

College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

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Admissions Watch

Class of 2021 Shapes Up

Bowdoin's App Record. Bowdoin C. in Maine received a record 7,251 applications from students hoping to join its Class of 2021. Bowdoin admitted 13.5 percent of them. This year's yield, or the percentage of students who chose to enroll after having been offered admission, is 52 percent.

Students of color make up 34 percent of the new class, while 16.5 percent are first-generation students. International students come from 29 different countries. Some 52 percent of the new class will receive need-based, no-loan aid packages, up from 47 percent last year, with the average financial aid package totaling \$43,000.

Dartmouth's Yield Highest in 25 Years. Dartmouth C. announced that 61 percent of students offered admission to the Class of 2021 have accepted. That's Dartmouth's highest yield in 25 years. The incoming class will include 1,279 students from the 2,092 admitted students, 555 of whom were Early Decision admits.

Need-based financial aid for the new class totals \$26 million, with an average grant of \$48,000. The number of Pell Grant-eligible students rose to 14 percent from 11 percent last year. Half of admitted international students were offered merit-based scholarships, according to thedartmouth.com.

Dayton's Deposits Soar. The U. of Dayton has already received more than 2,200 deposits for the Class of 2021, a 24 percent increase over last year. About 16 percent of the new class identifies as domestic students of color, an increase of 5 percent over last year. The number of Federal Pell Grant recipients increased by 22 percent.

Dayton's Tuition Guarantee promises stu-

dents that their financial aid will grow dollar-for-dollar to match any tuition increases. So what they pay their freshman year is what they will pay their senior year. As a result of the tuition guarantee, Dayton's graduation rate improved by 8 percent for the Class of 2017, while student loan borrowing decreased by \$6 million.

"We look forward to welcoming these students to campus as we build our national reputation as the University for the Common Good," said President Eric F. Spina.

Fordham's 45,000 Apps. Fordham U. in New York City attracted a record 45,035 students who applied to become part of the Class of 2021. It admitted 20,772 students or 46 percent of the pool. Asian, African American, Hispanic or multiracial students constitute 35 percent of the admitted pool, more than last year. Fordham also admitted 2,814 international students from more than 100 countries.

John Buckley, associate vice president for undergraduate enrollment, told *The Fordham Ram* that the school's yield in 2016 was 12.9 percent, and in 2016, approximately 2,106 full-time undergraduate students enrolled. Buckley also told the paper that one reason for growth in Fordham's enrollment is its "personal attention to students, often associated with a small college experience."

Harvard's Highest Yield. A record-high 84 percent of admitted students will join Harvard C.'s Class of 2021, up from 80 percent last year. Nearly 40,000 students applied this year. Harvard admitted only 2,056 students, for 5.2 percent acceptance rate. William Fitzsimmons, dean of admissions and financial aid, said that the high yield made it "highly unlikely" that

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A New High School Transcript

The Mastery Transcript Consortium, a new education reform movement that includes 100 elite private high schools across the nation, seeks to replace the traditional high school transcript that lists courses taken and grades earned with a competency-based, non-standardized transcript that documents student skill levels, with no grades.

This, in turn, they hope, will force colleges to change the way they evaluate applicants, especially since students from these private schools are highly valued at some of the nation's top elite colleges.

If these colleges adopt the idea, that, in turn, would force public high schools to undertake the same approach. Every high school would come up with its own system for evaluating the knowledge and skills that its students exhibit. Promoters of the idea expect the process to take at least a decade.

Instead of grades, the new Mastery Transcript would present a student's level of proficiency in various academic areas, including her/his understanding of key concepts and the ability to perform essential tasks related to the field of study. Each competence would be linked to examples of student work, so an admissions officer at a college would be able to view the student's lab reports, essays or other kind of projects related to that competence. The Mastery Transcript Consortium has already attracted a \$2 million grant from the Edward E. Ford Foundation. For more information, see www.mastery.org. ■

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Enrollment Trends

Northwestern Pennsylvania. Since 2010, enrollment has decreased at 12 of the 14 member colleges and universities in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. In part, that's because the state's pool of high school graduates is declining.

At **Edinboro U. of Pennsylvania**, for example, the region's largest and most comprehensive institution of higher learning, enrollment fell by almost a quarter in recent years to 6,181 students in 2016.

