

College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

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Admissions 2016 Begins

Early App Rates Decline

EARLY APPLICATION results are rolling into CB's editorial office. Here are a few benchmark results.

Brown Rejects 456 Students Early. Brown U. admitted 669 students or 22 percent of its 3,030 Early Decision applicants to the Class of 2020, dean of admission Jim Miller told the *Brown Daily Herald*. Deferrals were sent to 1,905 students, while 456 were denied admission.

Recruited athletes makeup 24 percent of the Early Decision class, down from last year's 26 percent. About 31 percent of those admitted come from racial minorities and 47 percent applied for financial aid. Female students account for 55 percent of the early pool and make up the majority of the new class so far.

Brown has reserved over 2,000 slots for Regular Decision applicants, and expects to receive over 30,000 applications.

Duke Has Record Low Admit. Duke U. admitted a record low 23.5 percent or 813 students from its 3,455 Early Decision pool for the Class of 2020, up 11 percent over last year. Early admits will make up 48 percent of the new class, according to *The Duke Chronicle*. About 48 percent of admitted students indicated they were applying for financial aid, compared to 43 percent last year. Some 37 percent of those admitted early were students of color.

"Diversity of students is incredibly important to us, and we don't want to feel limited by having admitted too many students through the Early Decision process," said Christoph Guttentag, the dean of undergraduate admissions.

Georgetown Receives Record Number of Apps. Georgetown U. received a record-high

7,027 Early Action applications and admitted 892, for an acceptance rate of 13 percent. Georgetown expects total applications to top 20,000 for the Class of 2020 and to offer admission to about 3,200 students for a class of 1,600. Dean of undergraduate admissions Charles Deacon told the student newspaper, *The Hoya*, "We don't want to over admit early, because the early pool tends to be slightly more advantaged. We want to give everybody a fair chance and are looking for diversity."

Harvard. Harvard C. accepted 918 students or 14.8 percent of its 6,173 early applicants for the Class of 2020, its lowest early acceptance rate since Harvard reinstated its Early Action program in 2011. The early pool was 4.3 percent larger than last year, and the acceptance rate fell by 1.7 percent.

Some 4,673 students were deferred to the regular cycle, while 464 were denied admission, 12 withdrew and 106 submitted incomplete applications. William R Fitzsimmons, dean of admissions and financial aid, told *The Harvard Crimson* that the admissions office is careful to leave room in the class for applicants from the regular cycle. Last year, only 2.8 percent of those in the regular pool were admitted.

Of those admitted early to the Class of 2020, 24 percent are Asian American students. African Americans account for 9.4 percent and Latino students 9.6 percent, with slight decreases for the last two groups. And a little over 47 percent of the new class, so far, is female.

Stanford Acceptance Rate Down. Stanford U. attracted 7,822 applications to its Restrictive Early Action program and admitted 745 stu-

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Enrollment Trends

Georgia Tech Benchmarks. The Georgia Institute of Technology set new highs in retention and graduation rates this year. Complete College Georgia is a university system-wide initiative to significantly increase the number of students who complete their degrees. Georgia Tech's first-year retention rate of freshmen who return for their sophomore year increased to 97 percent.

Georgia Tech's five-year graduation rate rose to 80 percent, while the six-year figure climbed to 85 percent. Nationally, those numbers are 55 percent and 59 percent, respectively, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

Idaho's Automatic Admissions. Beginning this year, the state of Idaho is automatically admitting all its public high school seniors to college. All 20,171 graduating seniors this year have been notified that they are welcome to attend any of the state's eight public colleges and universities (including U. of Idaho, Idaho State Universities and Boise State), depending on their academic performance in high school. Last year, about half of the state's high school graduates enrolled in a two- or four-year institution within a year. And about 18 percent of those who went to college enrolled out-of-state.

The new "direct" admissions policy is part of Idaho's statewide effort to bring the number

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ENROLLMENT TRENDS

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of people between the ages of 25 and 34 with a post-secondary degree up to 60 percent by 2020.

RPI To Increase Enrollment. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, recently announced a new Summer Arch program that eventually will require all undergraduates to attend RPI during the summer, and then possibly head abroad to study. That will allow RPI to increase undergraduate enrollment which currently stands at 5,557 students.

