

College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

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Admissions Watch

More Early Profiles

Bowdoin Attracts Over 9,000 Apps. Bowdoin C. in Maine has received 9,379 applications for the Class of 2024, slightly more than last year. It received a record 817 Early Decision I applications and 309 EDII apps.

Brown Boasts Second Largest Pool. Brown U. fielded a total of 36,592 applications for the Class of 2024, down from last year's 38,674 apps. Still, that is the second-largest applicant pool in university history. Despite the slight dip, Logan Powell, dean of admissions, said, "It's still going to be very hard to get into Brown this year."

About 47 percent of applicants self-identified as students of color, 2 percent more than last year. International applications increased to 18 percent of the applicant pool, up by 1 percent. Some 32 percent of applicants expressed interest in the physical sciences, while 27 percent are interested in the social sciences.

Dartmouth Admits 24 Percent. Dartmouth C. in New Hampshire attracted 2,069 Early Decision applications for the Class of 2024, fewer than last year's record high 2,474. There was a significant decrease in applications from China, Lee Coffin, vice provost for enrollment and dean of admissions and financial aid, told *The Dartmouth*.

The school offered admission to 547 students, for an acceptance rate of 26.4 percent. Coffin said he expects the ED cohort to make up about 48 percent of the overall new class. More than 20 percent of the ED admits were expected to be valedictorians or salutatorians of their graduating class. About a quarter of the new class will be composed of recruited athletes. Some 15 percent are first-generation students, 12 percent international students and 35 percent students of color, all record highs. And 14 percent of those admitted ED are eligible for Pell Grants.

Georgetown Admits Nearly 12 Percent EA. Georgetown U. in Washington D.C. attracted 7,305 Early Action applications to the Class of 2024, 6 percent fewer than last year. It accepted 856 of them, for an admit rate of 11.7 percent. Accepted students "generally placed in the top 5 percent of their class, with the mid-50 percent of ACT scores ranging between 33 and 35, the mid-50 percent of SAT verbal ranging between 720 and 760 and the mid-50 percent of SAT math scores ranging between 730 and 790.

Marquette Ahead of Last Year. As of mid-January, Marquette U. in Milwaukee had admitted 3 percent more students for the Class of 2024 than it had at the same time last year. Marquette attracted 23 percent more African American applicants and 12 percent more Hispanic students than last year, Brian Troyer, dean of undergraduate admissions, told *Marquette Wire*. Enrollment for the Class of 2023 hit 1,975 students, 225 fewer than the Class of 2022. This year, MU hopes to enroll 2,014 students.

"We are ahead of the place we feel like we would need to be at to meet that goal," Troyer told the paper. "... and we are doing that with a very academically talented... class."

Marquette went test-optional in June, and about 18 of this year's applicants have chosen that option.

More on MIT Admits. Massachusetts Institute of Technology fielded 9,291 Early Action applications for the Class of 2024, and offered admission to 687 students, or about 7.4 percent. Both numbers were slightly smaller than last year. Another 73 percent were deferred to be "reconsidered without prejudice" in the Regular Action round. But 17.5 percent were

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Financial Matters

Antioch Increases Student Aid and Jobs. Antioch C. in Ohio announced a new program, Antioch College Works, that expands financial aid and job opportunities for students while in and after college. The program seeks to fully meet the financial need of all students and expands its nearly century-old cooperative education model. Tuition will be free for students with the highest need. Antioch is struggling to get back on its feet after reopening 10 years ago. Its current enrollment is about 100 students, 27 of whom matriculated in Fall 2019.

Colgate Partners with QuestBridge. Colgate U. in upstate New York announced a new partnership with the QuestBridge National College Match based in Palo Alto, California. QuestBridge connects exceptional, low-income students with its university partners. Colgate will meet 100 percent of the demonstrated financial need for every admitted QuestBridge scholar. Since 2003, the QuestBridge National College Match has connected nearly 7,400 students with full scholarships at college partners.

Georgetown in Kentucky Offers Free Tuition for Three Counties. To attract more on-campus students, Georgetown C. (KY) is offering free tuition to students from three Kentucky counties, if they qualify and if they pledge to live on campus for all four years, paying room and board. They'll save on the \$20,000 tuition, but pay \$12,000 a year for housing. About 6 percent fewer Kentucky high school students are expected to graduate this year, so recruitment for these students is intense.

