



# THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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## EDUCATION, RESEARCH, AND SERVICE COMMITTEE

### STANDARDIZED TESTING IN ADMISSIONS SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Education, Research, and Service Committee of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Linda C. Martin, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success

DATE: January 20, 2022

RE: Standardized Testing in Admissions – Supplemental Information

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As follow-up to questions and specific requests for additional information raised at the Special Session of the ERS Committee held on Wednesday, October 20, 2021, the following items are being provided to inform further discussion on this topic at the next meeting of the ERS Committee (February 25, 2022).

### 1. Campus Reports

Each campus (undergraduate) has provided a separate report (see Tab #2), which includes the following information:

- *Predictive value of each factor and each combination of factors considered in admission decisions for each UT campus.*
  - *First-to-second year retention*
  - *4-yr graduation*
  - *6-yr graduation*
- *Historically, how ACT/SAT scores been used on each campus for scholarship determination; course placement; academic assistance provided; eligibility for bridge, honors, and scholarships programs; and admission into specialize programs. How this changed as a result of COVID (impact of fewer students taking the test).*
- *How campuses have historically used data purchased from ACT/SAT in student recruitment.*
- *Percentage of students applying on each campus provided ACT/SAT scores for Fall 2021 and Fall 2022 (to date). Data also requested by:*
  - *Residency (in-state vs. out-of-state)*
  - *Need (Pell-eligible vs. non-Pell-eligible)*
  - *First generation vs. Non-first generation*
  - *Students of color vs. other self-identified groups*

- *Acceptance rate (percentage) of students applying on each campus for ACT/SAT-provided and ACT/SAT-not-provided applicants for Fall 2021 and Fall 2022 (to date). Data also requested by:*
  - *Residency (in-state vs. out-of-state)*
  - *Need (Pell-eligible vs. non-Pell-eligible)*
  - *First generation vs. Non-first generation*
  - *Students of color vs. other self-identified groups*
  
- *Summer “melt rate” (percentage of students who committed, but did not show up for classes) on each campus for ACT/SAT-provided and ACT/SAT-not-provided applicants for Fall 2021 and Fall 2022 (to date)? Data also requested by:*
  - *Residency (in-state vs. out-of-state)*
  - *Need (Pell-eligible vs. non-Pell-eligible)*
  - *First generation vs. Non-first generation*
  - *Students of color vs. other self-identified groups*
  
- *First-to-second semester retention rate (percentage) for ACT/SAT-provided and ACT/SAT-not-provided applicants for Fall 2021)? Data also requested by:*
  - *Residency (in-state vs. out-of-state)*
  - *Need (Pell-eligible vs. non-Pell-eligible)*
  - *First generation vs. Non-first generation*
  - *Students of color vs. other self-identified groups*

**2. Use of ACT/SAT scores used to determine state and national scholarships and student aid.**

See Tab #3.

**3. National data related to the predictive value of GPA for student success? ACT/SAT? GPA combined with ACT/SAT? Other characteristics, if any, with strong predictive value.**

This information has been provided as an “Executive Summary” with an associated “Annotated Bibliography.” (See Tab #4).

**4. Post-COVID admission requirement decisions (required, test-optional, test-blind...) for peer and aspirational peers (Fall 2022 and beyond).**

The Office of Academic Affairs and Student Success reached out (via email) to all Board-approved peers and aspirational peers to gather requested information (Note: UTS does not yet have Board-approved peers).

A total of 50 institutions were contacted; 41 responded (summary and spreadsheet attached). Each institution responded to the following four questions:

Q1: *Was the ACT/SAT required prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (required; optional; test-blind; not required)?*

Q2: *How will ACT/SAT be used in admissions, post-COVID (required; optional; test-blind; not required)?*

Q3: *When will post-COVID changes go into effect? Fall 2023? Fall 2024?*

Q4: *Do you anticipate further changes in the use of ACT/SAT for Fall 2025 and beyond?*

(See Tab #5)



## High School GPA and ACT Scores as Used in UTC Admissions

Compiled upon request by the Board of Trustees of the University of Tennessee System

### 1. The Predictive Value of High School GPA and ACT Composite Score

Analyses were conducted using first-time full-time freshman cohorts from Fall 2011 through Fall 2020, excluding those students with neither an ACT/SAT score nor High School GPA (HSGPA) on their record. This population numbers 21,549 students.

#### Key Findings

1. There is a statistically significant, positive relationship between both HSGPA and ACT score and student retention and graduation. However, once HSGPA is accounted for, the significance of ACT score as a predictor and the magnitude of its effect is greatly diminished. In the case of graduation rates, ACT score's viability as a predictor in addition to HSGPA has decreased over the time period studied. In the most recently measured cohorts it becomes statistically insignificant in a model that includes HSGPA.
2. When HSGPA is already considered, ACT composite score only provides additional meaningful separation in outcomes for the top three to four deciles of HSGPA. At the level of HSGPA where admissions decisions are made, ACT score shows no capability to further delineate positive outcomes from negative outcomes. This pattern holds for all outcomes considered. Example: among students in the 6th decile for high school GPA, those in the bottom decile had a six-year graduation rate of 50.3% while those in the top decile had a six-year graduation rate of 42.3%.
3. When compared statistically in its ability to sort students by likelihood of success, a model which includes both HSGPA and ACT score *fails to outperform* a model which includes HSGPA only. The addition of ACT score thus does not enhance the model's capability of separating eventual successes from eventual failures.

The following table illustrates the findings above, in this case for six-year graduation rate (the other two outcome metrics show very similar patterns). When students are divided up into deciles of HSGPA and ACT score we see a clear, consistent, and strong trend from top to bottom (HSGPA) but there is no left-to-right (ACT) trend in the bottom six deciles of HSGPA. ACT only adds predictive value in the top few HSGPA deciles, which is largely unhelpful for admissions decisions.

*Six-Year Graduation Rates by High School GPA and ACT Composite Deciles*

Decile		ACT									
		1st (19)	2nd (20)	3rd (21)	4th (22)	5th (23)	6th (24)	7th (25)	8th (26)	9th (28)	10th (35)
HSGPA	1st (2.9)	27.8%	35.4%	24.9%	22.9%	21.7%	24.5%	21.1%	20.8%	22.7%	36.0%
	2nd (3.1)	34.1%	29.2%	36.6%	36.6%	25.8%	35.1%	22.4%	43.3%	33.3%	17.6%
	3rd (3.2)	35.1%	37.4%	37.5%	36.9%	39.7%	37.0%	31.3%	38.0%	32.8%	42.1%
	4th (3.3)	31.5%	38.8%	40.2%	38.0%	44.9%	44.2%	48.4%	38.9%	43.1%	28.1%
	5th (3.5)	41.8%	48.4%	46.6%	47.7%	51.9%	48.2%	42.3%	53.2%	53.5%	40.5%
	6th (3.6)	50.3%	52.2%	56.3%	56.3%	52.6%	54.7%	58.9%	52.4%	50.5%	42.3%
	7th (3.7)	47.0%	52.3%	53.1%	59.7%	59.1%	61.0%	60.0%	60.0%	59.7%	60.3%
	8th (3.9)	54.7%	57.4%	50.6%	57.9%	64.8%	68.5%	59.3%	62.1%	67.7%	64.2%
	9th (4.0)	54.3%	65.7%	59.5%	63.1%	76.3%	72.0%	67.6%	75.9%	76.3%	82.6%
	10th (4.0)										

## 2. ACT/SAT use in Scholarships, Placement, Academic Assistance, and Program Eligibility; and Changes due to COVID-19

### Scholarship Determination

Applicants must have a completed admission file for consideration for freshmen merit based institutional scholarship awards. A completed file includes an official high school transcript, a standardized ACT/SAT score, and paid application fee by the December 1 scholarship deadline. Early action scholarship consideration requires a completed admission file by December 1 for the upcoming fall term.

Chancellor's scholarship	3.75 GPA & 29 ACT (1330 SAT)	\$5,000
Provost's scholarship	3.4 GPA & 25 ACT (1200 SAT)	\$4,000
MOCS scholarship	3.2 GPA & 22 ACT (1100 SAT)	\$3,000

UTC offered a small number (100) of merit scholarships for students with a cumulative 3.9 and above high school grade point average due to limitations with access to standardized tests due to Covid.

### Course Placement

Students have several options for completing the English and math requirements at UTC. They may:

1. Submit documentation of Prior Learning Assessment coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement)
2. Transfer course credit from another accredited institution
3. Participate in the summer enrichment math camp and take a placement exam
4. Retake the ACT/SAT math test portion to meet minimum benchmarks

### English

UTC uses a Directed Self-Placement process to help students determine the appropriate English class. Students with an ACT English subscore of 30 or higher must take only ENGL 1020 to satisfy General Education requirements for Rhetoric and Composition. Students with ACT English subscores of 25-29 begin in [ENGL 1010](#). Students with ACT English subscores of 24 or lower have the option of taking [ENGL 1010](#) or [ENGL 1011](#), which includes a one-hour tutorial to help ensure their success in college composition.

