

# College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

Vol. 23, No. 10

June 2009

## Admissions Watch

### Are Yields Holding Steady?

YIELDS SEEM STEADY AT THE NATION'S top colleges and universities, despite the economic turmoil. According to the May 11 *New York Times*, elite private colleges such as Harvard (76 percent), Yale (70 percent), Princeton, Wesleyan (35 percent), Smith, Kenyon and Whitman are experiencing little variation in yields from previous years. Public universities are reporting a similar trend, including the U. of Virginia (49 percent, up 1 percent) and U. of Wisconsin (41 percent, down 2 percent).

"For all the Chicken Little and Henny Penny hysteria and dire predictions," Bruce Poch, dean of admissions at Pomona C., told the *Times*, "it seems to have worked out just fine here."

Some individual colleges have posted a drop. Dartmouth C., for example, saw a 2 percent decrease in this year's yield.

"The next question is whether the deposits are hard or soft," David Eaton, vice president for enrollment at SUNY New Paltz, told the *Times*.

But since many students are choosing public institutions in their own state, another problem may be emerging. According to a May 14 *BusinessWeek*, many public institutions are losing revenue they rely upon from out-of-state students. The magazine cited the U. of Delaware and Ball State U., which recorded 40 percent drops in out-of-state applications, while in-state applications were up between 5 and 10 percent. Most of the schools are hoping this is a short-term recession related trend.

Students transferring back to their home state is another trend spurred by the recession. *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* noted that admissions officers at Georgia colleges "report high numbers of Georgia students applying to transfer in, from out-of-state and private schools, as well as public colleges farther

from home." The paper reported that transfer requests were up by 25 percent over last year at Kennesaw State, up 13 percent at George State, up 12 percent at the U. of Georgia and up 25 percent at Georgia Tech.

Here are other Admissions Watch numbers and trends *CB* discovered this month.

**California.** California high schools are doing a better job preparing students for college. Over the past few years, 11 percent more California high school graduates are academically eligible to attend either the U. of California or California State U. campuses. More than 13 percent of all California high school students are now eligible to gain admission to the U. of California system, and 32 percent are eligible for the Cal State system. Also, the increases cross all racial/ethnic lines. For example, the number of eligible Latino graduates leaped by 55 percent between 2003 and 2007.

But, according to the *San Jose Mercury News*, Governor Schwarzenegger is proposing \$132 million in cuts from university funding. So 10,000 fewer students will be attending Cal State. And UC will have unspecified student reductions as well. Less money is available for scholarships.

All this comes at a time when, according to the Public Policy Institute of California, the state's economy could suffer over the next 20 years because the state is not graduating enough people to fill employers' needs. The PPIC said California actually needs to triple the number of highly skilled immigrants coming there from other states or companies will move out of the state to find workers.

**Cincinnati.** This fall, the U. of Cincinnati will enroll 4,472 new students on its main campus

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## Where the Jobs Are, er, Aren't

AS OF EARLY MAY, only 20 percent of graduating college students who applied for a job have been hired. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), 51 percent of 2007 grads and 26 percent of 2008 graduates had jobs at the time of graduation. Graduates seem to be anticipating hard times. Only 59 percent had even started looking for a job, compared to 66 percent last year.

Graduates holding an accounting or engineering degree are more likely to have started their job search and landed a job. NACE's 2009 "Student Survey" also indicated that liberal arts majors are more likely to turn down a job when offered. The average starting salary for accountants is about \$45,000. For engineers, it is \$62,000.

About 27 percent of the class of 2008 reports it will go directly to graduate school. That is 3 percent more than last year and may be due to the economic downturn. For more info see: [www.NACEweb.org](http://www.NACEweb.org).

Another survey, conducted by the Partnership for Public Service, of career counselors at 200 colleges and universities found that 90 percent of the students they work with are interested in federal jobs or internships. Some speculated that students were responding to President Obama's call to public service.

And then there is the new trend study from the U. of California San Diego Extension that notes the hottest career options for college

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## INSIDE

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## YIELDS STEADY?

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and another 900 at the Batavia campus. Total May 1 freshmen confirmations are up 12.8 percent. It's expected to be the largest first-year class in school history, in part because it has 700 more students than last year. That means more 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. classes to accommodate them.

