

College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

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Admissions Watch

New Programs, Aid Spur Applications

AS THE SEASON heats up, colleges begin posting their application numbers....

Berkeley's 100,000. More than 100,000 students applied to the U. of California at Berkeley for this fall. First-year candidates account for 82,539 applications, a 4.7 percent increase over last year, along with 19,116 transfer students, an 11 percent increase. The average GPA of freshman applicants is 3.67 (unweighted) and the average SAT composite score is 1945. African-American applications account for 6.7 percent of the total, while 5.6 percent came from Chicano-Latino students.

Other UC Campuses. The University of California System also released application numbers for its other campuses: UC Davis, 68,519 freshman applications, up by 6.1 percent; UC Irvine, 77,786 freshman applications, up by 8.4 percent; UCLA, 97,064 freshman applications, up by 4.7 percent; UC Merced, 19,683 freshman applications, up by 11.8 percent; UC Riverside, 41,559 freshman applications, up by 7.9 percent; UC San Diego, 84,218 freshman applications, up by 7.9 percent; UC Santa Barbara, 77,090 freshman applications, up by 9.3 percent; UC Santa Cruz, 49,133 freshman applications, up by 7.9 percent; university-wide (unduplicated count) 166,380 freshman applications, up by 5.2 percent.

Colby Commitment Spurs Apps. Applications to Colby C. surged by 30 percent for the Class of 2020 to a record 9,833. In fact, applications have skyrocketed by 90 percent since 2013.

One reason for soaring applications is the

“Colby Commitment,” whereby the school meets the full, demonstrated need of all students, without packaging loans. Colby also maintains partnerships with QuestBridge and Posse to attract applications from high-achieving, low-income students who might otherwise not consider applying.

Dartmouth ED Apps Rise 3.6 Percent. Dartmouth C. received 1,927 Early Decision applications, 3.6 percent more than last year, and admitted 494 students to the Class of 2020, Paul Sunde, interim dean of admissions and financial aid, told *Dartmouth Now*.

Some 30 percent of those accepted are students of color, up from 26 percent last year, and 11.5 percent are first in their families to attend college, up from 9 percent last year. International students account for 9 percent of admits, up from 8 percent last year.

The mean SAT score of admitted students is 2156. The mean ACT score is 32. Dartmouth students from families earning \$100,000 or less attend the college tuition and loan free. The average debt load for those who do borrow is \$46,315.

Georgia Early Action Apps Up 10 Percent. The U. of Georgia attracted 14,516 Early Action applications, 10 percent more than during the last cycle. UGA offered admission to 7,500 students. Their average weighted high school GPA was an impressive 4.11, up from last year's 4.01. The average SAT score rose from 1374 last year to 1395 this year, while the average ACT score increased one point to 31.

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INSIDE COLLEGE CAMPUSES

More on the Class of 2019

Alverna's Second Largest Class. Alverna C. in Reading, Pennsylvania, welcomed about 320 new students to its Class of 2019. About 75 percent hail from in-state. The new freshman were reading *The Other Wes Moore*, a book that compares the lives of two men with the same name, one of whom grew up in poverty and ended up in prison. The other became a Rhodes Scholar, wrote the book and appeared on campus in September. Throughout the year, students will make comparisons between life in Baltimore and Reading.

Arizona State's Record. Arizona State U. enrolled its largest freshman class, about 11,500 students. Some 2,000 of the new students come from out-of-state or out-of-country.

Arkansas Honor. The U. of Arkansas Honors College selected 75 “exceptional students” to receive fellowships of \$70,000. The 14th class of Fellows was chosen from more than 670 applicants, including 26 National Merit Scholars. In 2002, the Walton Family Charitable Support Foundation donated \$300 million to help keep Arkansas' best young minds in-state. Nearly a quarter of the new Honors College Fellows are first-generation college students.

CCNY Recruits Nationwide. The City College of New York matriculated 1,450 students for its Class of 2019. The new students came from 450 high schools, with the largest number coming from Brooklyn Technical High

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NEW PROGRAMS, AID

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Johns Hopkins' ED Admits Include Students for New Five-Year Program.

Johns Hopkins U. in Baltimore received 1,929 Early Decision applications, a 3 percent increase over last year, which was up 17 percent from the prior year.

