

College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

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Admissions Watch

American Admits 35 Percent. American U. in Washington D.C. received 18,500 applications for the Class of 2023. AU admitted 6,515 students. That translates into an admit rate of 35 percent, an increase of 6 percent over last year and the same rate as in 2015. Administrators say the increase is due to American's expansion of its Honors program and its Community-Based Research Honors program.

Approximately 40 percent of the admitted class lives in the Mid-Atlantic region. Women make up 65 percent of the admitted pool, African-American students 7.3 percent, while Hispanics account for 16.9 percent and Asian American students 6.1 percent, Andrea Felder, assistant vice provost for undergraduate studies, told *The Eagle*.

Felder also noted that the university saw an increased interest in its School of Public Affairs.

Update: Amherst Admits 10.8 Percent. Amherst C. in Massachusetts received a record 10,567 applications, and admitted 1,144 students to the Class of 2023, or about 10.8 percent, down from last year's 12.8 percent. About 56 percent of students self-identified as U.S. students of color.

"Now the work of admitting is complete, and now the work of yielding these students is just beginning," Matthew McGann, dean of admissions and financial aid, told *The Amherst Student*. "Now it's the role of the admissions staff and the financial aid staff to show the student what makes Amherst such a special place... Now the job of the admissions staff will turn to working with the students and their families."

Bowdoin Admits 8.9 Percent. Bowdoin C. in Maine received 9,332 applications for the Class of 2023, 3 percent more than last year, and admitted a record low 8.9 percent. The college

admitted 14 students through the QuestBridge Match program, up from 12 last year.

About 15 percent of applicants took advantage of a new option to submit a short video response to supplement their application. They were given a prompt and 30 seconds to think about an answer, followed by 2 minutes to respond.

"The likelihood of these students saying yes is increasing every year, which is great for Bowdoin," said Whitney Soule, dean of admissions and financial aid. "The by-product of that is that we can admit fewer people, because we don't want to over-enroll."

Chicago Admits 5.9 Percent. The U. of Chicago received just under 35,000 applications, 3,000 more than last year. It admitted 5.9 percent of those who applied to the Class of 2023, down from last year's 7.2 percent, according to James Nondorf, dean of admissions. Standardized test scores for those who were admitted climbed by about 15 points above last year, when the middle 50 percent of admitted students scored between 1490 and 1560 on their SATs, according to *The Chicago Maroon*. Students also had an option of submitting a two-minute video introduction instead of the traditional alumni interview.

Colby Admits 1,295. Colby C. in Maine attracted an applicant pool of 13,584 students and admitted 1,295 of them to the Class of 2023. This year's admitted cohort comes from 735 high schools, 47 states and nearly 70 nations. Some 34 percent of the new class identify as students of color and 9 percent are the first in their family to go to college. Some 90 percent ranked in the top 10 percent of their high school class. The median SAT of accepted students is 1500, the median ACT score is 34.

"The quality and competitiveness of this year's applicant pool made selecting the Class

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Financial Matters

TuitionFit Helps Make Sense of Aid Offers.

TuitionFit.org is a free site designed to help students go to college for a lower price and help colleges find students more efficiently. It was founded by Mark Salisbury, a college administrator, researcher, teacher and admission recruiter, and Kimberly Dyer, a mathematician and college instructor, who wondered why actual college prices were not more transparent and easier to understand.

They created TuitionFit to help students and families find out the real price of attending specific colleges. According to a 2018 study by New America, out of 515 award letters from different institutions it studied, more than one-third did not include any cost information to explain the financial aid offered. Out of the sample, 40 percent of schools calculated what students need to pay, but those 194 institutions had 23 different ways of calculating remaining costs. The majority of award letters also included misleading or confusing jargon.

Financial Jargon

"A lot of this has to do with our old process of not finding out the actual price until you've applied and been admitted," Salisbury told the *Quad Cities Times*. "Until 30 years ago, that didn't matter much because the cost was a lot lower. The only people who got financial aid were the people who had financial need. Then 30 years ago, things really shifted. Prices went up and discounts went up like crazy, as schools introduced all kinds of merit aid."

The TuitionFit service is free. Users set up an account, answer basic questions about high

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ADMISSIONS

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of 2023 especially challenging,” said Randi Arsenault, Colby’s director of admissions.

