more than last year, and admitted 2,184, a 12 percent rate. About 95 percent of the admitted students were in the top 10 percent of their high school classes, including more than 42 percent who were class valedictorians and nearly 11 percent who were salutatorians. About 45 percent are students of color. About 55 percent will receive need-based aid, totaling \$21.8 million. The average scholarship award is likely to be about \$33,978.

Harvard. Harvard C. admitted only 2,046 students, or 7 percent of its 29,112 applicants this year, a record low. Harvard received 6 percent more applications this year than last. Nearly 11 percent of the admitted students are Latino/as and nearly another 11 percent are African Americans. About 18 percent are Asian Americans and a little more than 1 percent are Native Americans. Students also come from 82 nations. Seventy percent of the new class will receive need-based financial aid. Last year, 200 students were offered spots off of the wait list. Dean of admissions William Fitzsimmons expects this to be another good year for wait-listed students.

Princeton. Princeton U. received a record 21,964 applications. It admitted 2,150 or 10 percent.

Yale. Yale C. accepted 1,951 students from approximately 26,000 Early Action and regular admission applicants, or about 7.5 percent, a record low. It received 14 percent more applications this year. Yale admitted fewer students early, 769, than last year. Yale expects to admit some students from its wait list. Last year, 60 students came off the list. ■

Geneseo's Record. Geneseo C. State University of New York (SUNY) set a new record for applications. And it is getting harder to get in. According to the college newspaper, *The Lamron*, the average SAT score is "just shy of 1350."

George Washington Apps Include 100 Nations. International applications to George Washington U. have soared by 20 percent over the past two years. Between 1998 and 2001, the number of international students attending the university in Washington DC declined sharply, but since then has been rising steadily. This year, GW received 2,100 international applications from 100 nations. Most often, it's the lure of the nation's capital that is the major factor in the attraction. Another factor is the diversity of its student body. Also, GW's

admissions staff traveled to 13 countries last year to speak and conduct interviews.

I.U. Pennsylvania. In these tough times, some talented students with an eye on the nation's elite schools have realized they cannot afford their tuition. That's why the Cook Honors College at Indiana U. of Pennsylvania extended application deadlines into April and May. "Because the economic forces at play here are putting these families in a late scramble to find a suitable college option, I find great pleasure in telling them about our late application process," says Cook's assistant director Kevin Berezansky.

Kenyon. This year, Kenyon C. in Ohio attracted 3,985 applicants and admitted 1,528, or 38 percent. Kenyon admitted 307 students of color and 145 legacies. The SAT Critical Reading average of admitted students was 700. The SAT Math average was 673, Writing 695. The ACT composite average was 30.7. Need-based financial aid was given to 402 students, while 545 received merit scholarships.

Economy Behind Numbers in Minnesota. U. of Minnesota received more than 33,000 applications for fall 2009, but there are seats for only 5,350 freshmen. That is 4,500 more apps than last year, a 16 percent increase. On Minnesota Public Radio, Wayne Sigler, admissions director, said, that the economy is one of the reasons for the increase. "The cost of the institution is always a major factor for most of us," Sigler said. "I think that's especially going to be important this year given the very difficult situation our state and our country is facing."

Applications are up elsewhere in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System, to 68,700 applications overall, 5,000 more than last year. And according to the Minnesota Private College Council, apps have decreased among 17 private colleges. But "one or two percent is not a serious deviation from anything," said Dave Laird, the council's executive director.

Northern Kentucky. As of mid-April, NKU had received more than 6,000 applications, up 38 percent from last year's all-time high. But state budget cuts of \$2.4 million will keep the school from growing. "I expect that for the first time in the university's history we'll have to turn away students who are otherwise qualified for admission," NKU's president, Jim Votruba, told Cincinnati.com. He noted that the school is adding \$1.6 million in new scholarship funds.

Swarthmore. Swarthmore C. drew applications from 5,574 students, the second most in its history. This is a drop of 10 percent from

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New Curriculum Capsules

LOOKING FOR NEW PROGRAMS and options for your college-bound students? Here is a roundup of recent postings.

Arizona State. Beginning this fall, Arizona State U. plans to offer the nation's "first comprehensive undergraduate degree program in biomedical informatics." Students will learn skills for integration of computer and information sciences with basic biological and medical research, clinical practice, medical imaging and public health disciplines. The American Medical Informatics Association predicts there will be 10,000 new jobs in the field by 2010. The degree is also a viable pre-med course. ASU has already launched a master's degree and Ph.D. in biomedical informatics. For more information, see <http://bmi.asu.edu/undergraduate/index.php>

Dalton State. Dalton State C. in Georgia will begin offering bachelor's degrees in English and history with an "option" for certification in secondary education.

Lehman. Lehman C. (CCNY) in the Bronx has introduced a new degree program in exercise science to meet a growing need for skilled professionals in areas such as physical fitness and community health education. "Our goal is the promotion of a healthier nation through exercise and wellness programs," said the program's coordinator. This is the third such program offered by a CCNY college.