Edinboro's attempt to reverse that trend is to raise admission standards and accept fewer students. Higher standards translates into higher retention.

"It sounds counter-intuitive," William Edmonds, vice president for enrollment management, told GoErie.com. "But we're actually insuring that incoming students are academically prepared and ready to take on the rigors

of college. We won't be setting students up for failure by accepting students who are unprepared or didn't have the motivation they needed in high school. We're marketing that Edinboro is changing; it's not the school of old. We're making changes for sustainability."

Administrators also note that once students visit the 585-acre, wooded campus, they are easier to convince. Edinboro offers degrees in 100 academic areas.

Nearby **Mercyhurst U.** in Erie, the region's comprehensive Catholic liberal arts school, attracted a record 734 freshmen. "Mercyhurst is a very special place with a special mission," said Michael Victor, president. "We told that story by increasing marketing, changing the way our admissions counselors talk to prospective students and redoing campus tours based on our history and current events."

And the school shifted from emphasizing

university research to touting teaching excellence, he added.

Pennsylvania State University Behrend recruited its largest first-year class of 1,280 students last fall, according to Mary Ellen Madigan, director of enrollment management.

And, **Gannon U.** in Erie, boosted its enrollment with 674 students from 43 nations. They account for almost 16 percent of the school's enrollment of 4,400 students. They were attracted by Gannon's strong English as a Second Language program and support system for international students.

Hamilton Partners With QuestBridge.

Hamilton C. in Upstate New York has become the 39th institution to join QuestBridge, a California-based nonprofit that connects high-achieving, low-income students with highly-selective colleges and universities. The QuestBridge Scholars Network has grown to more than 10,000 current students and alumni nationally. ■

ADMISSIONS WATCH

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any students will be admitted from Harvard's wait list this year.

James Madison's Honors College. James Madison U.'s Class of 2021 will include 3,768 undergraduate candidates. The top five intended majors? Health sciences, interdisciplinary liberal studies, psychology, biology and communication studies.

Meanwhile, JMU's Honors Program, begun in 1961 with a senior thesis focus, has become an Honors College, currently with 950 students. "The Honors College will provide individualized paths for students and help to create the next generation of engaged civic leaders who take calculated and enriching risks in their education," the school says.

Loyola Chicago's Largest Class. Loyola U. Chicago will matriculate its largest first-year class ever with more than 2,600 full-time students. In 2016, the average admitted students posted a 3.74 high school GPA and ACT score of 26.

"We have definitely gained more national and international recognition, particularly over the last five years," Erin Moriarty, director of undergraduate admissions, told the *Loyola Phoenix*. "Steadily, we've had increases in our application pool, but this year we saw a higher amount of students apply who had increased GPA and ACT."

Missouri Expects Significant Enrollment Drop. The U. of Missouri-Columbia anticipates a 7.4 percent drop in enrollment this fall. It expects to enroll its smallest freshman class in two decades. The decline is due, in part, to fewer high school graduates across the region, as well as ongoing "public perception concerns" related to the 2015 student protests

centered on issues of race that led to the resignation of two university leaders. Additionally, the state cut \$14.7 million, or 6.4 percent of Mizzou's budget. That is forcing the school to eliminate up to 400 positions, most of which will be through attrition.

Notre Dame's Record Pool. This year, the U. of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, attracted a record 19,565 applicants. Some 7,500 of the applicants rank in the top one percent of the nation based on test scores and grades. Yet only one in three of these applicants was offered admission to ND's Class of 2021, which will consist of 3,600 students.

"We understand in admissions that no matter how much you read the files and whether you use the numbers too much or not enough to inform you, there is a lot of serendipity," Don Bishop, associate vice president of student enrollment, told *The Observer*. "There are a lot of dynamics at college that you either respond to Notre Dame or you don't in the way that we expected, and those attributes—there's no SAT score for these sort of attributes. It's not just in the curriculum. It's not your grades—there are just these intangibles."

St. Lawrence Exceeds Enrollment Targets. Enrollment at St. Lawrence U. in Canton, New York, is expected to lead to the largest class size "in recent" history, according to the school. More than 720 students have made a deposit to date, 4.5 percent more than the last year. About 240 were students from New York State.