Fordham’s Updates its Profile. As of April 30, the yield of admitted students to Fordham U. in New York City yield is currently 44 percent. It has received deposits from 80 percent of students who committed to join the Class of 2023. Their average high school GPA is 3.6. Some 77 percent are in the top 25 percent of their class. A little over a third are domestic students of color, while 10 percent are international students from 50 countries, Patricia Peek, dean of undergraduate admissions, told *The Fordham Ram*. Fordham expects to matriculate about 2,200 new students.

Lehigh Accepts 24 Percent. Lehigh U. in Pennsylvania received a total of 15,647 ED and RD applications. It admitted 3,716, for an acceptance rate of 24 percent. The incoming class is expected to number about 1,425 students, up from 1,275 last year.

“We are now in the first year of growth in the Path to Prominence where we are expected to net 150 more students in the class,” Bruce Bunnick, director of admissions, told *The Brown and White*, the student newspaper. “We knew that the admit rate would likely go up, but not to an extent that we feel as if we’ve lost the competitive edge.”

Macalester Admits 31 Percent. Macalester C. in Minnesota received 6,598 applications, up 10 percent from last year’s 5,985 applications. Macalester offered admission to students from all 50 states and 86 nations. It admitted 31 percent, down from last year’s 41 percent.

This cycle was the second year that the admissions staff evaluated applications in a committee-based style, in which two admissions officers read candidate’s file simultaneously in the same room before discussing it.

“In previous cycles, we’ve targeted 545 students for the entering class,” Jeff Allen, vice president for admissions and financial aid, told *The Mac Weekly*. “This year, our target is 515 in response to the very large first-year class that we enrolled last year.” Allen added, “You don’t choose Macalester because of the weather. You choose Macalester because of the people, the programs, the opportunities of a liberal arts college in the metropolitan area.”

Notre Dame Attracts 9 Percent More Apps. The U. of Notre Dame in Indiana drew a record-breaking 22,200 applicants, 9 percent more than last year, and admitted 3,410 from 50 states and 82 nations. Applications from students with the highest academic credentials increased by 22 percent. About 47 percent of admits came from public schools, 34 percent from Catholic schools and 19 percent from

Longwood Hopes to Increase International Enrollment

Longwood U. in Virginia is seeking more international students. From 2016 to 2019, new enrollment of international students steadily increased, and now represents about 1 percent of the total number of students, Jason Faulk, dean of admissions, told the *rotundaonline*. Longwood hopes that those numbers continue to increase.

“The number of international students at U.S. colleges and universities has decreased since 2016. The political climate, social and safety issues, particularly gun control, have made the U.S. less appealing,” Patricia F. Trent, Longwood’s executive director of the Center for Global Engagement, told the paper. “Nevertheless, Longwood will continue to recruit international students for the value of the global perspective in the classroom, and for the economic value to our communities.” ■

private or charter schools, according to Donald Bishop, associate vice president for undergraduate enrollment.

“Top colleges are looking for students who won’t treat this as the biggest achievement of their life,” Bishop said. “It’s just the next step and they want to use the college as a vehicle to get smarter, to get more creative and to enjoy learning more.... The new elite student is coming up with their own questions, they are less enamored with and driven by coming up with the answers to whatever questions they think are going to be asked and they are a lot more interested in developing their own questions.”

St. John’s Admits from 94 Nations. St. John’s U. in New York received 28,500 applications for 3,000 first-year slots in the Class of 2023. Accepted students hail from all 50 states and 94 nations. Admitted students posted an average SAT score of 1197 and a mean GPA of 90.

“Our job at St. John’s is not just to enroll students. We also must help our students graduate, so they can pursue their ideal careers,” said Conrado Gempesaw, president. Each year, from 2015 through 2018, more than 94 percent of St. John’s graduates were employed or pursuing a graduate degree within six months of commencement.

Tufts Admits 14.6 Percent. Tufts in Massachusetts received a record 22,766 applications for the Class of 2023, 5.8 percent more than last year, and offered a spot in the new class to 14.6 percent of those students. About 9.5 percent are international students from 64 nations. The mean SAT scores are 751 in math and 726 in evidence-based reading and writing. The mean ACT is 33.5. Almost 60 percent attended public high schools, 12 percent of the first in their family to go to college and 11 percent are eligible for Pell grants. About

20.5 percent of admitted students identify as Asian Americans, 12 percent are Hispanic, 6.5 percent African American and 7 percent identify with two or more races.

