

# College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

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*Who Got In?*

## Record Rejections

- Princeton U. turned away just over 24,000 students.
- The University of California Los Angeles received more applications than any public college in America, a whopping 80,494.
- Even smaller colleges such as Bowdoin C. rejected 85 percent of its applicants.

In fact, record applications to colleges this year led to record numbers of rejections. At least, that is the inside word in high schools and colleges nationwide as acceptance figures unfold. Here is *CB's* May round-up of the latest stats, as well as a word or two about who did get in. The unanswered question: What will the summer melt bring?

**Amherst Accepts 1,077.** Students applying to Amherst still faced stiff competition this year, even though administrators say applications were down from last year by 7.54 percent. Only 1,077 students were accepted from a pool of 7,918 applicants, according to the *Amherst Student*. The ACT score of accepted students was 32, average SAT critical reading score was 729 and average math and writing scores were 728. Applications from “non-U.S. citizens” increased and 116 were admitted. The Class of 2017 included 600 students of color.

**Bryn Mawr's 39.** Thirty-nine percent of the students who applied to Bryn Mawr C. were admitted for the Class of 2017. About 2,700 students applied, the highest number of applicants in the college's history, “making this year the most selective in at least 30 years,” Laurie Koehler, dean of admissions, said. Of those accepted, 22 percent are international students representing 36 countries. Bryn Mawr noted it has a new international studies major.

**Bowdoin's 15.** Bowdoin C. in Maine received 7,052 applications, an all-time high, and admitted 1,021, for an acceptance rate of nearly 15 percent. Scott Meiklejohn, dean of admissions and financial aid, told *The Bowdoin Orient*, he hopes to fill the class of 2017 with 500 students, and may use a wait list to reach his goal. Applications were down from the Northeast, but up from the West and students applied from 3,172 high schools. Meiklejohn said, “I think the College is getting better and better known as a really fantastic place.”

**Clark U.'s 29.** In Worcester, Massachusetts, Clark U. saw applications increase 29 percent to over 5,545, up from 4,297 last year. According to *golocalworcester.com*, part of the increase is attributed to Clark's new SAT/ACT test optional policy. The university is also offering 10 new scholarships for full tuition, room and board.

**Denison U.'s 46.** Denison U. in Ohio admitted nearly 46 percent of 4,850 applicants. But the admit rate among the 224 Early Decision apps was 78 percent. They make up 38 percent of the Class of 2017, which is expected to be 605 students. Of the 2,145 accepted students: 119 are African American, 68 Asian American, 171 Hispanic, 75 are multiracial and 83 international students. The average high school GPA was 3.6 percent, the ACT average was 29 and the average SAT 1295.

**Georgetown Admits More Minorities.** A record portion of accepted students to Georgetown U. stated they were a racial minority, according to *The Hoya*. Among the 2,413 students accepted for the regular admissions cycle, “there was a three-point bump from last year.”

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## Tuition Tabs

**Boston C. Bolsters Aid While Increasing Tuition.** Boston C.'s 2013-14 tuition has been set at \$44,870, a 3.6 percent increase. Meanwhile, need-based aid was bolstered by 7.9 percent to \$97 million. BC is one of only 21 private colleges in the U.S. that remains need-blind in its admissions. More than 70 percent of BC students receive aid, with an average of about \$35,000 a year.

**Bethel U.'s Increase Lowest in 30 Years.** Bethel U. in Minnesota plans a 3 percent tuition increase this fall, the lowest in 30 years. Students in the College of Arts & Sciences will be charged \$31,620. Additionally, the room rate will reach \$5,250 and food will cost another \$3,950. More than 90 percent of students receive financial aid, making the average net tuition \$17,500.

**Cooper Union to Charge Tuition.** Reversing its long-standing pledge to offer free higher education, Cooper Union in New York announced it will begin charging tuition to undergraduate students. Citing “severe financial problems,” the college announced it would reduce its full-tuition scholarships by 50 percent beginning fall 2014. Tuition this year is \$19,275 per semester. The college said it would supply further scholarships to those in need. In a Statement on the Future Plans of Cooper Union, the Board of Trustees said, “The Cooper Union will continue to adhere to the vision of Peter Cooper, who founded the institution specifically to provide quality education to the poor.”

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## REJECTIONS

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year in the number of accepted students who identify as Hispanic, now at 11 percent.”

