

# College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

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## News on Data, the FAFSA and Aid

**Datapolooza at the White House.** President Obama and the U.S. Department of Education hosted a “Datapolooza” last month at the White House to promote the use of information that will improve college access, affordability and completion, particularly among low-income students. The reason: Only 9 percent of students from families in the lower 25 percent of the economy earn a bachelor’s degree by age 25 compared to 54 percent of students from families with incomes in the highest 25 percent.

The event focused on ways to empower students and families with financial aid information using apps, websites and other tools to help them make informed decisions about going to and paying for college.

This included adding new tools to [www.financialaidtoolkit.ed.gov](http://www.financialaidtoolkit.ed.gov) and showcasing 19 new online and mobile apps developed to help

low-income students and their families navigate the college application process.

Some have glitzy names such as “Zombie College,” a game that promotes a “fun way of learning about the college access process;” CollegeAbacus, a one-step shop for comparing college pricing; and Career Connect, an app that links students with experts who answer questions about college and career paths. These can be found at [www.CollegeAppMap.org](http://www.CollegeAppMap.org) or Facebook, Apple’s App Store or Google Play.

The event also re-emphasized the new 10 percent of income per year cap on federal student loan repayments passed by Congress to make student debt much more manageable.

One way the Dept. of Ed is seeking to help more students complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid is by “responsibly  
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## Admissions Watch

**Bowdoin Sees Slight Decline.** Applications to Bowdoin C. in Maine fell by 2.2 percent to 6,902 from last year’s all-time record. It was still the school’s second largest pool. A total of 843 applications came in through Bowdoin’s two Early Decision rounds, also down slightly. A little over 33 percent, or some 200 students were admitted during ED I.

Scott Meiklejohn, dean of admissions and financial aid, told the *Bowdoin Orient* that the declines may have resulted from minor changes in the Common Application. He said that if the decline “weeds out less serious applicants, then it’s a good thing.”

Applications from Maine were down 10 percent and 8 percent from the rest of New England. But they rose by 8 percent from the

South, 5 percent from the Mid-Atlantic and 3 percent internationally.

**Case Western Reserve Apps Soar.** Case Western Reserve U., in Cleveland, attracted 18 percent more applications for 2014 than last year. Some 21,600 high school students applied. In fact, the university has seen a 200 percent increase in applications since 2007. This year, international applications topped 3,900, an increase of 25 percent over 2013. International enrollment has nearly quadrupled since 2007. But applications from Ohio were up just 6 percent. The proportion of underrepresented first-year minority students also has jumped by 70 percent since 2007.  
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## Who Got In? Profiles from CB’s Survey

FOR THE LAST 28 YEARS, *COLLEGE BOUND* has surveyed colleges and universities coast to coast to assess the latest enrollment trends of the current school year. The colleges represent schools large and small, public and private.

This year, as *CB* looked at the overall trends, we decided to provide a closer look inside the admissions offices of five representative colleges.

### College Profiles

**Boston U.** BU has “experienced tremendous growth in applications from students from California,” said Ruth Milesky, senior research administrator. “In fact, both New York and California have now eclipsed Massachusetts as our top two states from which students apply for admission.”

BU’s first-year class for 2013 was smaller than in 2012, with 3,807 students. Yet it received 52,705 applications and accepted 19,420. It admitted 70 students from its 5,055-student wait list. BU’s yield was nearly 20 percent. And a little over 15 percent of the first-year class was accepted Early Decision.

BU’s student body: 38 percent are male, 62 percent female. Five percent are African American, nearly 10 percent Hispanic, 15 percent Asian and less than one percent Native American. More of the students were from out-of-state in 2013 compared to 2012  
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## ADMISSIONS WATCH

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Since that year, CWRU's overall admit rate has fallen from nearly 42 to 33 percent.

New applicants expressing interest in engineering grew by 27 percent. Those who want to pursue management rose by 25 percent; social sciences by 16 percent; and those who want to pursue the humanities increased by 14 percent. About 4,200 undergraduate and 5,600 graduate students attend Case Western Reserve U.

**Florida A & M Rebounds.** Florida A & M U., the nation's largest historically black college, saw applications for 2014 grow by 10 percent. "We've had a much more deliberate effort to focus our recruitment much earlier," interim president Larry Robinson told *diverse-education.com*. "We're putting out competitive scholarships that people will know about now."

