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UC Admissions Outcomes During COVID-19 and Elimination of the SAT/ACT

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Research Questions

How did UC fall freshman admissions outcomes change in the era of COVID-19 and test-free admissions, compared to trends in recent years? Specifically, examine changes in:

- volume of applicants, admits, and new enrollees
- composition of applicants, admits, and new enrollees
- academic preparation of applicants, admits, and enrollees



Background

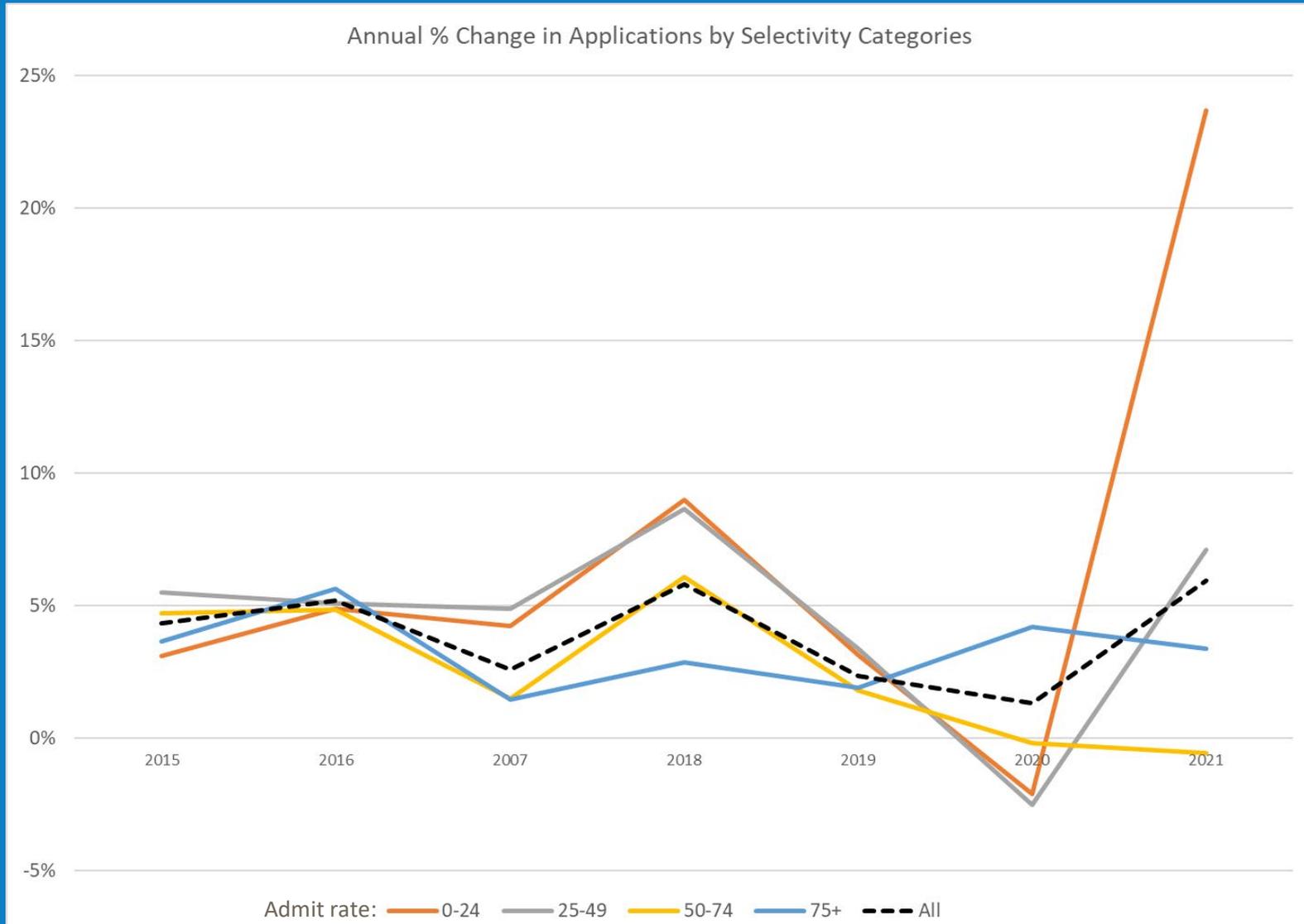
- October 2019: UC fall 2020 undergraduate admissions cycle begins
- March 2020: COVID-19 declared a pandemic
- May 2020: UC eliminates test scores for freshman admissions starting with the fall 2021 cycle
- October 2020: UC fall 2021 undergraduate admissions cycle begins
- COVID-19 affected part of the fall 2020 admissions cycle and all of the fall 2021 cycle; test-free was effective for the fall 2021 cycle
- This analysis focuses on fall 2019 and fall 2021 freshman admissions data



Broad Context

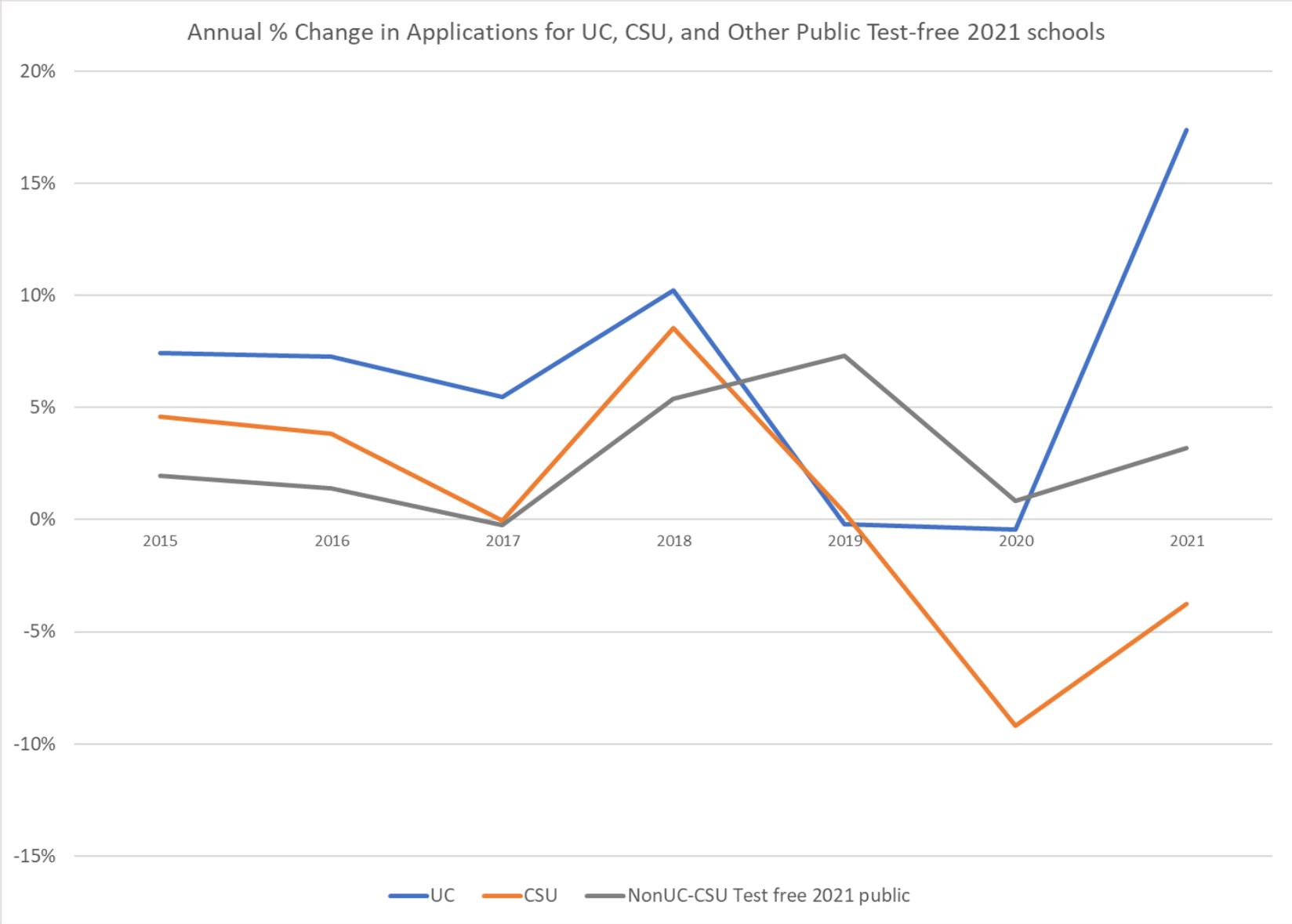
- Look at UC application volume vs. CSU and other test-free publics
 - Data from IPEDS for all first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates
 - Data counts applicants who apply to more than one institution within a group multiple times (UC campuses are separate institutions in IPEDS)