**Dartmouth.** Dartmouth C. will admit 50 to 60 students from this year's wait list to reach the class size target of 1,090. About 51 percent of Dartmouth's class of 2013 is female and 61 percent are public school graduates. About 39 percent are students of color. International students hail from 41 nations and make up 8 percent of the new class. Legacies make up 11 percent. About 50 percent will receive financial aid, receiving an average of \$36,000.

**Harvard Profile.** So who got into Harvard C. this year? A record 29,112 applied compared to 27,462 last year. This year, 7 percent of applicants were admitted, compared to 7.9 percent last year. Among the applicant pool, 2,900 scored a perfect 800 on the SAT critical reading test, 3,500 scored 800 on the SAT math section. And 3,700 were ranked first in their high school classes. About 76 percent of accepted students will enroll at Harvard.

About 25 percent of the admitted class plans to study biological sciences, 24 percent will study social sciences, 23 percent humanities, 7 percent mathematics, 2.2 percent computer science and only .4 percent were undecided.

Admitted students will share \$147 million in scholarships, an 8 percent increase over last year, and 167 percent more than a decade ago. More than 70 percent of all Harvard students receive institutional aid, with an average award reaching \$40,000.

**Ivy Wait Lists.** Princeton U. admitted 31 students from its wait list of 1,332 students, and may admit a couple more, according to Janet Rapelye, dean of admission. Last year, Princeton admitted 148 wait list students. Harvard C. admitted 85 from its wait list. Yale U., which is "oversubscribed," admitted no one from its wait list of 468.

**New York State.** Applications were up by 35 percent at Mohawk Community C. Morrisville State saw a 12 percent increase in freshmen applications and 34 percent in transfer applications. Utica C. attracted 2 percent more applicants. Hamilton C. saw an 8 percent drop in applications, but it was still its third largest pool ever. Colgate C. saw a 17 percent drop. "It's not our largest pool," Colgate vice president and dean of admission Gary Ross told the *Wellsville Daily*, "but it's our strongest."

Non-traditional older students are also

## Other Admissions News

### LAST MINUTE OPENINGS

**New England.** As of early May, 70 percent of the 202 colleges and universities polled by the New England Board of Higher Education still have openings for their fall first-year classes. Not only that, but "nearly all" have financial aid for "qualified students." Forty-two colleges reported that they have closed admission and 12 have spots for transfer students only. See <http://www.nebhe.org>.

**NACAC Openings.** The annual "Space Availability Survey: Openings for Qualified Students" from the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) indicates that "at least 258 colleges and universities have space available for qualified freshman and/or transfer students and nearly all also have financial aid to offer." More than 70 percent of the schools are private institutions. Visit [www.nacacnet.org](http://www.nacacnet.org).

### TUITION TABS

**Duke's Increase.** Duke U. will increase tuition 3.9 percent to \$37,485 for the next academic year, the smallest increase in recent years. Including room and board and fees, students will pay \$49,895. "Tuition and fees cover only a portion of the true cost of the education Duke provides," said provost Peter Lange. "But we know that many of our families make significant sacrifices to enable their children to have the benefits of that education." That's why approximately 45 percent of Duke undergraduates receive some form of financial aid and the North Carolina school covers 100 percent of a student's demonstrated need.

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returning to school. Utica School of Commerce drew 25 percent more applicants this year.

**Penn State.** As of mid-May, applications were still rolling into Pennsylvania State U. According to President Graham Spanier, PSU expects to field at least 106,000 applications this year. International undergraduate applications are up by 35 percent. PSU expects to enroll 6,800 new students at the main campus in State College and another 8,200 at its branch campuses.

**Princeton.** Of the 1,284 students offered a place in Princeton's class of 2013, nearly 60 percent have enrolled. An estimated 59 percent will receive financial aid, on average \$36,000 up from \$33,000 last year.

**Tennessee.** Tennessee State U. posted a 23 percent increase in the number of students who applied. Middle Tennessee State U. admitted 16 percent more freshmen for the class of 2013 than for 2012. It also admitted

21 percent more transfer students. And Austin Peay State U. reported a 16 percent increase in applications for freshman and 30 percent for transfers.

**Texas.** About 70 percent of each new class at the U. of Texas Austin is admitted through the top 10 percent rule. Texas students who place in the top 10 percent of their high school class are guaranteed a spot. And according to UT Austin President William Powers Jr., who wants the rule changed for greater flexibility in selecting a new class, as much as 100 percent of next year's class may come through the top 10 percent rule. That could cost the university as much as \$60 million in out-of-state tuition and reduce the school's diversity.

