

2016 TEST-OPTIONAL ADMISSIONS for the WU CLA

Over the past two academic years, the Admissions Committee,¹ a standing subcommittee of the Academic Council, at the request of Michael Beseda, VP of Enrollment and University Communications, has evaluated the use of standardized tests in our admission process and the appropriateness of a test-optional process of admissions for the Willamette University College of Liberal Arts. In the sections that follow, we state our recommendations, and then briefly report on the status quo of CLA admissions, discuss the process by which we arrived at our recommendations, highlight specific findings, further elaborate on our recommendations, and conclude on a note of welcome urgency.

[A] We recommend that the CLA revise its *‘c`jghjWUXa jggjcbg`dfcWgg`gc`h`UhUdd`jWUblg`*:

%` \Uj`Y`h`Y`cdh`cb`lc`gi`Va`j`h`cf`k`j`h` \`c`X`h`Y`ci`h`W`a`Yg`c`Z`h`Y`f`G`5`H`UbX`#`f`5`7`H`h`Y`gh`b`[`z`Z`i`b`X`Y`f`h`U`_`Y`b`U`h`U`z``

&`"Vi`h`z`Y`j`h`Y`f`k`U`h`z`U`f`Y`f`Y`ei`j`f`Y`X`lc`W`a`d`Y`h`U`K`I`7`@`!`gd`Y`W`z`W`g`l`c`f`h`gi`d`d`Ya`Y`b`h`U`Y`gg`U`nd`f`c`a`d`h`lc`V`Y`i`g`Y`X`j`b`h`Y`U`X`a`j`g`g`j`c`b`g`d`f`c`W`g`g`"

In addition, we recommend these Admissions changes be complemented

'`"V`m`i`c`b`[`c`j`b`[`UbX`b`Yk`j`b`j`h`U`h`j`Yg`j`b`W`f`f`j`W`i`a`z`d`Y`X`U`[`c`[`n`z`UbX`gh`i`X`Y`b`h`i`gi`d`d`c`f`h`g`Y`f`j`j`W`g`lc`a`Y`Y`h`h`Y`b`Y`Y`X`g`c`Z`U`b`j`b`W`Y`U`g`j`b`[`m`i`X`j`Y`f`g`Y`gh`i`X`Y`b`h`V`c`X`m`

Z`fa`Y`X`

¹hY consisted of Bobby Brewer-Wallin (in Spring), Susan Coromel, Seth Cotlar, Fritz Ruehr, and two students: Faith Kebekol and Elizabeth Smith. The present committee consi

has been chaired in both cycles by Sammy Basu, and attended throughout by M

Students are admitted through a 'holistic admissions process' that considers the following factors:

- SAT and/or ACT scores

- high school gpa weighted in solid subjects and against an overall profile of the school's honors, AP/IB, and other accelerated options.

- other considerations of merit germane to the CLA that are reflected in material submitted (record of co-curricular and community activities, letters of recommendation, personal essay) through the Comm

more compet



Denison, Earlham, Furman, Pitzer, and Smith.¹³ Among our immediate NW peer colleges, Lewis & Clark has been test-optional since 1991.

Fourth, there has also been a growing demand for rethinking the broader purposes of college admissions.¹⁴ On this view, various character qualities, including di

the ACT. We reviewed the general ev

performance, weighted for core and solid subjects and adjusted for contextual knowledge of the overall quality and student profile of that school, afford the admissions process comparable predictive power over the likely college succ

to AP and honor tracks in h

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[E] Further elaboration on our recommendations

To better align with the idealism of our motto and mission, reflect commitments to improve access and affordability expressed in the Case statement for our forthcoming capital campaign, and further enhance our student diversity, we recommend that Admissions continue its three-pronged approach but adopt a holistic admissions process, ...

*%'Jb`k \ JW `Udd`JWUblg` \ Uj Y`h Y`cdh`cb`lc`gi Va Jhcf`k Jh \ c`X`h Y`ci Wta Yg`
cZH Yf`G5 H`UbX*

&" ð `]Yi `cZfYei Jf]b[`G5 H#5 7 H' gWtfYgž k Y Z fH Yf `dfcdcgY' h Uih Y7 @ ` fYei JfYUgi dd`Ya YbHU`K I `7 @ !gdYVZ WUXa Jgg]cb`YggUmidfca dh" `

The existing and forthcoming Common (2016-17) App essay prompts largely direct the applicant to reflect on past achievements and demonstrated abilities in relation to background.³¹ Given that these essays will be available to us, we recommend a WU-specific question that orients the applicant towards the distinctive value statement reflected in our motto and asks how the applicant might be impacted by it and act on it.³² That is, and in keeping with our new recruitment materials (e.g. the 'viewbook') and ('First,' and 'Be one it') marketing campaigns, we want to encourage applicants to imagine themselves in various roles at Willamette and on various trajectories of life beyond Willamette.³³ Though the question wording (and attendant rubric) are yet to be finalized, once in place existing Admissions staff can complete this additional review work as part of their existing holistic admissions process.

We do not recommend more s /

greater selectivity (since only better test scores are submitted and reported) without enrolling a more diverse or wider-wealth student body.³⁶ Colleges that go test-optional achieve diversity gains when admissions efforts are genuinely committed to diversity. In this regard, an experimental study found that admissions officers are more likely to select for a more diverse applicant pool when they have detailed information on high school contexts. The CLA

assistance in shifting from high school requirements to college expectations.⁴² All students need to be participating in meaningful experiences and having mentoring interactions with their professors, and students unfamiliar with college processes or otherwise lacking college-success
