

Fall 2004 Undergraduate Applications to the University of California

Information Summary

Universitywide application volume: While a record number of California transfer students applied to the University of California for Fall 2004, for the first time since Fall 1993, fewer freshmen applied to UC than did so the year before.

UC received a total of 98,658 on-time freshman and transfer applications for Fall 2004, a 1.3 percent decrease from the 99,991 undergraduate applications received for Fall 2003.

Prospective freshmen filed 73,794 applications, 4.1 percent fewer than the 76,931 recorded for Fall 2003. The trend was led by international applicants, with an 18.2 percent decrease, followed by out-of-state students, with a 9.4 percent decrease; 2.9 percent fewer California residents applied.

More California resident transfer students, on the other hand, applied than ever before.

UC received 24,373 transfer applications for Fall 2004, up 5.7 percent from the 23,060 logged for Fall 2003. California transfer applications rose by 12.9 percent while out-of-state and international transfers dropped by 14.2 percent and 56.1 percent, respectively.

This is the third year where UC has experienced a systemwide decline in out-of-state and international freshman applications. Out-of-state transfer applications have also declined since 2001; international transfers declined compared to last year.

The average freshman applicant applied to 3.6 campuses, while transfer students applied to 2.8 campuses on average.

A record 84 percent of the applications were filed online, compared to 68.4 percent last year.

Applications by Campus

All campuses except Santa Cruz had decreases in the number of freshman applications. The decreases ranged from 0.7 percent at Berkeley to 7.5 percent at Riverside. Santa Cruz had a 7.4 percent increase in freshman applications.

In contrast, all campuses showed a noteworthy increase in transfer applications over last year. Some of the Fall 2004 increase may be tied to the closure of the Winter 2004 and Spring 2004 application terms.

California Freshman Applicants vs. Public High School Graduates

The overall decrease in California freshman applications is a departure from past patterns, which often matched or exceeded the increase in the number of California high school graduates (0.8 percent) projected by the California Department of Finance. This year, 15.3 percent of public high school graduates applied to UC compared to 16 percent in Fall 2003.

Within the public high school graduating class, varying percentages of the racial/ethnic groups applied to UC for Fall 2004, as outlined below in descending order: Asian/Pacific Islander 41.5 percent, Filipino 22.5 percent, White 12.7 percent, American Indian 11.6 percent, African American 8.8 percent, and Chicano/Latino 7.7 percent. The proportion of public high school graduates of all ethnicities applying to UC for the past three years has remained relatively steady.

Academic and Other Indicators

The high school GPA of California freshman applicants increased slightly on all campuses with the exception of Riverside, which experienced a slight drop.

Average SAT I total scores (Verbal + Math) increased for all campuses, and Fall 2004 applicants have higher SAT II Writing scores than applicants of prior years. In addition, all campuses show increases in SAT II Math scores.

The average number of A-G courses, meanwhile, dipped slightly on each campus. Further analysis will be done to determine the cause of this.

On all campuses, California freshman applicants with low socio-economic status (first generation college students from low-income families) increased slightly. However, the percentage of first generation college students declined slightly on all except Riverside while the percentage of students from low-income families increased slightly at all campuses.

Systemwide and at each campus, the proportion of freshman applicants from urban and suburban locations in California has remained steady since 2002. However, Fall 2004 data show a slight decline in rural applicants at most campuses.

The percentage of applications from low API scoring high schools has decreased slightly at all campuses, with the exception of an increase at Riverside.

Freshman ELC Applications

Fall 2004 was the fourth year of implementation of the ELC program. Under ELC, California high school graduates in the top 4 percent of their graduating class who completed a specified number of academic courses by the end of the 11th grade are eligible for UC admission.

Approximately 80 percent of the high school graduates identified as ELC eligible followed through with an application to UC, accounting for 11,394 of 14,247 high school seniors who were notified of their ELC eligibility in September of 2003. ELC applicants account for 17.8 percent of the California freshmen applicants tallied so far.

Over one-fifth of Berkeley and Los Angeles freshman applicants (23.8 percent and 22 percent, respectively) were ELC-eligible. Other campuses also experienced noteworthy percentages: San Diego (20.3 percent), Irvine (19.1 percent), Davis (15.1 percent), Santa Barbara (13.5 percent), Riverside (10.2 percent), and Santa Cruz (8.6 percent).

Dual Admissions Program (DAP)

UC's new Dual Admission Program elicited 491 applicants across the system in its first year of implementation.

California Applications by Ethnicity

The number of freshman applicants from all racial/ethnic groups decreased compared to last year with the exception of American Indian*, Asian American and Chicano/Latino students, for which there were increases of 3.5 percent, 1.9 percent and 0.3 percent, respectively. The largest decline was from African Americans, with 7 percent fewer freshman applications.

Systemwide, there was a rise in the number of transfer applications from all ethnic groups. Growth in transfer applications ranged from 25.9 percent for American Indians to 12.6 percent for Filipino Americans.

* In all cases, percentages related to American Indians should be viewed with caution due to the small number of students represented.

Applications by Gender and Level

The total applicant pool for Fall 2004 was 54.6 percent female and 45.4 percent male. The freshman applicant pool was 55.6 percent female and 44.4 percent male while the transfer pool was split 51.4 percent female and 48.6 percent male. The DAP pool was 58.2 percent female and 41.8 percent male.

[Note: The systemwide totals used above and in the attached tables are preliminary and “unduplicated,” meaning that each student is counted only once, even if he or she applied to multiple campuses. As a result, the systemwide totals are not the sum of the individual campus counts.]

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