St. Lawrence had been concerned that New York State's new Excelsior Scholarship Program aimed at increasing enrollment at state institutions would impact its enrollment. The Class of 2021 includes 16 percent first-generation students, 35 percent student-

athletes, 9 percent international students. St. Lawrence states it has the housing to accommodate the increase in its enrollment.

UC Berkeley Sees Increase In Apps from In-State Students.

The University of California Berkeley received 85,000 applications for the 2017 freshman class, a three percent increase over last year. "Grade-point averages and other academic measures are comparable to last year's application pool," said Janet Gilmore, public affairs, for the *Berkeley News*.

The number of applications from California residents increased 7.6 percent from last year while applications from California African American, Native American and Chicano-Latino students increased 6 percent. For application stats at other UC campuses see, the UC Office of the President website, <http://www.ucop.edu>. (Admit rates will be available in *CB's* Fall issue.)

Yale's Yield. This year, 2,271 of the 32,900 students who applied to Yale were offered admission. Now Yale reports that its yield reached 71.4 percent, one of the highest levels in recent years.

P.S. Fitchburg State Goes Test-Optional.

Fitchburg State U. in Massachusetts will be test-optional, beginning this fall. Sean Ganas, director of admissions, said that Fitchburg has been investigating this policy for the last two years.

"Most of the state universities have gone test-optional," Ganas told *telegram.com* in Worcester. "We're looking for hard-working, driven folks. High school GPA is the best indicator of that."

He added that Fitchburg is willing to look past grades if there is some other evidence that a student from an economically hard-pressed school district would be a good fit. ■

Financial Aid Matters

Tuition Discounts At Privates Hit Historic Highs. In 2016-17, private colleges and universities discounted their tuition revenue at the highest rates ever, according to a new report from the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO).

By offering grants, scholarships and fellowships, the 411 schools that participated in the “2016 NACUBO Tuition Discounting Study” averaged an estimated 49 percent institutional tuition discount rate for first-time, full-time students. That was the highest rate in the history of the survey. “This means that for every dollar in gross tuition revenue from those freshmen, institutions used nearly half for grant-based financial aid.” Find the full study at nacubo.org.

Is College Unaffordable? “Roughly 90 percent of colleges are affordable for students whose family income exceeds \$160,000 per year, while students with fewer resources struggle to find affordable college options, even after considering the grant aid they would receive.” This is according to a new study from the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) titled, “Limited Means, Limited Options: College Remains Unaffordable for Many Americans.”

In fact, IHEP asserts that at least 70 percent of colleges are unaffordable for working and middle-class students. IHEP used “net price” data from over 2,000 colleges for its analysis.

The study also found that only about 2 percent of colleges nationwide, roughly 40 schools, provide enough aid or have low enough tuition so students from families earning less than \$36,000 a year can attend without loans.

The study concluded that about 5 percent, or 100 schools, are affordable for students from families earning less than \$69,000 a year, who don’t want to borrow.

However, low-and middle-income students, who are willing to borrow the \$5,500 federal student loan maximum for freshman, can find 600 colleges, or about 30 percent of all schools, that are then affordable. To view the entire IHEP report, see, www.ihep.org.

Parents Express Buyer’s Remorse. Many parents of college students are shell-shocked when they realize their financial commitment. Nitro, a student loan company based in Wilmington, Delaware, recently surveyed parents who applied for its \$2,500 “Parent Scholarship.”

More than 36 percent of these parents said they would have encouraged their children to choose a lower-price school if they had been aware

of the true cost of higher education. Some 35 percent would have pushed their children to consider a community college, before transferring to a four-year college, if they had understood the savings. About 80 percent of the parents said they never bothered to open a tax-advantage 529 account for their child, while 84 percent have saved less than \$5,000 for college. That is, even though the average student pays \$33,480 in tuition and fees for private colleges.

Some 58 percent of the parents felt high school guidance counselors did a poor job of preparing them for understanding the real cost of higher education. And 50 percent said their children received less than \$5,000 in annual financial aid from their chosen college.

Unfortunately, this year’s application deadline for Nitro’s Parent Scholarship was May 31. But to find out more about the Nitro Parent Scholarship for next year, go to <https://www.nitrocollege.com/nitro-parent-scholarship-application>.

