

2004 Freshman Admissions to the University of California

Overview

Due to the state's budget difficulties, the governor's 2004-05 budget called for an enrollment reduction at the University of California of 3,200 new students for the fall 2004 term. As a result, UC offered admission to 6.7 percent fewer freshmen than were admitted as of this time last year. While this translated into lower admissions for almost every demographic group, traditional measures of overall academic quality continues to rise on every UC campus.

The statistics in this information summary and the accompanying tables are preliminary and a small number of applications are still under review. In general, about nine out of every 10 admitted freshman students are California residents, and the data in this package are for California residents. Transfer data are not yet available.

On average, students applied to 3.6 campuses. Students accepted by multiple campuses are included in the admissions figures for each campus in the attached tables. Unless otherwise noted, the systemwide totals in this summary and in the tables are "unduplicated," meaning that each student is counted only once.

Summary

- **The number of students receiving freshman admission offers from the University of California declined substantially.** The Governor's budget called for UC to reduce freshman enrollment by 3,200 students.
 - The breakdown is as follows: 46,923 California freshman applicants were offered fall admission, a decline of 3,368 (6.7 percent) from the 50,291 freshmen admitted for fall 2003 as of this time last year¹.
 - Many students who could not be accommodated in the fall received alternative offers: 2,661 freshman applicants received offers of winter or spring admission and 1,120 received a referral offer to an engineering program at UC Riverside.
 - 7,600 eligible California applicants received a Guaranteed Transfer Option, which provides for their admission to UC after they complete the required coursework at a California Community College. The Governor has proposed that these students receive fee waivers at the community colleges. That proposal is pending approval in the Legislature.
- **Fall 2004 marks the first time in over four decades that UC has not been able to accommodate all eligible students for entrance as freshmen.** Under California's

¹ based on March 30 data for both years.

Master Plan for Higher Education, the top 12.5 percent of the state's public high school graduates are deemed UC eligible and guaranteed admission to at least one campus in the system. UC's Eligibility in the Local Context program also guarantees admission to students in the top 4 percent of their school's high school graduating class, provided that the State can fund their enrollment.

- **As admission has become more competitive across the system, admit rates have declined.** The systemwide fall 2004 freshman admit rate is 73.2 percent compared to 75.7 percent in fall 2003 and 77.7 percent in fall 2002 (as of March). UC Santa Cruz experienced the largest one-year change, offering admission to 67.2 percent of its fall 2004 freshman applicants compared to 81.1 percent in 2003.
- **Some groups see modest gains.** The proportion of admitted students who are the first in their families to attend college, have a family income of less than \$30,000 a year and/or attend a low performing school increased slightly systemwide.
- **The academic quality of the incoming freshman class continues to be outstanding.** Traditional academic measures increased again this year. The average systemwide GPA of admitted students increased .04 to 3.80. Meanwhile, SAT II subject exam scores, which are more heavily considered in the admissions process than are scores on the SAT I or the ACT, are also up. The average SAT II score for Writing has climbed to 600 and for Mathematics, to 614.
- **The proportion of underrepresented students offered admission increased slightly systemwide.** Underrepresented students, i.e., American Indians, Latinos and African Americans, showed small gains as a total *proportion* of systemwide admits, from 19.8 percent last year to 20.0 percent. Their proportions declined modestly at six campuses and increased slightly at two.

However, because of the overall reduction in admissions, **all major racial and ethnic groups registered systemwide declines in the number of students admitted.**

There was a drop of 6.7 percent for all students, 15.1 percent for African Americans, 9.2 percent for American Indians, 1.9 percent for Asian Americans, 3.2 percent for Latinos and 8.4 percent for whites.

These numbers are consistent with the overall decline of freshman applications this year of 4.1 percent. For example, applications from African American students declined by 7 percent for fall 2004. While the University is still examining the possible reasons for this decline, higher fees and cuts to outreach are potential contributing factors. Declines in African American applications have also been reported at other universities across the country.

- **For the first time, students were offered the new Guaranteed Transfer Option (GTO).** Under this program, as proposed by the Governor, students would be provided two years of free instruction at a community college followed by guaranteed admission to a UC campus.

- Of these students, 1 percent are American Indian, 5.2 percent African American, 23.6 percent Asian American, 16.6 percent Latino, 44.1 percent White, and 9.4 percent other/decline to state. The average grade point average of GTO students is 3.46.

A complete set of tables is available online at: <http://www.ucop.edu/news/studstaff.html>