### Math

Students may use the higher of their UTC Mathematics Placement Test Level, ACT Mathematics subscore, or SAT Mathematics subscore to determine their eligibility for a mathematics course. The following table should be used in conjunction with the mathematics requirements for a specific major and with prerequisite course requirements to determine in which mathematics course they may enroll.

In general, students must complete three (3) credit hours in the Mathematics general education category. Students are expected to complete this requirement within the first 30 attempted credit hours.

*Math Placement Criteria*

UTC Course	Pre-requisite	Min ACT Math subscore	Min SAT Math subscore	Math Placement Test Score
Math 1010	None	None	None	None
Math 1130: College Algebra	Transfer in Math 1006 or 1007; or pass Step Ahead Math program	19	510	27
Math 1710: Precalculus I	Transfer in Math 1007 or pass Step Ahead Math program	19	510	27
Math 1720: Precalculus II	Math 1710	26	610	41
Math 1730: Combined Precalculus	Math 1130	24	580	37
Math 1830: Calculus for Mngt, Social Sciences	Math 1130	26	610	41
Math 1950: Calculus w/ Analytic Geometry I	Math 1720	28 and 1 sem of High school trigonometry	660 and 1 sem of high school trigonometry	46
Math 2100: Intro Statistics	None	None	None	None
Math 2150: Math for Elem & Middle School Teachers I	Transfer in Math 1006 or 1007; or pass the Step Ahead Math program	19	510	27
Math 2160: Math for Elem & Middle School Teachers II	Math 2150	26	610	41

Since there are multiple options for students to meet the placement requirements for English and math, UTC has not changed this area due to Covid.

**Academic Assistance**

UTC does not require students to submit any documentation to qualify for academic assistance (e.g., tutoring, supplemental instruction). All services are available to students regardless of academic credentials, like the standardized test score, and/or ability to pay.

**Summer Enrichment and Bridge Programs**

UTC has offered a summer enrichment opportunity for admitted students with the highest retention risk since 2015. The primary eligibility qualifications for participants includes:

1. Cumulative high school grade point average less than a 3.3
2. Math test score less than a 19
3. First generation
4. Federal Pell Grant eligible

Students meeting these four categories have a 56% second year retention rate. Since 2015, Summer Bridge participants have increased this rate to 80% and above. It is important to note that the Summer Bridge program was not offered in 2020 and 2021 due to Covid precautions. While standardized test scores are part of the consideration for this program, the success for these students has come through intensive engagement and connections with campus resources.

## Honors College

Students may enroll in the Honors College through one of two special academic programs: the Brock Scholars Program, which offers a unique four-year, multidisciplinary general education experience; or the Innovations in Honors (IIH) program, a two to three-year program focused on community engagement, research, and problem-solving, designed for sophomores, juniors, and/or seniors. The Honors College admission process is completely holistic and uses test blind criteria.

## Teacher Education Program

To date, entrance into the Teacher Education program requires an ACT score of 21 or SAT of 1080 for state licensure. Students without these standardized scores can take the Praxis Core and meet state requirements.

## 3. Data purchased from ACT/SAT and its use in student recruitment

UTC purchases names and demographic information on prospective student applicants from ACT and The College Board. The names are loaded into our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software to market our academic programs and student activities. The Undergraduate Admissions Office sends direct and targeted emails, postal pieces, text messages, and social media geo-fencing to encourage engagement. These name buys are a core foundation for our prospective student recruitment plan.

## 4. Percentage of Applicants Providing ACT/SAT Scores Rather Than Opting Out

	Fall 21	Fall 22
All	69%	75%
In-state	72%	78%
Out-of-State	48%	59%
First Gen	79%	73%
Not First Gen	65%	76%
Students of Color	63%	71%
Non-Students of Color	70%	76%

*Data regarding Pell eligibility cannot be provided for any students who do not enroll; thus, this breakdown cannot be provided.*

*Fall 2022 applicant data are as of December 2021 and are subject to change.*

## 5. Acceptance Rate of Applicants Providing ACT/SAT Scores vs. Those Opting Out

While the acceptance rate was generally lower for students opting out of the standardized test requirement, it is worth noting that this was not the case in Fall 2021 for students of color. They have also been less negatively affected so far in Fall 2022 admissions than non-students of color.

	Fall 21		Fall 22	
	ACT/SAT	Opted Out	ACT/SAT	Opted out
All	91%	83%	90%	71%
In-state	91%	84%	90%	71%
Out-of-State	86%	80%	91%	73%
First Gen	89%	83%	84%	82%
Not First Gen	91%	83%	92%	68%
Students of Color	87%	87%	88%	74%
Non-Students of Color	91%	82%	91%	71%

*Data regarding Pell eligibility cannot be provided for any students who do not enroll; thus, this breakdown cannot be provided.*

*Fall 2022 acceptance rate data are as of December 2021 and are subject to change.*

## 6. Summer Melt Rate of Committed Students Providing ACT/SAT Scores vs. Those Opting Out

	Fall 21	
	ACT/SAT	opted out
All	4%	6%
In-state	3%	6%
Out-of-State	9%	8%
First Gen	4%	6%
Not First Gen	3%	7%
Students of Color	5%	6%
Non-Students of Color	3%	7%

*Data regarding Pell eligibility cannot be provided for any students who do not enroll; thus, this breakdown cannot be provided. Data regarding melt rates for Fall 2022 committed students cannot be provided at this time.*

## 7. First-to-Second Semester Retention Rate of Enrolled Students Providing ACT/SAT Scores vs. Those Opting Out

*These data cannot be provided with reasonable accuracy until mid-January 2022.*

### QUESTIONS + RESPONSES | USE OF TEST-SCORES

#### 1. What is the predictive value of each factor and each combination of factors considered in admission decisions for each UT campus?

- The University of Tennessee, Knoxville uses a holistic approach with numerous considerations to evaluate applications for admission, therefore, the predictive value of each variable cannot be calculated. However, after an examination of the relationship between High School GPA and standardized test scores against 1st year retention, 4-year graduation, and 6-year graduation rates the following odds ratios are provided:
- HS GPA is positively associated, at a highly statistically significant level, with each of the three outcomes. Odds ratio: 2.24 for retention, 2.74 4-year graduation rate, 2.96 6-year graduation rate
  - Test scores are positively associated with two of three outcomes, but only statistically significant with 1st year retention. Odds ratio: 1.03 for retention, 1.00 4-year graduation rate, 1.01 6-year graduation rate
  - Odds ratio demonstrates the effect on retention or graduation based upon the difference in GPA or test scores. Note, an odds ratio of 1 represents no effect; the farther away the odds ratio is from 1, the stronger the effect. *\*Refer to BOT Regression Results for detailed Odds Ratio Report*

#### 2. Historically, how have ACT/SAT scores been used on each campus for scholarship determination; course placement; academic assistance provided; eligibility for bridge, honors, and scholarship programs; and admission into specialized programs? How has this changed as a result of COVID (impact of fewer students taking the test)?

- UTK has long considered a broad range of factors, including test scores, as part of a holistic admission review process assessing an applicant's unique experiences alongside traditional measures of academic readiness. Test scores continue to be considered (when provided) and used to inform course placement, academic support services (Vol Institute for Math Success), scholarships, competitive programs (Honors, Engineering, Nursing, Architecture).

##### Holistic Review Factors Include:

- UT Core GPA: UTK calculated GPA based on 16 unit core courses (English, Math, Science, American History, etc.)
- Rigor of high school curriculum (including Advanced Placement, Dual Enrollment, International Baccalaureate, Cambridge, Honors)
- Grade trend: academic performance over the course of high school career
- Test scores (ACT or SAT) or Test Optional Essay\*
- Extracurricular or leadership/service activities
- Experiences outside the classroom (employment, community engagement, entrepreneurship, etc.)
- Awards and Achievements
- Optional supporting statement
- Optional letters of recommendation



### HOLISTIC REVIEW

UTK utilizes a holistic evaluation of college readiness based on a broad range of factors

- **Scholarship Programs:** UTK's institutional aid and scholarship programs are based primarily on academic indicators including UT Core GPA and Test Score (Volunteer, Explore, Orange & White). The Beacon Test Optional Scholarship Program (implemented Fall 2021) utilizes GPA *and* a holistic review process.