It admitted 584 students to the Class of 2020 from 37 states and 18 countries. These include a Korean robotics national champion and an entrepreneur who created an organization to promote bone marrow donations in Turkey.

Among the ED admits are the first to be admitted to Hopkins' Direct Matriculation Program: Masters in International Studies, a new program that guarantees admissions into the five-year combined bachelor's and master's degrees offered in conjunction with the prestigious School of Advanced International Studies.

Middlebury Admits 49 Percent of Class.

Middlebury C. attracted 636 Early Decision I applications and admitted 338 students, or

about 49 percent of the Class of 2020. Eighteen of admitted students will begin their first semester February 2017 as part of the college's February Admissions Program.

"We are pleased that 25 percent of those admitted are students of color, the highest percentage admitted through Early Decision in Middlebury's history," said Greg Buckles, dean of admissions.

Middlebury deferred but 74 applicants and denied admission to 221 students.

MIT Receives 1,000 International Apps.

The EA applications were up 8.4 percent at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. It fielded 7,767 Early Action applications and admitted 656 students, for an admission rate of 8.4 percent.

According to *The Tech*, the dramatic increase in early applications may have something to do with the fact that for the first time, international students were allowed to apply during the Early Action round. International students make up 6 percent of the early admits. Meanwhile, 2,175 students were rejected and 4,776 were deferred to the regular cycle.

CLASS OF 2019

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School and the Manhattan Center for Science and Math. The largest out-of-state contingent came from New Jersey, followed by Connecticut, but also from Colorado, Arizona and California.

Hamilton Adventurers. Hamilton C. in New York matriculated 475 members into the Class of 2019. The new students then participated in one of 20 Orientation Adventure trips including ones going into the heart of the Adirondacks, canoeing on Blue Mountain Lake or sea kayaking on Lake Champlain.

Hendrix College. Hendrix C. in Conway, Arkansas, founded in 1876 and affiliated with the United Methodist Church, matriculated 398 first-year and 14 transfer students, up from 338 last year. New students brought with them a 3.92 high school GPA, an average ACT score of 28.4 and an average SAT score of 1209. Top academic interests include biology, economics and business, English, pre-medicine and psychology. Over 22 percent of the new class came from underrepresented ethnic groups.

Rice Admits 15 percent. Rice U. in Texas attracted 17,947 applications for the Class of 2019, the most in the school's 102-year history, and only admitted 971 or 15 percent. Some 41 percent of them posted perfect grades in high school, while 61 percent scored 1500 or higher on their SATs.

Tulane's Largest Class. Tulane U. in New Orleans welcomed 1,730 new students from 47 states and 25 countries to the Class of 2019,

its largest freshman class in school history. Tulane's international student population more than doubled from 26 to 54. About 17 percent of the class is from various ethnic groups. Louisiana residents make up 12 percent of the freshman class.

The median two-part SAT score is 1340 and the median ACT score is 30. Large numbers of students also come from New York, California, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Illinois. The largest number of students intends to enter the School of Science and Engineering, followed by business and liberal arts.

Faye Tydlaska, director of undergraduate admission and associate vice president for enrollment and management, told the *Tulane Hullabaloo* that her team visited over 850 high schools and 20 countries to recruit the Class of 2019.

Warren Wilson's Theme-Floors. Warren Wilson C. in Western North Carolina welcomed 200 first-year students to the Class of 2019, from 35 states and six nations. The new students had an option to select floor-specific themed housing such as an outdoor adventure floor for those eager to explore the natural wonder of the area, an "alliance floor" to "create a safe and supportive space for students of all gender identities" and a "global perspectives" floor.

West Virginia's Majority from Out-Of-State. More than 55 percent of West Virginia U.'s Class of 2019 comes from out-of-state. Male students account for 52.2 percent of the Class of 2019, while 7.9 percent is multiethnic and 4 percent is African-American. ■

Northwestern U.'s New Neuroscience Major Attracts New Students.

Northwestern U. drew 35,034 first-year applications for the Class of 2020, up by 9 percent, according to the *Daily Northwestern*. Included in that number are the 3,022 students who applied Early Decision. The total number of applicants rose by 9 percent over last year, Michael Mills, associate provost for university enrollment, told the paper.

