

College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

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Admissions 2020

“Through the Fog”

THAT’S HOW Macalester C. President Brian Rosenberg described the current scene in a letter to faculty and staff. “There is a fog of uncertainty that hovers all higher education right now,” he wrote. “And what it is making for are some very difficult logistic situations, some very difficult ethical decisions and some challenging financial decisions.”

In light of this uncertainty, here is what some colleges say about their Fall 2020 admissions.

Cal Poly Admits 15-Year-Old. California Polytechnic State U.’s School of Engineering in San Luis Obispo received 17,540 applications for the Class of 2024 and admitted 5,196 or 29 percent of applicants. Among them is one student who will be 16 when he enrolls as an electrical engineering freshman.

Colby Admits 10 Percent. Colby C. in Maine attracted a record 13,922 applications to the Class of 2024, and admitted fewer than 10 percent. The middle 50 percent range of SAT scores for the admitted students is 1390-1530. The middle 50 percent range of ACT scores is 32-34.

Colby-Sawyer Nursing Deposits Jump. Perhaps as a response to COVID-19, deposits for the fall semester are up 34 percent among nursing students who plan to attend Colby-Sawyer C. in New Hampshire. By late May, 90 nursing students sent in deposits versus 62 who enrolled last year. “During times like these, I think a lot of people are looking for ways they can make a positive impact on society,” said Kevin Finn, dean, School of Nursing & Health Sciences, “and healthcare is a great way to make a difference.”

Furman Reopens Applications. Furman U. in South Carolina is accepting new applicants

for the fall semester. In weeks after the virus struck, the office of admissions received inquiries from students who originally wanted to go out-of-state, but now want to stay closer to home. Furman hopes to enroll 680 first-year students this fall, according to M. Brad Poshard, associate vice president for enrollment and dean of admission and financial aid.

Hampshire to Open in Fall. Hampshire C. is projecting enrollment of 550-600 students on an 800-acre campus, “making social distancing viable,” President Ed Wingenbach declared, “As long as the State of Massachusetts allows colleges to open, which seems likely, Hampshire fully intends to welcome students to campus in the fall.... Our class sizes are small, allowing students and professors to spread out in classrooms.... We are planning to have same-day, rapid testing for COVID-19 infection and antibiotics.” Hampshire is also test optional.

Macalester Sees Through the Fog. Macalester C. in Minnesota received 537 first-year student deposits as of May 20. It hopes to enroll 545 students in its Class of 2024. Approximately, 160 students who were scheduled to study abroad this fall instead likely will be on campus, Jeff Allen, vice president for admissions and financial aid, told *The Mac Weekly*.

“We will continue our policy of meeting the full demonstrated need of all of our students, and so we expect our financial aid budget and our discount rate will increase,” President Rosenberg added in his announcement. All faculty and staff salaries will be frozen for the next academic year to help finance that pledge.

Marquette’s Deposits Lagging. Spring deposits for the incoming first-year class to
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COVID-19 UPDATES

How Will Colleges Reopen in Fall?

THAT IS THE QUESTION on the minds of colleges and students nationwide. The answer lies in the behavior of the COVID-19 virus.

“If you were to design a place to make sure that everyone gets the virus, it would look like a nursing home or a campus,” Paul LeBlanc, president of Southern New Hampshire U., which enrolls 130,000 students online, told *The Atlantic*.

Yet, according to *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, about 65 percent of 750 institutions surveyed by end of May had announced plans for in-person instruction in the fall. Purdue U. in Indiana; Brown U. in Rhode Island and the U. of South Carolina have already tentatively declared that they will open, in some cases with “de-densified” campuses, and many courses migrating online.

Stanford U. is “considering all options” including one where they conduct some classes outdoor in tents, according to the *Stanford Daily*. “Absolutely nothing is off the table,” Provost Persis Drell told the paper.

PREPARING SCENARIOS

Duke U. announced it will reopen, with details of how and when to follow during the summer. “We cannot be certain that it will be safe to resume all usual activities,” Harvard U. provost, Alan Garber told Bloomberg News.

