

Fall 2009 Undergraduate Applications
to the University of California
Information Summary

Universitywide application volume (Tables 1 and 2). The University of California received a record number of applications for admission to the fall 2009 term, though the overall rate of increase slowed down considerably in comparison with the previous year. Overall application volume for fall 2009 admission increased by 4.7 percent over fall 2008 (from 121,005 to a record high of 126,701), which includes a 2.9 percent increase (from 95,201 to 98,002) at the freshman level, and an 11.2 percent increase (from 25,804 to 28,699) at the transfer level. The University experienced great success with its online application, Pathways. Of the 126,701 applications received, less than 70 (compared to 721 the previous year) were mailed in paper applications.

Multiple applications to the University dropped slightly this year from an average 3.4 campuses per application in 2008 to 3.3 campuses for 2009. Freshman applicants applied to an average of 3.5 campuses in fall 2009; transfer applicants applied to 2.9 campuses on average.

The increase in the number of applications from California freshman applicants was 1.6 percent, while those from out-of-state freshmen increased by 2.0 percent and international freshman applications were up by 28.8 percent. California transfer applications increased by 11.0 percent, while international transfer applicants were up by 19.9 percent. Out-of-state transfer applicants declined 7.8 percent.

Applications by Campus (Table 3). Riverside, Davis, and Irvine had healthy growth in freshman applicants at 7.6 percent, 4.4 percent, and 4.0 percent respectively. The application growth at Berkeley and Los Angeles was essentially flat. Santa Barbara's applications fell by 5.0 percent and Santa Cruz's by 2.1 percent. Merced and San Diego each had a decrease less than one percent.

For the second year in a row, all campuses experienced a notable increase in transfer applications. The gains in transfers ranged from 17.8 percent at San Diego to 6.1 percent at Riverside. Transfer applications have increased at the systemwide level by 20.7 percent since 2007.

Applications by Ethnicity (Table 4 and 5). Data on the California freshman applicant pool reflect an increase in the number of applicants from many racial/ethnic groups compared to fall 2008 outcomes. The largest increases were from American Indian (18.9 percent), Chicano/Latino (9.0 percent), African American (5.8 percent), and Asian American students (4.8 percent). There was a 29.4 percent decline in Pacific Islander¹ and a 2.3 percent decline in the White/Other category.

¹ For this report Pacific Islanders are reported separately from Asian Americans. The 2009-10 application included 18 new Asian and Pacific Islander subcategories. Formerly, there was one Pacific Islander category on the application. As of 2009, Pacific Islander includes the following selections: Fijian, Guamanian/Chamorro, Hawaiian, Samoan, Tongan, and Pacific Islander.

Among transfer applicants, there were increases of 31.5 percent for American Indians, 20.2 percent for African Americans, 18.2 percent for Chicano/Latinos, 14.3 percent for Filipinos, 11.2 percent for Asian Americans, and 9.0 percent for White/Others.

California Freshman Applicants by Public High School (Table 6). For 2009, freshman applications from California public high school students increased by 3.2 percent, despite the California Department of Finance (DOF) projected 1.0 percent decline in the number of California public high school graduates. The DOF projected a decrease in all ethnic groups except Filipino and Hispanic. Contrary to these projections, applications to the University reflect increases from all ethnic groups except Whites.

The overall rate of public high school graduates applying to the university is 18.4 percent, up from 17.7 percent last year.

Transfer Applications from California Community Colleges (Table 7). The overall number of transfer applicants from California Community Colleges (CCC) increased this year by 13.0 percent, or 2,701 students. All campuses experienced a significant increase, ranging from 18.9 percent at San Diego (1,620 students) to 6.5 percent at Riverside (246). Applications from all ethnic groups increased, led by American Indians (31.0 percent), African Americans (18.9 percent), and Chicano/Latinos (18.6 percent). [Note: Percentage changes related to ethnic groups in this section should be viewed with caution due to the relatively small number of transfer applicants within many groups.]

Applications by Gender and Level (Table 8). The freshman applicant pool is 55.4 percent female and 44.6 percent male. For the third year in a row, the balance has tipped at the transfer level where male applicants (14,375 or 51.0 percent) slightly outnumber female applicants (13,808, or 49 percent).

Applications by California Region (Table 9). The Los Angeles, San Francisco Bay Area, Orange County and San Diego/Imperial regions continue to be the most strongly represented regions in the California applicant pool. Approximately seven out of ten freshman and transfer applicants come from one of these four regions. The relative proportion of applications across most regions has remained stable over the last several years.

Characteristics of California Resident Freshman Applicants. The academic quality of UC freshman applicants, as measured by self-reported high school grade point average, admissions test scores and number of academic courses completed in high school, remains high. The university also continues to experience slight gains among student who report they will be the first in their family to graduate from college, who report a low family income, and among those who are attending California's lowest-performing public high schools as defined by the school's academic performance index (API) score.

[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. Based on the UCAP Management Report of 1/05/09.]