“Tufts continues to attract a wide range of exceptional applicants who focus on being active in the world, and in their own neighborhoods,” said Karen Richardson, dean of undergraduate admissions and enrollment management.

Wake Forest Admits 29 Percent. Wake Forest U. in North Carolina received 12,500 applications to the Class of 2023. It admitted 29 percent for a target class size of 1,373. About 33 percent are students of color. Some 6 percent of the admitted class is made up of international students.

Washington and Lee’s Pool Grew 6 Percent. Washington and Lee U. in Virginia attracted 6,178 applications, 6 percent more than last year. W&L admitted 1,115, including the 248 students admitted to its Early Decision program and its partnership with QuestBridge National College Match program. “This year’s applicant pool was particularly competitive,” Sally Stone Richmond, vice president for admissions and financial aid, told *The Columns*.

Admitted students come from 48 states and 35 countries, “thanks in part to the university’s partnership with the Davis United World College program.” Since 2013, W&L’s no loan policy meets 100 percent of each student’s demonstrated need through grants, scholarships and work-study, guaranteeing that all students graduate debt-free.

Wesleyan Admits 15.8 Percent. Wesleyan U. in Connecticut attracted a record 13,350 applications for the Class of 2023 and offered admission to 2,114 of those students or about 15.8 percent. Some 403 students were admitted early. About 80 percent of those admitted who made their test scores available, posted median scores of 34 ACT Composite, 750 SAT evidence-based reading and writing and 780 SAT math. The admitted class is 54 percent female and 46 percent male.

About 82 percent of Wesleyan’s admitted students live outside of New England, 16.5 percent live in other countries, 14 percent are first-generation students and 10 percent have a Wesleyan alumni relative. More than 80 percent of admitted students took high school calculus, 84 percent chemistry/physics, and 82 percent four years of foreign language study. Some 50 percent applied for need-based financial aid. Wesleyan meets 100 percent of demonstrated need.

“We are extremely proud of the pool of students we have admitted,” said Nancy Hargrave Meislahm, vice president. “And the increase in offers to students of color reflects our university’s historic commitment to a diverse student body.” ■

FINANCIAL MATTERS

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school academic performance, estimated family contribution taken from the FAFSA and ACT/SAT scores.

Then, they take a picture of each award letter they receive and upload them to TuitionFit. Then, TuitionFit calculates the user's bottom-line costs and posts the pricing details in a format that is easy to understand. The user then can compare the different ways that his/her offers combined grants and loans. TuitionFit also explores the prices and award packages that other schools have offered to students like the user.

This way students and families can make more informed decisions throughout their college search process. See, www.TuitionFit.org.

Ed Issues Financial Aid Guidelines. In April, Federal Student Aid, an office of the U.S. Department of Education, issued recommendations on language colleges should avoid in financial aid offers.

- "Avoid calling your financial aid [loan] offer an 'award' and avoid calling it a 'letter.' ("Loans are not awards. Work-study is not an award...") Using a term like "financial aid offer" or "college financing" is "clearer."
- "Avoid issuing a financial aid offer that does not include cost of attendance."
- "Avoid listing the cost of attendance without breaking it down into clear-cut components."
- "Avoid listing grant and/or scholarship aid, loans, and work-study together."
- "Avoid listing student loans without clarifying the source (federal, state, institutional or private)."
- "Avoid listing Parent PLUS loans with student loans."
- "Avoid issuing a financial aid offer without CRITICAL next steps."
- "Avoid issuing a financial aid offer without net cost calculated."

Better Business Bureau Warning. The Better Business Bureau warns students and families to be cautious about websites, seminars or other schemes that promise to find scholarships, grants or financial aid packages for a fee. Fraudulent companies may promise a money-back guarantee if students are unable to secure grants or scholarships, but because of the fine print it is often impossible to get a refund. BBB cautions students not to be rushed into paying for help at a seminar. Get information about refunds in writing and beware of letters or e-mails that say you been selected to receive a scholarship for a contest you never entered.

BBB says that legitimate companies don't guarantee results and that parents and students can usually find the same awards and others by

searching online or asking a librarian for help. If you suspect a company of running a scam, visit BBB's Scam Tractor and make a report.