Another 13 percent admitted were Asian, eight percent black, up two percent from last year. Seven percent stated they were multiple races. A record number of first-generation students were also admitted, 12 percent. Both the School of Nursing and Health Studies and the Walsh School of Foreign Service were more competitive this year, and both accepted about 18 percent of applicants. Charles Deacon, dean, attributed this to the fact that students are interested in “practical” majors. Also of note: Georgetown requires interviews and refuses to use the Common Application.

**Macalaster C.’s 72.** Of the 6,683 students who applied to Macalaster this year, only 2,284 students got in, according to the *Mac Weekly*. Twenty-five percent were students of color and 72 percent were in the top 10 percent of their class. California had the greatest number of admits, followed by students from Minnesota, Illinois, Wisconsin, New York and Massachusetts, in that order.

**Middlebury C.’s 350.** Middlebury C. offered admission to 1,750 students, 350 of whom were admitted early February or Early Decision last December. Middlebury attracted a total of 9,112 applications, up 3 percent from last year. Its acceptance rate, though, fell from 20 to 19 percent. But 35 percent of Early Decision applicants gained admission, as opposed to 17 percent of regular decision students. Middlebury received 2,000 applicants from “students of color” and another 2,000 from international students. The admitted class comes from 77 countries and all 50 states, according to *The Middlebury Campus*. Middlebury is a need-blind school which meets 100 percent of demonstrated need of matriculating students. About 43 percent of the new class will receive part of the \$9.5 million in institutional aid.

**New York U.** According to the *New York Daily News*, NYU was “deluged” with calls from “college applicants demanding answers” as to why they were rejected. A tall order as the university received a record number of applications this year, 48,606, with over 30,000 of these students rejected.

**Princeton U.’s 7.** Princeton turned away just over 24,000 students while admitting 1,931 applicants for a 7 percent acceptance rate. That led Nathan Mathabane, the associate editor for opinion emeritus of *The Daily Princetonian*, to urge current students and administrators, “to reflect on the other, darker side of admissions statistics [the 92.7 who were “rejected” and who spent “a significant portion of the past four

years of their lives...dedicated to the quest for admission”] ...who will not be able to pursue their collegiate dreams in quite the same way as we can. Maybe then we won’t be so hasty to chalk them off as a virtue.”

**Stanford U.’s 5.7.** Only 2,210 students were offered admission to Stanford, from a pool of 38,828 applicants, a school record and a 6 percent increase of last year. This amounted to an acceptance rate of 5.7 percent, the lowest admit rate in the university’s history, according to *The Stanford Daily*. Another 813 students have been placed on a wait list.

**U. of Southern California.** The U. of Southern California drew more than 47,000 applications for 2,650 places in the Class of 2017, up by about 1,000 applicants from last year. The average un-weighted high school GPA of admitted students was 3.82 and standardized test scores were at or above the 95th percentile. About 45 percent of the admitted students are from California, 17 percent are international students and 38 percent from the rest of the nation. According to *Annenberg News*, this group of students “...is characterized by unprecedented diversity: ethnic, geographic and socioeconomic,” Timothy Brunold, dean of admission, said.

USC offers what it believes to be the “largest pool of university-funded financial aid of any private university in the country.” And two-thirds of USC students receive some form of aid.

**The UC System’s 61.** Californians made up nearly 61 percent of those admitted to the U. of California system at its nine undergraduate campuses. This is 1,356 fewer than last year. But it admitted 18,846 non-residents, 3,915 more out-of-state and international students, for a 43 percent increase. “We have the capacity to educate many more students at our campuses,” said Kate Jeffrey, UC’s interim director of undergraduate admissions. “What we don’t have is the funding to admit more California students. Nonetheless, we continue to honor the California Master Plan, finding space at one of our campuses for all students who qualify for guaranteed admissions (students in the top 9 percent of the high school classes). Meanwhile:

**UCLA’s Application Number Tops in the Nation.** UCLA received 80,494 applications—more than any other public university in the nation.

**UC San Diego Admits More.** Close to 25,000 students were admitted to UC San Diego for the fall, 8 percent more than last year or 1,856 students. The GPA is 0.04 higher. About 40 percent of the class is from Southern California. The class is also more diverse, according to the university, with an increase in black students (13 percent), Mexican-

Americans (18 percent), other Latinos (7 percent) and Filipinos (5 percent). Twenty percent will be the first in their family to attend college. The most popular declared majors: biology, economics, electrical and computer engineering, chemistry and math.