"In terms of majors, the new neuroscience major has played some part in this year's increase," Mills said. He expects NU's acceptance rate will be about 11 percent this year.

Penn Tops 38,000. The U. of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia received 38,792 Early Decision and Regular Decision applications for the Class of 2020, 4 percent more than last year and 22.5 percent more than five years ago.

Princeton Admits More Women Than Men.

Princeton U. admitted 785 students from a pool of 4,229 candidates, or 18.6 percent of candidates, through its single-choice Early Action program. Janet Rapelye, dean of admissions, told the *Daily Princetonian* that admitted students come from 33 countries and 46 states, and that 56 percent come from public schools.

About 16 percent of the admitted students were children of alumni. And about 21 percent of admitted students plan to major in engineering. For the first time in Princeton's history, women outnumber men, 51 percent to 49 percent.

Tufts 20,000-Plus. Tufts U. in Massachusetts, attracted 20,160 applications as of January 14, Lee Coffin told *TuftsNow*. It is the first time that the university received more than 20,000 applications, and the fifth time in six years that it set or tied a record for most applications for first-year undergraduate study, a 6 percent increase over the past two years.

Early Decision applications hit 2,070, an all-time high, and 12 percent more than last year. ED apps have soared by 70 percent since 2010. Overall, Tufts seeks to enroll 1,325 undergraduates in the Class of 2020. Last year, Tufts admissions rate was 16 percent.

"It will certainly be lower than last year, and will set a record for selectivity for the sixth year in a row," Coffin said.

Williams Selects Nearly 45 Percent of its Class ED.

Williams C. in Massachusetts offered admission to 246 of its 585 ED students. The targeted class size is 550 students. The early admits come from 35 states and 8 nations and will make up 44.7 percent of the incoming Class of 2020. The ED admits posted average SAT critical reading scores of 713, 710 in writing and 716 in math. The average ACT score was 33. ■

Financial Affairs

FAFSA Help. According to the U.S. Dept. of Education, two million students a year who would be eligible for Pell Grants each year do not fill out the gateway Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA). They thereby cut themselves off from billions of dollars in student aid. That is why the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) has updated its resources to help students and families. Tap into their free advice at www.nasfaa.org.

Tuition Soars at Publics. The average published tuition and fees at public four-year institutions rose by 40 percent between 2005-06 and 2015-16, according to the College Board. During the same period, it rose by 29 percent at public two-year institutions.

Undergraduates received an average of \$14,210 in financial aid in 2014-15. Total Pell Grant expenditures in 2014-15 reached \$30.3 billion. See, www.collegeboard.com.

Applications for Financial Aid Increased From 2008 to 2012. In another report from the U.S. Dept. of Education, the number of students applying for federal financial assistance rose from around 19.4 million in 2007-2008 to nearly 31.4 million in the 2011-2012 award year, a 62 percent increase over five years.

- During the 2012-13 academic year, 9.4 million students were awarded Pell Grants averaging \$3,555. More than 74 percent of recipients came from families earning less than \$30,000. In 2013-14, the total volume for the Pell Grant program was \$35.2 billion.

- During the 2012-13 academic year, approximately 1.6 million students participated in the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant program, with awards averaging \$599. Some 70 percent of the dependent recipients came from families earning less than \$30,000 a year. In 2013-14, total federal volume was \$733 million.

- And in the 2012-13 academic year, about 694,000 students were awarded an average of \$1,673 in the Federal Work-Study program. About 46 percent had family incomes below \$42,000 a year. In 2013-14, total federal volume was \$975 million.

Nearly Seven Million Borrowers

- During the 2013-14 academic year, the Direct Subsidized Loan program served 6.9 million borrowers with an average loan of \$3,677. Total loan volume was \$25.4 billion.

- During the 2013-14 academic year, 7.9 million borrowers took out loans averaging \$4,109 for undergraduates and \$17,562 for graduate students. Total loan volume was \$51.9 billion.

- And in the 2013-14 academic year, 704,000 parents borrowed an average of \$14,174 in the Direct PLUS Loan program. An estimated 343,000 graduate/professional students borrowed an average \$21,849. Total loans received reach \$17.5 billion.