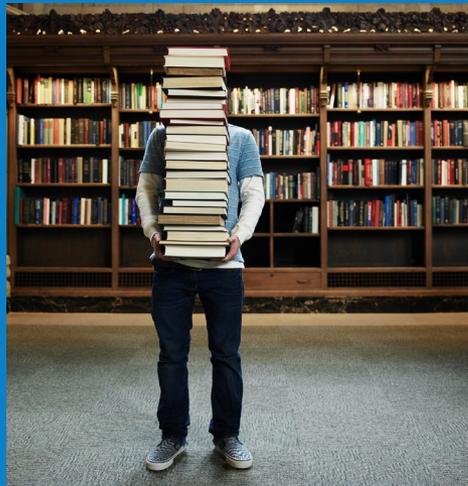
Broad Context



Accredited Bachelor's-granting colleges in 50 states plus DC with first-time full-time students (open admission excluded).

Broad Context

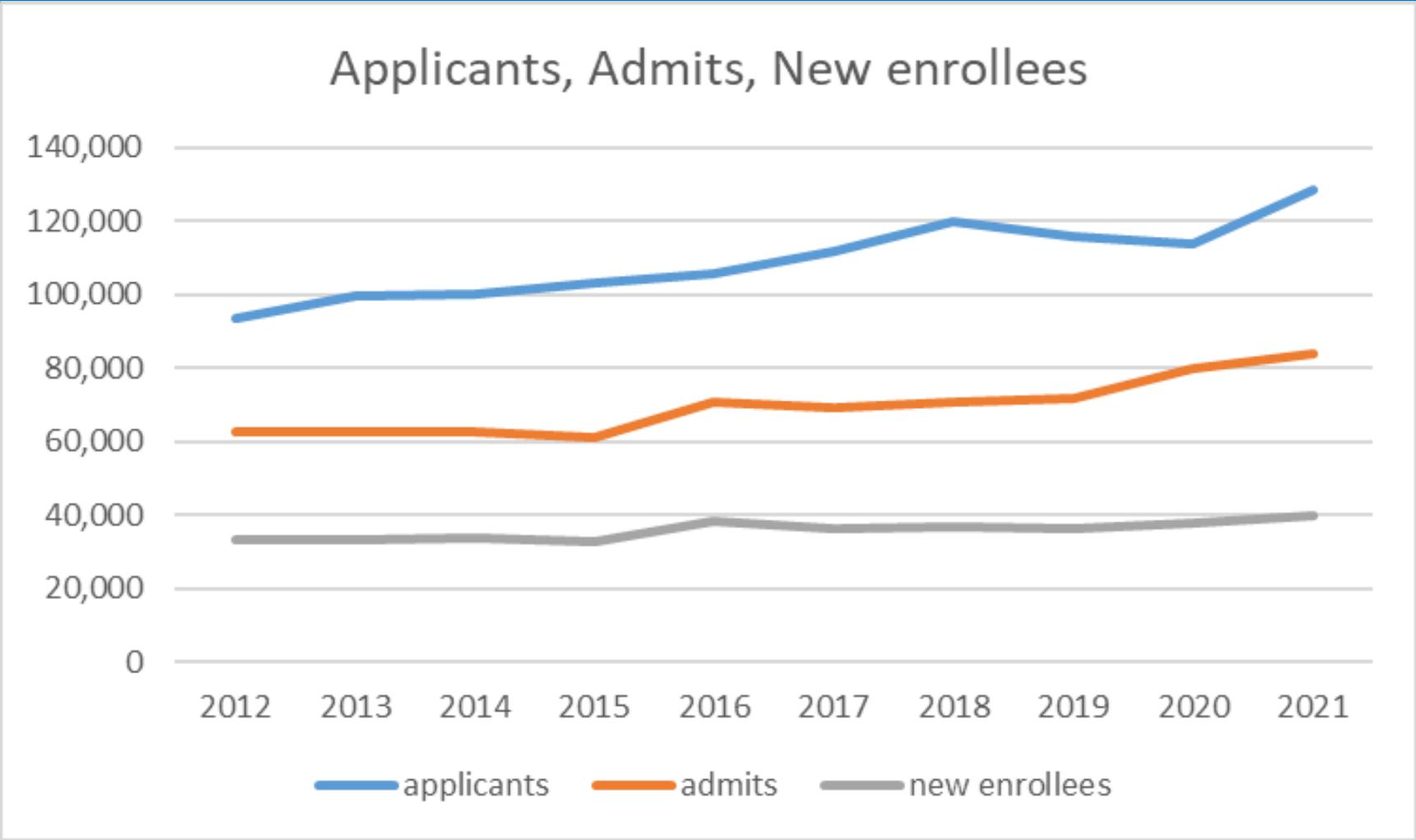




UC Admissions Outcomes

- Look at applicants, admits, and new enrollees by race/ethnicity, low income, first generation, academic preparation
- Data in this section are not directly comparable to the prior section but differences are small
 - Focus on California resident students
 - Race/ethnicity is based on UCOP categories

