

Freshman Application Review Process – Office of Admission

For the fall of 2007, the Office of Admission received nearly 13,600 applications for admission. We anticipate receiving 15,000 this year. We have approximately fourteen people reviewing these applications.

The minimum requirements for admission were developed by the faculty senate and are printed in the University catalog on page 29:

SAT or ACT exam

18 units of college preparatory work including:

4 units in English

3 in math (algebra 1 & 2 and geometry)

2 in a physical or natural science

2 in a history or social science

2 in the same foreign language

5 additional college prep courses (it is recommended that these courses are in the arts, humanities and foreign languages, mathematics, social sciences, or laboratory sciences)

Some majors at URI require additional units of math and/or science (engineering, business, pharmacy).

Applications are reviewed by high school, so that readers come to understand the profiles of the high schools that send us numerous applications each year, and so that they can make decisions equitably. Each application is carefully reviewed. We read the essay and letters of recommendation, as well as the resume of activities.

The transcript and high school profile receive the closest attention. The profile tells us how the GPA and rank (if available) are calculated, as well as what scale is used (4.0, 5.0, 7.0, etc.). It also tells us about the levels of course work offered at the high school (AP, honors, various levels of college preparatory work). This allows us to determine to what extent the applicant has challenged her/himself.

The class admitted for the fall of 2007 had an average GPA of 3.25 and an average SAT score of 1663/2400, and an average ACT of 24. The SAT now consists of three components: critical reading, writing, and math. The average for each section for the admitted class was approximately 550.

We have no strict “cut-off” for SAT scores or GPA. If an applicant falls significantly below our profile with grades and test scores, he or she will most likely be denied admission. We do admit many students with SAT scores below our average if their high school performance and course selection is strong. Some students have strong test scores and very weak high school records; we are less likely to admit these students. Research in

the field of college admission and retention has shown that the single best predictor of academic success in college is academic success in high school. Students with high test scores and low grades are the most likely to leave college because of poor academic performance.

In addition to reviewing candidates for admission, we also review them for Centennial Scholarship eligibility. The minimum requirements for Centennial consideration are printed in our publications and available on our web site. The current minimum requirements are 1150 on the SAT (combined critical reading and math) or 25 on the ACT, and a minimum rank of top third, or a 3.30 on a 4 point scale (88 on a 100 point scale). For the class entering in fall 2008, these criteria will be raised.

When we review applications, we do consider special talent in music, art, athletics, and leadership. We also consider legacy status, and whether a parent is employed at the University. These circumstances may make a difference in the case of a “borderline” applicant, but our goal is to admit students who have demonstrated that they are prepared to be successful here. Last year we admitted 79% of the applicants who applied to URI, although the acceptance rate varies by individual college. For example, the acceptance rate to nursing was 63%, to business: 57%, to pharmacy: 16%.

The denial letter that is sent to Rhode Island applicants encourages these students to consider enrolling at CCRI, and applying as transfer students after the accumulation of 24 transferable credits and a minimum GPA of 2.5 (as established by the Faculty Senate). The letter also describes the Joint Admission Program, which guarantees admission to URI if the student earns an associate degree at CCRI with a minimum GPA of 2.4. Out-of-state students who are denied are also encouraged to consider re-applying as transfer students.