→ **Fall 2021 and Fall 2022 for Test Optional | New in Response to the Pandemic**

- \*Test Optional Essay implemented for Fall 2021 applicants
- Optional Covid Question: Implemented for all CommonApp and UTK applicants inviting students to share how Covid 19 has impacted them.
- Beacon Scholarship Program: Test optional scholarships launched as part of test optional pilot
- Course Placement for test optional admits: developed in close partnership with faculty, utilizes high school coursework, grades and rigor for Math, Science, and English to determine placement
- Test Optional Pathways for Honors Programs and Competitive Academic Programs (Nursing, Engineering, Architecture): based upon GPA, academic rigor and specific academic coursework

## QUESTIONS + RESPONSES | USE OF TEST-SCORES

### 3. How have campuses historically used data purchased from ACT/SAT in student recruitment?

- ➔ UTK uses SAT and ACT name purchasing for lead generation to support lead gen/prospective student database, outreach & communication, invitations to events, etc.
- ➔ Lead diversification: UTK leverages a variety of lead generation resources including ACT, SAT names and Naviance, Cappex, SCOIR, student sourced (tours, events, high school fairs, inquiry), digital (website, social media), RaiseMe, Unibuddy, PlatformQ, YouVisit, Verto, CampusReel, and Carnegie.

### 4. What percentage of students applying on each campus provided ACT/SAT scores for Fall 2021 and Fall 2022 (to date)?

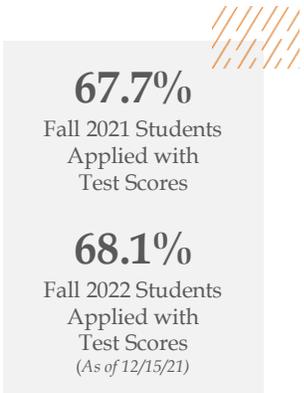
#### ➔ Fall 2021 Applicants | Provided ACT/SAT Scores | 67.7% Total

- Tennessee: 80.2%
- Out-of-State: 60.7%
- Student of Color: 65.3%
- White: 68.4%

#### ➔ Fall 2022 Applicants (*As of Dec. 15, 2022*) | Provided ACT/SAT Scores | 68.1% Total

- Tennessee: 81.2%
- Out-of-State: 63.3%
- Student of Color: 68.1%
- White: 68.8%

*\*Pell and First Generation | Unknown/incomplete data at point of application.*



### 5. What was the acceptance rate (percentage) of students applying on each campus for ACT/SAT-provided and ACT/SAT-not-provided applicants for Fall 2021 and Fall 2022 (to date)?

#### ➔ Fall 2021 Admit Rate | Provided ACT/SAT Scores

- Overall: 78.9%
- Tennessee: 78.0%
- Out-of-State: 79.6%
- Student of Color: 66.4%
- White: 82.4%

#### Fall 2021 Admit Rate | Test Optional

- Overall: 67.3%
- Tennessee: 64.6%
- Out-of-State: 68.0%
- Student of Color: 59.7%
- White: 69.7%

*\*Pell and First Generation | Unknown/incomplete data at point of acceptance.*

**Fall 2022 Admit Rate:** *information unavailable/incomplete given point in cycle.*

### 6. What was the summer “melt rate” (percentage of students who committed, but did not show up for classes) on each campus for ACT/SAT-provided and ACT/SAT-not-provided applicants for Fall 2021 and Fall 2022 (to date)?

#### ➔ Fall 2021 Melt Rate | Provided ACT/SAT Scores

- Overall: 9.8%
- Tennessee: 8.7%
- Out-of-State: 11.8%
- Student of Color: 9.9%
- White: 9.7%
- Pell: 10.5%
- Non-Pell: 9.6%
- First Generation: 10.4%
- Non-First Generation: 9.6%

#### Fall 2021 Melt Rate | Test Optional

- Overall: 11.5%
- Tennessee: 8.8%
- Out-of-State: 13.3%
- Student of Color: 12.3%
- White: 11.2%
- Pell: 11.2%
- Non-Pell: 11.5%
- First Generation: 13.7%
- Non-First Generation: 10.9%

**Fall 2022 Melt Rate:** *information unavailable given point in cycle.*

## QUESTIONS + RESPONSES | USE OF TEST-SCORES



### Fall 2021 Yield Rate | Provided ACT/SAT Scores

- Tennessee: 43.4%
- Out-of-State: 15.1%
- Student of Color: 25.2%
- White: 27.4%
- Pell: 38.3%
- Non-Pell: 25.3%
- First Generation: 34.3%
- Non-First Generation: 25.9%

### Fall 2021 Yield Rate | Test Optional

- Tennessee: 51.2%
- Out-of-State: 18.9%
- Student of Color: 25.5%
- White: 25.8%
- Pell: 35.1%
- Non-Pell: 24.0%
- First Generation: 29.2%
- Non-First Generation: 25.0%

Fall 2022 Yield Rate: *information unavailable given point in cycle.*

Yield rates reflect the number / % of enrolled students divided by the number of admitted students (those offered admission who enroll). Rates greatly affected by differences among in-state and out-of-state. The distribution of Pell, First-Gen and Test Optional are dramatically different by residency, with higher numbers of Pell and First-Gen populations existing in-state.

### 7. What was the first-to-second semester retention rate (percentage) for ACT/SAT-provided and ACT/SAT-not-provided applicants for Fall 2021?

UTK data reveals key factors traditionally related to retention gaps (Pell, first-gen, and gender) are more dominant than the distinction between test optional and test aware across early student success outcomes. UTK is focused on student success initiatives to enhance the student experience for all students including new programs aimed at first-generation, low-income and students of color to support increases in persistence and graduation outcomes.



### Spring 2022 Registered | ACT/SAT Scores

- Tennessee: 94.0%
- Out-of-State: 95.0%
- Student of Color: 92.6%
- White: 94.7%
- Pell: 91.6%
- Non-Pell: 94.9%
- First Generation: 90.5%
- Non-First Generation: 95.1%

### Fall 2021 to Spring 2022 Registered | Test Optional

- Tennessee: 93.1%
- Out-of-State: 94.8%
- Student of Color: 91.8%
- White: 94.6%
- Pell: 90.7%
- Non-Pell: 94.8%
- First Generation: 89.0%
- Non-First Generation: 95.3%

\* **NOTE:** Data incomplete. Spring 2022 classes begin Jan. 24, 2022 and students will continue to register over the winter break and before start of term. Registration data above as of Dec. 15, 2021.



While Non-Test Submitters high school GPAs were modestly lower than Submitters, and, upon entering college, first-year GPAs and cumulative GPAs were comparably lower they ultimately graduated at rates equivalent to, or marginally higher than submitters, the ultimate proof of success."

— National Association for College Admission Counseling  
Steven T. Syoerson, Valerie W. Franks, William C. Hiss

## EARLY INDICATORS + ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

### MID-YEAR SUMMARY | TEST OPTIONAL PILOT

→ As a part of UTK's Test Optional Pilot Program, preliminary mid-year review outcomes demonstrate slight differences among test aware (test score providers) and test optional student success academic indicators. Preliminary outcomes align with OIRA assessment of the predictive value of GPA (most predictive across first-year persistence, 4 and 6 year grad rates) and Test Scores (statistically significant only for first-year retention) and broader research studies which indicated test optional students performed slightly below test score submitters in first-year outcomes while graduating at equal or higher rates across 4 and 6 year graduation outcomes.

→ The early differences between test aware and test optional students are smaller than the gaps for other traditional known factors related to student success: Pell, First Generation, Gender, Student of Color, and Residency.



*First-generation, low-income, and students of color were more likely to apply to a school for the 2021 cycle specifically because it was test optional"*

– EAB Research  
Madeleine Rhyneer

### PRELIMINARY DATA REVIEW | EARLY OUTCOMES AS OF DEC. 15, 2021

#### → First Term GPA

- ACT/SAT Scores First Term GPA: 3.25
- Pell First Term GPA: 3.01
- First Generation First Term GPA: 2.99
- Males First Term GPA: 3.07
- Student of Color First Term GPA: 3.09
- In-State Student First Term GPA: 3.07
- Test Optional First Term GPA: 3.10
- Non-Pell First Term GPA: 3.25
- Non-First Generation First Term GPA: 3.25
- Females First Term GPA: 3.30
- White First Term GPA: 3.23
- Out-of-State Student First Term GPA: 3.30

#### → Completion Ratio = # Earned Hours / # Attempted Hours

- ACT/SAT Scores Completion Ratio: 89.2%
- Pell Completion Ratio: 84.0%
- First Generation Completion Ratio: 84.4%
- Males Completion Ratio: 85.6%
- Student of Color Completion Ratio: 85.9%
- In-State Student Completion Ratio: 87.8%
- Test Optional Completion Ratio: 87.5%
- Non-Pell Completion Ratio: 89.7%
- Non-First Generation Completion Ratio: 89.6%
- Females Completion Ratio: 90.9%
- White Completion Ratio: 89.4%
- Out-of-State Student Completion Ratio: 90.1%