Shirley Ann Jackson, RPI's president, said the Summer Arch will begin as a pilot program in 2017 with juniors in the School of Engineering and others from the Class of 2019. Beginning in 2019, all members of the Class of 2021 will be required to participate.

Free In Tennessee. Last year, Tennessee passed legislation to make the first two years of community college or technical school virtually free to qualified students. New enrollment data indicates that 16,291 high school graduates enrolled in the state's community colleges, technical schools and private colleges as a result of the Tennessee Promise program.

This year, Tennessee enrolled a total of 50,700 first-year students, an increase of 10 percent over last year. Tennessee community colleges attracted nearly 25 percent more first-year students, while technical colleges grew by 20 percent.

However, enrollment at the state universities fell by 8.4 percent. And the U. of Tennessee campuses saw a 4.6 percent drop. Critics of the Promise program predicted that it would have negative implications for four-year schools.

"We are not attributing Tennessee Promise as a cause for enrollment decline in freshman numbers," Bud Grimes, director of university relations at the U. of Tennessee at Martin, told *Inside Higher Ed*. "We see that as an opportunity down the line that we're going to get more qualified transfer students from the community colleges"

MORE COLLEGE STUDENTS, MORE GRADUATE

As the debate continues about where more students are actually enrolling in college and graduating, the U.S. Census Bureau has this to say: The cohort of students who entered in college in 2008 during the depths of the Great Recession was 12 percent larger than the previous year, with a higher number of older students, higher share of students who enrolled less than full-time and who enrolled in community colleges in larger numbers.

Six years later the completion rate for this 2008 cohort fell by one percentage point from a little over 56 percent to 55 percent. The cohort of students who entered college in 2009, at the official end of the Great Recession, was larger still, at 2.9 million students.

The cohort entering less than full-time increased by another half percentage point. And those entering community college also grew, by an additional 1.3 percentage points. But the completion rate continued to decline, by 2.1 percent to 52.9 percent. Nonetheless, the total number of graduates in six years increased by about 71,000 students, because the fall 2009 cohort was much larger.

Black Student Enrollment Declines. In 2014, African American students accounted for 13.2 percent (a little more than 2.7 million

students) of the 20,663,464 students nationwide. Hispanics accounted for 15.2 percent and whites 52.3 percent of total enrollment. African American enrollment was 13.4 percent in 2013. Two years ago, African-American college students numbered 2,966,463, according to the U.S. Dept of Education.

Elementary/Secondary Enrollment Grows, Too. About 50.1 million students enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools in the fall, slightly more than last year, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. Additionally, 4.9 million students enrolled in private schools. About 24.7 million of the public school students are white, 7.7 million are black students, 13.1 million are Hispanic students, 2.6 million are Asian/Pacific Islander students, 0.5 million are American Indian/Alaskan Native students and 1.5 million are of two or more races.

The number of white students remains below 50 percent, and is expected to continue to decline as the enrollment of Hispanics, Asians/Pacific Islanders and biracial students increases to at least 2024.

International Trends. The number of international students at U.S. colleges and universities increased by 10 percent to a record high of 974,926 students during the 2014/15 academic year, according to the 2015 *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange*, published by the Institute of International Education in partnership with the U.S. Dept. of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

It is estimated that the students contributed as much as \$30.5 billion to the U.S. economy. However, the U.S. market share of international students is down by 8 percent, according to the Organization for Economic Co-Operation. ■

More Fall '15 Enrollment Numbers

Albany. The U. of Albany in New York enrolled 2,540 freshmen and transfer students, President Robert J. Jones told *The Times Union*.

Bradley. Bradley U. in Peoria, Illinois, enrolled 930 students in its Class of 2019. "We're making a lot of changes now in the marketing and recruiting of students and so we expect to see enrollment growth as we go forward," said Stan Liberty, interim president.

Edgewood. Edgewood C. in Madison, Wisconsin, inaugurated its third-largest incoming freshman class of 300 students. While the majority come from Wisconsin, the Edgewood Class of 2019 also attracted students from Missouri, Tennessee, Florida, Arizona and Texas.