Mary Baldwin. Mary Baldwin C., a women's college in Virginia, will begin two new programs next fall. The new Interdisciplinary Minor in Civic Engagement in a Global Context will have an emphasis on "sustainability." Courses will include "Social Entrepreneurism for the Public Good" and a six-hour "Civic Engagement Practicum." MBC also will launch a business minor in management and a "reformatted" business communications minor.

Rose-Hulman. Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in Indiana is adding bachelor's degrees in biochemistry and international studies.

St. Mary's. St. Mary's U. in Texas will launch two new degrees in forensic science. A bachelor of science in forensic science with a bachelor of science in chemistry option and a bachelor of arts degree in forensic science with a criminology option will begin in fall 2009.

Saint Rose. The C. of Saint Rose in Albany, New York, is offering a new minor in public health. The 22-credit interdisciplinary minor combines social sciences and health sciences to prepare students for positions with local, county and state health departments, community organizations, hospitals and research centers. The Association of Schools of Public Health predicts more than 250,000 additional workers in the field will be needed by 2020. For more information, contact Stephanie Bennett at bennetts@strose.edu. The C. of St. Rose serves 5,000 students in 60 undergraduate and 43 graduate fields.

Seminole CC. Seminole Community C. in Florida has been approved to offer its first four-year degree. Starting in January 2010, SCC will offer a bachelor of applied science in interior design.

"SCC has been the primary source of interior design graduates to Central Florida for over 30 years through our award-winning two-year

programs," said SCC President E. Ann McGee. "By offering a four-year degree, we can provide our students and the Central Florida community with a program that will be locally accessible and affordable." She added that the school prides itself on its faculty of "scholar practitioners" with academic credentials and the industry experience necessary to teach workforce oriented degrees.

Another popular program at Seminole C.C. is the Professional Automotive Training Center with its two-year-old, \$10 million facility jointly funded by the Central Florida Auto Dealers Association and state taxpayers. Tuition totals about \$9,500, including \$4,000 worth of tools. Industry estimates are that in the outside world it costs about \$72,000 to comparably train a high-tech mechanic from scratch. The program educates about 140 full-time students.

South Carolina. The Moore School of Business at the U. of South Carolina, among the nation's best for international business, has launched two new programs. One is the International Business and Chinese Enterprise, a collaborative initiative with the Chinese U. of Hong Kong. Undergraduates spend two years of study in Hong Kong. "Our goal is to create an innovative platform for integrating business studies with an intensive language and cultural experience in Hong Kong and Mainland China," said the program manager. The second program is a new master of international business, a one-year, interdisciplinary program offered jointly by the Moore School, College of Arts and Sciences (political science) and the School of Law.

St. Petersburg. St. Petersburg C. in Florida will offer a new associate of science environmental science technology degree and bachelor of applied science in sustainability management beginning fall 2009. Jason Green, SPC's sustainability coordinator, said that the sustainability management degree focuses on sustainable business and communication strategies, energy and resource management, legal issues and sustainability in built and natural environments. "This unique degree, developed in collaboration with local industry leaders and universities, is designed to help students understand broad concepts of systems and strategy involved in sustainability," said Shri Goyal, dean of the College of Technology and Management. Other sustainability courses have been integrated into other curriculum areas.

Three-Year Bachelor's. Hartwick C. in New York has launched a three-year bachelor's degree that can end up cutting student costs by 25 percent. Beginning in fall 2009, students can earn a degree in liberal arts in practice, which combines traditional liberal arts study and experiential learning. Students who pursue the degree could end up saving \$40,000 in tuition, fees, room and board. Hartwick C. enrolls 1480 undergraduate students and sends the second largest percentage of its students overseas to study. "This initiative responds to the national discussion about the cost and value of postsecondary education," said President Margaret L. Drugovich.

Youngstown State. They used to call it the Rust Belt, now western Pennsylvania and Ohio are becoming known as the Aging Belt,. That's why Youngstown State U. has opened its new gerontology program. Students can earn an interdisciplinary bachelor's of arts and a certificate in applied gerontology. The Ohio school says plenty of jobs will be awaiting those with proper training. ■

FINANCIAL AID FLASH

\$50,000,000 in Scholarships. Yes, that's right. Eighteen Kansas private colleges have banded together to award that amount to eligible students. A new web site aims to assist students learning about the scholarships and information on applying to the colleges. "We wanted to simplify a lot of the details in the search for a college and the application process," said Doug Penner, President of the Kansas Independent College Association. "A lot of students and parents aren't aware that these opportunities are available." See www.Proud2bPrivate.com.

Military Families Benefit. ThanksUSA provides 400 scholarships totaling \$1.2 million for the spouses and dependents of active U.S. military personnel. Applications are being accepted through May 15. See www.ThanksUSA.org. The organization was started three years ago and has awarded 1,750 scholarships so far.