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MORE EARLY PROFILES

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rejected, according to *The Tech*.

“Applicants to MIT are a pretty self-selecting group,” Stu Schmill, dean of admissions and student financial services, told the paper. “And most of our applicants are very strong students and exceptional people.”

Notre Dame Admits 1,540 Early. The U. of Notre Dame in Indiana received 7,295 Restrictive Early Action applications to the Class of 2024, and admitted 1,540 of them, for an admit rate of about 21 percent. Don Bishop, associate vice president for undergraduate enrollment, told *The Observer* that Restrictive Early Action means that the student cannot apply Early Decision to another school. Last year, 44 percent of ND’s entire class was admitted early.

Penn Admits 53 Percent of Class ED. The U. of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia received 6,453 First-Choice Early Decision applications for the Class of 2024, and offered admissions to 1,269 of them, or approximately 53 percent of the new class.

Women make up 54 percent of admitted students, while 10 percent are first-generation college students and 24 percent are legacies.

About 13 percent qualified for Pell Grants.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

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Illinois Tuition Increases for First Time in Six Years. It’s been six years since tuition at the U. of Illinois increased. So many expected a big bump this year. Instead, the board of trustees announced only a 1.8 percent tuition increase at its Urbana-Champaign and Chicago campuses, and a 1 percent increase for the Springfield campus. That brought tuition up to \$12,254 at the flagship Urbana-Champaign campus and \$10,776 at Chicago. And increases will only affect incoming students.

At the same time, Governor J. B. Pritzker announced a deal with the U. of Illinois to expand its free tuition program by 10 percent to include families with incomes up to \$67,000. “That means now, more than half of the households in the state will qualify for free tuition,” he said.

Nevada State Will Be Free for Some. Residents and nonresidents of Nevada who are Pell Grant Eligible with an Expected Family Contribution of zero may be eligible to attend Nevada State C. tuition free. Transfer students are also eligible. This year, new students had until January 15 to apply. Nevada State, established in 2002, is located on a 512-acre campus in the foothills of Henderson, and educates 5,500 students, many from “a diverse and largely underserved student population.”

“Nevada State is committed to affordability

The middle 50 percent scored between 1450-1550 on the SAT and 33-35 on the ACT. Penn expects to enroll a first-year class of 2,400 students this fall.

Rice Admits 19 Percent ED. Rice U. in Texas received 2,042 applications for its Class of 2024, 13 percent fewer than last year, and admitted 385 of them through the university’s binding Early Decision program, or nearly 19 percent, fewer than last year.

It also admitted 55 students through the QuestBridge National College Match. Of the

Last Word on 2023 Class

Lander’s Largest Freshman Class.

Lander U. in South Carolina enrolled its largest freshman class, and ended the year with its largest enrollment in 147 years, 3,227 students. Lander is one of the most inexpensive schools in the state. “We believe this is proof that our pricing strategy is one that students and their families appreciate,” said a school spokesperson.

Lebanon Valley Celebrates with Water Ceremony.

Lebanon Valley C. in Pennsylvania enrolled a record-breaking 518 new students in Fall 2019. Move-in day included the traditional Water Ceremony. Students brought water from home that they poured into the Peace Garden pond, a symbol of a new united class.

Oklahoma’s Largest First-Year Class.

The U. of Oklahoma enrolled 4,500 new students into the Class of 2023, the largest ever. About 34 percent came from historically underrepresented minority groups, and 24 percent first-generation college students. ■

in higher education for all students. For many eligible Achieved Nevada students, tuition will be free,” said Vickie Shields, provost and executive vice president.

Texas to Dramatically Expand Financial Aid.

The U. of Texas system governing board approved a special \$160 million distribution from its endowment to fully cover tuition and fees of students whose families earn \$65,000 or less a year, up from \$30,000 a year. The new policy begins in 2020. The new funds also will allow UT-Austin to alleviate tuition cost for students whose families earn up to \$125,000. Texas’ endowment is the second largest in the nation, behind Harvard, according to the *Texas Tribune*.

Utah Shifts Merit to Need Aid. The Utah Board of Regents voted to end two merit scholarships worth \$18 million and to redirect those funds to students in need. “This is

really consistent with other discussions we’ve had about moving toward more needs-based scholarships,” Harris Simmons, chairman of the board, told *The Salt Lake Tribune*.

newly admitted students, 44 percent are from Texas, another 44 percent are from elsewhere in the U.S. and 12 percent are international students.