**Florida Gulf Coast.** Florida Gulf Coast U. made a big splash in last year's NCAA Division I basketball tournament. So it's not surprising that FGCU saw a 35 percent jump in freshman applications for 2014. But applicants also posted significantly higher academic credentials, with an average weighted GPA of 3.93. Last year, it was 3.54. FGCU expects a freshman class of about 3,050 students. This fall's total enrollment rose by 5 percent to 14,850.

**Georgia Tech.** Georgia Tech U. admitted more than 5,000 students from 12,300 Early Action applications. It has attracted a total of 23,000 apps, up significantly from last year's 17,000. For the first time, they came from all 50 states. But roughly 60 percent of the incoming freshmen hail from Georgia. Another 10 percent come from abroad. The increase is attributed to first time use of the Common Application.

Also, since Georgia Tech is a leader in offering MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) that are also taken by high school students, director of admissions Rick Clark expects future numbers to climb. "I could definitely see a day soon where we are almost expecting a kid would have taken a MOOC before coming to Tech," he said.

Ten years ago, Tech's average SAT score was 1334 for admitted students. This year, it is over 100 points higher, 1483/1600 and 2193/2400.

**Sacramento State.** Sacramento State U. received almost 33,000 undergraduate applications, including 11,288 transfer applications for fall 2014. The university has already sent out more than 8,000 admit notices to the most highly-achieving applicants.

A total of 526,798 first-year applications were received at all 23 campuses of the California State University system. Transfer

## DATA, FAFSA AND AID

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sharing data with schools and guidance counselors about whether their students have applied for the FAFSA."

Datapalooza participants included more than 80 college and university presidents, plus corporate, policy and private groups. For example, College Summit, a national non-profit that trains high school students to counsel their peers as they prepare their college applications, also played a large role in the meeting. It announced that it is scaling up its student-led training model to 10 new cities to help more than 100,000 high school students from low-income communities access these new tools.

**FAFSA Tips.** In their new book, *Filing the FAFSA: The Advisors Guide to Completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid*, authors Mark Kantrowitz and David Levy offer their own tips and advice. For example, they recommend that when families fill out the list of schools where they want their financial information sent, they put their second-choice school first and their top-choice school second or third. Why? Because some schools at the top of the list might offer a smaller aid package because they think the student will attend regardless of how much they are offered. The authors also tell students not to wait until they are accepted at a college to fill out the FAFSA, because some schools award aid on a first-come first-served basis.

**More Privates Reducing Tuition.** A decade or more ago, some of the nation's private colleges were charged with boosting their tuition rates so they looked more exclusive. Now, the list of private colleges reducing tuition to attract more students is growing. Schools such as Ashland U. in Ohio, Ave Maria U. in Florida, Belmont Abbey C. in North Carolina,

applications came from a total 234,659 students.

**Swarthmore's ED I.** Swarthmore C., in Pennsylvania, fielded 349 E.D. I applications, and made offers to 141 students, who will make up 35 percent of the Class of 2018. According to the student newspaper, *The Phoenix*, these students come from 25 different states. About 7 percent are international students. And 12 percent are first-generation college students.

**Tufts Tops 19,000.** Tufts U. in Massachusetts attracted a record-breaking 19,051 applications, a 3.5 percent increase over last year. The School of Engineering saw a 16 percent increase in applications to 3,701. There was no increase among Arts and Sciences applications. Early Decision applications were up 10 percent to 1,744. International applications

Alaskan Pacific in Anchorage and Sewanee, the University of South have led the way. And they have seen the number of their applicants grow.

Now add to that list, Converse C., a small woman's school of 700 students in South Carolina, which is "resetting" next year's tuition at \$16,500, a 43 percent decrease. According to Betsy Fleming, president, Converse's discount rate will drop also from the current 56 percent to 25 percent.

Other privates are turning to a strategy of four-year tuition rate guarantees. That's what George Washington U. in Washington D. C. and Roger Williams U. in Rhode Island did a few years ago. And last month, Northland C., on the shores of Lake Superior in Wisconsin, also promised a fixed-rate tuition. Northland students who meet certain academic and income criteria won't have to pay any more tuition than the flagship state university in Madison, Wisconsin. That comes to \$10,400 in tuition and fees. In all, 320 colleges and universities offered tuition guarantees in 2013.