#### → DFW Rates | Percentage of students with at least one grade of D, F, or W (Withdrawl)

- ACT/SAT Scores DFW Rates: 21.0%
- Pell DFW Rates: 29.8%
- First Generation DFW Rates: 30.4%
- Males DFW Rates: 26.8%
- Student of Color DFW Rates: 21.4%
- In-State Student DFW Rates: 23.4%
- Test Optional DFW Rates: 26.5%
- Non-Pell DFW Rates: 20.9%
- Non-First Generation DFW Rates: 20.8%
- Females DFW Rates: 19.5%
- White DFW Rates: 27.2%
- Out-of-State Student DFW Rates: 21.1%

#### → Spring 2022 Registered

- ACT/SAT Scores Registered: 94.3%
- Pell Registered: 91.3%
- First Generation Registered: 90.1%
- Males Registered: 92.7%
- Student of Color Registered: 92.3%
- In-State Student Registered: 93.8%
- Test Optional Registered: 94.0%
- Non-Pell Registered: 94.9%
- Non-First Generation Registered: 95.1%
- Females Registered: 95.3%
- White Registered: 94.7%
- Out-of-State Student Registered: 94.9%

## EARLY INDICATORS + ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

### → Fall 2021 First-Term | Academic Probation

- ACT/SAT Scores Provided: 7.9%
- Pell Awarded: 12.2%
- First Generation: 13.4%
- Male: 10.6%
- Student of Color: 11.1%
- In-State: 8.5%
- Test Optional: 8.4%
- Non-Pell: 7.1%
- Non-First Generation: 6.8%
- Female: 6.2%
- White: 7.3%
- Out-of-State: 7.4%

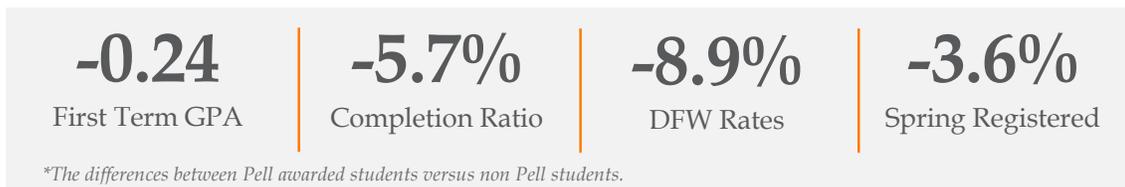
### TEST OPTIONAL PILOT | SUMMARY OF STUDENT SUCCESS EARLY INDICATORS

**FALL 2021 FIRST-TERM ACADEMIC PROBATION: 7.95% vs. 9.60% in Fall 2020**  
 Among largest first-year cohort ever and first to enter under test optional pilot – UTK experienced decreases in both number and percentage of first-year students placed on academic probation at end of first-term.

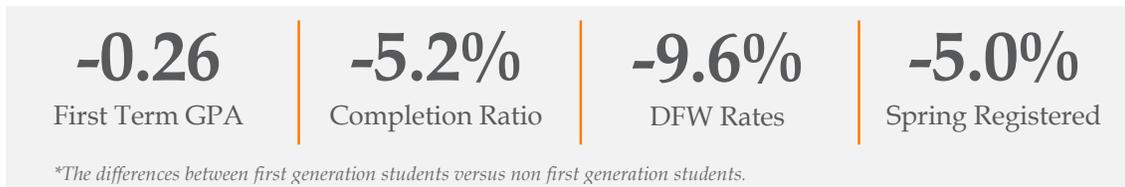
#### TEST OPTIONAL FIRST-TERM STUDENT OUTCOMES VS. TEST AWARE



#### PELL STUDENT OUTCOMES VS NON PELL



#### FIRST GENERATION STUDENT OUTCOMES VS NON FIRST GENERATION



## FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

### FALL 2022 NEW FIRST YEAR | EARLY INDICATORS



#### Record Applicant Growth

UTK’s Test Optional Pilot Program has aligned with record application growth:

- 17.9% Increase in Applications from 2020 to 2021
  - 6.9% Increase in Apps from Students of Color
- 21.9% Increase in Applications from 2021 to 2022
  - 17.6% Increase in Apps from Students of Color
- **46.3% Increase in Applications YTD since launch of Test Optional Pilot, 2020 to 2022 (As of December 17, 2021)**
  - 29.8 Increase in Apps from Students of Color YTD, 2020 to 2022 (As of December 17, 2021)



*Adoption of well-executed test-optional admission policies led to an increase in overall applications.”*

**– National Association for College Admission Counseling**  
 Steven T. Syverson,  
 Valerie W. Franks, William C. Hiss

## FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS + BENCHMARKING

### Fall 2022 NEW FIRST YEAR | SUMMARY OF APPLICATION EARLY INDICATORS

#### INCREASE IN TOTAL FIRST-YEAR APPLICATIONS

**+17.9%**

2020 - 2021

**+21.9%**

2021 - 2022

**+43.6%**

YTD, 2020 to 2022  
(As of December 17, 2021)

#### INCREASE IN TOTAL APPLICATIONS, STUDENTS OF COLOR

**+6.9%**

2020 - 2021

**+17.6%**

2021 - 2022

**+29.8%**

YTD, 2020 to 2022  
(As of December 17, 2021)

#### ➔ Recruitment Landscape | Competition for Students and Future Enrollment Growth

- 47 of U.S. News and World Report's top 52 universities offer test optional admissions for 2022
- Many institutions are evaluating longer term policies
- Harvard (through 2026), Stanford (through 2023), Cal State (final vote in March) and the UC System (permanently) all recently announced long-term test optional policies.

#### ➔ Continued Impact of Pandemic

- The new Omicron variant has created continued uncertainty regarding consistent and equitable access to testing
- Ripple effect of limited early testing available to juniors and sophomores

#### ➔ Potential Impact on Junior Recruitment

- 8,000+ juniors have visited the UTK campus to date (As of Dec. 15, 2021)
- Actively communicating with 130,000 junior leads
- Junior student and families are currently researching college options, including admissions requirements and potential scholarship opportunities

#### ➔ External Policy Considerations

- NCAA: approved test optional policy through Fall 2023 enrollees and will evaluate longer term policy changes in Spring 2022
- TN HOPE Scholarship: Test Optional - 21 ACT/1060 SAT or 3.0 GPA

#### TENNESSEE STATEWIDE POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

Tennessee HOPE Scholarship remains test optional: 21 ACT | 1060 SAT OR a 3.0 GPA

## FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS + BENCHMARKING

### MOST COLLEGES WILL KEEP TEST OPTIONAL POLICIES | Janet Godwin, ACT CEO

“It is somewhat unlikely that institutions who adopted temporary or pilot test use policies in response to COVID will return to test-required in the near term... We know we can’t go back to the way we did things before the pandemic. We must learn from this watershed moment, and we must all come together to fight for fairness for all students, to give them a world where they can realize their full potential.”  
(Inside Higher Ed, March 1, 2021)

#### ➔ COMPETITION + LANDSCAPE DECISIONS

A number of institutions have implemented extended test optional pilot programs including:

- Iowa State (Comparative Peer): Iowa Board of Regents to meet Jan. 2022 to evaluate long-term test optional policy for Iowa State, University of Iowa, and Northern Iowa.
- University of Wisconsin (Aspiration Peer): test optional pilot program through 2024/25
- University of Missouri (Comparative Peer): test optional pilot through 2023
- University of Nebraska (Comparative Peer): retains permanent test optional policy
- University of Alabama (UTK Competitor): test optional pilot through 2023
- University of Kentucky (UTK Competitor): test optional pilot through 2024/25

**LANDSCAPE DECISIONS:** Recent test optional policy announcements from Harvard (through 2026), Stanford (through 2023), Cal State System (final vote in March), UC System (permanent), and NCAA (Spring, 2022 – considering long term changes) – will impact the enrollment profession and competitive landscape.

**TRUE COMPETITION FOR STUDENTS:** UTK’s aspirational and comparative peer set reflects a subset of true competition for students.