George Washington. Forty-eight percent of men and 40 percent of women who applied to George Washington U. in Washington D.C. were accepted, according to GW's Office of

Institutional Research and Planning. Despite that, men make up only 43 percent of the Class of 2019. "Traditionally, males yield at a lower rate than females, therefore we do admit them at a higher rate," Laurie Koehler, senior associate provost for enrollment management, told *The GW Hatchet*.

Kenyon. Kenyon C. enrolled 492 students in the Class of 2019, the largest first-year class in school history, according to *The Collegian*. The school had targeted about 475 students, but yield was higher than expected.

Largest Historically Black University. North Carolina A&T enrolled 10,875 students this fall, 1.4 percent higher than last year, when it surpassed Florida A&M to become the country's largest historically black university.

Now NC A&T plans to grow even further, hoping to boost enrollment to 13,500 students by 2020. One way it hopes to do that is by offering more online courses. ■

EARLY APP RATES

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dents, for an acceptance rate of 9.5 percent, down from last year's rate of 10.2 percent. More than 80 percent of admitted students posted high school GPAs of 4.0 or above. The newly-admitted students hail from 48 states and 34 countries, Richard Shaw, dean of admission and financial aid, told *The Stanford Daily*.

The majority of spaces in the freshman class will be filled during the Regular Admissions program. Stanford expects to receive 35,000-plus applications.

Virginia Early Apps Up. The U. of Virginia received 16,778 Early Action applications for the Class of 2020, 4 percent more than last year, according to *The Cavalier Daily*. Last year, UVa offered admissions to 4,851 early applicants. This year, Early Action decisions are scheduled to be announced on January 31. ■

Financial Affairs in the New Year

Connecticut Aid to CC Transfers. Beginning in 2016, the U. of Connecticut will offer \$8,000 in scholarships to qualified Connecticut community college transfer students to complete their degree. Juniors with a minimum grade point of 3.0 and who present a recommendation of an academic advisor and community college president will be eligible for the \$2,000-per-semester award. About 43 percent of UConn transfer students come from community colleges.

College Savings Rate Up. Some 69 percent of parents, 5 percent more than last year, report saving some money for their children's college education, according to the "College Savings Indicator Study" conducted by Fidelity Investments. However, they are on track to save just 27 percent of their stated goals by the start of freshman year. On average, parents save \$232 a month. But that is far less than they need. "Millennials have weathered challenging conditions for much of their adulthood," said Keith Bernhardt, vice president of retirement and college products at Fidelity, referring to the Great Recession and high levels of student debt, "and have adopted smart savings habits at a higher rate than their older counterparts."

New Oregon Law Prohibits Hidden Fees. A new Oregon law will end hidden fees, such as those associated with debit cards students are issued to access their loan money. "College students, who are some of the most vulnerable and least able to pay, were getting charged really egregious fees, and sometimes before they even realized they were being charged all those fees.... It was appalling, even fees for not using the card, a \$19 inactivity fee," charged State Representative Nancy Nathanson.

Washington College Tuition Freeze. Washington C. in Maryland announced a one-year tuition freeze, at \$42,844, for students enrolled in the fall 2016-17 academic year. "This tuition freeze... is just the start of our dedication to making a world-class liberal arts education an accessible dream for all seekers," said President Sheila Bair. Currently, Washington C. students receive \$23 million in grants and scholarships. Ninety percent are awarded merit-based scholarships and need-based aid.

West Virginia Promise Scholars. The percentage of West Virginia Promise scholar recipients whose parents earn more than \$90,000 a year increased from 38.7 percent in 2009 to 44.1 percent in 2014. In a state where 93 percent of residents are white, more than 90 percent of Promise scholars are also white. Nearly 60 percent are female. But while the number of affluent students receiving Promise scholarships increased, so did the number of low-income students, whose percent rose by 1.4 percent. However, while the state's commitment of \$46 million

to the Promise program has not increased over that period, the total number of Promise students has increased from 9,456 in 2009 to 10,224 in 2014. That means the average award has decreased from \$4,833 to \$4,538. The majority of Promise scholars attend four-year public colleges in-state, with most headed towards West Virginia U. or Marshall U.