RESOURCES FOCUSED ON FINANCIAL AID

Affordable College Finder. One helpful tool for identifying affordable colleges can be found at Money.com’s “Affordable College Finder.”

Financial Aid Advice. CollegePoint (www.collegepoint.info/), supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies, provides virtual, high-quality college and financial aid advising to thousands of high-achieving, low-and moderate-income students across the United States.

Help For Defrauded Students. The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) has launched a new website <http://nextstepsed.org/> to provide direct assistance to an estimated 88,000 for-profit college students whose schools closed unexpectedly and left them with student debt. “A seasoned financial aid professional” will help these students understand their financial options, including debt relief, and help to navigate their next steps in completing their education elsewhere.

Finder.com, a personal finance comparison website, recently compiled an analysis of 20 top paying jobs to assess the return on student loans investment. Details can be found at <https://www.finder.com/is-that-student-loan-worth-it>.

P.S. Emory Pledges. Beginning this fall, Emory U. in Atlanta will pay 100 percent of the demonstrated financial aid needs of its undocumented students. Students must demonstrate need, graduate from a U.S. high school and be admitted to an Emory degree program. ■

SUMMER READING

The Hidden Ivies: 63 of America’s Top Liberal Arts Colleges and Universities, 3rd Edition, by Howard and Matthew Greene; Collins Reference; ISBN 978-0-06-242090-9; \$18.99.

Write Your Way In: Crafting An Unforgettable College Admissions Essay, by Rachel Toor (a former admissions officer at Duke U.); University of Chicago Press; ISBN-13:978-0-226-38389-7; \$15. (August 2017 publication date).

Financial Aid Handbook: Getting the Education You Want for the Price You Can Afford, by Carol Stack and Ruth Vedvik; Career Press; ISBN-13 978-1632650825; \$17.99.

Be the Architect of Your Life: Design, Build, and Start Living a Life Inspired, by Karen Otis; ISBN-13 9781608081769, \$14.66.

College Admissions Success: A Counselor’s Sure-Fire Guide For High School Students, by Ellie Duley; Prominence Publishing; ISBN: 0995827443; \$14.99.

Who Gets In? Strategies for Fair and Effective College Admissions, by Rebecca Zwick; Harvard University Press; ISBN: 9780674971912; \$35.

Colleges That Create Futures: 50 Schools That Launch Careers by Going Beyond the

Classroom, 2nd Edition, by Robert Franek; The Princeton Review; ISBN 978-0-451-48783-4; \$14.99.

College Greatness: A Family’s Guide to the Admissions Process by Billy Downing; ASIN:B01N3KWSRG; \$11.99 Kindle edition.

Universities and Their Cities: Urban Higher Education in America, by Steven J. Diner; ISBN: 978-1-4214-2241-1; \$44.95; and *Consolidating Colleges and Merging Universities: New Strategies for Higher Education Leaders,* by Martin, Samels and Associates; ISBN: 978-1-4214-2167-4; \$39.95. Both from Johns Hopkins University Press; www.press.jhu.edu. ■

CURRICULUM CAPSULES

Majors And Career Paths. “Putting Your Major to Work: Career Paths After College,” released by the Hamilton Project at the Brookings Institution in Washington D.C., allows users to explore 171 college majors and seek answers to a range of questions, including:

- What percentage of students are working in fields relevant to their college major?
- How common are various occupations within an undergraduate major?
- How do career paths shift, within the college major, when age and gender are taken into account?

“These findings show that not all college experiences are equal, because students from the same major often transition into varying occupations with different earnings,” said Ryan Nunn, co-author of the report. Find the report at http://www.hamiltonproject.org/papers/putting_your_major_to_work_career_paths_after_college.

Aerospace Physiology. This fall, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical U’s Daytona Beach, Florida, campus will offer an undergraduate bachelor of science degree in Aerospace Physiology. The program will operate in collaboration with Florida Hospital and seek to advance medical research and promote the health and well-being of pilots, astronauts, flight crew members and air travelers.

Saint Rose’s Three New Programs. The C. of Saint Rose in Albany, New York, has launched three new degree programs: The “first-of-its-kind” accelerated dual-degree program combining psychology and business will lead to a bachelor’s and master’s degrees in four years.