For more info, see “National Student Aid Profile: Overview of 2015 Federal Programs,” published by the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators; www.nasfaa.org.

Oregon's Promise. Beginning this fall, all Oregon high school students who graduate with a 2.5 GPA and applied to The Oregon Promise will be able to enroll in one of the state's community colleges tuition free with a \$50 per term fee. State officials expect some 7,000 students or nearly 20 percent of all public and private high school graduates in the class of 2016 to cash in on the offer. That would represent a 25 percent increase in Oregon high school grads headed to a community college. By the end of December, 5,400 high school seniors already applied, two months before the deadline.

Students will be expected to apply for federal financial aid. Oregon will make up the difference. Students who are fully covered by federal aid will also be awarded \$1,000 cash to help pay for books, fees and transportation. The total cost to Oregon is expected to be \$10 million for the first year, which is a sliver of the state's \$9 billion budget.

“It opens the possibility to more students,” Bob Brew, Oregon's director of student access and completion, told OregonLive.com. “And by having the tuition paid, students won't feel the need to make the difficult choice between ‘Gosh, do I work more hours and take fewer credits?’” Research shows that students who attend full-time are more likely to graduate.

Expanded Pell Grants. President Obama and Congress have expanded college aid by \$50 billion over the past seven years. Now the president and Acting U.S. Secretary of Education, John King Jr., are proposing that Congress act on two additional changes: Year-Round Pell Grants and The On-Track Bonus.

Currently, Pell students are supported only for two semesters a year. But the Year-Round Pell Grant would allow students to study in the summer as well, perhaps speeding up college completion.

The On-Track Bonus of \$300 would go to students who take 15 credits per semester instead of the minimal 12, thus keeping them on track for graduation. Currently, only 59 percent of first-time, full-time students at four-year institutions graduate in six years, while only 29 percent of comparable students at two-year institutions graduate in six years. It's hoped the bonus would give students incentives to keep on track.

Both proposals require Congressional approval before they could begin. ■

SCHOLARSHIP SCOOPS

Micro-Scholarships. High school students in 9th to 12th grades, particularly low-income students, should check out www.raise.me, a platform with 130 participating colleges that provides small micro-scholarships for high school achievements such as getting good grades; AP, IB and honors courses; club par-

ticipation; sports, volunteering and so forth. Students set up portfolios where they log their achievements.

According to *Business Insider*, the average amount earned by [raise.me](http://www.raise.me) students last year was \$20,000, which is spread over four years of college.

ADHD Help. The 2016 Michael Yasick ADHD Scholarship by Shire awards \$2,000 in tuition assistance and one year of ADHD coaching services to 50 students accepted or enrolled in undergraduate programs at accredited colleges, universities, trade schools, technical or vocational schools.

Deadline, March 9.

See, www.ShireADHDscholarships.com for eligibility requirements. ■

ENROLLMENT TRENDS

Sweet Briar Rebounds. Slated for closure last spring because of financial problems and sagging enrollment, Sweet Briar C. in rural Virginia was rescued by a dedicated group of alumni, faculty, students and staff. Now, the all-female liberal arts school is re-energized and still fighting. After a general reorganization and a revised budget, its president, Phillip Stone, is busy raising another \$10 million from alumni to keep the operation solvent.

His ambition is to grow Sweet Briar from its current 240 to 800 students by the 2019-20 school year. That means adding between 200 and 250 students for the next school year, by convincing students of the enduring value of an all-women's school and by providing viable financial aid packages to some of them, without sacrificing academic quality, according to the *Roanoke Times*.

VCU Hears Havana Calling. Virginia Commonwealth U. recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the U. of Havana in Cuba, founded in the 1720s, to develop cooperative programs in a variety of academic

disciplines. The agreement stemmed from Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe's recent marketing mission to Cuba. Details of the cooperation are yet to be worked out.

Percent of Low-Income Students Declines. Since 2008, the percentage of low-income high school graduates enrolling in college has declined an alarming 10 percent, from 55.9 percent in 2008 to 45.5 percent in 2013, according to the American Council on Education. ACE defines low-income families as those from the bottom 20 percent of income. "While the percentage of low-income students in elementary and secondary schools is increasing, the percentage of low-income students who go on to college is falling," ACE warned.