**The U. of Chicago** admitted but about nine percent of more than 30,000 of students seeking admissions.

**It was harder to Get In to the U. of Wisconsin—Madison.** UW-Madison accepted 15,126 students or 51 percent of the 29,653 applicants, the *Journal Sentinel* reported, 3.5 percent fewer than last year. The state’s flagship university denied admission to 12,220 applicants and wait-listed another 2,307. By comparison, last year, UW-Madison received about 600 fewer applications—29,037—but admitted a higher percentage: nearly 55 percent. Last year, UW-Madison admitted 15,841 applicants, wait-listed 2,749 and denied 10,444.

**William & Mary’s Record Pool.** The C. of William and Mary in Virginia attracted 14,035 applications for the Class of 2017, its ninth straight record pool. It sent out admit letters to 4,565 students in anticipation of a first year class of 1,470. Students of color make up 33 percent of those admitted, while international students accounted for 8 percent of the admits, with most coming from China. The admit rate was 32.5 percent. The median SAT score was 1410. And 89 percent placed in the top 10 percent of their high school class.

“The challenge we face,” Henry Broaddus, dean of admissions, told *The Flat Hat*, the student newspaper, is “the pool gets bigger and the decisions get harder, and yet we finish this process in the same amount of time with the same amount of people.... It does mean people put in very long hours.... It’s such a rewarding opportunity to influence the direction of the institution.”

**Williams C.’s Class of 2017.** As *CB* noted in its February issue, Early Decision applications to Williams C. in Massachusetts were up by 8 percent over last year. In announcing the regular admits, Richard Nesbitt, director of admissions, said, “it was as difficult as it’s ever been to make selections.” But 597 women and 560 men were admitted for the class of 2017, in addition to the 249 students admitted early. A total of 6,853 students applied. Regionally, 29 percent of U.S. admits were from the Mid-Atlantic States, 19 percent from the West, 15 percent from New England, 13 percent from the South, 9 percent from the Midwest and five percent from the Southwest. Ten percent of admits were from overseas. Decisions were need-blind. The targeted class size is 550 students, the same as last year. ■

## It's the Economy...

AS THE RECOVERY FROM A RECESSION CONTINUES, the repercussions from the nation's economic woes the last few years continue to impact college admissions and financial aid, students and their families. Here is a look at some of the recent reports.

**Debt Payments Delayed.** Student loan borrowers are delaying principal and interest payments in record numbers, according to TransUnion, one of the three major credit-reporting agencies. It found that the total balance of all loans in deferment is \$388 billion of the \$893 billion in outstanding student debt, up from \$228 billion in 2007. Since 2007, debt per borrower has risen 30 percent.

The Institute for College Access and Success says that 20 years ago, fewer than half of the students at four-year publics graduated with debt. Now, two-thirds do so, with a debt average of \$26,600. And, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, 11 percent of student loan balances are 90 or more days delinquent. The delinquency rate for federal loans was 12.3 percent and 5.3 percent for private loans.

**Disappointing Jobs for Graduates.** For those who graduated during the "Great Recession," the job market has been "horrendous." In fact, according to a recent study from the Center for College Affordability and Productivity, millions of recent graduates hold jobs that don't require a college degree.

The report, "Why Are Recent College Graduates Underemployed? University Enrollments and Labor Market Realities," states that 48 percent of the recent 41.7 million working college graduates in 2010, a total of 20 million people, hold jobs for which a B.A. is not even required. The percentage of graduates who are underemployed rose from nearly 11 percent in 1967 to about 18 percent in 1990. In 1970, only 1 percent of cab drivers held degrees. By 2010, it was more than 15 percent. Students who graduated from the elite colleges are doing better than those from state flagship universities....

**Where the New Jobs Will Be.** According to Georgetown U.'s Center on Education and the Workforce, 200,000 jobs for college graduates were actually created during the recession, and two million more have been created since the recession ended. But that is not enough to keep up with the backlog and new graduates. Still others project 31 million new jobs requiring college training in the next decade, many of which will be in information services, financial services and health care.

**Economic Growth Tied to Higher Ed.** If the U.S. wants economic growth, it must boost its number of college graduates, according to Peter Orszag, former director of the Office of Budget and Management in the Obama Administration. Writing in a recent *Bloomberg*, Orszag pointed out that between 1960 and 1985, the share of U.S. adults with a college degree more than doubled, from less than 8 percent to 19 percent. From 1985 to 2010, it rose to 30 percent. But if it had continued to rise at the earlier rate, it would stand at 50 percent today. The good news is that because of

an acceleration in high school graduation rates among black and Hispanic students, the high school graduation rate now stands near 85 percent.