**Western Illinois' Early Aid Offers.** Western Illinois U. is sending out financial aid award letters to high school seniors almost two months ahead of most colleges and universities. "... By getting aid award letters out earlier than most other schools, we continue to be national leaders in helping students and families to make informed choices about the cost to go to college," said Gary Biller, vice president for student services.

Also, WIU has increased its fall to spring retention rate from 82 to 89 percent by pairing first-year students with a faculty or staff mentor. "As we talk to students about their experiences, some of the common themes we hear include how faculty have high expectations in the classroom, but also how much faculty care about student success," explained Andy Borst, admissions director. ■

grew by 5 percent. Lee Coffin, dean of undergraduate admissions, cited an improved website and international travel and recruitment by the admissions staff as the prime reason. China, Singapore, India and Vietnam all send significant numbers of students to Tufts. In all, applications came from all 50 states and 115 countries.

Now comes the difficult task of evaluating applications. "If the acceptance rate winds up at 17 percent, a lot of really wonderful people were at 18, 25 and 28 percent," Coffin told *The Tufts Daily*.

**Washington U.** Washington U. in St. Louis attracted nearly 30,000 applications for 2014, slightly fewer than last year. More than 630 students were admitted in the Early Decision round, a little more than 35 percent of the expected freshman class, according to Julie Shimabukuro, director of admissions. ■

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and the majority of international students came from China, Korea and Taiwan. Need-based financial assistance is not available to international students, but BU does award aid to international students, "If international students demonstrate superior academic achievement." Indeed, about 51 percent of BU students receive financial aid. The average aid package is \$37,038. The average debt at graduation: \$37,694. And nearly 4 percent of students participate in study abroad programs.

**Colgate U.** According to Jason Jacobs, senior assistant dean, Colgate is "very aware" of demographic changes and "where the high school graduation numbers are increasing." In fact, Colgate enrolled more out-of-state students this year, compared to 2012. It also accepted more international students, the majority coming from China.

Colgate's first-year class was 759 students in 2013, the same as in 2012. It received more applications, 8,375, but accepted the same number of students as in 2012, 2,238. Forty-eight percent of the first-year class was accepted ED. It placed 1,734 students on a wait list and admitted 60 students. Its yield was nearly 34 percent.

Colgate's student body: 42 percent male, 58 percent female. It admitted more minority students—8 percent of those enrolled were African American, 7 percent Hispanic, 12 percent Asian and 1 percent Native American.

Nearly 42 percent of all students receive financial aid and the average aid package is \$42,575. The average student loan debt when students graduate is \$16,128. Nearly 61 percent of Colgate students participate in study abroad and 57 percent participate in internships.

**Oberlin C.** Nearly 75 percent of Oberlin students study abroad. The majority of its international students come from China, Canada, Korea and the United Kingdom. Ninety-one percent of its students are from out-of-state.

Oberlin's 2013 first-year class had 780 students, the same as in 2012. It received more applications though, 7,438, but accepted the same number as in 2012, 2,262. Thirty-three percent of its first-year class was accepted ED. It placed 1,285 students on its wait list and admitted 82. Its yield was 34 percent, higher than in 2012.

The ratio of males to females: 45/55. Oberlin admitted the same number of minority students in 2013 as in 2012: about 6 percent were African American, 7 percent Hispanic, 4 percent Asian and 1 percent Native American.

### Samples of Average Test Scores

School	Combined SAT	ACT
Boston U.	1929	29
Colgate U.	1351	31
Oberlin C.	1940-2150	28-32
Rensselaer Polytech	1376	29
U. of Iowa	1080-1260	23-28
Valparaiso U.	1660	26

From COLLEGE BOUND'S 2013 National College Admissions Trends Survey.

**U. of Iowa.** According to Katie Voss, demographic shifts are impacting admissions at the U. of Iowa. She pointed to a "declining number of high school graduates in the state." At the same time, U. of Iowa enrolled fewer out-of-state students, 2,326, compared to 2012. But it accepted more international students, with the majority from China. The U. of Iowa had "more Chinese applicants," Voss said.

Iowa received more applications, 21,644, and accepted more students, 17,363. It did not use a wait list and it did not admit students ED or EA. Its yield was 26 percent, lower than the

previous year. In fact, 4,460 students made up the first-year class, which was smaller than in 2012. While the U. of Iowa did not experience "a summer melt," Voss did note that "applicants are applying to more institutions."

