

College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

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Admissions Watch

Selective Surges

APPLICATIONS to selective colleges this spring surged by 17 percent, according to statistics gathered by the Common App, which is used by 900 schools. Applications increased only 6 percent for more accessible colleges. Here are a few samples of both.

Barnard Apps Up 10 Percent. Barnard C. in New York City attracted 10,395 applications to the Class of 2025, 10 percent more than last year. It admitted 1,084 students from 43 states and 40 countries. According to the *Columbia Spectator*, 64 percent of accepted students identify as women of color, 19 percent as first-generation college students.

“Our incoming class is truly impressive, and the record-breaking number of applicants this year is a testament to the value of the education we offer and the Barnard experience as a whole,” said Jennifer Fondiller, vice president for enrollment and communications.

Carnegie Mellon Qatar Apps From 43 Countries. Applications to Carnegie Mellon U. in Qatar rose by 30 percent in 2021. Admitted students come from 43 countries. CMU-Q offers degrees in biological sciences, business administration, computer science and information systems. In a letter to admitted students, Michael Trick, dean of CMU-Q, wrote, “While we know you are very strong academically, we chose you because of your enthusiasm, thoughtfulness and creativity.”

Chapman Looks for “Strength of Character.” Chapman U. in California received more than 15,000 applications for the Class of 2025, the most in school history. Chapman accepted slightly more than 8,000 students hoping to matriculate a class

of about 1,800.

Slightly more than half self-identified as African American, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander or students of multiple ethnicities. First-generation college students account for nearly 18 percent of the admitted class. More than 500 international students representing 72 nations were also tapped. Around 71 percent of the admitted class applied without submitting standardized tests.

“In addition to academics, our admission team focused on some key areas like leadership, service and communication skills and other non-cognitive variables,” said Marcela Mejia Martinez, Chapman’s assistant vice president for admissions. “We emphasized what we call ‘Strength of Character’ attributes and characteristics...”

Colgate Admits 17 Percent. Colgate C. in Upstate New York received 17,533 applications for the Class of 2025, 104 percent more than last year! Applications from minority students more than doubled. Colgate admitted 3,010 students. Its admit rate fell from 27.5 percent last year to 17.2 percent this year.

“We are always looking for students who have demonstrated a willingness to meaningfully engage, to tackle difficult challenges and who have proven that they have the capacity to contribute to a community focused on excellence inside and outside the classroom,” said Gary Ross, vice president for admission and financial aid.

Georgetown Has School-Low Acceptance Rate. Georgetown U. in Washington D.C. attracted 27,650 applications for the Class of 2025, 30 percent more than last year. Georgetown admitted a total of 3,226 students,

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Financial Matters

Bowdoin Increases Aid by \$3.5 Million. Bowdoin C. in Maine, one of the nation’s 19 “need-blind, meet full need, no loan” institutions, is increasing its student aid budget by \$3.5 million per year, beginning this fall. “This increase to the aid budget reflects Bowdoin’s steadfast commitment to need-based aid and to equitably address affordability and the needs of our families,” said Whitney Soule, vice president and dean of admissions and student aid.

Colby Receives \$2.8 Million for Aid. Colby C. in Maine is the beneficiary of an anonymous \$2.8 million gift dedicated to financial aid for Maine students. “Financial aid made my years at Colby possible, years that have shaped my entire life,” one of the donors said in a press release. “It means so much to us to pay it forward for the next generation of Maine students on Mayflower Hill.”

Whitman’s International Aid. Whitman C. in Washington State meets the full financial need of international students it admits. Whitman’s admit rate for international students ranges between 12 and 22 percent.

SCHOLARSHIP SCOOPS

Alvernia’s Transfer Scholarships. Alvernia U. in Redding, Pennsylvania, now sponsors five new \$15,000 to \$21,000 scholarships for transfer students. Deadline for submitting FAFSA was April 1, so think next year. “Nearly 99 percent of transfer students receive some form of financial aid.”

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“SELECTIVE”

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for a school-low acceptance rate of 11.7 percent, according to *The Hoya*.

Among students who were admitted, 25.6 are Asian American, 12.2 percent are Latinx, 10.3 percent are black and .5 percent are Native Americans. Some 9.6 percent of those admitted are international students from 98 foreign nations.