ADMISSIONS WATCH

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last year, but 34 percent more than four years ago. Swarthmore offered admission to 959 students for a class of 390. About 52 percent of the admitted group are students of color, with 18 percent Asian Americans, 18 percent Latino/as, 15 percent African Americans and 1 percent Native Americans. About 42 percent of the class was admitted ED.

UC Admits Fewer Freshmen. Budget problems made it harder to get into the nine undergraduate campuses of the U. of California system. The system turned away about 28 percent of applicants this year, according to the *Los Angeles Times*. Santa Cruz, Davis and Irvine posted the greatest jumps in selectivity.

The percentage of California applicants offered freshman admission by at least one UC campus dropped from about 75 percent last year to 73 percent, the paper reported. This year, 80,820 students applied to at least one UC campus, up 1.4 percent, Susan Wilbur, the UC system's director of undergraduate admissions, said.

But Wilbur noted that all students who were academically qualified would find some UC spot. About 10,000 eligible students who had been rejected by all campuses were later offered admission to Riverside and Merced.

UC Davis received 42,374 applications and admitted 19,564 or 46 percent, down from 52 percent last year.

UCLA with the most applicants was the toughest to gain entry, with an admissions

Purdue Adds New Aid for Middle-Income Students. On April 10, Purdue U. announced a new Marquis Scholarship Program for Hoosier students with family incomes of \$40,000 to \$100,000. Qualifying students must be in the top 50 percent of admitted students. Recipients receive \$2,000 a year, starting with the 2009-2010 freshman class.

Wayne State's Stimulus. Wayne State U. in Detroit is offering a one-time doubling of need-based financial aid to all freshman and other high-achieving students beginning in fall 2009. The package will also cover a full year of tuition for any freshman who needs it and to any upper classman with a 3.0 average or above. The stimulus is made possible by a reallocation of resources to address the immediate and pressing needs of its students. The scholarship package will also enable more than 4,000 students to pay their entire four-year tuition bill.

rate of 21 percent. The average SAT score for admitted students was 1992 out of 2400.

Statewide, the percentage of Latinos among the accepted applicants increased from over 20 percent last year to 22 percent; of African Americans from 3.8 percent to 4 percent, of Asian Americans from 33.6 percent to 34.9 percent. The percent of admitted white students in the class fell from 34.4 percent to 33.1 percent. The system-wide average SAT was 1790, up from 1777 last year.

"Catastrophe du Jour" in Evansville. The good news in Indiana is that there may be increased support for financial aid as a result of the federal economic recovery plan, according to the U. of Evansville *Crescent* April 17. The bad news is the economy may still hurt enrollment. "...this is sort of the catastrophe du jour," said Stephen Jennings, president. Evansville received 2,951 applications, 95 more than in 2008. About 25 percent of UE's Indiana students are in need of financial aid.

"Why Didn't I get Into UGA?" That's the title of a column in the *Atlanta Constitution* in April by UGA's associate VP for admissions. More than 18,000 high school students applied for admission to the freshman class this year for about 5,000 spots. Not surprisingly, "Two factors continue to give students the best chance to be admitted: taking academically rigorous courses and doing well in them, and doing well on the SAT/ACT, including the writing section," Nancy McDuff said. "GPA in academic coursework is the most important factor in the admissions process." ■

Hispanic Travel Scholarships. Applications for college travel for Hispanic students are being accepted through June 5 at www.hacu.net/hacu/Lanzate_EN.asp. The program is sponsored by Southwest Airlines in conjunction with the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities.

P.S. Calculating the Gap. For a rare inside look at how financial aid calculations are made at colleges, take a look at "Dividing Up the Pot," in the April 19 *New York Times*. The article reported on how Boston U.'s Office of Financial Assistance examines the "expected family contribution" of each accepted student. Students with the best profiles receive the best offers. For others, the gap between tuition and the university's offer is larger.

Last year, *The New York Times* reported, BU received post-offer adjustment appeals from 600 families. It changed awards on half of those, increasing the initial offer from \$500 to \$2,000. The university also said that it does respond when a family's economic circumstances change. ■

FINANCIAL AID

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said, "Students and families need to know the money will be there." He noted he is hearing of students who are in sixth grade and already think they can't afford to go to college.

However, fearing that the Obama proposal will pass, some large private lenders are hedging their bets by also putting in bids for contracts to service the billions in dollars of student loans that the Dept. of Ed will be unable to manage itself. *CB* will keep you posted.

Pennsylvania's Tuition Relief. Some states are taking financial aid plans into their own hands. Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell has proposed a Tuition Relief Plan that, if passed by the legislature, will radically reduce the cost of attending a state college or community college for at least 170,000 students who will pay "what they can afford." Families with income under \$100,000 could obtain as much as \$7,600 in relief for tuition, fees, room and board. Many families earning less than \$32,000 a year will pay just \$1,000.

The plan will also help with student debt. "Three out of four students who graduate from our public universities begin their professional life with massive debt, averaging \$19,000 per student," Governor Rendell said. "That debt often hampers new graduates ability to establish their careers, purchase a home and start a family." ■

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