“Consequently, we will need to prepare for a scenario in which much or all learning will
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“THROUGH THE FOG”

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Marquette U. in Milwaukee were lagging behind last year by 13 percent. The numbers began to fall behind in March when many high schools and universities announced they were switching to online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic, reports John Baworowsky, vice president for enrollment management. He attributed the decline to the fact that prospective students had to focus on their online high school classes, and could not visit Marquette.

Marquette set up an admitted student’s webpage on which students, faculty and deans have posted videos giving information about Marquette. The school also extended its deposit deadline to June. Baworowsky said he “hasn’t seen anything like this in his 38-year career.”

Minerva Recruits “Visiting Scholars.”

The Minerva School at KGI in California is recruiting top-ranked international students who are facing visa and travel restrictions and who have been accepted into a highly-selective, English-speaking university. Some 80 percent of Minerva students are located outside the U.S.

The “Visiting Scholars” year was “created to ensure other international students who are prepared for the rigor of the curriculum are forced to curtail their learning during these uncertain times,” founder and Minerva CEO Ben Nelson said. Credits are transferable. The full year of tuition and fees has been set at \$15,950.

Rensselaer Polytechnic Predicts 4 Percent Decline.

At a Town Meeting, President Shirley Ann Jackson predicted a 4 percent fall enrollment decline for the Class of 2024 at the New York school, which translates to an estimated 1,680 freshmen.

Saint Rose Enrolls More Local Students.

The C. of Saint Rose in Albany, New York, has seen “an influx of more local students than usual.” Katie Lesko, assistant vice president of enrollment management, told spectrumlocalnews.com.

St. Olaf Welcomes “the 9/11 Generation.”

By May 1, 774 students committed to St. Olaf’s Class of 2024, with another 90 or so to decide by the new June 1 deadline. (About 400 colleges and universities formally extended their deposit deadline to June 1.)

“Many members of the St. Olaf Class of 2024 were born in 2001; they are the 9/11 generation,” said Michael Kyle, vice president for enrollment at the Minnesota college. “Now they have finished high school virtually, graduated from high school in absentia and made a college selection during a generation-defining pandemic. September 11 may have defined

Other Admissions Updates

AMONG THE IVY LEAGUES

Cornell Confirmations Higher than Normal.

Cornell U. admitted 164 students off its wait list in anticipation of a lower acceptance rate among others who were admitted this spring. However, 3,344 students confirmed their letters of acceptance, “higher than our target,” Jonathan Burdick, vice provost for enrollment, told *The Cornell Daily Sun*.

Princeton Transfers. Princeton U. reinstated its transfer program three years ago. This year, it received 905 transfer applications for Fall 2020, down from 1,429 three years ago, and only accepted 13, the same all three years. Approximately nine students have enrolled each previous year. This year that translates to only 1.4 percent admit rate. Seven of the new students have served or are currently serving in the military.

Penn’s 268th Class. The U. of Pennsylvania attracted 42,205 applicants to the Class of 2024. Penn offered admission to 3,404 Early and Regular Decision students. It hopes to enroll a first-year class of approximately 2,400 students. About 14 percent of those admitted are international students coming from 98 nations. And 53 percent are domestic members of minority groups. Some 20 percent qualify for federal Pell Grants. The middle 50 percent test results range from 1460-1560 on the SAT and 33-35 on the ACT.

AMONG THE NEWS HEADLINES

Duke Refers Chinese Students to Duke Kunshan U.

Duke’s international undergradu-

ates in the Class of 2024 who are barred from the United States because of travel restrictions can enroll in Duke Kunshan U. in China and receive full credit toward their Duke degree. They’ll take a combination of in-person DKU classes, as well as remotely-delivered Duke classes.

their entry into the world, but it didn’t define their life. COVID-19 certainly challenged their last months of high school and their college search process, but it will not define their decision to become an Ole.”

Tulane’s Record Yield. “Tulane was founded in 1834 to cure yellow fever and cholera, and still today we are an institution that is working on the front lines of trying to combat COVID-19,” said Satyajit Dattagupta, Tulane’s vice president for enrollment management and dean of admission. “Our students in the Class of 2024 want to join the Tulane community as a group that is constantly looking at issues that are impacting the world.”

About 1,800 students will comprise the Class of 2024. Tulane posted a 39 percent yield this year, up 73 percent over the last five years. “This is one of the largest increases in yield for any institution in the nation,” Dattagupta told *Tulane News*.