“Early Decision applications are down [from last year],” Yvonne Romero da Silva, vice president for enrollment, told *the Rice Thresher*. “But that’s not surprising given the huge surge in applications last year after the publicity surrounding the introduction of The Rice Investment.”

The Rice Investment waves full tuition for students from families making under \$130,000 and charges half tuition for families between \$130,001 and \$250,000 a year. As a result, Early Decision applications soared by 39 percent last year, while applications overall rose by 29 percent.

Tufts Apps Up. Tufts U. outside of Boston attracted 23,100 applications for the Class of 2024, 1.5 percent more than last year. Nearly half of the pool came from students of color. About 17 percent came from first-generation students, while 19 percent came from international students, 12 percent more than last year.

“Tufts marries the strengths of a residential liberal arts college with the innovative spirit of a research university, while enjoying all the benefits of one of the nation’s most vibrant metropolitan areas,” said JT Duck, dean of admissions and enrollment management.

P.S. The Early Word in Colorado.

On October 15, the Free Application Day in Colorado, sponsored by the Colorado Department of Higher Education and Governor Jared Polis, brought a flood of applications. UC Boulder applications shot up by 55 percent. Colorado State U. received 9,126 applications. Applications from across the state doubled, according to the *Boulder Daily Camera*. ■

Meanwhile, Salt Lake City announced it will award HOPE scholarships of up to \$7,000 per academic year to eligible first-generation college students who enroll in the U. of Utah. The scholarship is funded with \$150,000 seed money from the Semnani Family Foundation and the U. of Utah Eccles School of Business.

Whittier Freezes Tuition. Like many small liberal arts colleges, Whittier is in fierce competition for students. To help its recruiting efforts, Whittier announced it is freezing tuition for the next school year, at \$49,000. It also said that about 93 percent of its students receive financial aid. Currently, 70 percent of Whittier’s 1,700 students are students of color. About 23 percent of California’s Latino families live at or below the poverty line. ■

Enrollment Trends

California Laws Respond to Admissions Scandal. California enacted two laws to “reassure the public that the system is not totally rigged.” California public campuses are allowed to admit up to 6 percent of their entering class from students who don’t meet minimum standards. One new law will require at least three senior administrators to sign off each time a student is admitted by exception.

The second law mandates that private colleges report on whether they give preference to applicants with connections to donors or alumni. Both laws take effect this year.

Does ED Harm Low-Income Students? According to a recent report from the Center for American Progress, “University early decision policies, particularly at the most prestigious colleges, reinforce the inequities found throughout America’s education system. Wealthy students are able to apply to early decision because they can afford the risk of not receiving a substantial financial aid package.”

Meanwhile, low-income students and students of color are left to compete for the remaining spots. “Early decision perpetuates broader patterns of societal and economic inequity. Ending early decision admissions policies can help ensure that more students have equal access to higher education opportunities,” the report argues. For more info, see <https://www.americanprogress.org>.

Johns Hopkins Dropped Legacies, Increased Diversity. A couple of years ago, Johns Hopkins U. in Baltimore quietly decided it would no longer give preference to “legacy” applicants, or those who were related to Hopkins graduates. President Ronald J. Daniels told *The Washington Post* that he found the legacy practice to be “deeply perplexing given the country’s deep commitments to merit and equal opportunity.”

In 2009, Daniels’ first year at Hopkins, about 12.5 percent of that fall’s first-year class were legacy students. However, by the time the Class of 2023 matriculated, only 3.5 percent of the 1,355 new students had legacy ties. During that same period, the number of Pell Grant-eligible students increased from 9 percent to 19 percent. (Only 10 percent of the 30,100 applicants to the Class of 2023 were admitted.)

International Students Top One Million. For the fourth year in a row, the number of international students studying in the United States numbered more than 1 million. In the 2018-19 academic year, 1,095,299 international students were studying in the U.S., an increase of .05 percent, according to the “2019 Open Doors Report on International Education Exchange.” These students contributed an estimated \$44.7 billion to the U.S. economy, a 5.5 percent increase over the previous year, according to the Department of Commerce.

For the 10th consecutive year, China sent the most students, followed by India, South Korea, Saudi Arabia and Canada. Over half of these

students are pursuing STEM subjects.

During the same period, 341,751 U.S. students studied abroad, a 2.7 percent increase. Almost 55 percent of them headed for Europe, with the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, France and Germany the most popular destinations.