The freshman class was 46 percent male and 54 percent female. The U. of Iowa admitted more minority students in 2013 compared to 2012: 3 percent were African American, 7 percent Hispanic, 3 percent Asian and less than 1 percent of the first-year class was Native American.

**Santa Clara U.** Meanwhile, in California, Santa Clara U. noted that demographic shifts are influencing its admissions. In addition, "national disasters are impacting access," said Leesa Riviere, such as the Colorado floods, California Rim Fire and so on. Still, Santa Clara spotted a "slight increase in Catholic/Jesuit applicants," said Riviere.

Santa Clara enrolled 1,291 students in its first-year class in 2013, a larger class than in 2012. It received 14,980 applications, more than in 2012, and accepted 7,456, more than in 2012. It put about 1,000 students on its wait list, the same as in 2012, and admitted about 50. Its yield was 20 percent. It uses both ED and EA and had more early applications in 2013. About 56 percent of its first-year class was accepted ED/EA.

It, too, had more international students in 2013. The majority here likewise came from China. It does provide merit-based aid to international students. Its male to female ratio is 49/51. It admitted more minority students: 4 percent of those enrolled are African American, 6 percent Hispanic, 18 percent Asian and less than 1 percent Native American. At the same time, 35 percent of students study abroad. Riviere noted it is located near the Silicon Valley, an "advantage for opportunities" and 75 percent of students participate in internships.

Santa Clara students graduate with \$28,672 in student loan debt on average. About 88 percent of students receive financial aid; an average aid package is \$24,112. Riviere noted that Santa Clara's "increased popularity is influencing capacity and financial aid need." ■

## SCHOLARSHIP SCOOPS

**Agricultural Scholarships.** The CHS Foundation, "the major giving entity of CHS Inc., the nation's leading farmer-owned cooperative and a global energy, grain and foods company," will award 50 \$1,000 scholarships to high school students who are planning to study in the agricultural field at either two or four-year colleges. And it will award 25 \$1,000 two-year scholarships to first-year agricultural

students attending two-year colleges. The deadline is *March 15*. For more information and applications, see, [www.chsinc.com](http://www.chsinc.com).

**STEM Scholarships.** The Buick Achievers Scholarship Program, funded by General Motors, will award 100 scholarships of up to \$25,000 per year to high school seniors or current undergraduates seeking to obtain

a college degree in science, technology, engineering or math (STEM) or other fields related to the auto industry. The deadline is *February 28*. For more information, visit [www.buickachievers.com](http://www.buickachievers.com).

**Middle Class Scholarship.** A new program will provide scholarships to students from families with \$100,000 to \$150,000 income to attend the UC or California State U. The maximum amount is a 40 percent tuition discount. See, <http://www.csac.ca.gov/mcs.asp>. ■

## Campus Life

**Getting a Bike.** This year, the U. of Dayton gave away 100 new bicycles to incoming first-year students who signed a pledge not to bring a car to campus their first two years. The new program seeks “to promote a healthier, greener campus.” It also hopes to better “connect students with the natural beauty of the Dayton area and to encourage them to live more active, healthy lives.” The initiative is an outgrowth of a successful bike-share program launched two years ago that has recorded more than 4,500 checkouts. The 100 winners were selected from 293 students who submitted the pledges. Male students received a Linus Roadster Sport, while female students were given a Linus Dutchi 3.

**Tree Campus USA.** Speaking of quality of life, Nova Southeastern U.’s main campus in Davie, Florida, received a 2013 Tree Campus USA

designation from the Arbor Day Foundation. NSU has approximately 6,000 trees and “strongly promotes environmental stewardship and responsible campus tree care.”

**Snowiest Schools.** Some people love the snow, some people hate it. So here’s a word for the wise, AccuWeather.com’s “10 snowiest colleges”: Michigan Technological U., Syracuse U., U. of Rochester, U. of Buffalo, U. Minnesota Duluth, U. of Vermont, Southern New Hampshire U., Western Michigan U., Cornell U., U. of Alaska Fairbanks.