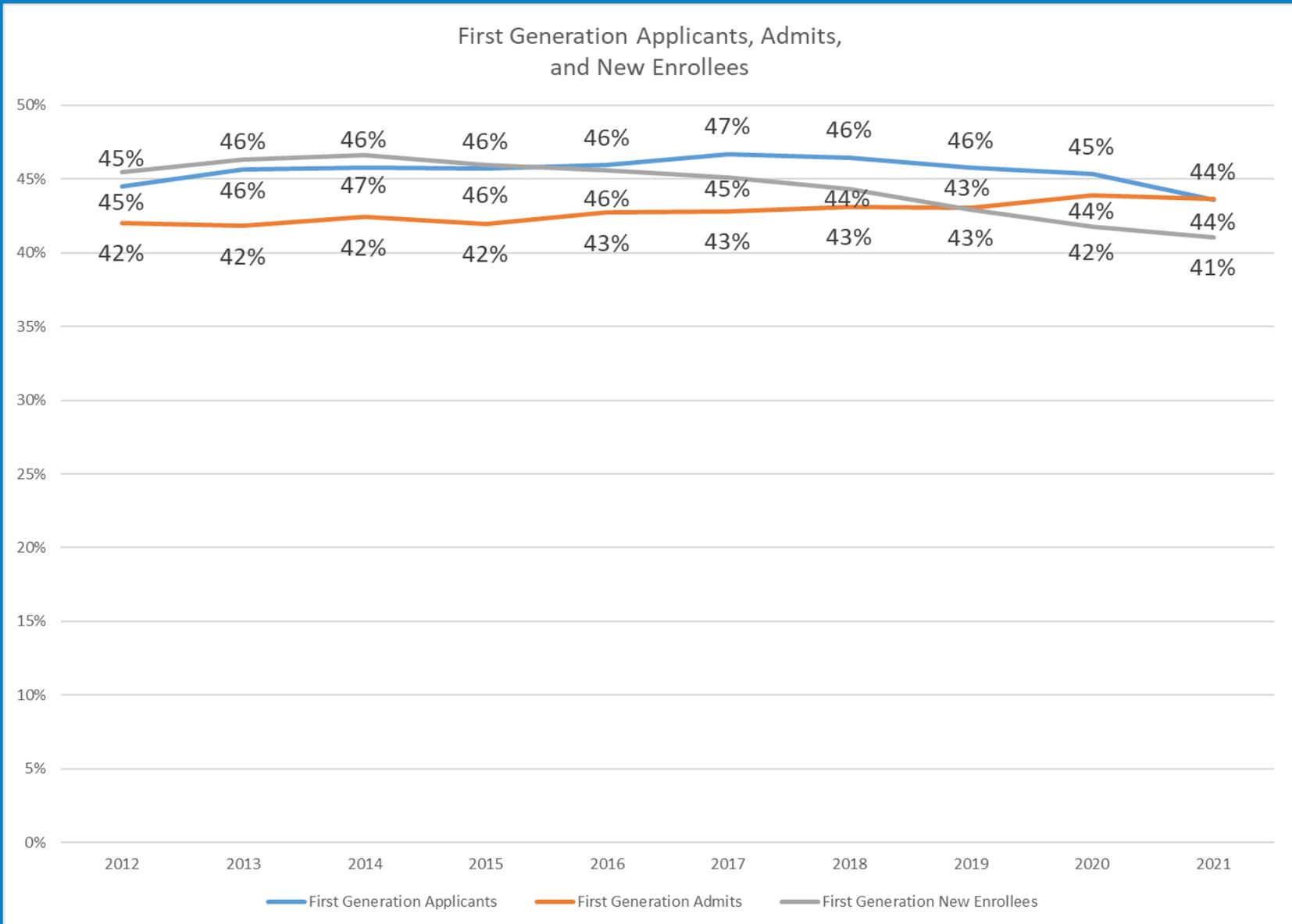
UC Systemwide



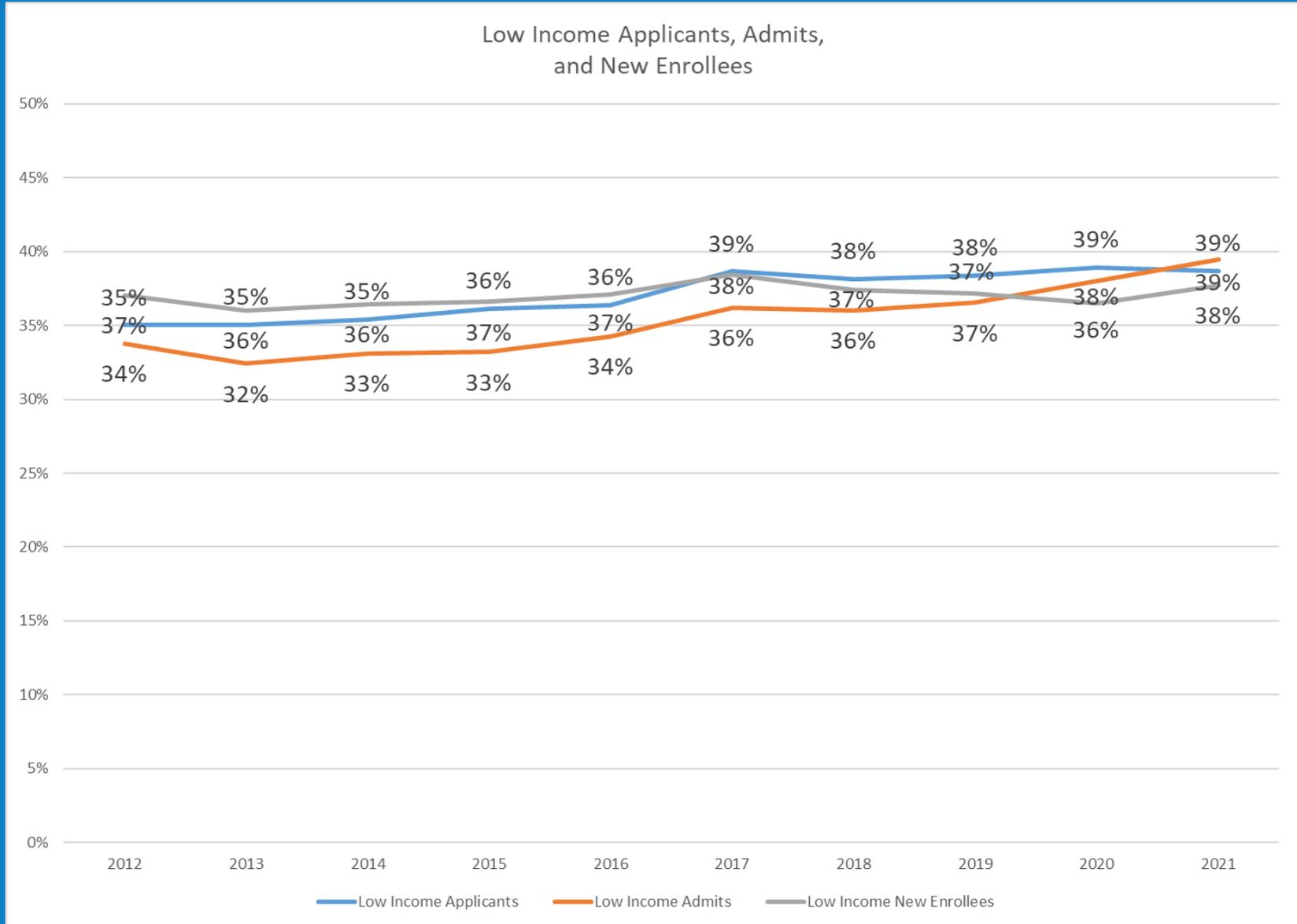
UC Applicants by Campus

Campus	2019 rank	Annual % change		Difference
	Average HSGPA	2012-2019	2019-2021	
Berkeley	2	3%	11%	9 pct pts
UCLA	1	4%	10%	6 pct pts
San Diego	3	5%	8%	3 pct pts
UC (unduplicated)	n/a	3%	5%	2 pct pts
Davis	5	4%	5%	1 pct pts
Santa Cruz	7	6%	5%	-1 pct pts
Irvine	6	6%	5%	-1 pct pts
Santa Barbara	4	5%	4%	-1 pct pts
Riverside	8	7%	3%	-4 pct pts
Merced	9	9%	3%	-6 pct pts