- 1 (UGA) of 6 UTK Aspirational Peers fall within our top 10 overall competitors for admitted students
- 6 of 11 UTK Comparative Peers fall within our top 10 overall competitors for admitted students

#### ➔ 8 OF TOP 10 COMPETITORS FOR NON-RESIDENT STUDENTS ARE TEST-OPTIONAL

- Students entering in fall 2022 (bold schools in the chart represent those that are not test-optional)
- Competitors are defined as students offered admission to UTK who enrolled elsewhere

1. South Carolina	3. Clemson	5. Alabama	7. <b>Florida State</b>	9. Ohio State
2. <b>Georgia</b>	4. Auburn	6. Virginia Tech	8. Kentucky	10. NC State

#### ➔ ALL COMPARATIVE PEERS | RETAINED TEST-OPTIONAL POLICIES FOR FALL 2022

Alabama*	Iowa State	Missouri	South Carolina*
Auburn*	Kentucky*	NC State	Virginia Tech*
Clemson*	LSU	Nebraska	

*\*Reflect Top Overall UTK Competitor for Admitted Students*

#### ➔ 47 OF THE TOP 52 PUBLICS (US NEWS) | REMAIN TEST-OPTIONAL FOR FALL 2022



# ACT/SAT SCORES IN ADMISSION AND RETENTION FOR FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS

SUMMARY, DECEMBER 2021

## HS GPA VS. ACT PREDICTIVE COMPARISON

### *Background*

A model was built to compare the predictive ability of the high school GPA (HS GPA) and ACT composite scores of entering freshmen with regard to these outcomes:

1. First-year, fall-to-fall retention
2. Graduation within four years of beginning at UTM
3. Graduation within six years of beginning at UTM

The above outcomes were modeled using data for the following freshmen cohorts:

1. Fall 2011 – 2019 for retention (approximately 10,000 students)
2. Fall 2011 – 2016 for four-year graduation (approximately 6,700 students)
3. Fall 2011 – 2014 for six-year graduation (approximately 4,800 students)

The predictive accuracy of each model was evaluated for not only the aforementioned data, but also for the most recent available cohorts---Fall 2020 for retention, Fall 2017 for four-year graduation, and Fall 2015 for six-year graduation. Since these cohorts, or holdout periods, were not used in creating the models, examining this data provided an additional means of validating the predictive capability of the final models, and of HS GPA and ACT scores.

Logistic regression was the statistical technique used to model the three outcomes under study. Logistic regression is one of the most widely used methods in data science for predicting binary/dichotomous outcomes, such as retention or graduation. It produces the odds of an outcome occurring based on a linear combination of explanatory or predictor variables. Given the values of these variables for an individual student in this case, the predicted odds of say, graduating in four years, can be converted to a probability for said event. These probabilities then form the basis for making predictions about who will graduate, predictions which can be tested for accuracy when data with known outcomes is available. Logistic regression models also allow for estimation of the impact of individual predictor variables on the odds of outcome occurrence.

A method for quantifying the overall predictive ability of a logistic regression model is provided by the Receiver Operating Characteristic (ROC) Curve. Figure 1 on the following page provides an example of an ROC curve. In terms of prediction accuracy, the curve provides two crucial pieces of information for each probability cutoff that could be used to designate outcome occurrence/non-occurrence: sensitivity and one minus what is known as specificity.

Sensitivity, located on the vertical axis, is another term for the true positive rate; in other words, the percentage of actual outcomes, such as being retained, that were correctly predicted by the model. Specificity represents the true negative rate, the proportion of actual non-events that were accurately predicted. Thus,  $1 - \text{specificity}$  equates to the percentage of non-occurrences that the model forecasts to be occurrences, i.e., the false positive rate. In the context of retention, the false positive rate would be the percentage of non-retained students that a model predicted to be retained.

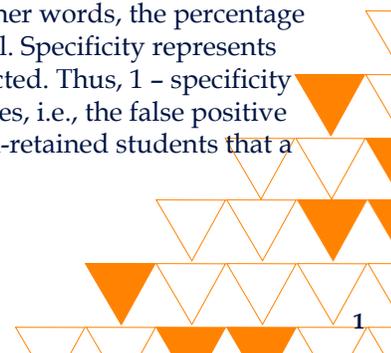
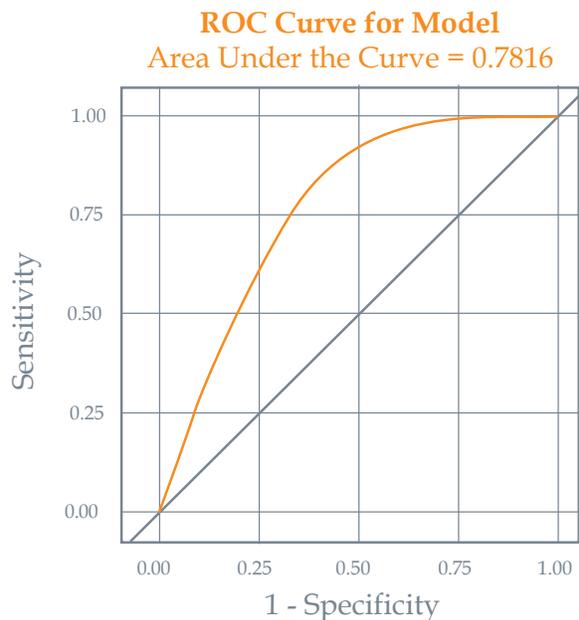


Figure 1. Example Receiver Operating Characteristic (ROC) Curve



As Figure 1 demonstrates, there is a trade-off between the true positive and false positive rate. As lower predicted probability cutoffs are used to classify observations as an event or non-event, the true positive rate of the model increases; however, this is accompanied by an increase in the false positive rate. In terms of retention, this would mean that, in order to predict a greater proportion of retained students, a larger number of non-retained students also will be predicted to return.

Good predictive models, then, will yield predictions that produce the largest possible true positive rate for a given level of false positives (or stated another way, the lowest possible false positive rate for a given level of sensitivity). This concept is reflected in the shape of the ROC curve. The curve for better predictive models will bow upward and toward the top left-hand corner of the graph. Such a curve naturally will encompass more of the total graph area, and thus the amount of space under the curve can be calculated and used to compare the predictive ability of different models. In Figure 1, the area under ROC curve is presented below the graph title. Since the total graph area is equal to one, curves with underlying areas closer to that number correspond to models with greater predictive capability.

### Model Results

As a preliminary step, regression models were built for all three outcomes using just freshman HS GPA and ACT results, respectively. Using the area under the ROC as a measure of predictive accuracy, below are the comparative results:

- For the retention model, HS GPA had 10.5% more predictive power
- For the four-year graduation model, HS GPA was 8.5% more accurate
- For the six-year graduation model, HS GPA had 8.9% more predictive power

The above results are incomplete, however, because they omit other important student-related variables that impact the outcomes under review, in addition to GPA/ACT score. More robust models must be built to both improve predictive accuracy and provide better context for estimating the influence of GPA and/or ACT score on the odds being retained or graduating.

To this end, three more models were constructed that include the following variables: PELL grant eligibility status, first generation status (yes/no/unknown), and whether a student had earned any college credit before entering UTM--typically achieved via AP exam or by taking college courses while in high school. These variables provide information about students' background and experiences, indicating to some degree their ability to meet the academic and financial challenges of college. Additionally, the number of credit hours taken in a student's first term was added to

the retention model, while the average number of fall/spring hours taken in a student's career was included in the graduation models.

With these important factors in place, HS GPA and ACT score were incorporated into the more complete models, the results then being compared. For each outcome, GPA was added to the model singly, then ACT alone, and then both together.

FINAL RETENTION MODEL RESULTS				
GPA/ ACT Included	Impact on Retention Odds	Statistical Significance	Area Under ROC Curve: Model Data	Area Under ROC Curve: Holdout Data
GPA Only	+12.9%, per .10 increase	Yes	.703	.7242
ACT Only	+4.6%, per 1-pt. increase	Yes	.6606	.7054
GPA/ACT Jointly	+13.5%/-0.7%	Yes/No	.7031	.7231

The results in the above table can be summarized as follows:

- In the complete model with HS GPA alone, the odds of a student being retained after his first year increase by 13% with a .10 increase in GPA, other factors being equal; a model with ACT only yields a 5% increase in retention odds per 1-point increase in composite score. In a model with both measures, GPA retains its positive impact, but ACT score loses its statistical significance as an explanatory variable.
- In regard to predictive accuracy, the model with GPA predicts better than one which replaces it with ACT score---the area under the ROC curve is 6% greater using the model data and 3% larger with respect to the most recent cohort.
- A model with both HS GPA and ACT score essentially predicts no better than a model with GPA alone, as evidenced by the areas under the relevant ROC curves.

As an aside, it should be noted that the predictive power of even the best model above is satisfactory, but not outstanding. Inclusion of students' first-term college GPA greatly enhances prediction accuracy; with a model including both HS and college GPA, the area under the ROC curve grows to 0.82-0.83, depending on the data evaluated. This indicates that many students face substantial challenges in adjusting to college, regardless of HS GPA or ACT score. Of course, for purpose of this project, first-term college GPA is a variable that cannot be known at the time of student admittance.