“We were surprised by the increase, especially since we did not adopt a test-optional policy and do not accept the Common Application,” Charles Deacon, dean of undergraduate admissions, told the paper.

Haverford Had More “Holistic” Review of Apps. Haverford C., outside of Philadelphia, attracted 5,336 applications for the Class of 2025, 17.5 percent more than last year. Haverford accepted 17.8 percent of them, the second lowest rate in college history, according to *haverfordclerk.com*. Some 60 percent of applicants this year chose to omit a standardized test score, which allowed for a more “holistic” review of aspirants.

Howard Offers “Cultural Diversity” to Applicants. Howard U. in Washington D.C., founded in 1867 and offering 140 programs, experienced a 24.8 percent increase in Regular Decision applications to go along with a 13 percent increase in early apps. Some 10,000 students were offered a spot in the Class of 2025.

“We carefully reviewed each student application, and offers were extended to those students who have the greatest potential to excel in our culturally diverse and rigorous academic setting,” said Anthony E. Jones, associate provost and assistant vice president of enrollment management.

Northwestern Saw “Soaring” Applications Numbers. Northwestern U. received 47,633 applications for its next class, and admitted only 6.8 percent of them. Director of undergraduate admissions, Liz Kinsley, told *The Daily Northwestern* that NU’s test-optional policy contributed to its soaring application numbers.

But she also attributed the virtual outreach of the admissions department to students who might not normally be able to travel to visit the school outside Chicago.

Notre Dame Puts Thousands on Wait List. The U. of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, fielded a total of 23,639 applications for the Class of 2025, 11.1 percent more than last year, and admitted 3,446 for a record-low acceptance rate of 14.6 percent. The admitted students came from 2,175 high schools. About 48 percent of this year’s admitted students are

State News

Florida’s Diversity Declined. *CB* reported admit numbers from the U. of Florida in April. Here’s some additional information. Women make up about 59 percent of the Class of 2025, according to the *independent Florida alligator*.

Hispanic students make up about 18 percent of those admitted, African Americans about 5 percent and Native Americans only 1 percent. Nearly 50 percent of admits are white. Both the number of Hispanic and African American students this year continued a decline, probably due to the impact of COVID-19. Another reason could be because the U. of Florida did not become test optional.

A total of 5,192 Florida students were admitted, while non-Florida admits totaled 4,757. The number of admitted international students doubled.

Minnesota Privates Up. Macalester C. in St. Paul, Minnesota, attracted 42 percent more applications than last year. Applications from students of color at Macalester jumped 21 percent, and those from first-generation college students soared by 45 percent. Macalester admitted 31 percent of applicants. Its target class size is 545 freshmen.

St. Olaf C. and Carleton C., both in nearby Northfield, saw increased applications of 20 percent and 15 percent respectively. Carleton’s acceptance rate dropped from 19 percent

international or U.S. students of color. ND placed 3,101 students on this year’s waitlist. “With the uncertainty, we felt that we should do more waitlists in case we need more spots to be taken,” Don Bishop, associate vice president for undergraduate enrollment, told *The Observer*.

“We had an increase of about 500 students from lower-income households that had very high-class performance,” Bishop added, attributing that number to the fact that ND did not require standardized test scores, a policy that extends to next year.

NYU Fields Over 100,000 Apps. New York U. received more than 100,000 applications for its New York, Abu Dhabi and Shanghai campuses, 15,000 more than last year. Only 12.8 percent of applicants were admitted to its New York campus, 29 percent of whom hail from underrepresented groups, 20 percent of whom are first-generation college-goers, 20 percent of whom are Pell Grant-eligible students.

Admitted students posted a record high median SAT score of 1540. NYU expects to matriculate 6,700 students this fall.

Rice Essays Matter. Rice U. in Texas received 29,253 applications, 26 percent more than last year. It offered admission to 2,749,

to 17 percent this year, Art Rodriguez, vice president and dean of admissions and financial aid, told the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*. About 60 spots in its targeted class of 525 freshmen were taken by students who deferred enrollment last year due to the pandemic.

St. Olaf’s 2020 freshman class was smaller than expected, due to the pandemic, so it admitted 10 percent more students than last year, Chris George, dean of admission and financial aid, told the paper. “We’re not looking to get more and more selective,” he said.