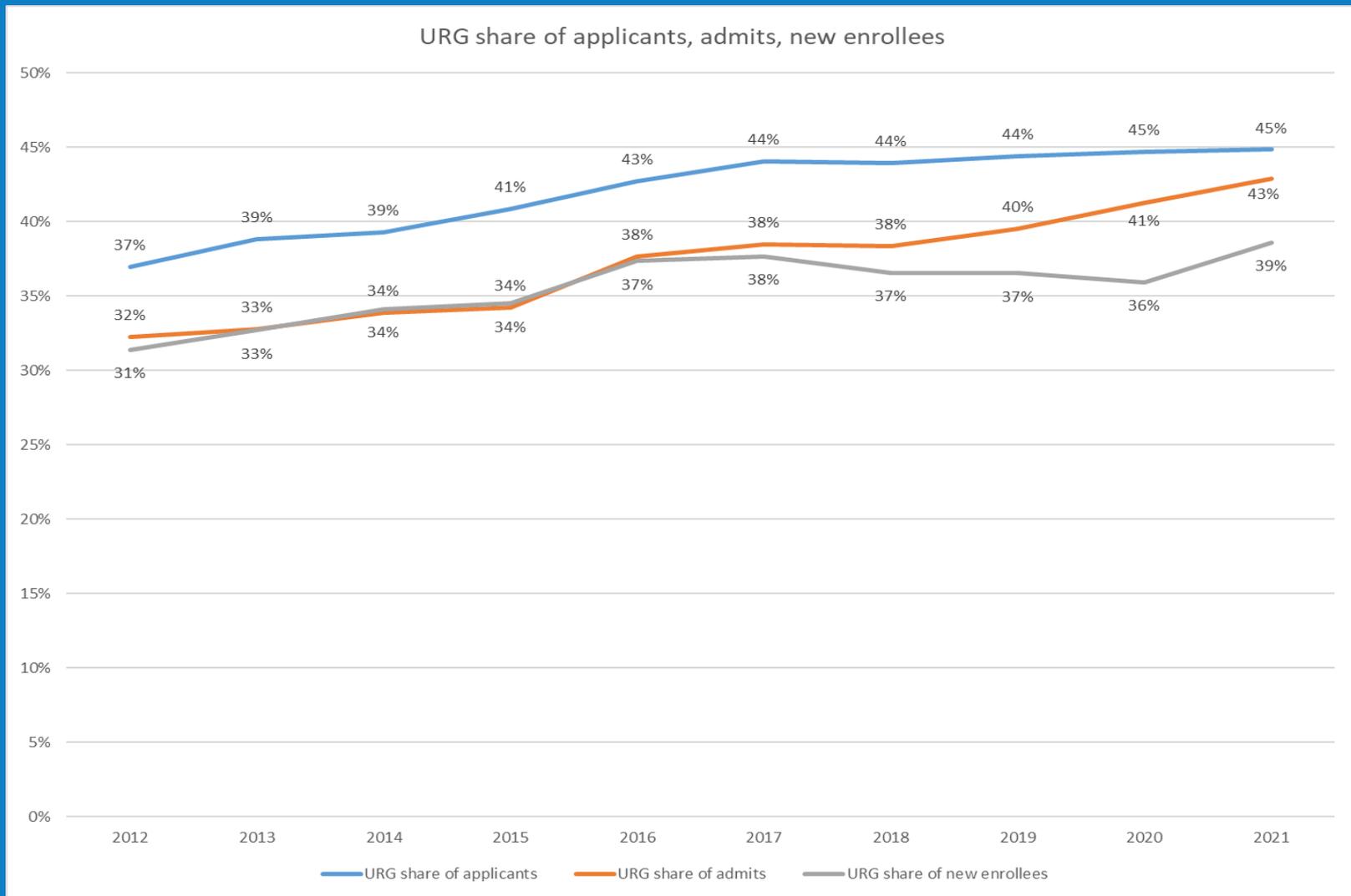
UC First Generation



UC Low Income

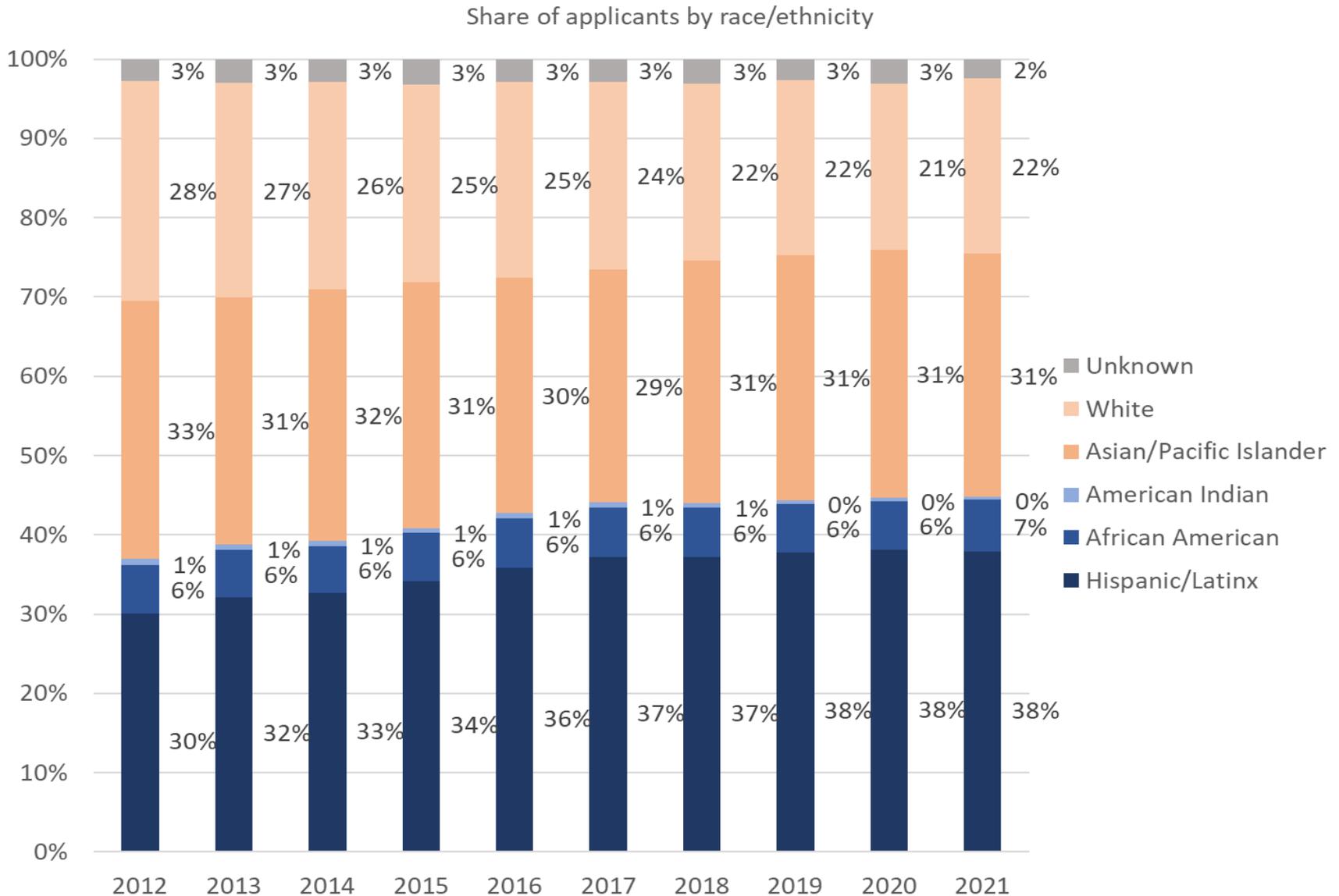