Virginia Tech Faces Decline in International Students. Virginia Tech is one

Test Optional. Several more colleges have gone test optional temporarily and for the future. This includes: Bradley U. in Illinois, Carlton C. in Minnesota, Elon U. in North Carolina, Fordham U. in New York, Greenville U. in Illinois, Olin C. of Engineering in Massachusetts, Rochester Institute of Technology in New York, U. of New England in Maine, U. of California (through 2024, and then permanently for in-state students), U. of San Diego, the U. of St. Francis in Illinois, Villanova U. in Pennsylvania and West Virginia Wesleyan C. See, <https://fairtest.org>.

Common App to Include COVID-19 Questions. The next Common App will give students 250 words to describe how the pandemic has disrupted or affected their lives. Counselors will have the same option on their form.

Fayetteville Freshmen Receive Free Laptops. All 700 members of the entering Class of 2024 at Fayetteville State U. in North Carolina will receive a free laptop, compliments of an anonymous donor.

“This pandemic showed the university the need and importance for our students to have a laptop so they can continue their academic work in the event of a crisis. ■

of the first colleges to announce a decline in international admissions enrolling this fall, according to the *roanoke.com*. As of end of May, it had received deposits from 150 international students. It needed to have about 550. As a result, more offers have been extended to out-of-state students. Tech aims to enroll 6,675 freshmen in the fall.

P.S. Fresno State U. announced it was establishing a special program for freshmen who want to stay close to home in the fall. It is expecting a 5 percent increase in freshmen, and a 54 percent increase for transfer students. This makes for 6,265 new students.

Likewise, the U. of New Mexico, which had declining enrollment for the last several years is seeing an uptick of students accepting scholarships from 7,144 students last year, to 8,547, according to the *Albuquerque Journal*. Is that because students want to stay close to home?

Dan Garcia, UNM’s vice president, said, “Obviously there’s the unknown. There’s a lot that we don’t know.” ■

HOW WILL COLLEGES REOPEN?

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be conducted remotely.”

Some colleges say they will open, but are changing their fall schedule. The U. of North Carolina and North Carolina State U. announced plans to start the fall semester early. The U. of Notre Dame, will start on-campus classes August 10 and end the fall semester by Thanksgiving.

“Bringing our students back is in effect assembling a small city of people from many parts of the nation and the world, who may bring with them pathogens to which they have been exposed,” wrote ND’s president, Rev. John I. Jenkins. “We recognize the challenge, but we believe it is one we can meet.”

Regis U. in Colorado also plans to bring students back to campus in August, “when the probability of disease is lower,” and to adjourn campus-based classes Friday before Thanksgiving, offering online-only final exams the week after. “With this plan, if a second surge occurs around Thanksgiving, your child will already be safely at home,” the school notified parents.

Regis also equipped classrooms with the ability to simultaneously teach in a classroom and on Zoom. And like others, it is creating testing sites, social distancing, screening, isolation protocols and disinfecting residence halls and dining facilities.

While most schools obviously hope they will be able to resume in-person learning, most also understand that other on-campus events must change. According to the May 27 *Des Moines Register*, Iowa State U. announced it will still play football games, but with 50 percent reduced attendance--say, 30,000 spectators.

ONLINE AND OTHER OPTIONS

But at the same time, the California State U. System was the first in the nation to declare that all learning this fall will be online and athletic competitions suspended. The same is true internationally. U. of Cambridge in England declared its lectures will be online until Spring 2021.

Since some students may want to stay closer to home, community colleges across the country are gearing up for a possible influx of students.

“Under the circumstances, families may turn to us as the gateway of opportunity, and we’ve been ready,” Michael Baston, president of Rockland Community College in New York, told CNBC.

A survey by the College Savings Foundation, based in Washington D.C., found that 26 percent of students say they will choose a community college. The average tuition at a public community college was \$3,730 for the 2019-2020 school year. Currently, about half of all bachelor degree earners already start their higher education at a community college, according to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. And at least 30 states guarantee students with an associate degree can transfer to a four-year college.

But, some community colleges around the country also seem to be

leaning in favor of a year of online learning. In the end, will students want this kind of learning experience?