Top Retention Rates. *U.S. News & World Report* recently posted a list of schools with top retention rates: Columbia U., 99 percent; U. of Chicago, 99 percent; Yale U., 98.7 percent; Dartmouth C., 98.2 percent; Princeton U., 98.2 percent; Stanford U., 98.2 percent; Harvey Mudd C., 98 percent; Massachusetts

Institute of Technology, 98 percent; Pomona C., 98 percent; Amherst C., 97.7 percent; U. of Notre Dame, 97.7 percent; U. of Pennsylvania, 97.7 percent.

Ontario Record. Enrollment in Ontario's (Canada) colleges increased by 2.4 percent in 2015 to 237,000 students. First-year enrollment grew by 2.7 percent, with 133,000 new students. "We continue to see increasing numbers of students pursuing career-specific postsecondary programs in Ontario's colleges," said Linda Franklin, president and CEO of Colleges Ontario.

P.S. Criminal Background Checks. About 66 percent of U.S. colleges and universities use criminal background checks to screen their applicants, according to a new report, "Removing Barriers to Opportunity for Parents with Criminal Records and Their Children," from the Center for American Progress.

But while the intention is to make campuses safer, one side effect is that the screenings, often done by untrained staff, can hinder student access to financial aid, disqualify them from using a federal tax credit and bar students with low-level offenses from educational opportunities and ultimately better employment. ■

CURRICULUM CAPSULES

Cornell Adds Analytics. Cornell U. in New York has added a new concentration to its undergraduate curriculum: business analytics, which will become the Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management's 11th concentration.

"Companies are looking for these skills, given the rise of big data and analytics. And business analytics is being leveraged more and more on a daily basis in the corporate world," professor Donna Haeger told *The Cornell Daily Sun*.

Denison's Global Commerce Major. After extensive research into the emerging global dimension and needs of business, Denison U. in Ohio has designed a new Global Commerce major that includes a commerce core with study of macro- and micro-economics, statistics and global financial markets; a specific global focus in one of five geographic areas such as Africa/Middle East or Latin America/Caribbean; language proficiency; off-campus study in students' region of interest; and a capstone senior seminar.

"We designed the major with rigorous courses that would appeal to students interested in business and entrepreneurship. We also developed the curriculum to engage students interested in international development, NGO

work and global social issues such as global health, food insecurity and poverty..." said Adam Weinberg, Denison's president.

Iona's Gamers. Iona C. will launch a BA and BS in computer science with a concentration in game development. "It is an interdisciplinary field that includes script writing, graphic design, music, psychology, artificial intelligence and other related areas, and should appeal to a wide variety of student interests," said Frances Bailie, chair of the computer science department. The concentrations will prepare Iona students for the job market.

Iona C., located just 20 miles north of New York City, enrolls 3,900 students and is "dedicated to academic excellence and the values of justice, peace and service."

Harris-Stowe/Washington U. Occupational Therapists. Qualified students from Harris-Stowe State U. in St. Louis can now earn their undergraduate degree in three years and then earn an MS in Occupational Therapy from Washington U. in St. Louis. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that this field will grow by 32,000 professionals or 29 percent between 2012 and 2022. But currently, only 4 percent of occupational therapists are African-American. ■

Quality Counts

The 2016 edition of *Education Week's* Quality Counts report, "Called to Account: New Directions in School Accountability," examines how states are performing and how new state and federal strategies will impact school performance. Overall, the nation received a "C" on its report card, the same as a year ago. Massachusetts ranked first with the only "B+" grade, followed by Maryland, New Jersey and Vermont, all of which earned a "B." Nevada ranked last with a "D," while Mississippi and New Mexico also received a "D."

"After a decade and a half of strong federal influence over school accountability, the states are poised to take the helm again [as a result of the new Every Student Succeeds Act] and chart their own course," said Christopher B. Swanson, vice president of editorial projects in education at *Education Week*. "This promises to be a period of great innovation and opportunity, but also one of considerable uncertainty and divergence, when states may take very different paths forward."

To read highlights from the report, see www.edweek.org/go/qc16shr. ■

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