**Norwich U.’s New Field of Dreams.** A new athletic field will enable students at Norwich U. in Northfield, Vermont, to play soccer and lacrosse in addition to football, beginning this year. It is part of \$41 million in investments on the campus that also includes a new \$25

million dorm aimed at easing overcrowding and adding housing for 286 students. Norwich plans to increase enrollment to 2,200 students.

**Virtual Walking Tours.** YouVisit.com offers high definition virtual guided walking tours of more than 500 colleges and universities worldwide. Many are offered in more than 30 foreign languages to help international students and their families reach locations that are too expensive to visit. Another 200 campus visits are in the works. Visitors can see 360-degree panoramic views of campus locations and student hot spots. “...People feel as if they were there in person,” said Abi Mandelbaum, YouVisit CEO. ■

## International Affairs

**UK Sees Drop-off in Non-EU Overseas Students.** The number of non-European Union students at United Kingdom universities fell by 1 percent last year, the first time ever recorded. The largest decline came among Indian students, down 25 percent among first-year students starting courses in 2012-13. The number of Indian students has fallen by 50 percent in just two years. The main reason seems to be that the British government has abolished post-study work visas and there’s been a decline in currency exchange rates. In contrast, the number of Chinese first-year students rose by 6 percent.

**UK Lifts Cap on Undergraduates.** The United Kingdom will lift its current cap on the number of undergraduates studying at its universities. By 2015, an additional 30,000 students will be able to “attend university.” The change, which partly aims to increase the number of students studying STEM subjects, will be financed by the sale of more student debt to private companies. Some critics are worried about the impact of more student debt, others about the impact of the higher student numbers on the quality of education.

**Israel’s Ups and Downs.** According to *The Jerusalem Post*, 29,749 students applied to universities in 2012-13, down from 36,383 in 2008. Academic colleges applications increased from 36,383 to 45,482 during the same time. But nearly 68 percent of students applying to universities were accepted and nearly 74 percent of those applying to their first choice academic college were accepted. According to *jpost.com*, “the range of fields offered to students at universities is far greater than those of academic colleges.” ■

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## NEWS YOU CAN USE

**New GED Launches.** The long-awaited revamp of the GED test began in January. More than 26,000 students have already signed up. The new test is “fully aligned to state and national college and career-readiness standards and is computer-based to ensure adults have basic computer skills essential for success in college and jobs.” According to the GED Testing Service, only 12 percent of GED grads gained additional education credentials in the past. The new test is designed to give its holders skills to succeed beyond the high school level. Last year, nearly 800,000 adults sat for the GED test, which is accepted by virtually all US colleges and employers.

**Note to Students: Frequent Cell Phone Use Linked to Lower Grades.** A new study from a team of Kent State U. researchers finds that high frequency cell phone users tend to have a lower GPA, higher anxiety and lower satisfaction with life (happiness) relative to their peers who use the cell phone less often. Earlier this year, some of the same researchers identified a negative relationship between cell phone use and cardiorespiratory fitness.

“The higher users are not able to control it and are glued to the cell phone,” said Andrew Lepp, one of the researchers. “They need to unplug and find some personal time where they can disconnect from the network. You need time to be alone with your thoughts, recover from the daily stressors in a way that doesn’t involve electronic media.”

He further noted that “In class, students look you right in the eye while texting under

the table.” And he added, “I have been informally tracking those students for a couple of years, and they do not do as well as those that put the phone in the backpack.”

The study, published in the journal *Computers in Human Behavior*, can be found at [www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com).

**The Mentoring Effect.** A new report from MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership based in Boston, finds that more than 4.5 million at-risk students are currently in some kind of mentoring relationship through formal mentoring programs, up from 300,000 in the early 1990s. Another 10.5 million at-risk young people are involved in some kind of informal mentoring relationship with teachers, coaches, extended family members or neighbors. However, one-in-three at-risk young people will reach adulthood without any kind of mentoring experience.

The report also found that students who are mentored are more likely to aspire to and enroll in college, participate in sports and other extracurricular activities, take leadership roles in school and volunteer in their communities. For more information, see [www.mentoring.org](http://www.mentoring.org).

**Odds and Ends.** Caldwell C. in New Jersey, a private Catholic coed, four-year college focusing on the liberal arts, has become Caldwell U. with 25 undergraduate programs, 27 graduate programs and one Ph.D. field. It sponsors 12 NCAA Division II athletic teams. See, [www.caldwell.edu](http://www.caldwell.edu). ■

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