

Admissions Advisory Committee (AAC)

Annual Report

April 2007

Committee members: Stan Barnett (CHE), Cindy Bonn, ex officio (Dean of Admissions), Edmund Ferszt (Associate Dean, Feinstein Providence Campus), Allan Graham (COB), Celia MacDonnell (PHP), Lewis Pakula (MTH), Karen Ramsay, Chair (LIB), Jayne Richmond (Dean, UC), Paula Viau, (NUR), Gerald Williams (Director, SPTD)

Charge:

[5.77.10 The Admissions Advisory Committee](#) shall review and evaluate standards and policies concerning recruitment and admissions and study all matters related to recruitment and admissions, except the establishment of annual admissions targets which is the responsibility of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. The committee *may* make recommendations to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and provide the Faculty Senate with a copy of their recommendations. The Dean of Admissions shall provide the committee with appropriate information to enable the committee to carry out its charge.

[5.77.12](#) This committee shall meet at least once each semester and shall report annually to the Faculty Senate on the status of admissions for that academic year, including recommending any changes in admissions policy.

Activities:

The Committee met five times over the course of the academic year. The Committee members met the new Dean of Admissions, Cindy Bonn, reviewed the 2006 AAC annual report, and addressed issues for the new year. At that time, a resolution came before the Faculty Senate requesting that the AAC:

“...conduct a careful study of the implications of eliminating the requirement of the SAT for admission of freshman to the URI. This study shall investigate the effectiveness of the SAT and ACT in predicting success at URI including data on gender, race, and major; study potential benefits of making the SAT/ACT optional as well as risks and potential costs involved with this change.”

A report is to be made to the Faculty Senate no later than the January 2008 meeting.

The Committee began its work on this task on several fronts:

- Literature search
- Admissions office staffing
- A survey of the Deans of degree granting colleges
- A discussion with Institutional Research (IR)

The literature search resulted in articles from *Economics of Education Review*, *ERIC*, *Psychological Science*, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Inside Higher Education*, to name a few, as well as articles and papers on the extensive study conducted at the University of California (2001-2004). Many news releases on this issue were also distributed as well as shared various institutions' websites regarding admission requirements.

Concern for any substantial increase in applications prompted the Committee to also review staffing of the URI Admissions Office as compared with other Admissions Offices. Data was collected and it was agreed that the University of Rhode Island is considerably understaffed with the number of applications currently received (spreadsheet attached). Increased staffing is necessary now, before any changes are made or any additional impact is felt by that office.

Deans were asked:

- How and when do you define success within your college or programs?
- Have any studies been conducted within your college investigating whether SATs are one of the determinants of success, however it has been defined?

The Deans' revealed a wide range of responses. In defining success responses included "The College has not specifically addressed this issue," "It varies by program" and "...currently engaged in developing assessment tools for monitoring the progress and success of our students." Although most colleges have not conducted any studies of the SATs within their colleges at least one "has researched, studied, and discussed this issue at length."

Gary Boden of Institutional Research (IR) met with the Committee to discuss available data and outline a study. After much discussion, he agreed to submit a proposal for a study to the Committee which was reviewed and agreed upon. The study, with analysis, will be completed by the end of June 2007 and submitted for Committee review.

Over the course of the year the following were discussed:

- Most of the institutions that have gone SAT optional with no exceptions are small, private, liberal arts colleges; such as Sarah Lawrence (<1400 total enrollment), Hampshire (1400 total enrollment);

- Many SAT optional institutions require students to submit scores after admission for placement purposes, such as Bowdoin;
- Larger, public institutions should be looked at, such as the University of California (which underwent a similar study between 2001-2004), the University of Texas, etc.;
- Most SAT optional institutions have clear exceptions and guidelines, such as, optional if student has certain gpa and/or class rank (University of Wyoming); eligibility indices (University of Oklahoma) for in- and out-of-state applicants; while some require scores for “majors that require higher standards” at CalState, or for admission to particular majors (Electrical Engineering, Computer Science, Civil and Infrastructure Engineering, etc. at George Mason University);
- **The admissions process at the University of Rhode Island is a holistic one,** weighing the high school transcript most heavily, and considering many other materials submitted by the applicant.