Meanwhile, applications to the U. of Minnesota’s Twin Cities campus declined by 5 percent.

UCLA Hits 140,000 Applications. The U. of California at Los Angeles, the nation’s most popular university, attracted more than 140,000 applications for about 6,300 freshman seats for the Fall 2021, according to the *Los Angeles Times*. But according to the paper, 60 percent declined UCLA’s offer.

Washington Tops 48,000 Apps. The U. of Washington received 48,800 applications for the Class of 2025, up from 43,781 last year. “I definitely was surprised to see an increase in applications this year,” said Paul Seegert, director of admissions. The university is expected to matriculate about 7,000 freshmen this fall. ■

or a record low 8.7 percent of those students, Yvonne Romero da Silva, vice president for enrollment, told the *Rice Thresher*. The total includes 478 Early Decision admittees.

“We read each student’s Rice supplemental essays and really value when students can convey the elements of Rice that are special--the community, our culture of care and engaged students and faculty,” Romero da Silva told the paper.

St. John’s “Highly-Qualified” Admits. St. John’s U. on Long Island, New York, received more than 22,000 applications for the Fall 2021 semester. Simon G. Moller, provost and vice president for academic affairs, told viewers at St. John’s virtual Accepted Student Day that, “You are one of the highest academically-qualified classes that St. John’s has ever had, with an average high school grade-point average above 90 percent and the average SAT score of 1225.”

Vanderbilt Admits But 6.7 Percent. Vanderbilt U. in Tennessee received 42,125 Regular Decision applications for the Class of 2025, and admitted 2,248. In total, Vanderbilt received 47,174 applications, an increase of 28.5 percent over last year. It admitted 3,162 students, for an overall admit rate of only 6.7 percent. ■

COVID Enrollment Numbers

Spring Follows Fall. Spring 2021 enrollment apparently followed the trends of last fall. Overall, undergraduate enrollment is down, -4.5 percent, while graduate enrollment is up 4.3 percent compared to last year, according to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. Community college is the worst-hit sector, where enrollment is -9.5 percent from last spring. Undergraduate enrollment fell in all racial and ethnic groups. Enrollment among 18- to 24-year-olds is down, -5.3 percent this spring versus adult enrollment, which also declined, -2.6 percent.

Community college enrollment declines among minority students were particularly sharp, with a 19 percent decrease from Fall 2019 to Fall 2020 and a 16 percent decrease among Hispanic students during the same period.

Steady Goes at Saint Mary's. Saint Mary's C. in Indiana enrolled 20 fewer students during the Fall 2020 COVID semester than in 2019, according to the *South Bend Tribune*. "The students entering into the Class of 2024 and 2025 have had their lives upended over this last year at such a pivotal time, which certainly had an impact on their college decision process," said Sarah Gallagher Dvorak, director of admission. "Many are facing the unknown, financial uncertainties, family illness and other factors which have influenced these decisions...." The Class of 2024 went well into the summer before many of those final decisions were made. She added, "One trend we're seeing nationally is that the Class of 2025 is delaying each step of the college search and decision process... making their final decisions much later than normal."

Colorado Minority Declines. The Colorado Community C. System experienced a 14 percent decline in enrollment among students of color, first-generation students and low-income students during this COVID school year. "A lot of those students lost their jobs and frankly, they're not getting them back. They were service industry, tourism jobs," one official told thedenverchannel.com.

He added, "We have to provide services that colleges never had to consider. We have to provide food pantries, mental health counseling. We have to help connect them to other government services they may need to allow them to continue...."

Metropolitan State U. in Denver saw a 6.2 percent overall enrollment drop-off.

Albion & Kalamazoo Excel in Diversity. According to Michigan Independent Colleges and Universities, Albion and Kalamazoo C.s are doing the best job of Michigan's 41 private colleges in improving diversity and supporting that with financial aid.

In 2013-14, 18 percent of Albion's students identified as persons of color. But by Fall 2020, 48 percent of new students came from racial

minorities. "One of our core values is belonging," said Kelly Finn, chief of staff to Albion's president. "We are committed to building a campus where every student feels at home. To do that, we need to go beyond diversity, equity and inclusion to true belonging."