UC Underrepresented Groups

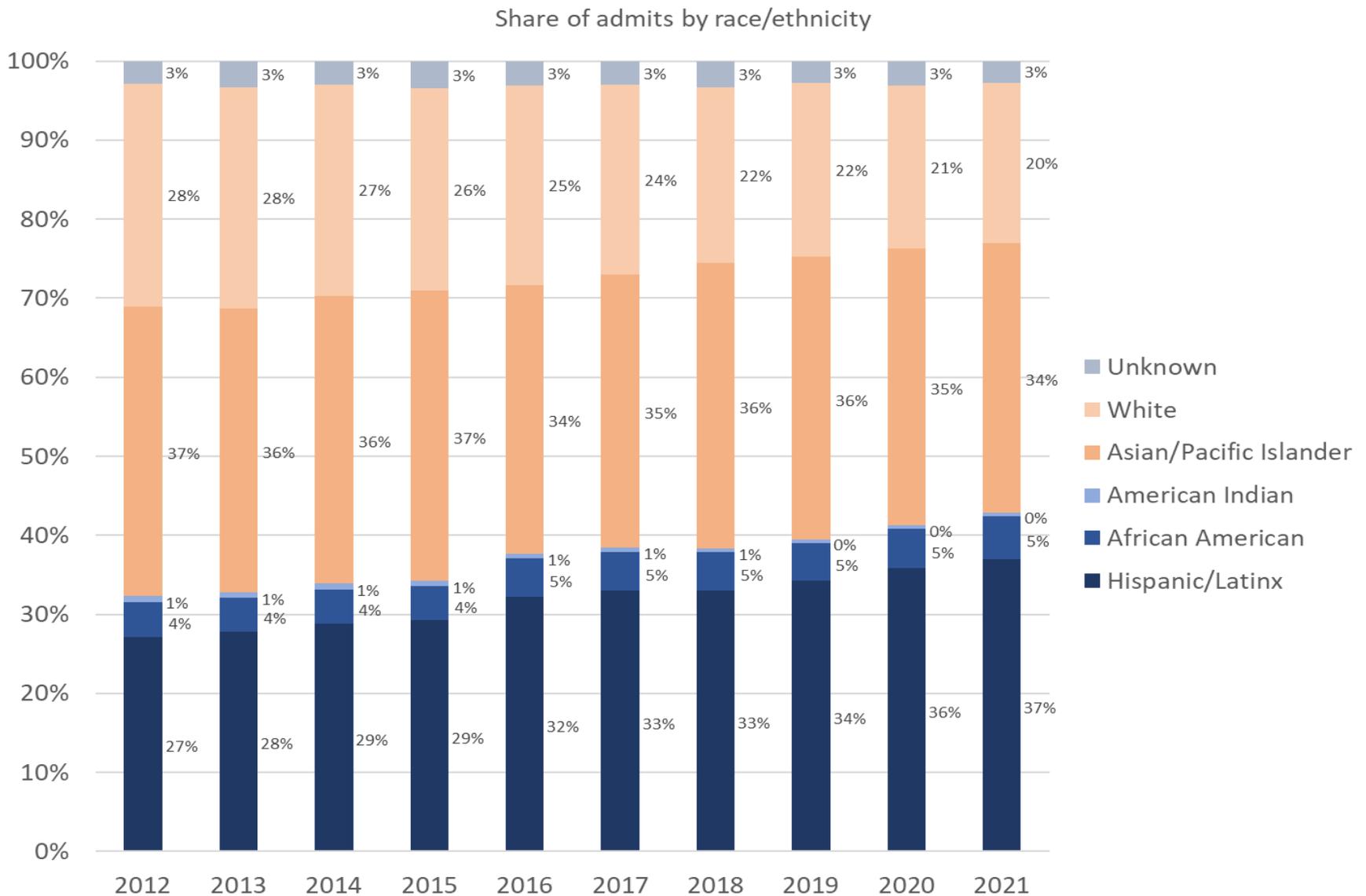


Race/ethnicity is based on UC categories.