Many students “were signing up for something way more than the classes,” Michael Horn, author of *Choosing College*, told *The Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel*. “A lot of the experiences are in the extra-curriculars, late-night experiences with other students, shared dining rooms, parties, meeting alumni, that’s part of the college experience. It’s not just a collection of classes.”

An Eduventures Insights white paper suggests that many administrators and professors believe “remote instruction’ will at best depress enrollment and disappoint students, and at worst threaten institutional viability.” It notes some educators argue that the “only responsible course of action would be to cancel the semester and close the colleges.”

Such an attitude, Eduventures writes in “Reimagining the College Experience in a Pandemic,” could be disastrous. Instead, it argues, “We must think differently” and “re-create those fundamentals [of college, learning communities, diversity of ideas, human formation] in different ways.... A growth mindset, an outlook limited only by imagination and hard work, is the key to college success.” The report offers several strategies to reinvent the college experience. See, encoura.org.

EXPLORING GAP YEARS

One strategy many students are looking into is a “gap year” while the virus plays itself out.

“Our website is going bonkers,” said Ethan Knight, executive director and founder at the Gap Year Association. The nonprofit connects recent high school graduates to experiential learning opportunities. “We have a list of 350 college deferral policies, and page views have gone up 250 percent from the same time last year.”

An internal poll of admitted Williams C. students showed that 43 percent likely will take a gap year if classes remained online this fall. And 68 percent of current students surveyed by the *Record* are “seriously considering” the same. Liz Creighton, Williams’ dean of admission and financial aid, told the paper, “If students request a gap year, they can have every expectation that the request will be approved.” Typically, only 20-25 of the 550 incoming students take a gap year.

“I can’t imagine that we won’t be responsive to students that step forward and say, ‘This isn’t what I wanted,’” Lee Coffin, Dartmouth’s dean of admissions and financial aid, told *The Dartmouth*.

Coffin referred to students who want to take a gap year as the “if cohort.” He added that if a lot of people decide to take a gap year, Dartmouth may cap the number of students in the Class of 2025.

The pandemic already has hit families, colleges and communities economically. A Junior Achievement-Citizens Bank survey of 1,000 teens ages 13-18 found that 44 percent of U.S. high school upperclassmen say COVID-19 has affected their plans to pay for college. And 30 percent say they will delay their college start date, while 13 percent say they have changed what school they plan to attend. ■

COUNSELOR’S BOOKSHELF

Resources to Stay Up-to-Date. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* is posting updated lists of what colleges are opening when. See, <https://www.chronicle.com>.

The National Association for College Admissions

Counseling will maintain its College Opening Updates until July 31. www.nacacnet.org.

The American School Counselor Association has organized a list of resources. See, <https://www.schoolcounselor.org>.

The National Governors Association issued a Memorandum to governors, “Reopening Institutions of Higher Education.” www.nga.org.

And, throughout the summer, COLLEGE BOUND’S website will post other updates in its “Admissions Story-of-the-Day” and Links to Resources. See, <http://www.collegebound-news.com/links/links.php>. ■

CURRICULUM CAPSULES

Carthage's Nursing B.S. Carthage C. in Wisconsin is accepting applications for its new RN-BSN program, which is designed for working nurses to complete their studies in as few as 21 months through a hybrid online and on-campus approach.

Cedarville's Cyber Specialization. Cedarville U. in southwestern Ohio created a new computer science major in cyber operations. "It's imperative that every computer science graduate understands cybersecurity because they are the ones responsible for building cyberspace, a world we all increasingly depend upon to be safe and secure." Cedarville is a Baptist institution with an enrollment of 4,193 undergraduates, graduates and online students specializing in 150 areas of study.

Central C. Offers Early Childhood/Special Education Training. Central C. in Iowa has been approved to train students in Early Childhood/Special Education in its education department. Beginning this fall, Iowa students will be able to begin their college coursework while in high school and follow diverse paths to various early childhood employment credentials.

Fairfield's Sports Media Major. Fairfield U. in Connecticut is launching a new interdisciplinary major in sports media. The program will encompass journalism, broadcasting, communications and public relations in a way that is rooted in the liberal arts and Fairfield's Jesuit mission. Students will learn to critically evaluate social, cultural and political issues

that surround sports.