Pell Enrollment Deficits. More public universities need to be proactive to enroll low-income undergraduates, according to a new report from the Institute for Higher Education Policy. "Only about half of low-income high school students ever enroll in college—and those who do tend to concentrate in less selective colleges with fewer resources and lower graduation rates."

The report concluded, "If more colleges with Pell enrollment deficits opened their doors to qualified, low-income students, far more low-income students would have the opportunity to earn the college credentials they need." The report identified 10 universities with the greatest potential to graduate more lower-income students receiving Pell grants, and 10 institutions facing similar challenges that are exceeding expectations. See, "Serving Their Share," at www.ihep.org.

Aid For International Students. According to *U.S. News & World Report*, these colleges and universities provide the most aid to international students (with the average aid amount): Skidmore C., \$56,500, Yale U., \$55,862, Amherst C., \$55,673, Williams C., \$55,119, Wesleyan U., \$54,996, Trinity C. (CT), \$54,788, Columbia U., \$53,912, Stanford U., \$53,422, Harvard U., \$53,409 and Duke U., \$53,334.

"Lend With a Smile, Collect With a Fist." Writing in a recent issue of *The New York Times*, Kevin Carey noted: "Pro-student organizations support low interest rates, no credit checks and lengthy deferment options, as do colleges that can't stay solvent without debt-financed tuition. Individually, these policies have merit, just as not repaying a student loan is often a perfectly rational choice in the short term, right up until the point when the short term becomes long. For some people, it hardly seems like debt at all.

"When the loan bill finally comes due, the federal government transforms into a heartless loan collector. You don't need burly men with brass knuckles to enforce debts when you have the Internal Revenue Service. It is both difficult and illegal to hide money from the federal government, which can and will follow you as long as you live."

P.S. The Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approved a new policy that will require high school seniors to apply for financial aid for college, or sign a document that they are opting out. The policy is effective 2018. ■

COUNSELOR'S BOOKSHELF

Paying For College Without Going Broke, 2016 Edition, by Kalman A. Chany with Geoff Martz, The Princeton Review, ISBN 978-1-101-88197-2, \$21.99.

Off to College: A Guide for Parents, by Roger H Martin; University of Chicago Press; ISBN-10: 022629563X; \$21.03.

Where You Go Is Not Who You'll Be: An Antidote to the College Admissions Mania, by Frank Bruni; Grand Central Publishing; ISBN 10: 1455532703; \$12.99.

Strategies and Practice for the New PSAT/NMSQT by Brian W. Stewart, M.Ed., Barron's, ISBN: 978-1-4380-0768-7, \$14.99.

Designing The New American University by Michael M. Crow and William B. Dabars, Johns Hopkins University Press, ISBN 13: 978-1-4214-1723-3, \$34.95.

Kiplinger released its list of 300 "Best College Values" for 2016. Top 10: Washington and Lee U., Princeton U., Harvard U., Davidson C., Swarthmore C., Vanderbilt U., Rice U., Pomona C., Yale U., U. of NC at Chapel Hill. See, <http://www.kiplinger.com>. ■

NEWS YOU CAN USE

UC Adds 10,000 In-State Students. The U. of California Board of Regents recently voted to enroll 10,000 more in-state undergraduates over the next three years. The plan calls for opening 5,000 additional spots for Fall 2016 by expanding enrollment at each of the nine UC undergraduate campuses, and an additional 2,500 undergraduates in each of the two following years. The system currently educates about 50,000 students. The UC system will enroll 2,000 more graduate students by 2018.

The regents also voted to expand the size of UC Merced, the 10-year-old Central Valley campus, from its current 6,700 students to about 10,000.

State lawmakers allocated \$25 million for the UC expansion. To help balance the budget, UC plans to phase out tuition grants to low-income students from out-of-state, or about 5 percent of students.

MOOCs for High Schoolers. *The New York Times* called 2013 the “Year of the MOOC” (Massive Open Online Courses). MOOCs were first made available that year through the online platform edX, developed by Harvard U. and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Since then, millions of students worldwide have had access to some of the best college courses in a wide variety of subjects at those

two and other institutions.

Now MOOCs are coming to high school. edX announced that it will offer a free curriculum of 26 courses aimed at high school students, created by 14 institutions, including the U. of California-Berkeley, Rice U., MIT and Georgetown U. The MOOCs will cover subjects from science, mathematics, English and history, plus courses that seek to “demystify” the college admissions process.

