

# College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

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*People are Talking About...*

## The New SAT Pros and Cons

AS YOU NO DOUBT HEARD, last month the College Board announced significant changes to the SAT. At the same time, the organization expanded its outreach to “college-ready, low-income students to provide them with customized, targeted support in the college application process.”

For example, every “income-eligible student who takes the SAT will directly receive four fee waivers to apply to college,” removing a cost barrier faced by many low and middle-income students.

Second, in an effort to diminish the inequities arising from “the culture and practice of high-priced test preparation,” the College Board is partnering with the Khan Academy “to provide the world with free test preparation materials for the redesigned SAT.”

Interactive software will give students “deep practice and help them diagnose their gaps.” It will be available in 2015. Until then, Khan Academy is offering “hundreds of previously unreleased practice problems from actual SAT exams, accompanied by more than 200 videos that show how to solve the problems step-by-step.”

See, [www.khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org).

### The Changes

As for the new SAT changes themselves: The SAT returns to the 1600 scale. The essay will be a separate score. The test will last three hours, with an additional 50 minutes for the essay. Beginning in 2016, the test will be administered on paper and by computer.

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## State News

**California Borrowing Up.** Over the past 10 years, the percent of California four-year college undergraduates who are borrowing to go to school has increased from 59 percent to 77 percent. The average amount they borrow has increased 26 percent from \$16,071 in 2003 to \$20,269 in 2013, according to a new report, “Borrowing for College” from the Campaign for College Opportunity.

“It’s troubling that we’ve got such a significant increase in the number of student loan borrowers in California,” Audrey Dow, a spokesperson, told [sfgate.com](http://sfgate.com).

The big problem is that many former students are struggling with their debt and that is having impact on the economy, as they are less likely to buy a car or home or other purchases.

Michele Siqueros, executive director of the organization, said, “While loans are one of those critical sources that make higher education pos-

sible for many, not all students are fully utilizing available grants before turning to debt.”

The group makes many recommendations for high schools, such as: providing information on financial aid options to all students and incorporating the information into the curriculum. For the entire list: [www.CollegeCampaign.org](http://www.CollegeCampaign.org).

**Delaware High School Dual Enrollment.** Delaware Governor Jack Markell is setting aside \$300,000 to pay for dual enrollment college courses for talented low-income Delaware high school students. “We have two main purposes in establishing this program,” he told high school students. “First, experiencing college-level work while still in high school, whether it’s on a campus or within these walls, will help you transition to meeting the

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## Admissions Watch

AS CB WENT TO PRESS, colleges began sending letters to hopeful applicants on whether they were in... or not. Here is a spot check.

**Brown’s Pool Second Largest in History.** Of the 394 international students admitted to Brown U. on March 27, China, India, Canada and the United Kingdom were the top four nations represented. The most common home state for admitted students: California, followed by New York, Massachusetts and New Jersey. In all, 2,619 students were admitted to the Class of 2018, from a pool of 30,492 applicants. Thirty-seven percent of the admits intend to study physical sciences.

**Columbia U. Announced Admits from its College Walk.** Regular Decision letters mailed at the end of March to the 32,967 students who applied which is the third largest pool in Columbia’s history. Ten percent applied early. Columbia admitted 2,291 applications, an admit rate of 6.94. The means nearly 93 percent of applicants were rejected....

**Harvard Accepts Record Numbers of Minority Students.** At 5 p.m. March 27, emails were sent to 1,031 regular applicants to tell them they were admitted. Another 992 students were admitted through Early Action. This was 5.9 percent of the 34,295 applicants applying. African American and Latino students are nearly 12 and 13 percent of the admitted students, respectively, and nearly 20 percent are Asian American.

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## NEW SAT

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Other changes:

- The new math test will focus on three essential areas: “problem solving and data analysis, the heart of algebra and passport to advance math.”

- “The SAT will focus on words that students will use consistently in college and beyond.”

- “Students will be asked to support answers with evidence.”

- “The essay will measure students’ ability to analyze evidence and explain how an author builds an argument to persuade an audience.”

- “The reading section will enable students to analyze a wide range of sources, including literature and literary non-fiction, science, history and social studies.”

- “Students will be asked to analyze both text and data in real world contexts.”