Lewis & Clark's Health Studies Minor. Lewis & Clark U. in Oregon has created a new health studies minor organized around three categories: mechanisms of wellness and disease; psychological and narrative representations of wellness and disease; and global and cultural approaches to wellness and disease.

Lyon Adds Data Science. Lyon C. in Arkansas added a data science major. Data science focuses on logarithms and how they apply to data, combining mathematics and computing. Students will be able to pursue one of three tracks: science, business and economics or social sciences/humanities/fine arts.

Manhattan's Geography Minor in Sociology. Sociology students at Manhattan C. in New York can now minor in geography. Students will learn how geographers think about complex problems facing our planet: poverty, inequality, environmental degradation, climate change, even how the pandemic will influence decisions. Students will develop skills in digital tools and data-analytic methods that employers value.

"There's a critical and social awareness, social responsibility aspect of human geography," said Robin Lovell, geography professor.

Mercy C.'s Online Healthcare Degree. Mercy C. of Health Sciences in Iowa, founded in 1899, announced MercyPlus, an online extension of the college's existing health care degree options with four degree programs. These include a B.S. in nursing completion program; a B.S. in healthcare administration; a B.S. in public health; and both a certificate and associate of science degree in medical assisting. Tuition for the program is set at \$2,500 per quarter for up to 12 credits.

Also, Franklin C. Announces Esports Program. Franklin C. in Indiana plans to launch an esports program in the 2020-2021 academic year. The program includes video games on various platforms, often in the form of organized, multiplayer competitions. Currently, more than 425 colleges have an esports club program, while more than 108 colleges play at the tournament level. Bill Dever, chief creative officer, at Harena Data, said, "It is a portal to another language, another digital universe and another way of cognitively developing a thought process." ■

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NEWS YOU CAN USE

Michigan Opens College Advising Hotline. The Michigan College Access Network launched a statewide college advising hotline to answer questions from high school students, grades 9-12, about attending college. It is staffed by nearly 100 high school counselors and college advisors connected with MCAN and MSU's College Advising Corps.

Nation's Report Card. Eighth-grade test scores on the "Nation's Report Card" (National Assessment of Educational Progress) in U.S. history and geography declined since the test was last given in 2014, while civic scores remained the same. Some 42,700 eighth-graders in 780 public and private schools took the test. U.S. Ed Secretary Betsy DeVos called the results "stark and inexcusable."

Only a quarter or less of students scored at or above proficient levels. Only 15 percent were proficient when it comes to U.S. history.

Internet Homework Gap. "Statewide, roughly 30 percent of students have no access to Internet service, and/or a device," Blake Bogan, president of the (Louisiana) Lafourche Parish Association of Educators, told the National Education Association's *Education News*. "The areas hit hardest are rural, low-income families. Those students are going to be left behind the most."

Nationally, 37 percent of rural Americans have no broadband Internet service at home, trailing urban residents by 12 points and suburban residents by 16 points, according to a 2019 Pew Research Center report.

Educators are urging Congress to appropriate emergency funding for E-Rate, a program

that increased public school Internet connection from 14 percent in 1998 to nearly 100 percent. They want funds to purchase Wi-Fi hotspots, modems, routers and devices that students and educators need for equitable online learning.

DACA Students Enroll. More than 450,000 undocumented students are enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities, according to a new report from New American Economy and Presidents Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration. Find the report, "Undocumented Students in Higher Education: How Many Students are in U.S. Colleges and Universities and Who Are They?" See, <https://presidents-immigrationalliance.org>.

Debt Update. Women and Student debt has grown to \$1.54 trillion, doubling over the last decade at a rate six times that of inflation. Women owe two thirds of all outstanding loans or about \$929 billion, according to the American Association of University Women. To read about solutions, see "Deeper In Debt: Woman and Student Loans in the Time of COVID" at www.aauw.org

Comings & Goings... Pine Manor C. and Boston C. have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to integrate the two institutions in a common mission "to serve underrepresented, first-generation, low-income students." The agreement establishes the Pine Manor Institute for Student Success, endowed with a \$50 million from Boston C.... And, with too few students to sustain its operation, Nebraska Christian C. closed this spring. ■