A second accelerated dual-degree program combines psychology and clinical mental health counseling that lead to a bachelor’s and master’s degrees in five years. The third new program is a graduate degree in social work. ■

Tech Talk

Facial Recognition Aims to Boost Dorm Safety. Beijing Normal U. recently installed facial recognition technology to keep intruders (and boyfriends) out of female dorms. Now when students enter their dorm, they say their name, swipe their ID card and have their face scanned. If they forget or lose their ID cards, the system will still let them in. The machine responds by saying, “Welcome Home.” The facial recognition system aims to improve security and cut down on staff workload.

This is not the first use of facial recognition technology in Chinese universities. One lecturer uses it to check the boredom level of his students. It could be used for checking attendance. Facial recognition is being used in other capacities throughout China, including at ATM machines. But some critics fear that the technology will be used to further state control over individuals, and not just in China.

The World’s First Cybrary. The future is now for the old library in Homestead, Florida, which is being replaced by a \$16 million virtual reality “cybrary.” After learning that only 10 percent of local teens ever visited the old library, plans went forward.

Landmark Entertainment Group, designer of Universal Orlando and other futuristic sites, has been hired to create the world’s first cybrary, which will feature a talking robot guide, think e-books, librarians in costumes and a massive circuit tree with branches that will glow in a kaleidoscope of colors to guide visitors to different areas.

“Why can’t Mary Poppins be your cybrarian?” asked Tony Christopher, Landmark’s founder, CEO and president.

Visitors will encounter augmented reality experiences, where characters climb out of books and come to life by way of goggles or headsets. They will be able to transport themselves to foreign countries and past centuries after stepping into a virtual reality cube.

“We want to capitalize on the strengths of what the traditional library has been, but we want to focus on making it cooler and gamifying it; making it a place where children find fascination and have a dynamic place to go; including checking out books,” Christopher told the *Miami Herald*.

Quoting the English writer Caitlin Moran that, “The library is a cathedral of the mind, a hospital for the soul, and a theme park for the imagination,” Christopher declared, “And that’s what we’re going for.” ■

HAVE A GOOD SUMMER!

And keep in touch:
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NEWS YOU CAN USE

Anxiety Among College Students of Increasing Concern. The Association for University and College Counseling Center Directors recently released the results of its 2016 survey of 503 current members at public and private institutions.

- Anxiety continues to be the most predominant and increasing concern among college students (51 percent), followed by depression (41 percent), relationship concerns (34 percent), suicidal ideation (20 percent), self-injury (14 percent) and alcohol abuse (9 percent);
- On average, 26 percent of students seeking services take psychotropic medications;
- 64 percent of directors reported that psychiatric services are offered on their campus, up from 54 percent last year;
- Among students, 72 percent say counseling services helped with their academic performance.

To find the full version of the survey, go to www.aucccd.org.

Penn Stops Credit For Two AP Courses. The U. of Pennsylvania will no longer award college credit for students with AP Chemistry or AP Biology scores of five. The reduction comes a year after Penn’s Department of History made the same decision. “The departmental decision is based on their understanding of how students who receive credit by exam fare in subsequent courses in that discipline,” Kent

Peterman, associate dean of the college and director of academic affairs, told *The Daily Pennsylvania*.

Independent Counselors Tool. The Higher Education Consultants Association (HECA) has launched the College Admissions Expert Calling Network (ECN). The new network is designed to connect independent education consultants with high school students and their families during their transition to higher education. ECN allows paid one-on-one phone consultations at a rate set by each consultant. See, <http://collegeadmissions.expertcalling-network.com/>.

Forces Transforming Higher Ed. Eduventurers, a Massachusetts-based research and advisory firm focused on analyzing forces that are transforming higher education, released two recent reports of interest. “Tech Landscape 2017” provides an overview of the higher education technology landscape. “The Eduventurers Analytics Market Overview” helps higher education leaders “evaluate the strength and weaknesses of domain-specific offerings.” Find more information at eduventurers.com.

P.S. If students are still looking for a college, don’t forget to check NACAC’s College Openings Update for schools with space and financial aid. See, www.nacacnet.org. ■