Holy Cross Scales Back Need Blind Aid. Holy Cross C. in Massachusetts, which has maintained a need blind admissions policy for decades, announced it scaled back that approach this year due to mounting financial aid demands from incoming students, according to the *Telegram & Gazette*. College officials also told the paper that they hope to get back to a full need blind policy next year. Holy Cross awarded \$67 million in student aid in 2018-19.

This year, Holy Cross admitted 2,300 students using the traditional need blind formula. "But for a final pool of 800 applicants, Holy Cross did consider their ability to pay to attend when determining who to accept," the paper reported. The college admitted 90 students from that group.

Margaret Freije, provost and dean of the college, said the policy change doesn't mean that that Holy Cross is backing off its commitment to increase recruitment and financial support of first-generation and low-income students,

Davidson Expands Duke Scholars. Davidson C. in North Carolina received a \$24 million grant from the Duke Endowment, the fourth-largest in college history, to fund full-tuition scholarships. Davidson will expand its James E. Duke's Scholars Program to 25 students in each class, beginning with the class of 2025.

Public Service Loan Forgiveness Problems. "The vast majority of individuals who applied for a second chance at public service loan forgiveness that Congress created last year were again denied that benefit, according to new Education Department data, *Politico* reported.

"Congress set aside a combined \$700 billion over the past two fiscal years to help tens of thousands of borrowers who failed to qualify for public service loan forgiveness because they selected the wrong repayment plan. But the temporary 'fix' to the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program isn't working as expected, the data shows.... Of the 9,820 applications that the department received, 1,184 remain pending and 8,374 were rejected. The applications were most frequently rejected because borrowers had not met the requirement of making 10 years of loan payments, the department said."

Sallie Mae Tips on Award Letters. Find tips on understanding and evaluating financial aid award letters at SallieMae.com/AwardLetters, as well as its video "How to Read Your Financial Aid Award Letter." ■

COUNSELOR'S BOOKSHELF

Top Scholarship Websites. RAVE Reviews posted its list of "Best Scholarship Websites." The top 10 are: scholarships.com, sallieMae.com, unigo.com, cappex.com, petersons.com, collegeboard.org, fastweb.com, chegg.com, scholarshipmonkey.com and broke-scholar.com.

Illinois Comprehensive Data Website. The state of Illinois launched a new centralized

data porthole for perspective Illinois college students. The Illinois College2Career website compiles information on graduation rates, costs, student debt and potential earning from more 48 community colleges and more than 60 four-year institutions in the state. See, www.ilcollege2career.com.

Will This Be On The Test? by Dana T. Johnson with Jennifer E. Price, Princeton U. Press,

ISBN 978-0-691-17953-7, \$19.95. "A college professor's practical guide to surviving and thriving in higher education and beyond."

The Ultimate Guide to America's Best Colleges 2019 by Gen and Kelly Tanbe, ISBN 978-1-61760-130-9' \$28.99. (Watch for 2020 edition this summer.) And, *America's Best Colleges for B Students* by Tamra B. Orr, Gen Tanabe, et al; hot off the press; \$13.98 paperback; ISBN-10: 1617601519; both available on Amazon or from www.supercollege.com. ■

CURRICULUM CAPSULES

Top Information Technology Programs. Bachelor's Degree Center released its 2019 ranking of best Information Technology bachelor's degree programs. Here are the top 20, in order: Purdue U., U. of Washington, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (NY), Florida State U., Illinois Institute of Technology, U. of South Florida, New Jersey Institute of Technology,

Brigham Young U., Towson U. (MD), Temple U. (PA), Montclair State U. (NJ), Texas Christian U., Marist C. (NY), East Carolina U. (NC), Rochester Institute of Technology (NY), U. of Tulsa, U. of Arizona, LaSalle U. (PA), Loyola U. Chicago and Elmhurst C. (IL). To see entire list and evaluations, go to: <https://www.bachelorsdegreecenter.org>. ■

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Carleton Skips Winter. Carleton C. announced it will become the first U.S. university to adopt a Spring-Summer-Fall trimester academic calendar, beginning in 2020-2021, freeing its students from Minnesota's bitter winters.

"This is a bold and unprecedented move," said Steven Poskanzer, Carleton's president. "But we at Carleton have long prided ourselves on a willingness to challenge even the most basic assumptions about our institution, especially when it serves the best interest of our students, faculty and staff."