Meanwhile, in 2011, 19.8 percent of Kalamazoo students identified as coming from a minority group. By 2020, that number hit 35.7 percent. The school has focused some of its recruitment on Southern California and Texas.

"We really wanted to get a student body that looked more like the world that we live in instead of a world that has passed," said Sara Westfall, vice president of student development and dean of students. She added that, "We don't define diversity only as a racial or ethnicity. There is socio-economic diversity, religious diversity and cultural diversity, and we care equally about all of these."

Early College as Equity "Silver Bullet." In 2018, low-income Massachusetts students were 2.6 times less likely to earn a college degree within six years of high school graduation than their wealthier peers. That's why a new report from MassINC, "Early College as a Force for Equity in the Post-Pandemic Era" is urging state legislators to increase support for the state's Early College program which currently supports only 2 percent of students who would stand to benefit, or about 4,000 students.

Last year, Early College participants were 66 percent more likely to complete a FAFSA application for financial aid and 54 percent more likely to enroll in college right after high school.

More Schools Test-Optional. More than 1,400 schools, or about 60 percent of the 2,330 undergraduate institutions in the United States, will not require standardized test scores next year, according to FairTest, The National Center for Fair and Open Testing.

"Last year's sharp spike of admissions exam suspensions was not a one-time phenomenon," said Bob Schaeffer, FairTest's executive director. "Schools that waived ACT/SAT score requirements during the pandemic generally saw more applicants, better academically qualified academics and more diversity of all sorts. Now, most are extending these policies for at least another year." You can find a full list of the schools at <https://fairtest.org/university/optional>.

Test-Optional Schools. The U. of Illinois, the U. of Illinois Chicago and U. of Illinois Springfield will not require ACT or the SAT scores for the next two years.

Scripps C. in California, part of the Claremont system, announced that it will be test-optional beginning Fall 2021. It's part of Scripps' effort "to identify and advocate for students with a strong academic profile who may have previously been viewed as less competitive." ■

COUNSELOR'S BOOKSHELF

Hopes & Worries. Filling out a college application caused "High" or "Very High" stress for 74 percent of students and parents this year, according to the *Princeton Review's* "2021 College Hopes & Worries Survey." The greatest worry for 41 percent of the 14,000-

plus respondents was "the level of debt to pay for their degree." For 28 percent, their top concern was "will get into first-choice college but won't be able to afford to attend."

Some 59 percent said the pandemic had influenced their thinking about college, and 54

percent of them said that they were applying to colleges "with lower sticker prices." See, <https://www.princetonreview.com>.

50 Colleges With No Student Loans, Reduced Tuition. Who are they? Alice Lloyd C., Brown U., College of Holy Cross, College of the Ozarks and Columbia U.... For all, see, www.Forbes.com/sites/zachfriedman/2021/02/22. ■

Ivy League 2021 Updates

Brown U. received a total of 46,568 applications to the Class of 2025, 27 percent more than last year. In April, it made offers to 1,652 students to go along with 885 Early Decision admitted students, for an admitted class of 2,537 and an admit rate of 5.4 percent. Nearly 69 percent of the admitted class intended to apply for financial aid. Some 55 percent of those admitted are students of color and 58 percent attended public schools.

The top 10 intended majors? Computer science, economics, biology, political science, engineering, international and public affairs, biochemistry and molecular biology, health and human biology, neuroscience and biomedical engineering.

“Whether looking at the global pandemic or movements to support racial justice or environmental impacts of climate change, this has been a year of great unrest for students all over the country and world,” said Logan Powell, dean of admission.

Harvard Admits 3.4 Percent. Harvard C. attracted 57,435 applications, up 17,000 from last year. Harvard admitted a total of 1,968 to the Class of 2025, or 3.4 percent of applicants, down from last year’s 4.9 percent.

International students make up 12.2 percent of the admitted pool, while 8.8 percent are U.S. dual citizens. Some 55 percent will receive need-based grants that allow families to pay an average of \$12,000 annually. About 20 percent of the class will pay nothing. African American students make up about 18 percent of the admitted class, while 13.3 percent is Latinx. Harvard is extending its test-optional policy through the next school year and is planning

a full return to campus in fall.

“We chose to admit a full class, despite the many deferrals matriculating this fall, because we believe in the promise of this incredibly diverse and accomplished group of students,” Claudine Gay, dean of the faculty of arts and sciences, told *The Harvard Gazette*.

