



UNIVERSITY
OF
CALIFORNIA

Michael V. Drake, MD
President

July 9, 2021

Office of the President
1111 Franklin St.
Oakland, CA 94607

universityofcalifornia.edu

The Honorable Nancy Skinner
Chair, Joint Legislative Budget Committee
1020 N Street, Room 553
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Senator Skinner:

Pursuant to Section 680052.1 of the Education Code, enclosed is the University of California's annual report to the Legislature on Data on Nonresident Student Admission, Fall 2020.

If you have any questions regarding this report, Associate Vice President David Alcocer would be pleased to speak with you. David can be reached by telephone at (510) 987-9113, or by e-mail at David.Alcocer@ucop.edu.

Sincerely,

Michael V. Drake, MD
President

Enclosure

cc: Senate Budget and Fiscal Review
The Honorable John Laird, Chair
Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee #1
(Attn: Ms. Anita Lee)
(Attn: Ms. Jean-Marie McKinney)
The Honorable Kevin McCarty, Chair
Assembly Budget Subcommittee #2
(Attn: Mr. Mark Martin)
(Attn: Ms. Carolyn Nealon)
Mr. Hans Hemann, Joint Legislative Budget Committee
Ms. Erika Contreras, Secretary of the Senate
Ms. Amy Leach, Office of the Chief Clerk of the Assembly
Ms. Sue Parker, Office of the Chief Clerk of the Assembly
Mr. Chris Ferguson, Department of Finance
Ms. Rebecca Kirk, Department of Finance
Mr. Brian Rutledge, Department of Finance

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Associate Vice President David Alcocer
Associate Vice President and Director Kieran Flaherty

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Data on Nonresident Student Admission Fall 2020

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.”¹ 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.²

Under the University’s guidelines regarding the admission of undergraduate students—referred to as the Comprehensive Review policy—faculty have identified multiple factors that may be used by campuses to assess the achievements of California resident and nonresident applicants alike.³ Many of these factors are qualitative in nature and there is not any statistically valid way to report mean and median scores for these factors. Thus, while high school grade point average (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

¹http://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/files/reports/DS_MGY_LPBOARSNRPrinciple6.pdf

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

³<https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/files/committees/boars/documents/guidelines-implementation-of-ug-admission-rev-7-2019.pdf>

these traditional quantitative measures can serve as rough indicators of a campus’s adherence to the Compare Favorably policy.⁴

It is important, however, to note the language that BOARS uses when doing this analysis:

Variances [between resident and nonresident 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 they 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.⁵

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

Data Summary

Tables 1 and 2 summarize systemwide and campus data for high school unweighted 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 2020, Table 1 shows that domestic and international nonresident students scored higher than California residents on both quantitative measures of academic preparation.

Residency Status	# of Freshman Admits	Mean HS GPA	Median HS GPA	Mean Test Score	Median Test Score
California Resident	79,579	3.66	3.73	1264	1280
Out-of-State Domestic	19,924	3.80	3.88	1405	1430
International	18,751	3.75	3.84	1393	1410

At all nine campuses, the mean test scores were higher for both domestic and international nonresident students than for California residents. Further, the median test scores were equal to or higher for all nonresidents compared to those for residents. (See Table 2 at the end of this report.)

⁴Fall 2020 is the last year in which standardized test scores are accepted for use in admission to the University.

⁵https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/_files/committees/boars/documents/2019-compare-favorably-report.pdf, page 3.

The GPA results were more varied by campus. 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). Unlike the SAT and ACT, which are standardized benchmarks that allow direct comparison between California residents and nonresidents, evaluating the grades of students from other states and countries can be particularly challenging, as the records are often more complex. There is also wide variation in curricula and standards for grading.

Another factor to take into consideration for the fall 2020 admission cycle is the COVID-19 global pandemic. As campuses were admitting applicants in winter and spring 2020, the severity and extent of the pandemic was unfolding. Campuses did their best to meet pre-pandemic undergraduate enrollment goals while navigating a once-in-a-lifetime worldwide event with unknown effects on UC and postsecondary education in general.

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

Table 2
University of California
High School GPA and Test Score of UC Freshman Admits, Fall 2020

Campus	Residency Status¹	# of Freshman Admits	Mean High School GPA²	Median High School GPA²	Mean Test Score³	Median Test Score³
Systemwide	C	79,579	3.66	3.73	1264	1280
	D	19,924	3.80	3.88	1405	1430
	I	18,751	3.75	3.84	1393	1410
Berkeley	C	10,156	3.90	3.95	1404	1440
	D	3,790	3.93	4.00	1489	1510
	I	1,477	3.92	4.00	1495	1510
Davis	C	21,640	3.85	3.90	1337	1370
	D	4,668	3.77	3.84	1375	1400
	I	9,337	3.78	3.85	1397	1410
Irvine	C	16,478	3.84	3.90	1374	1380
	D	5,109	3.83	3.86	1398	1410
	I	7,714	3.86	3.90	1414	1420
Los Angeles	C	9,205	3.93	4.00	1424	1460
	D	4,743	3.94	4.00	1490	1500
	I	1,654	3.95	4.00	1502	1520
Merced	C	20,727	3.45	3.45	1127	1110
	D	387	3.66	3.72	1278	1280
	I	868	3.61	3.64	1292	1310
Riverside	C	28,113	3.60	3.64	1249	1240
	D	1,154	3.59	3.64	1279	1280
	I	3,255	3.56	3.60	1295	1300
San Diego	C	21,898	3.88	3.92	1397	1430
	D	8,356	3.85	3.91	1442	1460
	I	6,379	3.86	3.92	1458	1470
Santa Barbara	C	22,356	3.85	3.90	1384	1430
	D	5,780	3.83	3.88	1420	1430
	I	5,248	3.87	3.92	1466	1470
Santa Cruz	C	26,971	3.67	3.72	1305	1310
	D	3,206	3.65	3.71	1324	1340
	I	5,414	3.59	3.64	1325	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 2020.

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 2020 admits, using the new SAT scale.

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