Recruit to Deny? Schools across the nation are sending enticing recruitment letters to high school students to help attract as many applications as they can, in part, in order to boost their “ratings,” according to a new working paper for the National Bureau of Economic Research. It focused in particular on Harvard’s recruitment efforts and argued that the school recruits students differently based on race.

The researchers charged that Harvard intentionally sought applications from African Americans who probably had no chance of getting in. The data the researchers used was released during a trial a year ago when Harvard was accused and found not-guilty of discriminating against Asian American applicants. The student names came from those who took the PSAT.

For the class of 2018, Harvard sent out encouraging letters to 114,000 high school students, but in the end admitted only 2,047 students. Almost half of those who qualified for the recruiting letter were members of underrepresented minorities.

“It’s about appearances,” Peter Arcidiacono, a Duke economist and co-author of the study, told *The New York Times*. “You can say, ‘Look, we’re trying.’” During the recent discrimination trial, William Fitzsimmons, Harvard’s dean of admissions and financial aid, said, “It really comes down to the economic disadvantage. These are students who have less of an opportunity, on average at least, to prepare well and do well on standardized testing.”

“Recruit to Deny” recently has come under attack at other schools, including Tulane U. *The Tulane Hullabaloo* revealed the school had purchased 300,000 SAT test-taker names. It is unclear how many recruitment letters it sent, but last year it admitted only 5,300 students.

Tulane officials told the paper that the practice of buying lists is common among universities. The College Board said it sells its lists to about 1,900 colleges and scholarship organizations.

Rate of Return High for Liberal Arts Colleges. Meanwhile, another new study from Georgetown U. Center on Education and the Workforce found the return on investment (ROI) after 40 years of 210 U.S. liberal arts colleges is \$918,000, nearly \$200,000 higher than the median ROI for all colleges.

The 47 most selective liberal arts institutions have a 40-year median ROI of \$1.13 million, “nearly as high as the returns from doctoral institutions with the highest research activity, at \$1.14 million.” Find the full report at www.cew.georgetown.edu/LiberalArtsROI. ■

COUNSELOR’S BOOKSHELF

Indebted: How Families Make College Work at Any Cost by Caitlin Zaloom; Princeton U. Press; ISBN: 9780691164311; \$29.95.

Improving Research-Based Knowledge of College Promise Programs by Laura W. Perna and Edward J. Smith; American Educational

Research Association; ISBN: 9780935302776; \$34.95 members, \$44.95 non-members.

Who Is This Kid? Colleges Want to Know! Writing Exercises for Winning Applications by Joyce Slayton Mitchell; Critical Thinking Co.; 978-1-60144-969-6; \$13.99

The Mindful College Applicant: Cultivating Emotional Intelligence for the Admissions Process by Belinda H. Y. Chiu; Rowman and Littlefield; ISBN: 978-1-5381-1983-9, \$32.

Making Pre-Med Count: Everything I Wish I’d Known Before (Successfully) Applying to Medical School by Elisabeth Fassas; Kaplan Publishing; ISBN: 9781506258188; \$16.99 paper. ■

CURRICULUM CAPSULES

Chicago Unveils Five Interdisciplinary Minors. The U. of Chicago introduced five new interdisciplinary minors: Data Science, Education and Society, Geographic Information Science, Health and Society and Inequality, Social Problems and Change.

Johnson & Wales' Cooks Up a New B.S. in Sustainable Foods Systems. Next fall, Johnson & Wales U., with campuses in Providence, Rhode Island; North Miami, Florida; Denver, Colorado and Charlotte, North Carolina, will launch a new Bachelor of Science degree in Sustainable Foods Systems. Courses will include "Cultivating Local Food Systems," "Growing for the Menu," "Politics of Food, Human Security & Social Justice" among others.

"We have designed a hands-on, experiential curriculum that maintains the fundamental techniques and skills essential to working with and understanding food with the addition of relevant knowledge about food systems, food security, public health and policy," said Branden Lewis, who will lead the new program. "This degree will forge new pathways to

healthier eating, healthier societies and more sustainable food systems."

Rensselaer Polytechnic's Biological Neuroscience Major. Beginning this spring, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York is offering a new degree program in biological neuroscience that explores the structure and function of the brain and nervous system. Students will also have an option for a dual degree in biological neuroscience and neuropsychological science.