High school students looking to prepare for Advanced Placement exams or simply expand their academic knowledge will find these courses of interest. The new curriculum will deliver “high-quality, engaging and interactive courses to specifically meet the needs of this student population,” said Anant Agarwal, edX CEO and the person credited with development of MOOCs at MIT.

Citing an alarming recent study that said 60 percent of college freshmen are academically unprepared to do college work, Agarwal said he hoped the MOOCs will help students better prepare for college. Ultimately, students may be able to use MOOCs to complete their first college year while in high school, thus saving time and money.

Connecticut Credits for MOOCs. Connecticut’s public online college, Charter Oak State C.,

will begin awarding credits for select MOOCs taken through edX.org. “This partnership reflects our mission of using non-traditional means to speed adults toward the completion of their college degrees in a cost-effective manner,” said Ed Klonoski, president.

Supreme Court Revisits Affirmative Action. The U. S. Supreme Court agreed to review its 2003 decision that race can be one among many factors in college admissions decisions. In 2013, it returned a similar case for review to a federal appeals court, which upheld the practice. Now the Supreme Court has agreed to hear that case again, challenging the U. of Texas’ procedures. But this time, Justice Elena Kagan has recused herself because she worked on the case as United States Solicitor General. That means the court could stalemate in a four-to-four vote.

New Nevada Programs. Great Basin C. in Nevada is adding a B.A. in English and a B.S. in biological science. “The new degrees serve educational needs of place-bound students located in our vast service area,” said Mike McFarlane, vice president for academic affairs.

P.S. Kilian Community C. in the South Dakota will close at the end of May 2016. “Kilian has a rich, 38-year history of serving our community. But the reality is that the business of higher education is changing at a very rapid pace,” Mark Millage, president, told *The Sioux Falls Business Journal*. ■

Every Student Succeeds Act

Congress set aside partisan differences long enough to renew the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, formerly known as the “No Child Left Behind Act,” now renamed “Every Student Succeeds Act.” President Obama signed the bill into law in mid-November.

According to a White House fact sheet, ESSA “helps ensure educational opportunity for all students” by:

- “Holding all students to high academic standards that prepare them for success in college and careers”;
- “Ensuring accountability by guaranteeing that when students fall behind, states redirect resources into what works to help them and their schools improve...”;
- “Empowering state and local decision-makers to develop their own strong systems for school improvement based upon evidence...”;
- “Reducing the often onerous burden of testing on students and teachers, making sure that tests don’t crowd out teaching and learning...”;
- “Providing more children access to high-quality preschool”;
- “Establishing new resources for proven

strategies that will spur reform and drive opportunity and better outcomes for America’s students.”

Not everyone is happy about ESEA. In an editorial, *The Los Angeles Times* wrote, “this new act is a compromise that benefits pretty much everyone but the students most in need of improved schools. Although it requires annual testing to continue for third- through eighth-graders and once for high schoolers, it abandons federal curriculum and performance standards in favor of greater state autonomy... It merely calls for states to make some effort to improve the lowest performers—those in the bottom 5 percent and the high schools where more than a third of students drop out. The many schools that are simply mediocre are completely off the hook...”

“The Every Student Succeeds Act will make it hard to even identify the schools that need intervention, by allowing states to rate success by such vague measures as school climate, parent involvement and teacher engagement. Those are all fine things for schools to focus on, but if they don’t result in better educated students, how is this success?” ■

SCHOLARSHIP SCOOPS

50 Scholarships. Marlboro C. in Marlboro, Vermont, has launched a “Renaissance Scholars” program, which will award full-tuition scholarships to one student from each of the 50 states. “We’re looking for a few rugged intellectuals who can bring their talents to our campus community. In exchange for giving us your all, we will give you free tuition,” said Kevin F. F. Quigley, president.

Canadian Scholarship. The Royal Bank of Canada awards 15 scholarships totaling \$150,000 to students involved in promoting social good and inspiring change in their communities and around the world. See <http://scholarships.rbc.com/StudentsLeadingChange.aspx>. ■

Happy New Year!
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