- “Each exam will include a passage drawn from the Founding Documents of America or the Great Global Conversation they inspire—texts such as the Declaration of Independence....”

- “Scoring does not deduct points for incorrect answers....”

### Cheers and... Criticism

Not everyone is pleased with the changes. For example: “When the going gets tough, well, why not just make the going easier?” Kathleen Parker commented on the new SAT in *The Washington Post*. “...one does fear that such tweaking is really a stab at greater market share....”

“The test no longer will include fancy words, otherwise known as rich vocabulary, or require a timed essay... a way of determining if a student can compose a coherent sentence. You know, subject, verb—all that stuff—not to mention whether one can think. If a person can’t write a series of sentences to express a cogent thought, does that person really qualify for a college education? For what purpose?”

The Editorial Board of *The Chronicle* at Duke said that while the test is supposed to be better aligned to the high school curriculum, it might make it coachable, and if easier, make student differentiations harder for admissions offices.

*The Korea Times* further worried that the new test would put Korean students at a disadvantage. Why? Kim Chan-soo, director of a college prep center, argues that the new Critical Reading section of the exam requiring critical-thinking answers will be hard for Koreans who are strong in memorizing. And if the math portion is easier, Korean students will not be able to distinguish themselves as they have in the past with their strong math skills. Time will tell.

*The New York Times* devoted its magazine to the topic in “The Story Behind the SAT.” See, [www.nytimes.com/2014/03/09/magazine](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/09/magazine). ■

## STATE NEWS

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more rigorous academic expectations of higher education classes. Second, so that we can help you afford not only the expenses of earning college credit before you leave here, but also the high cost of college overall.”

**Tennessee’s Two-Years Free.** Community College will be free to all Tennessee students, if Republican Governor Bill Haslam has his way. His “Tennessee Promise” is working its way through the state legislature. The numbers are still under debate, but tuition at Tennessee’s public community colleges currently stands at \$3,787. Haslam wants to give all CC students at least a \$3,000 scholarship, if they maintain a “C” average, and require them to apply for other federal and state scholarships. If they still have a financial gap, the “Tennessee Promise” will fill it, so they can go to school essentially “free” for two years. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, the “Tennessee Promise” has the backing of powerful groups such as The Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

Free education through the first two years of college has many proponents. But since some of the funding will come from reduced four-year college scholarships, private four-year colleges in the state are objecting. They have forced the governor to scale back the amount he plans to cut from those scholarships.

The plan has also set off a debate between those in favor of job training versus those who think a broader education of “critical thinking” is more important. But observers predict the “Tennessee Promise” will drastically change higher education in the state and boost two-year college participation.

### ADMISSIONS WATCH

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almost 2 percent Native American or Native Hawaiian. International students make up over 10 percent of the class. Interestingly, nearly 8 percent of students claim dual citizenship.

**MIT Portfolios.** MIT made its undergraduate admissions decisions available mid-March. This year, MIT admitted 1,419 students from a pool of 18,357 applicants, for an admissions rate of nearly 8 percent. “Every year, the job of selecting among such a talented applicant pool is more and more difficult,” said Stu Schmill, MIT’s dean of admissions.

This year, the admissions office used a new “maker portfolio” supplement as an optional part of the application. This allows students to submit samples of music, works of art or hands-on projects such as coding a new computer program, building a car or designing a costume for a play. “The maker portfolio standardized what has long been ad hoc process of recognizing applicants who already demonstrate mastery of both mind and hand,”

## What we learned during the NCAA Tournament

The U. of Dayton, whose team “The Flyers” pays homage to the Wright Brothers, had a fall enrollment of 10,856.... Stephen F. Austin State University’s basketball team is known as the “Lumberjacks” because the school is located in Nacogdoches, Texas, amidst a pine forest.... Mercer U. has three campuses in Georgia with 8,300 students in 12 colleges, and on its Board of Trustees sits former President Jimmy Carter. ■

### Washington’s Demographics Change.

About 5,000 fewer Washington students will receive high school degrees this year than in 2010. That’s because the high school class of 2014 is at the bottom of the population dip. That means about 69 percent of Washington high school students who apply will be admitted to the U. of Washington, as opposed to 63 percent in 2013. About 7,100 in-state students will be admitted to UW, for a first-year class of about 6,400.

