2012 Freshman Admissions to the University of California

The admissions outcomes reported in the summary below and the accompanying tables are preliminary and focus entirely on admission of freshman applicants. Transfer admissions data will be available mid-June. These data reflect admissions offers as of April 2, 2012.

The University of California continues to implement a waitlist process to help campuses enroll the maximum number of new freshmen consistent with their enrollment targets for state-supported students. Individual campus admission numbers in this report are subject to change if campuses admit students from their waiting lists. New totals that incorporate waitlist admitted students will be distributed with preliminary reports of Statements of Intent to Register (SIR) in September.

Unless otherwise noted, the universitywide totals in this summary and the tables are “unduplicated,” meaning that each student is counted only once.

Summary

For fall 2012, the University of California admitted a record 80,289 applicants for freshman admission out of a similarly record-setting applicant pool of 126,455. Table 1 shows the number of admitted students by residency for each UC campus as well as for the system over the past three years. Table 2 shows the same information including the admission rates. Below is a summary for California residents and nonresidents.

California Residents

The number of California resident students admitted to the University increased by 2,155 students over fall 2011, or 3.6 percent. Despite this increase, the University expects to enroll approximately the same number of students in fall 2012 as it did in 2011 (33,000).

The number of newly admitted California students did not keep pace with the number of applicants, however. As a result, the admission rate – the percentage of applicants admitted – dropped for the system from 69.7 percent in 2011 to 65.8 percent in 2012. All campuses except Davis, Riverside, and San Diego became more selective in their freshman admission decisions for California students.

Changes in campus admission offers for California students are driven by campus enrollment targets, the anticipated rate at which students accept these offers, and, in some cases, by enrollment outcomes in recent years. Most campuses saw modest adjustments from 2011.

The University of California will continue to honor its commitment to the California Master Plan for Higher Education. Students who are in the top 9 percent of their high school or the top 9 percent of the state are guaranteed admission to the University. Through a process called “referral,” these students will be offered the opportunity to be admitted to UC Merced if they do not receive an offer of admission from any campus to which they applied.
Out-of-State and International Students

The number of out-of-state and international students admitted to the University of California also increased from fall 2011 to fall 2012, from 13,144 to 18,846.

The increase did not keep pace with the 56.2 percent increase in applications from nonresidents. Therefore, the systemwide admission rates for out-of-state and international students dropped significantly between the two years. For out-of-state students, the admission rate dropped from 60.7 percent in 2011 to 53.9 percent in 2012; for international students, it went from 64.1 percent in 2011 to 61.3 percent in 2012.

Despite the increases in the number of out-of-state and international students, the University expects to remain below the 10 percent cap on total nonresident undergraduate enrollment for fall 2012.

Diversity

The fall 2012 class of students admitted to the University of California is more diverse this year.

Table 3 shows modest improvement in the University’s admission of students from historically underrepresented minority groups over the past three years. The proportion of admitted African American students increased from 4.1 percent in 2011 to 4.4 percent in 2012. The proportion of Chicano/Latinos increased from 26.0 percent to 27.3 percent.

The attached bar charts show that the University also experienced modest increases in the proportions of newly admitted freshmen who are the first in their family to attend college, come from low-income families, and attended a California high school with a low Academic Performance Indicator (API).

These outcomes are consistent with the University’s new admissions policy, which is intended to expand consideration for admission to a broad range of students.

Academic Preparation

The academic preparation of the newly admitted class as measured by average grade point average and test scores remains nearly unchanged between 2011 and 2012. The University does see a slight decline in the average total SAT score (from 1795 to 1781). This decline corresponds to a change in the average SAT score of this year’s applicants to the University and across the country.