FINAL FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION MODEL RESULTS				
GPA/ ACT Included	Impact on Graduation Odds	Statistical Significance	Area Under ROC Curve: Model Data	Area Under ROC Curve: Holdout Data
GPA Only	+20.0%, per .10 increase	Yes	.7926	.7741
ACT Only	+10.5%, per 1-pt. increase	Yes	.7649	.7487
GPA/ACT Jointly	+19.0%/+3.2%	Yes/Yes	.793	.7705

A recap of these results is presented below:

- In the complete model with HS GPA alone, the odds of a freshman graduating from UTM within four years go up by 20% with a .10 increase in GPA, other factors being equal; a model with ACT only estimates an 11% increase in graduation odds per 1-point increase in composite score. In a model with both measures, GPA essentially has the same impact, while the influence of the ACT--though significant--decreases.
- In regard to predictive ability, the model with GPA predicts better than one which replaces it with ACT score--the area under the ROC curve is 4% greater using the model data and 3% larger using the holdout period.
- A model with both HS GPA and ACT score essentially predicts no better than a model with GPA alone, as evidenced by the areas under the relevant ROC curves.

Overall, the prediction accuracy of the model including HS GPA is quite good, but as with retention, performance is improved by knowledge of students' first-semester GPA.

FINAL SIX-YEAR GRADUATION MODEL RESULTS				
GPA/ ACT Included	Impact on Graduation Odds	Statistical Significance	Area Under ROC Curve: Model Data	Area Under ROC Curve: Holdout Data
GPA Only	+16.7%, per .10 increase	Yes	.7378	.7554
ACT Only	+7.7%, per 1-pt. increase	Yes	.696	.7185
GPA/ACT Jointly	+16.6%/ +1.2%	Yes/No	.7376	.7551

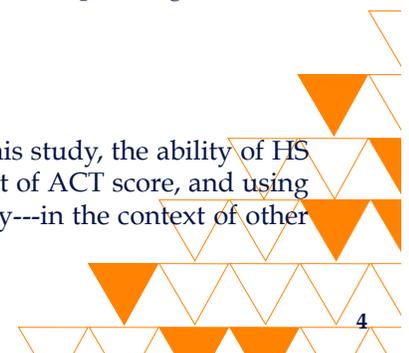
The results in the above table can be summarized as follows:

- In the complete model with HS GPA alone, the odds of a freshman graduating from UTM within six years go up by 17% with a .10 increase in GPA, other factors being equal; a model with ACT only yields an 8% increase in graduation odds per 1-point increase in composite score. In a model with both measures, GPA maintains its positive impact, but ACT score loses its statistical significance as an explanatory variable.
- In regard to predictive accuracy, the model with GPA predicts better than one which replaces it with ACT score--the area under the ROC curve is 6% greater using the model data and 5% larger with respect to the most recent cohort.
- The areas under the relevant ROC curves indicate that a model with both HS GPA and ACT score has no greater predictive power than one with just GPA.

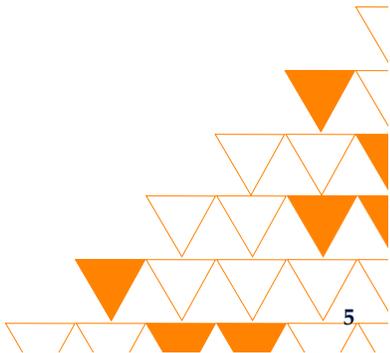
This model's capability to predict graduation could be improved substantially by incorporating first-term GPA, but again, this information is unknown at the time of admission.

### Summary

In conclusion, based on the results of the logistic regression models constructed in this study, the ability of HS GPA to predict the retention and graduation of entering freshmen is greater than that of ACT score, and using both variables together appear to provide no material increase in prediction accuracy--in the context of other significant student attributes.



ACT/SAT SCORE UTILIZATION STRATEGIES		
	Pre-COVID	COVID-Related Changes
Scholarship Eligibility	All merit-based scholarships were based on a combination of GPA and ACT/SAT scores.	ACT/SAT scores strongly recommended; most scholarships awarded with test scores for fall 21. For fall 2022, some test-flexible scholarships awarded for students who indicate they are not planning to submit scores.
Course Placement	ACT/SAT subscores used for placement into math, English, and reading (if needed) courses.	98% of fall 21 enrolled students submitted scores, so we have not made any changes to date on how we place students into courses. A few students were placed on case-by-case basis based on high school GPA and courses taken by faculty advisor when no scores were submitted.
Academic Assistance Provided	Students with specific, lower test scores are placed into Math 100, English 105, and/or Reading 100 that provide additional supplemental instruction built into the classes. All classes are for college credit.	98% of fall 21 enrolled students submitted scores, so we have not made any changes to date on how we place students into courses. A few students were placed on case-by-case basis based on high school GPA and courses taken by faculty advisor when no scores were submitted.
Eligibility for Honors Programs	Students were required to have ACT/SAT scores to be eligible to apply for our University Scholars honors program.	ACT/SAT scores continue to be required to be eligible to apply for the University Scholars honors program.
Admission into Specialized Programs	Minimum ACT/SAT scores required for admission into Education and Engineering programs; however, both programs have historically had alternate paths for admission.	Minimum ACT/SAT scores continue to be required for admission into Education and Engineering program; both programs continue to have alternate paths for admission.
Student Recruitment	ACT/SAT name buys were one part of our recruitment strategy, but we have always bought student names not tied to testing as well.	ACT/SAT name buys are one part of our recruitment strategy, and we have further diversified our strategy with other name buy options not related to testing.

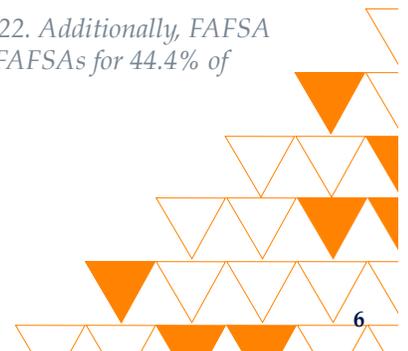


UT MARTIN FALL 2021 FIRST-YEAR APPLICANTS						
	TEST SCORES SUBMITTED			TEST SCORES NOT SUBMITTED		
	Applicants	Accept Rate	Melt Rate	Applicants	Accept Rate	Melt Rate
In-State	52.7%	79.8%	31.9%	47.3%	70.7%	40.0%
Out-of-State	49.5%	88.6%	44.0%	50.5%	60.1%	34.0%
Non-White Students	47.6%	74.7%	47.8%	52.4%	62.2%	55.3%
White Students	55.8%	85.9%	26.7%	44.2%	74.8%	30.2%
Unknown	45.8%	71.4%	60.0%	54.2%	63.8%	80.0%
First-Generation	56.6%	84.8%	34.4%	43.4%	86.1%	43.4%
Non-First Generation	59.9%	90.7%	25.8%	40.1%	90.7%	29.1%
Pell-Eligible	56.3%	84.6%	33.8%	43.7%	86.3%	41.0%
Non-Pell-Eligible	61.0%	92.4%	24.4%	39.0%	91.8%	26.9%
No FAFSA	44.3%	70.1%	89.4%	55.7%	50.7%	92.5%

Note: FAFSA data determines Pell-eligibility and first-generation student status. For Fall 2021, we received FAFSAs for 54.5% of first-year applicants and 98.9% of enrolled students.

UT MARTIN FALL 2021 FIRST-YEAR APPLICANTS				
Data from July 1 - December 16, 2021				
	TEST SCORES SUBMITTED		TEST SCORES NOT SUBMITTED	
	Applicants	Accept Rate	Applicants	Accept Rate
In-State	67.6%	85.6%	32.4%	53.9%
Out-of-State	45.6%	87.5%	54.4%	46.4%
Non-White Students	54.7%	79.4%	45.3%	44.5%
White Students	69.7%	88.8%	30.3%	59.3%
Unknown	53.8%	78.6%	46.2%	33.3%
First-Generation	80.9%	92.5%	27.3%	78.3%
Non-First Generation	71.8%	94.6%	28.2%	77.7%
Pell-Eligible	73.4%	91.2%	26.6%	72.8%
Non-Pell-Eligible	72.3%	95.7%	27.7%	80.6%
No FAFSA	57.3%	77.7%	42.7%	39.2%

Note: We have received approximately 70% of the applications we expect to receive for Fall 2022. Additionally, FAFSA data determines Pell-eligibility and first-generation student status. To date, we have received FAFSAs for 44.4% of applicants.





## Use of Test Scores in Admissions at UT Southern December 2021

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### 1. What is the predictive value of each factor and each combination of factors considered in admission decisions for each UT campus?

- First-to-second year retention
- 4-yr graduation
- 6-yr graduation

For the 2021-22 academic year, UT Southern admitted students whose Composite ACT score was a 15 with a high school GPA of 3.0, or whose Composite ACT score was a 16 or higher with a high school GPA of 2.0. Martin Methodist, which had begun as a two-year institution, still offered an associate degree even when the institution changed to a four-year baccalaureate, and as a consequence, the profile of the incoming class was somewhat bimodal. Because our previous admissions requirements were so much lower than the other campuses and the local high schools tend to have inflated GPAs compared to their ACT scores, we have found ACT to be a useful predictor for student success. Our current goal is to raise the ACT profile of our student body, which we believe will be the fastest way to move our retention and graduation rates up. As our requirements increase and our applicant pool more closely matches UT Martin and UT Chattanooga, other admissions factors should become increasingly important, relatively, to our student success initiatives.