"Increasingly sophisticated research techniques are fueling a rapid expansion in our understanding of the brain, and with that, an increasing demand for that knowledge. These new insights open the door to new medical interventions for neurodegenerative diseases and breakthroughs in neurophysiological research," said Curt Breneman, dean of the Rensselaer School of Science. "The study of neuroscience has become an important route to success across many diverse career paths, and we are pleased to offer this program to our students."

Founded in 1824, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute is the nation's first technological

research university and now has five schools, 32 research centers and 7,900 students.

Steubenville's B.S. in Criminal Justice. Franciscan U. of Steubenville in Ohio announced a new Bachelor of Science program in criminal justice. Courses will include Justice and Nature of Rights, Crime, Criminal Law and Criminal Process, American Policing and Forensic Law. Internships and service-learning experiences will be available with law enforcement organizations and students will be able to study abroad.

Virginia to Graduate 31,000 in Computer Science over the Next Two Decades. Virginia Governor Ralph Northam announced a new Talent Investment Program with 11 universities aimed at graduating 31,000 new computer science majors. Northern Virginia is the site of Amazon's second headquarters, and this proposal is geared at ensuring an educated workforce for it and other high tech enterprises.

"The Tech Talent program creates clear pathways for Virginia students to obtain high-wage jobs by equipping them with the necessary skills to succeed in high-demand fields," said Atif Qarni, secretary of education.

Virginia Tech to Offer Cybersecurity Program. Virginia Tech announced a new study option in Cybersecurity Management and Analytics. The program focuses on ethical decisions about data use and how to keep IT systems secure. ■

NEWS YOU CAN USE

More Test Optional. Beginning Fall 2021, Indiana U. Bloomington will no longer require either the SAT or ACT for general admissions. IU's Board of Trustees gave the green light to all of its nine campuses to make the move, but so far only the flagship campus has done so.

St. Mary's-of-the-Woods in Indiana also announced that it will no longer require students to submit the SAT or ACT with their applications. In Fall 2019, 1,578 students enrolled in St. Mary's. "We look for students who already exemplify the core values that make our college special: a passion and calling for serving others, leadership skills and a diversity of interests and variety of life experiences and backgrounds to help enrich the campus community," Sarah Gallagher Dvorak, director of admissions, told *The Observer*.

Lourdes U. in Toledo, Ohio, is now also test-optional. "We've looked at how standardized test requirements advantage students who come from higher economic backgrounds or have attended significantly higher-rated high schools," said President Mary Ann Gawelek. "We want to make sure that students from all economic backgrounds and high schools have equal access to the university."

Lourdes also announced a new Heart of

America Grant which will provide tuition assistance to new undergraduate students whose families have an annual income of \$100,000 or less. "We want to make sure that we can help those families who have significant challenges with funding collegiate tuition," Gawelek told *The Blade*. "We believe that this will help hard-working moms and dads be able to send their daughters and sons to Lourdes."

And as *CB* went to press, *Northern Illinois U.* announced that students applying to NIU for Fall 2021 no longer need send in test scores. If they have a 3.0 GPA, they're in.

Sleep Helps Testers. In a recent article in *Science of Learning*, a MIT researcher found that sleep accounted for nearly one-fourth of the difference among students' grades in class. The researchers used Fitbits to track how long 18-year-olds from a chemical engineering class sleep and how often they wake up. Those who woke up often or didn't get enough sleep tended to do poorly on exams. Those who pulled an all-nighter also fared poorly.

"A student who sleeps seven hours at night, every night, would do better than a student who sleeps 7.5 hours one night and 6.5 hours another night," said researcher Jeffrey Grossman. ■

Is College Worth It?

That is an age-old question that researchers at the Georgetown U. Center on Education and the Workforce tried to answer for current youth. It used a new database of 4,500 colleges and universities and a formula that calculated college costs versus expected income over a lifetime. In general, researchers concluded that the average graduate of a four-year private college has a net gain of \$838,000 over 40 years, \$765,000 for a public college grad.

Its list of the schools with the best ratio turned up surprises. Here are the top 10 schools with the best net economic gains, in order: Albany C. of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, St. Louis C. of Pharmacy, Massachusetts C. of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Stanford U., Maine Maritime Academy, Babson C., Harvard U., Georgetown U. and the United States Merchant Marine Academy.

To view the entire list, go to, <https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/collegeroi/>. ■

And see, www.collegeboundnews.com