Yet he cites an experiment by Stanford professor Eric Bettinger showing that students who have help filling out the FAFSA form "were substantially more likely to submit aid applications, enroll in college the following fall, and receive more aid." Some college prep programs do that, more should. The upshot is that U.S. economic growth is linked to getting more students into and completing college.

**New Federal Aid System Needed?** Excelencia in Education, a non-profit education advocacy group focused on the role of Latino/Hispanic students in higher education, released a new report calling for a restructuring of student aid formulas, and new practices to make sure these students are better informed about their aid options. The report, "Using a Latino Lens to Reimagine Aid Design and Delivery," calls for a restructuring of financial aid programs such as work study. It notes that the way some aid is formulated favors flagship and private universities, particularly in the Northeast. But the great growth in low-income and minority (Latino/Hispanic) students is in the Southwest. The report also states that the nation needs a more aggressive way of getting financial aid information, such as the net-price calculators and the new College Scorecard, to Latino/Hispanic students.

Currently, 14 percent of those in college are Latino/Hispanic students, the second largest ethnic/racial group. But only 21 percent of Latino/Hispanics hold an associate degree or higher, versus 41 percent of all adults. Find the entire report at [www.edexcelencia.org](http://www.edexcelencia.org)

**Student Debt Remedy.** In his recent 2014 budget request, President Obama proposed tying the rate of student loans, fixed for life, to the interest rate on 10-year Treasury notes, plus 2.93 percent for the popular Unsubsidized Stafford loans. Subsidized Stafford loans would be set at the Treasury rate plus 0.93 percent. And PLUS loans for families would be set at the Treasury rate, plus 3.93 percent. The proposal has set off some debate among student aid experts and others. For example, Bruce Watson, *Daily Finance's* Savings editor worries that "The trouble is that the Treasury note interest rate is currently near historic lows and is almost certain to rise if the economic rally ever kicks into gear." He points out that "there are times during the past few decades when—under the proposed plan—student interest rates would have jumped above 12 percent."

Groups such as the New America Foundation counter that the already enacted new income-based repayment (IBR) that went into effect last year caps repayment at 10 percent of income, with a 20 year maximum before loans are forgiven. That will make that issue moot. "A borrower's payments under IBR are based on his income, and the total time he is required to repay is limited through loan forgiveness, so there is a limit to how much he can ever pay on his loans—and that limit can make the nominal interest rate on the loan or the amount borrowed irrelevant," the foundation says. ■

### BOOKSHELF

**College Reality Check.** That is the name of the new tool produced by *The Chronicle of Higher Education* with support from the Gates Foundation. The tool enables users to compare

up to five colleges at a time from 3,600 options. The measures include net price, graduation rates, default rates and graduate earnings. See, [www.collegerealitycheck.com](http://www.collegerealitycheck.com).

**The 2013 Best High School Rankings.** *U.S. News and World Report* released its new rankings

with profiles of 21,000 public high schools and rankings of 4,805 schools. *U.S. News* also ranked states and provided rankings of Best Charter Schools and Best Magnet Schools. Included is a college readiness score. The resource is available exclusively online.

See, <http://www.usnews.com>. ■

## TUITION TABS

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education to those who might otherwise not be able to afford it.”

**Dartmouth Raises Tuition.** All toll, tuition, room, board and mandatory fees will grow by 3.8 percent to \$60,201 at Dartmouth next fall. Meanwhile, financial aid will increase 6.5 percent to \$82 million.

**Duke's Increase.** Undergraduate tuition at Duke U. will rise by 4 percent in 2013-14 to \$44,929. Including room and board and fees, the total will reach \$58,278. Duke will maintain its need-blind admissions policy and meet 100 percent of demonstrated financial need. Some 40 percent of students receive need-based aid. Duke spends about \$127.9 million in institutional funds to support undergraduate financial aid.

**Tuition Increase? Zero.** That's the word from Mercy C. in Dobbs Ferry, New York, for the 2013-14 school year. Tuition is currently about \$17,000. And applications to Mercy, have reached 20,000 for the first time in its history, a 161 percent increase since 2005. Mercy offers 90 undergraduate and graduate degree programs. According to the *Westchester News*, “the tuition freeze comes

at a time when interest in Mercy C. is at an all-time high.”