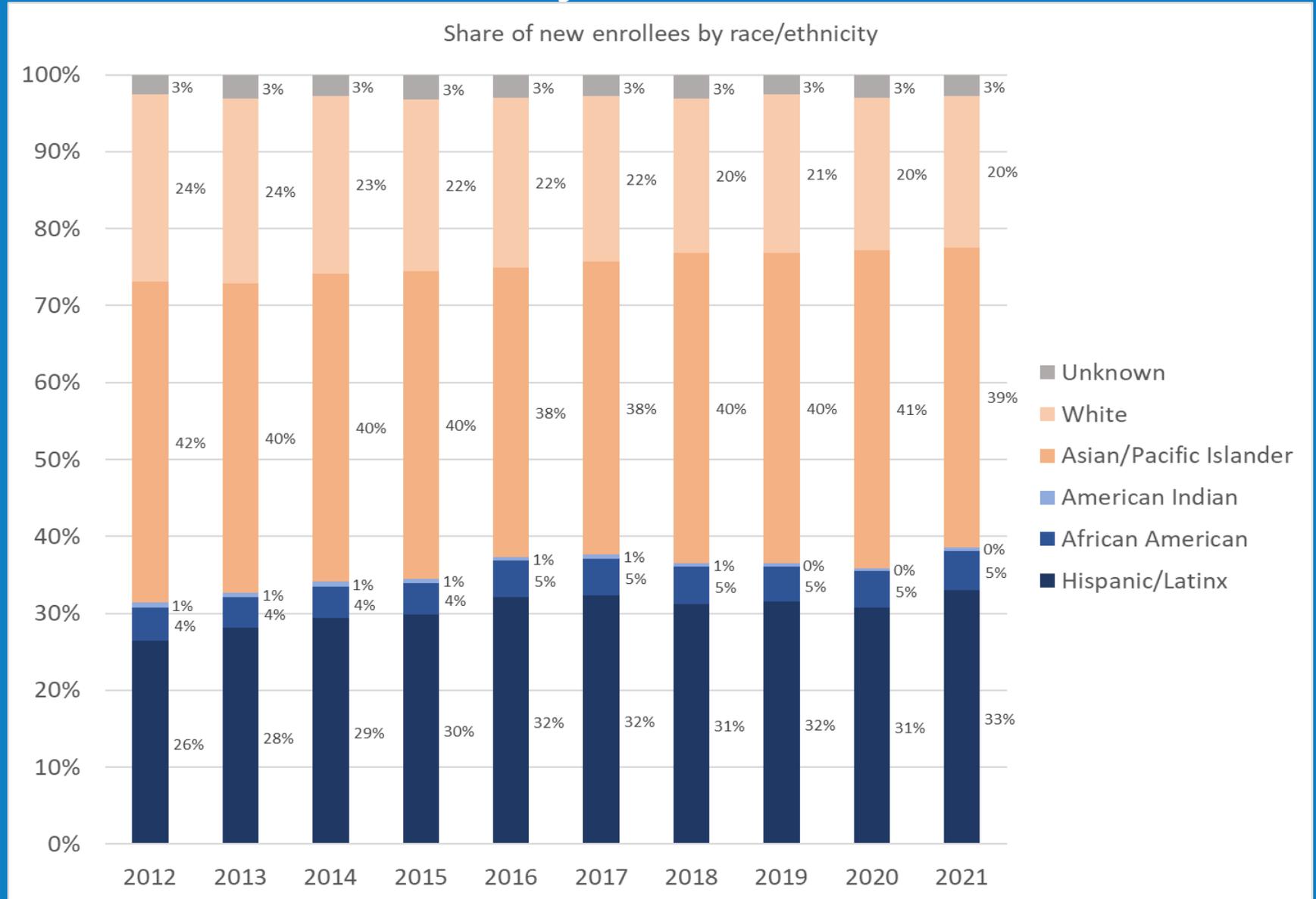
UC Race/ethnicity - Applicants



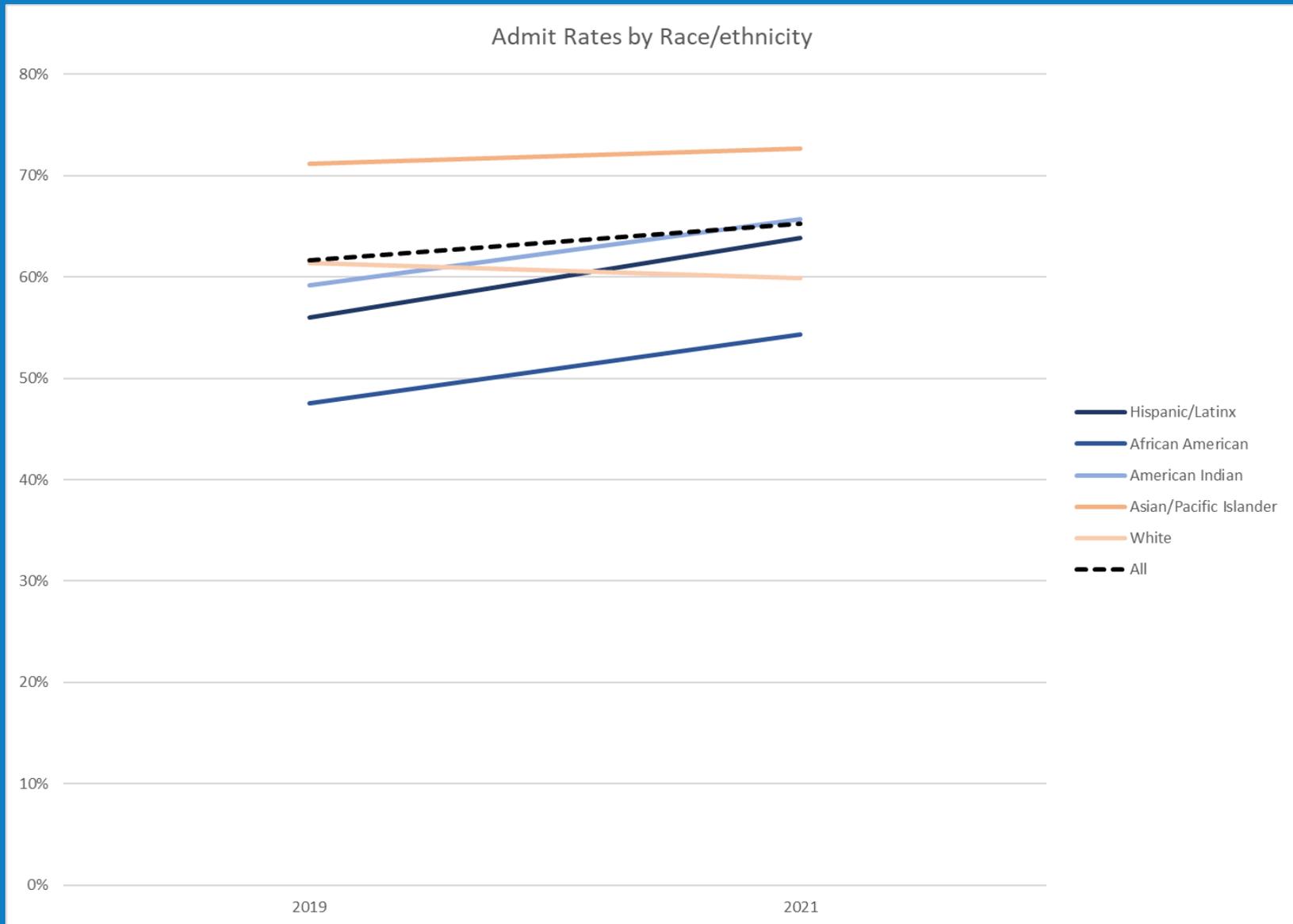
UC Race/ethnicity - Admits



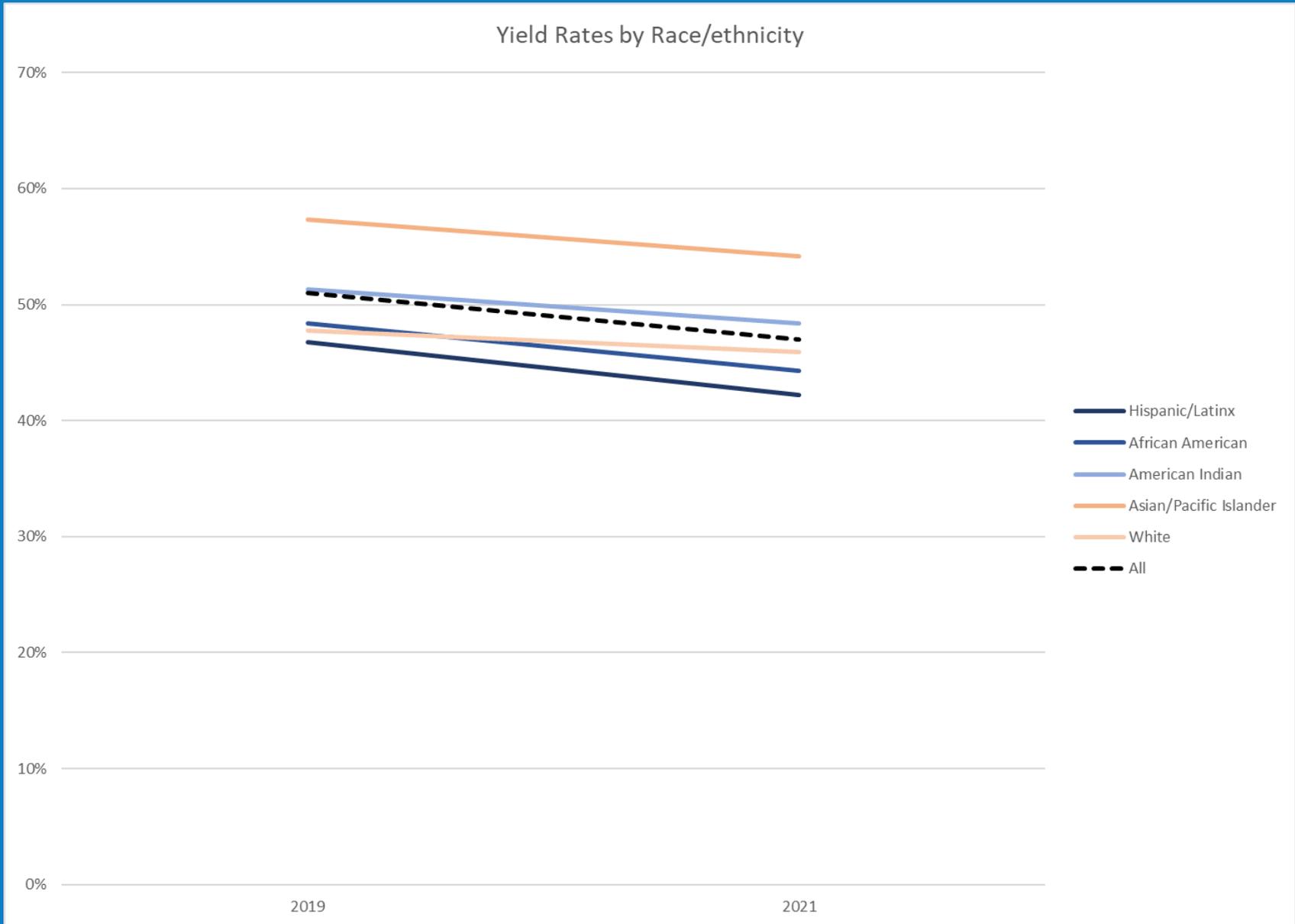
UC Race/ethnicity – New Enrollees



UC Race/ethnicity – Admit Rates



UC Race/ethnicity – Yield Rates

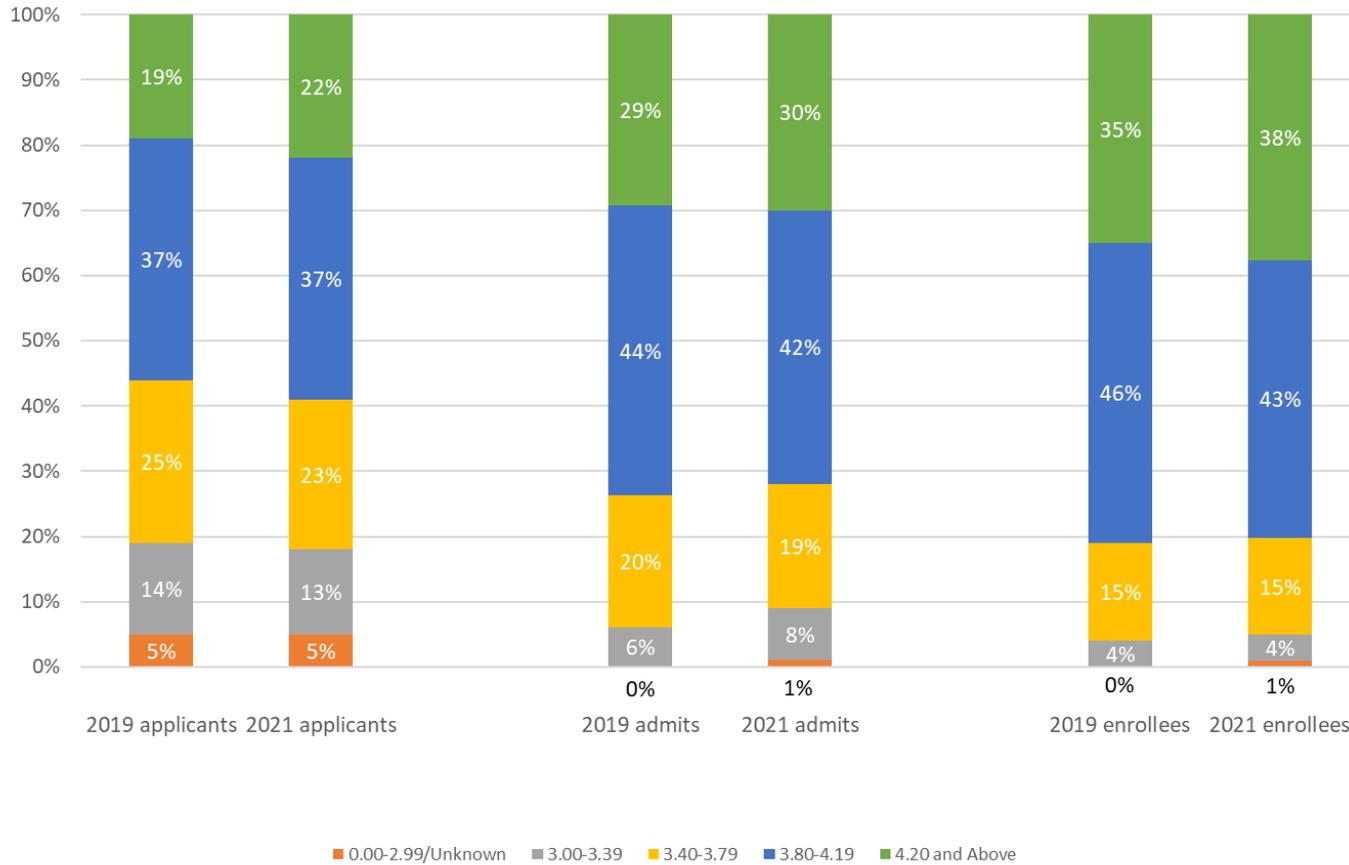


Academic Preparation

Fall	Avg. # of A-G courses			Avg. HSGPA (weighted, capped)		
	Applicants	Admits	Enrollees	Applicants	Admits	Enrollees
2012	47	48	48	3.68	3.85	3.88
2013	47	47	47	3.69	3.89	3.92
2014	47	48	47	3.71	3.90	3.94
2015	47	48	48	3.71	3.93	3.97
2016	47	48	48	3.72	3.89	3.94
2017	47	48	48	3.73	3.93	3.97
2018	48	49	49	3.76	3.96	4.01
2019	48	49	49	3.79	3.96	4.02
2020	48	48	48	3.81	3.93	4.00
2021	48	49	49	3.81	3.96	4.04

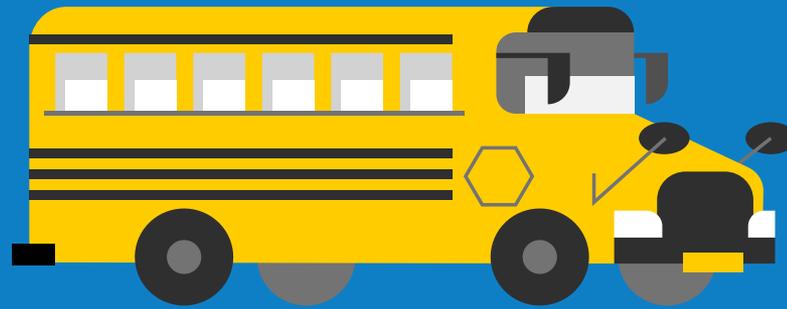
Academic Preparation

Distribution of HSGPAs for applicant, admits, new enrollees



Academic Preparation

- Due to COVID-19 students could elect P/NP for any high school courses from Spring 2020 through Summer 2021
 - Weighted capped HSGPA is based on 10th/11th grade A-G courses
 - For fall 2021 applicants this affected second half of 11th grade only
- For fall 2021 applicants with 11th grade courses:
 - 74% had no courses with “P/NP” grades
 - 13% had some courses with at least one “P/NP” grade
 - 13% had all courses with at least one “P/NP” grade
- Also:
 - Grading standards may have been different during “Zoom school”
 - Hard to measure “learning loss” for fall 2021 cohort
 - Even broad context from K12 tests (NAEP, SBAC) not available due to COVID cancelations



High School to UC Pipeline

- Application rates overall and by race/ethnicity
- Race/ethnicity gaps between high school graduates and UC applicants, admits, new enrollees
- Data in this section are not directly comparable to the prior section but differences are small
 - Students from California public schools (instead of California residents)
 - Race/ethnicity is based on IPEDS categories (vs. UCOP categories) to more closely match CDE data for high school graduates.

Gap Analysis – Race/ethnicity

Race/ethnicity*	Share of:	2019	2021 Gap (vs. HS grads)	2019	2021
Hispanic/Latinx	HS grads	52%	53%		
	Applicants	41%	42% Applicants	11 pct pts	11 pct pts
	Admits	37%	40% Admits	15 pct pts	12 pct pts
	New enroll	34%	35% New enrollees	19 pct pts	17 pct pts
African American/Black	HS grads	6%	5%		
	Applicants	4%	3% Applicants	2 pct pts	2 pct pts
	Admits	3%	3% Admits	3 pct pts	2 pct pts
	New enroll	2%	2% New enrollees	3 pct pts	3 pct pts
URG	HS grads	58%	58%		
	Applicants	45%	45% Applicants	13 pct pts	13 pct pts
	Admits	40%	43% Admits	18 pct pts	15 pct pts
	New enroll	36%	38% New enrollees	22 pct pts	20 pct pts

* American Indian/Alaska Native students are also part of the URG category but are not broken out due to small cell sizes.

Application rates – race/ethnicity

Application rates	2019	2021
All	23%	26%
Hispanic/Latinx	18%	20%
African American/Black	15%	17%
URGs	18%	20%



Summary

How did UC fall freshman admissions outcomes change in the era of COVID-19 and test-free admissions, compared to trends in recent years?

- Changes in volume of applicants, admits, and new enrollees?
 - UC CA resident applicants, admits, and new enrollees increased faster than in recent years
 - Broad context for application volume:
 - increased faster after slower growth for two prior years, especially at more selective colleges

- Changes in composition of applicants, admits, and new enrollees?
 - No substantial increase in diversity of applicants
 - Changes in line with recent trends with possible exception of shares of African Americans
 - Diversity of admits increased (first generation, low income, URG)
 - Changes were in line with recent trends with exception of Hispanic/Latinx students
 - Mixed changes for diversity of new enrollees
 - First Generation down slightly
 - Lower Income up slightly
 - URG up slightly
 - Changes in line with recent trends

- Changes in academic preparation of applicants, admits, and enrollees?
 - Average HSGPA and # of A-G courses did not change much for applicants, admits, enrollee; changes observed continued recent trends
 - Distribution of HSGPAs shows increasing share 4.20 or above
 - Applicants: shift upward
 - Admits and new enrollees: shift outward

Questions?

Thanks for coming!

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