Other Washington state schools have rolling admissions policies and are continuing to accept applications for fall. However, Washington State U. has received 27 percent more applicants than it did this time last year. In part, that is because WSU dropped its requirement for student essays and because SAT and ACT scores are now an option. WSU expects a class of 4,100 new students in fall.

“It’s not easier to get in,” said John Fraire, vice president. “We just put a lot of emphasis on grades. It’s a better predictor of success.” ■

said Chris Peterson, senior admissions counselor. “As a result, we’ve been able to more rigorously identify, evaluate and admit some of the most creative and innovative students the world.”

**Princeton U. Harder to Get Into.** According to [nj.com](http://nj.com), Princeton offered admissions to 1,939 students, a little over 7 percent of the “near-record” number of applications, 26,641. Of these, 714 were admitted Early Action. Princeton expects a class of 1,308. Students received letters, but could view the university’s web site for results. Of note: 11,453 applicants have 4.0 grade-point averages, 13,477 have scores of 2100 or higher on the SAT and 97 percent are in the top 10 percent of their class.

**Other Acceptance Rates.** According to *Business Insider*, “this year was extremely competitive for some of the Ivies.” The U. of Pennsylvania accepted 3,551 from 35,788. Cornell U. had a 14 percent acceptance rate, 6,025 of 43,041 applications. ■

## New Programs for a New Age

THIS SPRING, a number of colleges announced they are launching new programs and majors, designed to attract students interested in new and emerging fields, meet the need for adding students to the STEM fields and fulfill pledges to businesses and employers stating they need college graduates with new skills. Here is a roundup of a few we've noticed in the last month.

**Amherst Adds New Stats.** Late last month, Amherst C. announced it will offer a new major in statistics and the Department of Mathematics changed its name to the Department of Mathematics and Statistics. The major will emphasize interdisciplinary skills beyond math, real-world applications, communications and computer skills. "...to be a statistician you need more skills about collaborating, communicating ideas and really thinking hard about a problem," said Amy Wagaman, professor.

**Arkansas Engineering Degree Approved.** Beginning Fall 2014, Southern Arkansas U. in Magnolia will offer a B.S. in engineering and "boost economic development in the region," said SAU president David Rankin. The university is building new facilities for the program. But this is only the latest new program at SAU. It recently began offering Computer Game and Animation Design and Wildlife Biology. Officials suggest that these new programs have led to an "enrollment jump" this school year.

**New B.S. in Electrical Engineering.** The C. of Staten Island will offer a new degree this spring in Electrical Engineering, the second college within the City University of New York system. Students will have the option to major in both Electrical Engineering and Engineering Science. The program is designed to help students get internships and jobs when they graduate.

**New Pre-engineering Program in Iowa.** Iowa State and Iowa Western Community C. have a new partnership to promote a pre-engineering program. Students begin the program at a community college with courses in calculus, physics, English and other general education classes and then stay on track by immediately taking engineering classes at Iowa State.

**New Journalism B.A. in Emerging Media.** Beginning September 2014, Montclair State University in New Jersey will offer a B.A. in journalism, designed "to prepare students for careers in emerging, new and traditional media," said Merrill Brown, noting the "dramatic

transformation" going on in the journalism field today. Internships will also be part of the program.

**Free and Open Source Software.** The Rochester Institute of Technology's School of Interactive Games and Media will offer a minor next fall in "free and open source software," known as FOSS, and free culture. "As students progress through the minor, they acquire domain knowledge, hands-on experience and community interaction skills," said Stephen Jacobs, professor.

**Stanford's New Joint Major.** Stanford U. is offering a new degree that integrates computer science and the humanities. The CS+X program lets students study computer science and either English or music beginning in fall 2014. The idea is to mix the two pursuits, so that, for example, an English student will use computer technology in literary analysis.

"We're seeing students who want to balance their academic passions with pragmatic considerations about their career development, and this kind of program addresses that need," Nicholas Jenkins, associate professor of English and director of the CS+X initiative, told the *San Francisco Chronicle*. "The intellectual landscape is changing, and the workplace landscape is changing. We're looking to help cultivate, and provide academic structure for a new generation of both humanists who can code and computer engineers whose creativity and adaptability is enhanced by immersion in the humanities."