**U. Pennsylvania.** Penn will enroll 63 percent of the students who were accepted to the class of 2013, dean of admissions Eric Furda told *The Daily Pennsylvanian*. The average SAT for the incoming class was 2175, a 15 point increase over the class of 2012. About 44 percent of the new class is "multicultural," and 13 percent are international students, from 71 nations. About 51 percent is female. Penn accepted 64 students through Quest Bridge, an admissions program that links low-income students with grants at top colleges.

**Vanderbilt.** In 2007, Vanderbilt U. received 12,930 applications. This year, that number soared to 19,350. Last year, "Vandy" accepted 23 percent of applicants. This year that figure dropped to about 19 percent.

**China Surging.** The May 1 *Washington Post* calls it "an admissions officer's dream"—stacks of applications from Chinese students with outstanding test scores, grades and academic preparation. A decade ago, the U. of Virginia received only 17 applications from Chinese students. This year more than 800 Chinese students sent in their applications. Over the past three years, applications from Chinese students to Georgetown U. increased from 95 to 208. At George Mason U, the total jumped from 54 to 100. George Washington U. saw the number of Chinese applications grow from 170 to 350. At Brown U., the number rose from 166 to 500, at Stanford from 268 to 400, and at the U. of Washington, the number of Chinese applications soared from 250 three years ago to 1,600 this year.

Until 2007, about 9,000 Chinese students applied to colleges across the U.S. Since then the number jumped to 16,000. The reason? Increasing Chinese wealth, fewer visa delays and technology making it easier to learn about and apply to U.S. colleges.

The *Post* cited the stats of students at one elite Chinese secondary school where the SAT average was 2100 out of 2400. "Most students got 800, the top score, on math tests." ■

Advice from Counselors

# How to Prepare for College by Really Trying

THIS MONTH, DAVID HAMILTON, Director of College Advising at St. Mary's Ryken High School in Leonardtown, Maryland, closes out the school year with the advice he has given to seniors and prepares to give to juniors in the fall.

The current reality of secondary and postsecondary education today is much different than in the past. I like to compare preparing for college with a health fitness center: you might purchase the membership, but don't expect results unless you avail yourself of the facilities. In my role, I help students find the right college for the right reason. They have to be reminded, admonished, repeatedly that the goal is to find a school that is the "right fit," as opposed to "getting in" to a certain school.

But whether they realize it or not, students have a great amount of control in terms of admission to colleges and universities. The process begins even in the years prior to high school. After eleven years in college admissions and eleven years as a college advisor, I strongly believe that students can become great students and contributors to society provided they start early on in high school. Given my experience, I've developed a "Top Ten" list to help students at the high school level and beyond. Here is what I say.

## TEN TRUISMS FOR SUCCESS IN HIGH SCHOOL THAT LEAD TO COLLEGE

- 1. Curriculum.** Numerous studies are showing that it is the most important building block for academic and financial success in the future. Load up on English, mathematics, science, social studies and foreign language courses each and every year in high school.
- 2. Read.** Consume books of all types! Read a lot so you are used to the larger reading demands when you head to college.



David Hamilton

**3. Skills.** This attribute covers individual study skills, doing homework, following directions, writing legibly, participating in class and many others.

**4. Grades.** Year in and year out, this is the best predictor of academic success in high school and future performance in college. Admission to college, scholarships, internships and well-paying jobs hinge on this. Keep up grades each and every year in high school. That includes senior year as well!

**5. Time management.** Students who have superior time management skills are able to successfully manage academic and extracurricular endeavors.

**6. Testing.** Follow the Boy Scout motto: Be prepared. Whether it is a quiz or final exam or the SAT, students

need to prepare for each and every test.

**7. Go to school/class.** There is a direct correlation between class attendance and academic performance in college.

**8. Student conduct.** Manners count in this day and age. Simple things such as using "please" and "thank you" are appreciated by one and all. College admission representatives appreciate students with a firm handshake, good eye contact and active listening skills. Additionally, all students need to realize that there are rules and regulations to abide by in high school and in college.

**9. Get involved in quality activities.** Studies have shown that students with fewer activities yet great depth, tend to be better students who elect to participate in a wider range of endeavors. Remember: Quality, not quantity.