The ACC will continue to gather general information as well as data specific to URI. Upon completion of the IR study, the Committee will review its findings and analysis, consider various SAT optional plans, address the benefits, risks and costs involved with implementation of any admission requirement changes, and prepare its report to the Faculty Senate.

Admissions Comparison

Institution	Notes	(as of June 2006)			Total Enroll.	% Admits	Peterson's			Applicants per Total		Applicants per Prof. Staff
		Prof. Staff	Sup. Staff	Total Staff			Apps.	Admits	Enroll.	Staff	Staff	
Peer Institutions												
James Madison University (VA)	3	16	19	35	15,618	68%	16,388	11,094	3,798	468	1024	
Montana State University - Bozeman	4			5	10,842	74%	5,124	3,784	2,236	1025		
North Dakota State University - Fargo					10,496	84%	4,007	3,346				
University of Maine (Orono only)	5	13	11	24	9,179	80%	5,702	4,580	1,753	238	439	
University of New Hampshire	6	16	13	29	11,529	72%	12,310	8,804	2,798	424	769	
University of Vermont	8	25	18	43	9,859	80%	13,015	10,439	2,394	303	521	
University of Wyoming	7			5	9,510	95%	3,155	3,008	1,421	631		
NE Land Grant Universities												
University of Connecticut		20	17	37	16,112	51%	18,608	9,498	3,260	503	930	
University of Maine (Orono only)	5	13	11	24	9,179	80%	5,702	4,580	1,753	238	439	
University of Massachusetts (Amherst)					19,394	80%	20,205	16,240	4,486			
University of New Hampshire	6	16	13	29	11,529	72%	12,310	8,804	2,798	424	769	
University of Vermont	8	25	18	43	9,859	80%	13,015	10,439	2,394	303	521	
Aspirants												
University of Connecticut		20	17	37	16,112	51%	18,608	9,498	3,260	503	930	
University of Delaware					16,939	47%	21,617	10,256	3,404			
University of Virginia					14,213	38%	15,657	5,898	3,112			
SAT Optional Universities												
Bates College					1,730	27%	4,356	1,272	490			
Bowdoin				17	1,666	25%	5,026	1,232	477	296		
Drew University					1,613	77%	3,802	2,941	391			
George Mason (VA)	1, 2			20	18,091	69%	10,344	7,109	2,529	517		
Hamilton College (NY)					1,812	36%	4,189	1,502	498			
Hampshire College (Amherst)	9			21	1,376	64%	2,243	1,441	392	107		
Sarah Lawrence Collge				13	1,339	45%	2,634	1,174	376	203		
Wheaton College (MA)	10			17	1,568	44%	3,697	1,638	466	217		
URI		11	8.5	19.5	11,546	77%	13,388	10,327	2,366	687	1217	

- (1) SAT not required at George Mason if student has cum. avg. of 3.5 or higher, has taken academic curriculum, rank in top 20% of class, must submit 2 additional letters of recommendation and additional essay. This is first year, no data yet. Hired 2-3 more "processors" for implementation of SAT optional. SAT writing score is not required on any application.
- (2) 11 processors, dean, 2 administrators and some other people who assist.
- (3) James Madison admissions divided by region and state, clear admits require 1 reviewer, committee of 3 decides on others
- (4) Montana State has total of 23 admissions and enrollment officers, 2 review freshman applications, 3 review transfer students (god only knows what the rest do)
- (5) Univ. of Maine has 9 readers who are also counselors -- do holistic review, essays, interviews "on demand" for Orono campus only
- (6) UNH has 12 FTE First year admissions staff, 2 transfer staff, 1 for Associate's Degree at Thompson School, SATs are "not heavily weighted"
- (7) Univ. of Wyoming has unique situation in that they have space and therefore do not require essays or interviews. Strictly based on SAT/ACT scores and cum. GPA (they bring all GPA's to a 4.0 scale and do not differentiate between high schools. The 5 processing staff do not include recruiting staff.
- (8) Univ. of Vermont has 10 seasonal readers in addition to 43 regular employees
- (9) Hampshire College has 6 counselors, director, associate director, 9 support, 4 partime interviewers, 2 seasonal readers
- (10) Wheaton College has 1 Dean, 1 Director, 4 Asst. Directors, 3 Assoc. directors, 8 support, 5 seasonal readers