**Rice Up.** Rice U. will increase tuition by 4.5 percent to \$38,260. “The main sources of revenue to the budget are the endowment and net tuition revenue,” vice president for finance Kathy Collins told the *Rice Thresher*. “Tuition is not going to support the cost of the colleges.” But Rice has maintained its need-blind admission policy. “Rice cares very much about affordability,” Collins said. “I think our financial aid policies reflect that.”

**Yale Aid Declines.** Tuition will also increase by about 4 percent at Yale U. to \$57,500. But the financial aid budget will decrease slightly to \$119 million. “While I don't expect that students will feel the effects of [federal] sequestration in their financial aid, the University will,” said President-elect Peter Salovey.

**P.S. Tuition Less Than a Cell Phone?** Observers were skeptical when Florida Speaker of the House Will Weatherford, in arguing for a 6 percent state tuition increase, claimed that the “out-of-pocket” cost of tuition for Florida public college students was less than the bill students pay for their cell phones. But when *The Miami Herald* conducted its “Politifact Florida” check, it found that

Weatherford's claim was “mostly true,” with some “caveats.”

For one thing, in 2013 Florida ranks 41st in state tuition. Tuition at Florida four-year publics is \$6,069, up 67 percent in the last five years. But the average amount of scholarship and other gift aid (excluding loans) totals \$4,646 per student. So the average “out-of-pocket” an average Florida student spends for tuition and fees is only \$400. And 44 percent of the students, those who come from families earning less than \$60,000, pay nothing.

Meanwhile, according to J. D. Power and Associates, 86 percent of U.S. residents have cell phones, and the average monthly wireless bill in March 2013 was \$111. That adds up to \$1,332 per year. So Weatherford was right, students pay more for their cell phones than for tuition at Florida publics.

However, students also have to pay thousands in addition for the room and board, books and transportation. Still, the issue may be moot. Florida's Republican Governor Rick Scott says he'll veto any tuition increase this year because it is “a tax on students and a tax on families.” Also, both houses of the Florida legislature, looking toward the next election, have agreed to boost state university funding by \$100 million this year, and to restore \$300 million cut last year. ■

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

**College Contribution to Community.** What's a college worth to a community? A study commissioned by Florida's community college system found that in that state the economic return is about \$27 billion dollars. That means Florida community colleges return about \$10 for every one dollar of tax money invested in the system, mostly from higher salaries paid to graduates. For example, Miami Dade College, which educates about 175,000 students on its eight campuses and employs 6,600 people, contributes \$3.3 billion to the local Miami economy.

**Federal Guidelines on Disabled Athletes.** The U.S. Dept. of Ed issued new guidelines to elementary and high schools that extend to higher education on accommodating students with disabilities. The new rules cover individual athletes and groups of athletes. For info see, <http://www2.ed.gov>.

**Getting to College.** Getting to college depends on getting out of high school. Dropout rates are still disturbing. In 2006, the U.S. ranked 17th in high school graduation rates and 14th in college graduation rates among

30 developed nations as identified by the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (2006). In California, only 74.4 percent of students who enrolled in ninth grade in 2006, graduated in 2010. For white and Asian students, it was much better at 83.4 percent. But only 59 percent of African American students and 67.7 percent of Hispanic students graduated from California high schools in four years.

**Only Half Graduate.** The National Student Clearinghouse Research Center released a report recently with these statistics: A little over 54 percent of the 1.9 million college students who enrolled as freshmen in 2006 had graduated six years later. Another 16 percent were still enrolled in some sort of postsecondary program after six years. And about 30 percent had dropped out. Only 42 percent graduated from the institution where they first enrolled. The completion rate at two-year public schools was only 36 percent.

**How Do Successful California Schools Do It?** A report from WestEd, “Making the Move: Transition Strategies at California Schools

with High Graduation Rates” recommends:

- Engage all students in some aspect of school (e.g. classes, activities, clubs and sports) and create caring and safe school environments;
- Provide staff collaboration time for teachers and principals (e.g. between the high school and its middle grade feeder schools) to create partnerships;
- Ensure struggling students are identified early, that information on individual students is communicated across schools;
- Consider ways to leverage open enrollment that leads to healthy competition among schools for students.

**A Year Off?** Norway leads the way among nations whose students take a year off before going to college, followed by Denmark and Turkey. Only 38 percent of Norway's high school graduates go straight to college. But a full 89 percent are registered after a little time off. University tuition in Norway is free and the state provides low interest loans to help students cover other expenses. Students travel, do a little work or fulfill their mandatory year of military service before enrolling. Many feel the experience “recharges their batteries.” ■

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