**10. Get to know people at the school: classmates, administrators, counselors and teachers.** The more you get to know people at your school, the more the school will get to know you. As one college admissions director said once: "Go to high school like there is no college to go to afterwards." ■

## COUNSELOR'S BOOKSHELF

*The College Selection Compass: Helping Families Navigate a Difficult Course* by Rebecca J. Callow and Susan P. Nichols; a guide to helping families organize the college application process; (iUniverse, 2008); 78 pgs. with index; ISBN: 978-0-595-49192-6; \$11.95.

*Excuse Me, College Is Now: How to Be a Success in School and in Life* by Doreen Banaszak and Sebastian Oddo (Hampton Roads, 2009); 120 pgs., ISBN 978-1-57174-592-7; \$16.95.

*The Prepared Parents: Sending Your Child To College* by Marie Pinak Carr and daughters, (Dicmar Publishing), includes checklists, summer preparation, insurance, money questions, dorm prep, moving in and other practical tips. Author is on the parent councils at Texas A & M. U. and Boston U. ISBN 978-0933165168, \$15.95. Also, see [www.preparedparent.com](http://www.preparedparent.com).

*Guide to the Most Competitive Colleges*, 6th edition (Barron's 2009); 1,040 pgs; new schools added; ISBN: 978-0-7641-4226-0; \$21.99.

*50 Best College Majors for a Secure Future* by Laurence Shatkin and the Editors @Jist (JIST Works, 2009); 352 pgs.; ISBN-13: 978-1-59357-726-1; \$17.95; see [www.jist.com](http://www.jist.com).

NACAC's Human Relations Committee has released *Guiding the Way to Higher Education, Families, Counselors and Communities Together Guide*; also PowerPoint presentations in English and Spanish, covering the "essentials" of the transition process; free from the website or can be ordered bound for a fee; See [www.nacacnet.org](http://www.nacacnet.org).

*The Official Guide to College Transfer Agreements* from SideDoor Strategies is the

first of its kind, a helpful guide to help make college affordable through transfers and understanding articulation agreements between schools. See, [www.SideDoorStrategies.com](http://www.SideDoorStrategies.com)

**Food for thought?** *Parenting the Guardian Class: Validating Spirited Youth, Ending Adolescence, and Renewing America's Greatness* by Jonathan I. Cloud (AuthorHouse, 2008), 317 pgs.; ISBN 978-1-4343-5493-8;

*The Way to Work: How to Facilitate Work Experiences for Youth in Transition* by Richard G. Luecking (Paul Brookes Publishing Co., 2009); 223 pgs., ISBN-13: 978-1-55766-898-1; \$34.95.

*Great Ideas: Using Service-Learning & Differentiated Instruction to Help Your Students Succeed* by Pamela J. Gent; (Paul H. Brookes Publishing, 2009); ISBN-13:978-1-55766-985-8; \$34.95. ■

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

**Computer Gamers.** Southern Polytechnic State U. in Georgia will offer a bachelor of science degree in computer game design and development. Students will acquire skills to apply computing and software engineering techniques to the design and production of digital media for entertainment, research and education.

**Curriculum Reform.** According to the Association of American Colleges and Universities, institutions across the nation are reforming their general education programs, searching for more engaged and integrative curricular practices. Only 15 percent of the schools still use a "cafeteria-style" general education program alone. About 52 percent are using learning communities, 73 percent use first-year experiences and 36 percent use thematic required courses. Colleges are also developing new approaches and ways to assess key learning outcomes.

### OTHER ADMISSIONS NEWS

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**Saint Vincent.** Saint Vincent C. in Pennsylvania announced its smallest tuition increase in 40 years, 2.95 percent. It's the third year in a row that the college has limited tuition increases to less than 5 percent. At the same time, it raised over \$23 million for a new science complex.

**Chicago Up.** The cost of an education at the U. of Chicago will increase 3.5 percent for the 2009-10 school year. Total cost: \$51,078 (tuition \$38,550). Financial aid is going up as well.

### SCHOLARSHIP SCOOPS

**Debt Relief.** Today's college graduates who took out loans are leaving school with a frightening average of \$22,000 in debt. But beginning in July, a new federal Income-Based Repayment program will peg repayment to a graduate's income. Low-income graduates could pay as little as zero dollars a month on their federal student loans if their income is small enough. Students who owe more than they earn a year could qualify. After 25 years of repaying, the balance will be forgotten (10 years for some public service professionals). See [www.IBRinfo.org](http://www.IBRinfo.org).