**U.S. Naval Academy Goes Nuclear.** Beginning with the Class of 2016, students can take a sequence of courses to complete a new major in nuclear engineering. Students will study the fundamentals of nuclear power, radiation and healthy physics and learn about nuclear propulsion, applications of radiological technology and systems of nuclear powered ships. The Academy notes navy ships began using nuclear power in 1954.

**New "3+3 B.A. Law Degree.** The U. of California Santa Cruz and the U. of California's Hastings College of Law in San Francisco are launching a new program this fall whereby students can complete three years in Santa Cruz and then move to Hastings for the three-year law degree. There are no special undergraduate requirements, according to *The Santa Cruz Sentinel*, and students can be from any major. Students will still need to take the Law School Admissions Test. Hastings, founded in 1878, was the first law school in California. ■

### THE COUNSELOR'S BOOKSHELF

**Hot Off the Press:** *From Public School to the Ivy League: How to Get Into a Top School Without Top Dollar Resources*, by Mandee Heller Adler with Aimee Heller (Biographical Publishing, 2014); ISBN: 1-929882-95-5; \$14.95.

"The Community College Route to the Bachelor's Degree" by David B. Monaghan and Paul Attewell. Published in *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, March 19. Authors suggest that the "widespread loss of credits that occurs after undergraduates transfer from a community col-

lege to a four-year institution" lowers the chance of a student completing a B.A. degree. Available at <http://epa.sagepub.com/content/early/recent>.

**NY Debt Website.** Since New York has the third largest student debt level in the nation, Governor Andrew Cuomo launched a new website with tips, advice and information for students and parents preparing to apply for financial aid. The site is run by New York's Student Protection Unit, which also investigates and protects students from fraud. See, [www.dfs.ny.gov/studentprotection](http://www.dfs.ny.gov/studentprotection).

**Top Dream Colleges.** It turns out Stanford U. is the No. 1 dream college for both college applicants and parents responding to The Princeton Review's 2014 "College Hopes & Worries Survey." Harvard was No. 2. In all, 500 institutions were named "dream" schools.

Respondents also said financial aid was "very necessary" to pay for college, 65 percent of respondents said it was "extremely necessary." And 70 percent said stress levels were "high" or "very high." Other findings: Biggest worry? Debt. Main benefit of college? Jobs. Toughest factor in the applications process? Tests.

For these and other results see, <http://www.princetonreview.com>. ■



## SCHOLARSHIP SCOOPS

**Connecticut's Advance Scholarship.** The Connecticut Higher Education Trust (CHET), the state's 529 savings plan, will conduct a random drawing of 100 high school juniors and 100 sixth-grade students to receive \$2,500 scholarships for college expenses. Applications close on April 30. For more information, see [www.chetadvance.com](http://www.chetadvance.com).

**Food, Agriculture or Natural Resource Sciences.** Students at Central State U. in Ohio who study food, agriculture or natural resource sciences are eligible for full scholarships from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, according to Cleveland's *Plain Dealer*. This year, Congress gave the university "land grant" status. It joined 18

other Historically Black Land-Grant Universities.

Students will be eligible for the scholarships beginning in 2016, as part of the 1890 National Scholars Program which awards two dozen scholarships at 19 universities. For more, see [www.outreach.usda.gov/education/1890](http://www.outreach.usda.gov/education/1890).

**25 New Scholarships at Johnson C. Smith U.** Duke Energy of North Carolina is funding \$1 million worth of new STEM scholarships at Johnson C. Smith U. "We are raising the bar in STEM education by delivering market-driven programs in emerging fields such as cyber security, robotics, bioinformatics, analytics and renewable energy," said president Ronald L. Carter, president, John S. Smith. ■

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

**Tufts Pays Some for Gap Year.** Tufts U. in Massachusetts is launching a new program to help cash-strapped students who want to take a year off after high school to travel and explore different communities. The Tufts' 4+1 gap-year program will pay for housing, airfare, and even visas up to \$30,000, according to the *Daily Reporter*.

"Students return to the classroom more focused, independent and confident," said Holly Bull, president of the Center of Interim Programs.

