2003 Freshman Admissions to the University of California

Information Summary

The University of California admitted a record number of freshman students for Fall 2003 and admissions grew by 4 percent, but the proportion of those being admitted to UC’s selective campuses declined slightly as admissions becomes more competitive at nearly all UC campuses.

A total of 60,439 California freshman students were offered Fall, Winter or Spring admission this year to one or more of UC’s eight undergraduate campuses.

The breakdown is as follows: 50,291 California freshman students were offered Fall admission, compared to 48,369 in Fall 2002. An additional 3,676 students were offered Winter or Spring admission and another 6,472 were offered admission to a campus they had not selected on their application, a process known as a referral. Under California’s Master Plan for Education, the top 12.5 percent of the state’s high school graduates are deemed UC eligible and guaranteed admission to at least one campus in the system.

Although more students were offered admission this year, continuing growth in the college-age population and in the number of UC applicants have forced UC campuses to become increasingly selective. While admissions rates at selective campuses have declined, students from most areas of the state and all ethnic groups except American Indian have been admitted in greater numbers systemwide.

UC Davis, for instance, admitted 63.3 percent of its applicants in 2002 compared to 56.9 percent for 2003. However, Davis admitted 448 more students this year than in 2002. At UC Irvine the admit rate dropped from 56.6 percent in 2002 to 53.3 percent for 2003, yet the campus admitted 1,141 more students than a year ago. Across the system, 2003 freshman admit rates range from 81.1 percent at UC Santa Cruz to 24.1 percent at UCLA.

On average, students applied to 3.5 campuses. Students accepted by multiple campuses are included in the admissions figures for each campus in the attached tables. Unless otherwise noted, the systemwide totals in this summary and in the tables are "unduplicated," that is each student is counted only once.

The academic quality of the incoming freshman class continues to be outstanding. Admitted students are taking more college preparatory courses and earning higher grades. The average number of year-long courses completed is now 23; the minimum requirement is 15 year-long academic courses, which are also known as “A to G” classes. The average systemwide GPA of admitted students is now 3.76. Meanwhile, SAT II subject exam scores are more heavily considered in the admissions process than are
scores on the SAT I or the ACT. The average SAT II score for Writing has climbed to 590 and for Mathematics, to 610.

The statistics in this information summary and the accompanying tables are preliminary and may change after the campuses review appeals. In general, nine out of every 10 admitted freshman students are California residents. Transfer data are not yet available.

A brief summary of the admissions data follows:

- **Growth rate in admissions exceeds the growth of California’s public high school graduating class.** For Fall 2003, UC freshman admissions grew by 4 percent. This is almost twice the California Department of Education’s projected growth rate of 2.4 percent for the public high school graduating class.

- **Except for American Indians, all major racial and ethnic groups registered systemwide increases.** A breakdown follows:
  - American Indian, -3.4 percent;
  - Chicano/Latino, 8.3 percent;
  - African American, 6.9 percent;
  - White, 1.3 percent;
  - Asian American, 0.7 percent.

- **Proportion of underrepresented students increased modestly systemwide and at most campuses.** Underrepresented students, i.e., American Indians, Chicano/Latinos and African Americans, comprised 19.8 percent of the systemwide admitted class. Six campuses registered incremental gains and two campuses experienced small declines.

A complete set of tables is available online at: