

## UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

### Data on Nonresident Student Admission Fall 2018

The following report is forwarded in compliance with Section 68052.1 of the Education Code, which states:

The University of California is requested to comply with both of the following:

- (a) By July 1, 2018, the University of California, in collaboration with the Academic Senate of the University of California, is requested to ensure that implementation of any admissions policy it adopts regarding admission of nonresident undergraduate students shall include guidance that ensures that the academic qualifications for admitted nonresident undergraduate students generally exceeds, on average, the academic qualifications of resident undergraduate students admitted at each campus.
- (b) The University of California is requested to report to the Legislature annually regarding implementation of this policy, including, but not limited to, the mean and median scores on academic indicators of admitted resident and nonresident undergraduate students at each campus.

This document is the annual report responding to this legislative request.

#### Background

Adopted in 2011, the University of California policy on the admission of nonresident domestic and international students states that “[n]on-resident domestic and international students admitted to a campus should compare favorably to California residents admitted at that campus.”<sup>1</sup> The University’s Academic Senate faculty committee, the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS), monitors each campus’s compliance with this “Compare Favorably” policy and produces an annual summary report.<sup>2</sup>

Under the University’s guidelines regarding the admission of undergraduate students—referred to as the Comprehensive Review policy—faculty have identified 14 factors that may be used by campuses to assess the achievements of California resident and nonresident applicants alike.<sup>3</sup> Many of these factors are qualitative in nature and there is not any statistically valid way to report mean and median scores for those factors. Thus, while high school GPA and standardized test scores do not fully represent the range of qualities and characteristics that campuses use to select applicants for admission as undergraduates, analysis of these traditional quantitative measures can serve as rough indicators of a campus’s adherence to the Compare Favorably policy.

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<sup>1</sup>[http://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/files/reports/DS\\_MGY\\_LPBOARSNRPrinciple6.pdf](http://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/files/reports/DS_MGY_LPBOARSNRPrinciple6.pdf)

<sup>2</sup><https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/committees/boars/reports.html>

<sup>3</sup>[https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/files/committees/boars/documents/GUIDELINES\\_FOR\\_IMPLEMENTATION\\_OF\\_UNIV\\_ERSITY\\_POLICY\\_on\\_UG\\_ADM\\_Revised\\_June2016.pdf](https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/files/committees/boars/documents/GUIDELINES_FOR_IMPLEMENTATION_OF_UNIV_ERSITY_POLICY_on_UG_ADM_Revised_June2016.pdf)

However, it is important to note the language that BOARS uses when doing this analysis:

Variations [between resident and non-resident students on these indicators] do concern BOARS and suggest a need for further examination, although BOARS does not consider them necessarily to be violations of the Compare Favorably policy for several reasons. First, while a comparison of the average GPAs and test scores of admitted students can provide a first indication of whether a campus has met the policy, such narrow academic indicators are imperfect measures for the assessment, given the use of comprehensive review on all campuses, which requires campus admissions professionals to consider 14 factors in the broad assessment of merit they use to admit students. GPA and SAT are important components of this assessment, but are only two components, and as such they provide an incomplete picture. Furthermore, educational context also is a key component of comprehensive review, but admissions personnel do not, in general, have access to the same information about educational context for nonresident applicants that they have for California residents.<sup>4</sup>

The quantitative admissions data that the BOARS annual report considers are average test score and average high school unweighted grade point average. This report to the Legislature also includes median test score and median grade point average, as requested.

### Data Summary

Tables 1 and 2 summarize systemwide and campus data for high school unweighted grade point average (GPA) and students' highest total score on a required standardized admissions test. Unweighted GPA values range from 0–4.0. Test scores range from 400–1600. (ACT scores have been converted to the SAT scale equivalent.)

Among all freshman students admitted to the University for fall 2018, domestic and international nonresident students scored higher than California residents on both quantitative measures of academic preparation.

Table 1: High School GPA and Test Scores of UC Freshman Admits, Systemwide, Fall 2018

| <b>Residency Status</b> | <b># of Freshman Admits</b> | <b>Mean HSGPA</b> | <b>Median HSGPA</b> | <b>Mean Test Score</b> | <b>Median Test Score</b> |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| California Resident     | 70,777                      | 3.68              | 3.75                | 1290                   | 1310                     |
| Out-of-State Domestic   | 17,946                      | 3.80              | 3.88                | 1410                   | 1430                     |
| International           | 18,940                      | 3.75              | 3.85                | 1393                   | 1410                     |

The data by campus are more nuanced. The mean and median test scores were higher for both domestic and international students than California residents at eight of the nine UC campuses. (See Table 2.) For the one campus where this was not the case, UC Santa Cruz noted that a discrepancy in the conversion of test scores between the ACT and the old version of the SAT resulted in the campus narrowly missing the Compare Favorably goal on this metric.

The GPA results varied by campus, with nonresident domestic and international students achieving higher mean GPAs than California residents at five campuses. At four campuses, Davis, Riverside, Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz, the mean for California residents was higher than the mean for nonresidents. Also, at two additional

<sup>4</sup> <https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/files/committees/boars/boarscomparefavorably2017.pdf>, page 3.