About 40,000 Americans participated in gap year programs in 2013, an increase of 20 percent since 2006, reports the American Gap Year Association. Princeton U., the U. of North Carolina and St. Norbert College in Wisconsin all sponsor similar programs.

**Drew Drawing International Students.** This year, 47 foreign undergraduate students from 21 countries enrolled at Drew U. in Madison, New Jersey. But Drew's goal is to enroll 130 new international students in the 2014-15 year and 500 students in the next five years, according to *The Star-Ledger*. It is participating in a new program that will allow students to complete two years of undergraduate studies and English language coursework at Drew and then become eligible to complete the next two years at Drew or another university in the New York metropolitan area. Drew notes it is building on its current international programs and the nation's first United Nations Semester, created in 1962.

**Liberal Arts to Career.** Austin C., with 1,300 students in Sherman, Texas, has created a new "Gateways Initiative" to link its liberal arts students to more than half a dozen law,

medicine, healthcare and accounting programs across the country. Austin C. students will participate in research projects, summer study, dual degree opportunities and preferred graduate school admission. Austin C.'s new partners include Texas Tech U., Carnegie Mellon U., Kansas State U., and the U. of Texas at Tyler and at Arlington.

**7.1 Million-Plus Online Learners.** The 2013 Survey of Online Learning, conducted by Babson Survey Research Group, found that more than 7.1 million students are taking at least one online course, or 6 percent more than 2012. "While the rate of growth in online enrollments has moderated over the past several years, it still greatly exceeds the growth in overall higher education enrollments," said I. Elaine Allen, the study's co-author.

Other findings: at least 33 percent of higher education students take at least one course online. Some 74 percent of academic leaders rate online courses as the same or superior to face-to-face classes. Only 5 percent of higher education institutions currently offer a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course).

**Realtor's Top 10.** What are the top university towns to live in from a real estate point of view? Movoto Real Estate put together this list based on total amenities, total crimes, tax rates, unemployment, commute time and weather. The results, in order: Hanover, NH (Dartmouth), Bryn Mawr, PA (Bryn Mawr C.), Charlottesville, VA (U. of Virginia), Ann Arbor, MI (U. of Michigan), Blacksburg, VA (Virginia Tech), Princeton, NJ (Princeton U.), Swarthmore, PA (Swarthmore C.), Iowa City, IA (U. of Iowa), Waltham, MA (Brandeis U.) and Burlington, VT (U. of Vermont). ■

## Campus Life

**New College Names.** Three Seattle colleges are dropping "community" from their titles. They will be known as Seattle Central College, South Seattle College and North Seattle College. All three offer Bachelor of Applied Science degrees, with additional third- and fourth- year coursework for students who have completed a two-year technical degree. And all three of them are open-admission colleges with low tuition. "We believe this will inspire prospective students to reach higher than they thought possible," said district chancellor Jill Wakefield.

**U. of the Pacific's New S.F. Campus.** The U. of the Pacific, which already operates campuses in Stockton and Sacramento, has expanded its San Francisco presence with a new \$151 million downtown campus to educate dentists, audiologists and music therapists, and offer other programs in food studies and data analytics. About 1,000 students and faculty will work at the new facility.

**New Detroit Institute of Music Education.** The Detroit Institute of Music Education, "dedicated to teaching the next generation of modern musicians," is being started by three music industry veterans. It will "offer advanced music students a college-style experience in contemporary music, with expert musicians and industry professionals teaching courses in guitar, bass, vocals, drums, songwriting and music entrepreneurship. Students can obtain a bachelor's degree in Creative Music Performance or sign up part-time or for summer music education programs. See, [www.dime-detroit.com](http://www.dime-detroit.com).

**Quality of Life Counts.** According to an article in the March 2014 issue of *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, changes in "academic and quality-of-life reputations affect the number of applications received by a college and the academic competitiveness and geographic diversity on the ensuing incoming freshman class.... This suggests that potential applicants often begin their search process by shopping for groups of colleges where non-pecuniary benefits may be relatively high."

**P.S. New Web Site.** Freshmansupport.com offers information on institutions, housing, roommate matching, scholarships and visits at 34 institutions (and growing). It started as a class project at the U. of Texas. ■

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