**Laid-Off Workers.** The president of Oakton Community C. in Illinois, Margaret Lee, decided to offer free career certification courses to jobless adults in her area. "We wanted to have some good news to tell people." She waived tuition for up to 12 credit hours for courses in

"One hundred years ago, Harvard introduced the concepts of 'distribution' and 'concentration' to organize the undergraduate curriculum," AAC&U president Carol Geary Schneider said. "In 2009, this new study shows clearly that a decisive majority of colleges and universities see this model as inadequate for today's students and today's world."

She added, "Most campuses still use the concept of 'breadth,' requiring students to take courses in different fields to guide them beyond their comfort zones. But only a tiny fraction of institutions now rely on this model alone to ensure that students get the outcomes they need from a college education. Many colleges are now emphasizing interdisciplinary global studies, learning communities or topically lined courses taken together by a small cohort of students, thematic courses on big questions like sustainability or global AIDS pandemic, and advanced-level integrative requirements."

high demand careers. Other community colleges have contacted her to see how Oakton does it.

In general, scholarships for the jobless can be found at local community colleges. Michigan's "No Worker Left Behind" program offers up to two years free tuition for unemployed and underemployed workers. In New Jersey, Bergen County C. C., New Jersey City U., Passaic County C.C. and Middlesex County C.C. let unemployed workers fill empty seats free of charge.

In Pennsylvania, Bucks County C.C. offers 30 free credit hours. The C.C. of Allegheny County offers free tuition in five career certification programs. Reading Area C.C. offers one semester free. In Minnesota, Anoka-Ramsey C.C. offers half tuition for recently unemployed. Other community colleges around the nation are contemplating similar initiatives.

### TESTING TABS

**Does Commercial Help Help?** Commercial test preparation may raise a student's score by as much as 30 points on the SAT and less than one point on the ACT, says a new report commissioned by the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC). But that may be less progress than test companies promise. The report also said that since a small number of colleges improperly use test score cut offs, test preparation may have some paradoxical benefits to individual students who incrementally improve their scores. NACAC wants more research on the topic and colleges to use test scores properly. ■

To see the entire study, go to: [www.aacu.org/membership/documents/2009MemberSurvey\\_Part2.pdf](http://www.aacu.org/membership/documents/2009MemberSurvey_Part2.pdf).

**Every Student Works.** Berry C. boasts one of the nation's best work-experience programs. The Georgia college guarantees every student on campus the opportunity to work all four years in a variety of 300 types of jobs. At a time when graduates of other schools are hitting a tough job market with limited experience, Berry grads can claim four years experience in fields such as writing, tutoring or research assistant. Other fields range from tour guide to computer technician, event planner and personal trainer. Each year, students gain greater responsibility and can work their way up to supervisory positions. To find out more, go to: [www.berry.edu/stuwork](http://www.berry.edu/stuwork).

**Liberal Arts Decline?** Will humanities enrollments be hurt by the current economic upheaval? Andrew Delbanco, director of American studies at Columbia U., told a recent *New York Times* that humanities teachers "have never felt quite as much panic that their field is becoming irrelevant."

With new budget cuts, liberal arts programs are under greater pressure than ever. Currently, only 8 percent (110,000 undergrad students) are enrolled in humanities programs. The low point was actually during the early 1980s. And about 3 percent of Ph.D.'s are awarded in the humanities.

Why study the humanities? Anthony T. Kronman, a Yale professor of law and author of *Education's End: Why Our Colleges and Universities Have Given Up on the Meaning of Life*, told *The Times* that the need for the humanities was "more urgent today" given the widespread greed, irresponsibility and fraud that led to the recent financial meltdown. It's time, he said, to re-examine "what we care about and what we value," something study of the humanities is all about. ■

### JOBS

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graduates this recession. Among the top jobs: "Casual game development," (no kidding, 200 million consumers play games online); oncology studies, data mining, "embedded" engineering, geriatric healthcare, occupational health and safety, specialized Spanish/English translation, sustainable business practices and the greening of all jobs, teaching adult learners and teaching English abroad. For complete details see: <http://www.extension.ucsd.edu/toptenhot>. ■

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Production: Design|Americom; Salsedo Press, Inc. COLLEGE BOUND is published monthly, ten times a year. Inquiries should be directed to P.O. Box 6536, Evanston, IL 60204; 773-262-5810. Annual subscription: \$59 in North America, \$69 for international orders, including airmail postage. [www.collegeboundnews.com](http://www.collegeboundnews.com)

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ISSN 1068-7912

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