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campuses (Irvine and Los Angeles), while the mean was higher for nonresidents, the median was not. The campus-specific GPA differences are often minor – some are as small as one or two one-hundredths of a point (0.01 and 0.02), trivial variances when one considers that the difference between the letter grade of “A” and “A-” is three-tenths of a point (0.3).

Campuses provided explanations for these results. They noted that these metrics are only two of the many factors in admissions decisions. In contrast with the SAT (and ACT), which are standardized benchmarks that allow direct comparison between California residents and nonresidents, the campuses repeatedly emphasized that evaluating the grades of students from other states and countries can be particularly challenging. These records are often more complex and there are wide variations in standards for grading and coursework. Moreover, UC campuses noted that they lack the kind of detailed contextual information about schools that they can bring to bear while assessing California residents.

In sum, the degree of compliance across the University is very high, especially when one considers both the volume of applications that are received by the University, the extraordinary level of achievement presented by virtually all applicants, and the challenges of applying the complex Compare Favorably standard within the context of a competitive, internally-dynamic admissions process.

**Table 2**  
**University of California**  
**High School GPA and Test Scores of UC Freshman Admits, Fall 2018**

| Campus        | Residency Status <sup>1</sup> | # of Freshman Admits | Mean HSGPA <sup>2</sup> | Median HSGPA <sup>2</sup> | Mean Test Score <sup>3</sup> | Median Test Score <sup>3</sup> |
|---------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Systemwide    | C                             | 70,777               | 3.68                    | 3.75                      | 1290                         | 1310                           |
|               | D                             | 17,946               | 3.80                    | 3.88                      | 1410                         | 1430                           |
|               | I                             | 18,940               | 3.75                    | 3.85                      | 1393                         | 1410                           |
| Berkeley      | C                             | 8,911                | 3.92                    | 3.96                      | 1413                         | 1450                           |
|               | D                             | 3,196                | 3.94                    | 4.00                      | 1487                         | 1500                           |
|               | I                             | 1,481                | 3.92                    | 4.00                      | 1480                         | 1500                           |
| Davis         | C                             | 19,401               | 3.85                    | 3.90                      | 1340                         | 1370                           |
|               | D                             | 3,980                | 3.75                    | 3.81                      | 1381                         | 1400                           |
|               | I                             | 8,662                | 3.77                    | 3.83                      | 1400                         | 1410                           |
| Irvine        | C                             | 17,892               | 3.85                    | 3.90                      | 1349                         | 1370                           |
|               | D                             | 2,680                | 3.87                    | 3.91                      | 1385                         | 1400                           |
|               | I                             | 6,766                | 3.85                    | 3.89                      | 1391                         | 1400                           |
| Los Angeles   | C                             | 8,725                | 3.92                    | 4.00                      | 1418                         | 1460                           |
|               | D                             | 5,035                | 3.93                    | 4.00                      | 1483                         | 1500                           |
|               | I                             | 2,210                | 3.92                    | 3.97                      | 1496                         | 1505                           |
| Merced        | C                             | 15,826               | 3.46                    | 3.48                      | 1161                         | 1140                           |
|               | D                             | 255                  | 3.62                    | 3.66                      | 1286                         | 1310                           |
|               | I                             | 547                  | 3.58                    | 3.59                      | 1306                         | 1330                           |
| Riverside     | C                             | 22,072               | 3.60                    | 3.63                      | 1266                         | 1270                           |
|               | D                             | 807                  | 3.56                    | 3.59                      | 1276                         | 1280                           |
|               | I                             | 1,941                | 3.54                    | 3.57                      | 1302                         | 1310                           |
| San Diego     | C                             | 17,280               | 3.85                    | 3.91                      | 1375                         | 1400                           |
|               | D                             | 6,554                | 3.85                    | 3.91                      | 1442                         | 1460                           |
|               | I                             | 5,768                | 3.89                    | 3.93                      | 1458                         | 1460                           |
| Santa Barbara | C                             | 19,713               | 3.83                    | 3.89                      | 1376                         | 1410                           |
|               | D                             | 4,539                | 3.81                    | 3.86                      | 1407                         | 1420                           |
|               | I                             | 5,472                | 3.86                    | 3.91                      | 1444                         | 1450                           |
| Santa Cruz    | C                             | 18,749               | 3.72                    | 3.76                      | 1342                         | 1370                           |
|               | D                             | 3,006                | 3.62                    | 3.66                      | 1332                         | 1340                           |
|               | I                             | 5,260                | 3.55                    | 3.59                      | 1322                         | 1330                           |

**Notes:**

1. Residency Status: Residency status in this analysis is determined based on the residency status at the time of admission. C=California Resident; D=Out of State Domestic; I=International.
2. High School GPA: Unweighted high school GPA of students admitted in fall 2018.
3. Test Score: Highest score of SAT Reasoning (Math, Critical Reading, and Writing), (new) SAT with Essay (Evidence Based Reading and Writing, Math) or ACT equivalent (Composite) of fall 2018 admits, using the new SAT scale.