Penn Apps Up 34 Percent. The U. of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia attracted 56,333 applications, a 34 percent increase over last year. The Ivy League school offered admission to 3,202 applicants. About 56 percent of admitted students are U.S. students of color, while 54 percent are women. First-generation college students account for 15 percent of those offered admission to the Class of 2025. And 18 percent qualify for Pell Grants. Another 13 percent are legacy students, according to the *Daily Pennsylvanian*.

Princeton Attracts 37,000-plus Apps. Princeton U. received 37,601 applications for the Class of 2025, 15 percent more than last year. It offered admission to 1,498 students. Of those admitted, 22 percent will be first-generation college students, up from 17 percent last year. People of color, including biracial and multiracial students, account for 68 percent of those who have been admitted.

About 52 percent are women, and 64 percent come from public schools, while 10 percent are legacy students, children of Princeton alumni. Almost a quarter said they are interested in studying engineering, while 15 percent are interested in the humanities. The admissions office conducted 574 virtual visits, 387 of which were schools that had not been visited the previous year. ■

FINANCIAL MATTERS

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Cornell C. Aids Iowans. Cornell C. in Iowa announced a new Iowa Promise Scholarship that will award \$30,000 to each recipient, about half the cost to attend. The scholarship is renewable each year. Drew Shradel, director of admissions, says that applications and deposits have grown by 50 percent since Cornell C. launched the scholarship last October.

Williston State C., a two-year school in North Dakota, has a number of scholarship programs for students from North Dakota and Montana. Currently, 238 students are on scholarship.

TUITION TABS

Duke Tuition Up 3.9 Percent. Duke U. set its 2021-22 academic year undergraduate tuition at \$58,085, a 3.9 percent increase, an increase that it suspended during the COVID school year of 2020-21. The average financial aid for students who entered in 2020 was \$55,368. Approximately 22.5 percent of students in the entering Class of 2020 received grants that covered their full cost of tuition.

Indiana State Housing Up 1.5 Percent. Indiana State U. will increase its resident hall room and meal plan by 1.5 percent for the 2021-22 school year to \$7,346.

Rollins Tuition Up 1.9 Percent. Rollins C. in Florida experienced a \$16 million loss during the 2020-21 budget year. A 1.9 percent tuition increase will help bring faculty and staff salaries back to their pre-COVID-19 levels. “We need to restore the temporary reductions to enable us to remain competitive for the highest quality faculty and staff,” said Ed Kania, vice president of business and finance and treasurer. About 85 percent of Rollins students receive some form of financial aid, and many of them will see an increase in their grants. ■

tioned that fishing clubs are popular on some campuses. Since then we have learned that 220 universities across the country operate fishing clubs, including Indiana U., Purdue U., U. of Tennessee, U. of Wisconsin-Madison, Whitewater and Green Bay, U. of Michigan, North Carolina State U., Auburn U., U. of North Carolina-Charlotte and Virginia Tech—all top programs. Bethel U. in Minnesota recently awarded two athletic scholarships for competitive fishing. ■

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NEWS YOU CAN USE

Student Drinking Declines During Pandemic. A survey from the U. of Nebraska-Lincoln seems to indicate that college students drank less during the pandemic. Those who moved home with parents cut their drinking in half. Those who did not move decreased their drinking by 21 percent.

“This speaks to the role of social environment in college drinking,” said lead researcher Anna Jaffe, assistant professor of psychology at UNL.

Virtual Leap. According to the *Economist Intelligence Unit*, educators believe that the pandemic has accelerated the evolution of virtual education by 10 years. “We’ve been entering a new paradigm for the last decade and COVID-

19 has just expedited this progress. It provided gasoline to trends that were already underway,” said Michael Horn, co-founder of Clayton Christiansen Institute for Disruptive Innovation.

Faculty More Positive About Online Learning. As a result of experiences with the dramatic shift to online learning during the pandemic, 51 percent of 1,702 faculty at 967 institutions are more positive about online learning than pre-pandemic, according to the Third Digital Learning Pulse Survey. And 47 percent expect that many of the technological changes will remain in place after the pandemic. See, <https://news.cengage.com/>.

More on Fishing Clubs. In March, *CB* men-

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