### 2. Historically, how have ACT/SAT scores been used on each campus for scholarship determination; course placement; academic assistance provided; eligibility for bridge, honors, and scholarships programs; and admission into specialize programs? How has this changed as a result of COVID (impact of fewer students taking the test)?

Historically, ACT/SAT scores have determined placement, early alert information, eligibility for honors and scholarships, and admission into specialized programs (Teacher Licensure). As MMC has transitioned into UT Southern and focus has narrowed to exclude the associate degree, the information provided by the ACT, especially on the subscores, has been exceptionally helpful with placement and admissions decisions.

### 3. How has the campus historically used data purchased from ACT/SAT in student recruitment?

We buy the names who match our admissions standards and degree programs in the counties we serve. We then target mailings and emails to those students. We also target higher ACT scores for the Honors Program.

### 4. What percentage of students applying on each campus provided ACT/SAT scores for Fall 2021 and Fall 2022 (to date)?

Fall 2021 Applicants: 89.2% provided ACT/SAT

- By Residency: In-State 94.1%, Out-of-State 87.1%, International 42.3%
- By Pell: Pell 95.8%, Non-Pell 86.6%
- By Ethnicity: American Indian 100%, Asian 100%, Black or African American 89.1%, Hispanic or Latino 88.9%, Non-Resident Alien 37.5%, Unknown 77.8%, Two or More Races 85%, White 93.9%

### 5. What was the acceptance rate (percentage) of students applying on each campus for ACT/SAT-provided and ACT/SAT-not-provided applicants for Fall 2021 and Fall 2022 (to date)?

First-Time Student Cohort	Acceptance Rate for ACT/SAT Provided	Acceptance Rate for ACT/SAT Not Provided	Overall Acceptance
408 Fall 2021 Applicants	92.0% (n=364)	93.2% (n=44)	92.2% (n=408)
In State	90.1%	88.2%	90.0%
Out of State	97.5%	91.7%	96.8%
International	100%	100%	100%
Pell	99.1%	100%	99.1%
Non-Pell	88.8%	92.3%	89.3%
American Indian	100%	N/A	100%
Asian	100%	N/A	100%
Black or African American	78.0%	80%	78.3%
Hispanic or Latino	87.5%	100%	88.9%
Non-Resident Alien	100%	100%	100%
Not Specified	71.4%	100%	77.8%
Two or More Races	88.2%	100%	90%
White	94.6%	88.9%	94.3%
<i>Fall 2022: Of 295 accepted students - all have provided ACT or SAT scores.</i>			

**6. What was the summer “melt rate” (percentage of students who committed, but did not show up for classes) on each campus for ACT/SAT-provided and ACT/SAT-not-provided applicants for Fall 2021 and Fall 2022 (to date)?**

Only 9 students received a schedule at Summer Orientation but did not attend in Fall 2021.

First-Time Student Cohort	Melt of ACT/SAT Provided	Melt of ACT/SAT Not Provided	Overall Melt
224 FA 2021 Schedules	3.8% (n=210)	7.1% (n=14)	4.0% (n=224)
In State	3.8%	0%	3.7%
Out of State	2.5%	8.3%	3.2%
International	0%	0%	0%
Pell	6.5%	0%	6.2%
Non-Pell	2.0%	3.8%	2.4%
American Indian	0%	N/A	0%
Asian	0%	N/A	0%
Black or African American	9.5%	N/A	9.5%
Hispanic or Latino	0%	N/A	0%
Non-Resident Alien	0%	0%	0%
Not Specified	0%	0%	0%
Two or More Races	0%	0%	0%
White	3.7%	20%	4.1%



**7. What was the first-to-second semester retention rate (percentage) for ACT/SAT-provided and ACT/SAT-not-provided applicants for Fall 2021)?**

Retention Rates are tentative until census day in the Spring

<b>First-Time Student Cohort</b>	<b>Retention of ACT/SAT Provided</b>	<b>Retention of ACT/SAT Not Provided</b>	<b>Overall Retention</b>
215 First-Time, Full-Time	87.1% (n=202)	76.9% (n=13)	<b>86.5% (n=215)</b>
In State	87.3%	50%	<b>85.9%</b>
Out of State	83.3%	100%	<b>83.7%</b>
International	100%	100%	<b>100%</b>
Pell	88.5%	50%	<b>86.8%</b>
Non-Pell	86.1%	88.9%	<b>86.3%</b>
American Indian	100%	N/A	<b>100%</b>
Asian	100%	N/A	<b>100%</b>
Black or African American	84.2%	N/A	<b>84.2%</b>
Hispanic or Latino	75%	N/A	<b>75%</b>
Non-Resident Alien	100%	100%	<b>100%</b>
Not Specified	100%	100%	<b>100%</b>
Two or More Races	60%	50%	<b>57.1%</b>
White	87.3%	50%	<b>86.4%</b>

## Overview of use of SAT/ACT Scores for Scholarships

### Nationally Competitive Scholarship Awards

The National Merit® Scholarship Program is an academic competition for recognition and scholarships that began in 1955. Approximately 1.5 million high school students enter the program each year.

High School students who meet published program entry and participation requirements enter the National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®) at the specified time in the high school program, usually as juniors. Each year's PSAT/NMSQT is the qualifying test designated for entry to a particular year's competition. For example, the 2020 PSAT/NMSQT is the qualifying test for entry to the competition for scholarships to be awarded in 2022.

Registration for the test is by high school rather than individual student. Interested students contact their counselor at the beginning of the school year to make arrangements to take the PSAT/NMSQT at the school in the fall.

**Note:** The PSAT 10 and PSAT 8/9 will not be considered for entry to the National Merit Scholarship Program. The PSAT/NMSQT is the official route of entry to the National Merit Scholarship Program.

### Student Entry Requirements

To participate in the National Merit Scholarship Program, a student must:

1. take the PSAT/NMSQT in the specified year of the high school program and no later than the third year in grades 9 through 12, regardless of grade classification or educational pattern;
2. be enrolled as a high school student (traditional or homeschooled), progressing normally toward graduation or completion of high school, and planning to accept admission to college no later than the fall following completion of high school; and
3. attend high school in the United States, the District of Columbia, or U.S. commonwealth and territory; or meet the citizenship requirements for students attending high school outside the United States (see below).

Nationally competitive scholarships require an endorsement by the University and are awarded through a national search. These include the Fulbright, Boren, Goldwater, Udall, Rhodes, Marshall, Mitchell, and Truman scholarships. UW scholarships are administered through different offices, including the International Programs Office, the Haub School, and various other offices. *Some colleges give automatic scholarships based on SAT/ACT scores and qualifiers like GPA or class rank.* Students do not have to submit any extra application information for these scholarships, but in some cases, students must apply by a specific deadline to be guaranteed the scholarship.

- Marshall Scholarship
- Boren/NSEP Scholarships and Fellowships
- Rhodes Scholarship
- Udall Scholarship
- Goldwater Scholarship
- Mitchell Scholarship
- Gates Cambridge Scholarship

## Tennessee Scholarships

<https://www.scholarships.com/financial-aid/college-scholarships/scholarships-by-state/tennessee-scholarships/>

### Bird Dog Foundation Annual College Scholarship Essay Contest

- **Application Deadline:** 4/15/2022
- **Amount:** \$2,000
- **Test:** Not Required
- The Bird Dog Foundation, Inc. has established a Scholarship Fund to promote interest in wildlife conservation and related subjects. An annual College Scholarship Essay Contest sponsored by the Bird Dog Foundation, Inc. has been in effect for several years now. This contest was created in the hopes that it would enhance scholarly training and education in wildlife and wildlife conservation as well.

### Christa McAuliffe Scholarship

- **Application Deadline:** 4/1/2022
- **Amount:** \$500
- **Test:** Required
- The Tennessee General Assembly created this scholarship program to honor the memory of Christa McAuliffe, a high school teacher who lost her life in the space shuttle Challenger accident. The scholarship program was established to encourage promising rising college juniors from Tennessee who have a commitment to teaching and inspiring young minds to explore and achieve their highest potential.

### NIADA Foundation Regional Scholarships

- **Application Deadline:** 3/9/2022
- **Amount:** \$3,500
- **Test:** Required
- The NIADA Foundation promotes the academic growth of youth throughout the United States and awards scholarships annually at the National Independent Automobile Dealers Association Convention. The Foundation proudly sponsors four young men or women each year who have displayed outstanding abilities in education.