Top Colleges for Free Online Courses. MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) offered by some of the nation's top universities have made learning from some of the best professors in the world available to anyone around the world with a computer. According to College Consensus, MOOCs "have proven to be a game changer for continuing education, lifelong learning and skills building for adults, seniors and other nontraditional students."

Once a standardized crediting system is established, MOOCs also will be used for fulfilling traditional undergraduate credits. At any rate, sophisticated learning opportunities in a broad range of areas are now available to almost anyone who wants to learn.

College Consensus recently rated the top 50 colleges for free online courses. MIT, Stanford U., U. of Michigan-Ann Arbor, Harvard U., U. of Pennsylvania, U. of Illinois Urbana-Champaign are leaders in the field. To see the entire list, go to: www.collegeconsensus.com/rankings/free-online-college-courses/.

Admissions Hack. Grinnell, Hamilton and Oberlin are among the colleges that have recently reported that their college admissions computer systems have been hacked. In the case of Grinnell, some prospective students were contacted and told that they could purchase their full admissions file for the price of one Bitcoin, worth about \$3,890. Others were offered a deal of \$60 for the information.

One student told *The Scarlett & Black*, the Grinnell student newspaper, "First of all, I mean, if they got our FAFSA then they could have gotten our parents' Social Security numbers, and that's something the school hasn't even addressed."

"...We take this situation very seriously and sincerely regret the concern and inconvenience this may cause," Joe Bagnoli, vice president for enrollment and dean of admissions & financial aid, told the paper.

Virtual College Counselor. MyKlover, a media division of Student Global, LLC in New York has launched an Artificial Intelligence-College Counselor to provide students with personalized guidance in selecting and applying to college.

MyKlover's enhanced college planning platform includes a tool that helps users discover, build and refine a college list, and generates college recommendations based on the student's individual profile.

It also includes an enhanced parent portal, and "a powerful goal recommendation engine delivering individual insightful recommendations." The whole program comes with a money-back guarantee should the student not be admitted to a college from a recommended tier. See <https://myklover.com>.

The Number of Colleges and Universities. During U.S. Senate hearings on the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, Tennessee Senator Lamar Alexander, chairman, said that the federal government should not act as a "national school board for colleges, telling states and accreditors and boards of directors at institutions how to manage the 6,000 colleges and universities."

Webster U. Opens in Uzbekistan. In February, Webster U. in St. Louis signed an agreement with the Minister of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education to expand its programmatic and physical presence in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. "Following recent

experiences at our Accra, Ghana, campus, we see how students long for American programs to help them be successful in their chosen fields and rise to the level of achievement in their own country," said Elizabeth Stroble, Webster's president.

Student Parents. About 22 percent of all undergraduate college students are parents raising children, according to a new report from the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) and Ascend at the Aspen Institute. More than two-in-five student parents are single mothers. One third of student parents maintain a 3.5 GPA or higher. Student parents are most likely to attend community colleges. However 45 percent of all for-profit students are raising children, and 39 percent are single mothers.

While the number of college students overall declined roughly 6 percent between the 2011-12 and 2015-16 academic years, the number of enrolled parents tumbled by 20 percent. The closure of more than 100 for-profit colleges between 2012 and 2016 probably contributed significantly to their decreased share in higher education. Median debt among student parents is two-and-a-half times higher than debt among students without children.

P.S. Final Chapter. Southern Vermont C. announced it will close at the end of this spring semester due to financial problems. Undergraduate students will finish out their degree at Massachusetts C. of Liberal Arts or transfer to other programs.

Other recent closings include Wheelock C. in Boston which merged with Boston U. Last year, the property of Mount Ida C. in Newton, Massachusetts, was taken over by the U. of Massachusetts Amherst. Newberry C. in Brookline, Massachusetts, is also shutting down after the 2019 spring semester.

Green Mountain C. is closing at the end of the spring semester. The C. of New Rochelle in New York is also shutting down after 115 years, and its students are transferring to Mercy C. Meanwhile, Hampshire C. in Massachusetts which admitted only 77 students in the fall, is looking for a partner. Also, Hiwassee C., a Methodist institution in Tennessee, announced it will shut down at the end of the semester.

In March, the U.S. Department of Education announced that 22 Argosy U. and Art Institute campuses face "imminent closure." That will leave thousands of students without a degree or certificate to show for their work.

See www.nasfaa.org. ■

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