### Southern Automotive Women's Forum Scholarship

- **Application Deadline:** 3/12/2022
- **Amount:** \$5,000
- **Test:** Not Required
- The SAWF Scholarship Program provides financial assistance to women enrolled or enrolling in a STEM field at an accredited two-year technical program, four-year undergraduate program or a graduate program with a preference for those interested in the automobile and mobility industry. Applicants must be female high school seniors or graduates enrolling or enrolled in a STEM field at an accredited institution.

### Stegall Charitable Educational Foundation Scholarship

- **Application Deadline:** Varies
- **Amount:** \$500
- **Test:** Optional
- The Stegall Charitable Educational Foundation Scholarship is offering scholarships to high school students, high school graduates or existing college students entering a full-time program of college study within one year from the scholarship application deadline. Eligible applicants must be Tennessee residents.

### **Tennessee Grocers Education Foundation Scholarship Program**

- **Application Deadline:** 2/28/2022
- **Amount:** \$2,500
- **Test:** Not Required
- TGEF was founded in 1985 to support and promote education of students in the food industry in Tennessee. It helps deserving students, assists parents with college expenses and colleges benefit by receiving scholarship funds. TGEF scholarships are open to high school seniors, college undergraduate, and graduate students who are employees or the dependents of employees of a TGCSA member company. [...] More

### **Tennessee Minority Teaching Fellows Program**

- **Application Deadline:** Varies
- **Amount:** \$5,000
- **Test:** Required
- The Minority Teaching Fellows Program is intended to encourage talented minority Tennesseans to enter the teaching field in Tennessee. This award is for students who are pursuing a teacher certification at an eligible Tennessee college or university. Applicant must be a minority Tennessee resident and U.S. citizen, a high school senior who has a minimum 2.75 GPA and scored at least an 18 on the ACT.

### **Tennessee Teaching Scholars Program**

- **Application Deadline:** 4/15/2022
- **Amount:** Varies
- **Test:** Required
- The Tennessee Teaching Scholars Program is intended to encourage exemplary students to enter the teaching field in Tennessee. Participation is limited to college juniors, seniors, and post baccalaureate candidates admitted to a teacher education program in a Tennessee college or university. To be eligible, the applicant must be a Tennessee resident and a U.S. citizen.

### **U.S. Army Loan Repayment Program**

- **Application Deadline:** Varies
- **Amount:** \$20,000
- The Loan Repayment Program (LRP) is a special incentive that the Army offers to highly qualified applicants entering the Army. Under the LRP, the Army will repay part of a Soldier's qualifying student loans. Only specified Military Occupational Specialties (MOSs) qualify for the LRP. The Army will repay 15 percent of the outstanding principal balance, less taxes of the Soldier's student

**TO:** Education, Research, and Service Committee

**FROM:** The Office of Academic Affairs & Student Success

**SUBJECT:** The Predictive Value of Admissions Variables on Student Success

**DATE:** January 7, 2022

### Executive Summary

The Office of Academic Affairs & Student Success set out to answer the questions: 1) how well do high school GPA and standardized tests such as the ACT predict success in college (i.e., individually, or when used in combination), and 2) are there other variables that should be considered, given their predictive value? To answer these questions, a thorough review of the extant literature was completed. The most recognized and cited peer-reviewed studies were examined and ten were selected for this executive summary. Together, these articles were cited more than 2,200 times and have helped to shape emerging practices across higher education. A complete annotated bibliography can be found at the end of this summary.

#### Key Takeaways:

- ACT Composite scores and high school grade point average (GPA) are both highly correlated with first-year academic performance. First-year academic performance emerges as the best predictor of 2nd- and 3rd-year retention. Socioeconomic status (SES) is a weak predictor of both academic performance and retention.
- Studies examined how effective high school GPA and standardized tests, such as the ACT, were at predicting first-year GPA at various levels (e.g., 2.00, 2.50, 3.00, etc.). Data indicate that high school GPA was somewhat more accurate than ACT scores at predicting success, though it was not as an effective predictor of success at higher levels of first-year GPA. ACT score, in contrast, was effective in predicting success at all first-year GPA levels.
- Looking beyond first-year academic performance and to college graduation, the relationship of high school GPA with college graduation is strong and consistent. In contrast, the relationship of ACT scores with college graduation, when taken alone, is weaker and smaller than high school effects. For this reason, high school GPA, and not standardized test scores, is consistently the best predictor of both freshman grades and four-year college outcomes.
- High school grades are better than college admission tests (e.g., ACT/SAT) at predicting college graduation because success in college requires not only cognitive ability but also self-regulatory competencies that are better indexed by high school grades.

- While the above is true, adding standardized test scores to high school GPA can have the important effect of statistical moderation, that is, offsetting differences in grading standards across high schools. Test scores also increased predictive accuracy over that for high school GPA alone.
- Looking across student subgroups, the joint use of ACT Composite scores and high school GPA resulted in greater prediction accuracy than when either predictor was used alone. Findings also suggested that African American, Hispanic, and lower-income students are not disadvantaged using a total-group cutoff for making admission decisions.
- The support of a more holistic approach was affirmed by Gala et al. (2019) who stated, “Affirmation of the relevance of teacher-assigned grades, however, is not an indictment of standardized admissions tests. In our investigation, test scores added unique predictive power, over and above grades and demographic characteristics, for college graduation. It is a judicious combination of high school grades and achievement tests that are seen as especially promising. The limitations of any single metric of student competence recommend a more holistic approach to college admissions” (p. 2105).
- Contrary to prior claims by earlier studies, minority and lower income students are not disadvantaged by using ACT Composite score to predict long-term college success. The predictive power of admissions tests was shown not to be an artifact of SES. A study by Sackett et al. (2009) shows that tests retain virtually all their predictive power when controlling for SES.
- When it comes to admissions variables that aid in the predictors of cumulative college grade point average (GPA), beyond standardized test scores (e.g., SAT/ACT) and high school GPA (HSGPA), some studies have found that biographical data and situational judgment measures added incrementally to this prediction, noting that these inputs could be useful supplements to cognitive indexes of student potential in college admissions.

### Annotated Bibliography

**Allensworth, E. M., & Clark, K. (2020). High school GPAs and ACT scores as predictors of college completion: Examining assumptions about consistency across high schools. *Educational Researcher*, 49(3), 198-211.**

High school GPAs (HSGPAs) are often perceived to represent inconsistent levels of readiness for college across high schools, whereas test scores (e.g., ACT scores) are seen as comparable. This study tested those assumptions, examining variation across high schools of both HSGPAs and ACT scores as measures of academic readiness for college. The authors found students with the same HS GPA or the same ACT score graduate at very different rates based on which high school they attended. Yet, the relationship of HS GPAs with college graduation is strong and consistent and larger than individual school effects. In contrast, the relationship of ACT scores with college graduation is weak and smaller than high school effects, and the slope of the relationship varies by high school.

**Galla, B. M., Shulman, E. P., Plummer, B. D., Gardner, M., Hutt, S. J., Goyer, J. P., ... & Duckworth, A. L. (2019). Why high school grades are better predictors of on-time college graduation than are admissions test scores: The roles of self-regulation and cognitive ability. *American Educational Research Journal*, 56(6), 2077-2115.**

Compared with admissions test scores, why are high school grades better at predicting college graduation? We argue that success in college requires not only cognitive ability but also self-regulatory competencies that are better indexed by high school grades. In a national sample of 47,303 students who applied to college for the 2009/2010 academic year, Study 1 affirmed that high school grades out-predicted test scores for 4-year college graduation. In a convenience sample of 1,622 high school seniors in the Class of 2013, Study 2 revealed that the incremental predictive validity of high school grades for college graduation was explained by composite measures of self-regulation, whereas the incremental predictive validity of test scores was explained by composite measures of cognitive ability.

**Geiser, S., & Santelices, M. V. (2007). Validity of High-School Grades in Predicting Student Success beyond the Freshman Year: High-School Record vs. Standardized Tests as Indicators of Four-Year College Outcomes. *Research & Occasional Paper Series: CSHE. 6.07. Center for studies in higher education.***

The present study challenges that conventional view. The study finds that high-school grade point average (HSGPA), and not standardized test scores (e.g., ACT/SAT), is consistently the best predictor not only of freshman grades in college, the outcome indicator most often employed in predictive-validity studies, but of four-year college outcomes as well. A previous study by Geiser and Studley (2003) demonstrated that HSGPA in college-preparatory courses was the best predictor of freshman grades for a sample of almost 80,000 students. Key findings

are: (1) HSGPA is consistently the strongest predictor of four-year college outcomes for all academic disciplines, campuses and freshman cohorts; (2) surprisingly, the predictive weight associated with HSGPA increases after the freshman year, accounting for a greater proportion of variance in cumulative fourth-year than first-year college grades; and (3) as an admissions criterion, HSGPA has less adverse impact than standardized tests on disadvantaged and underrepresented minority students.

**Koretz, D., & Langi, M. (2018). Predicting freshman Grade-Point average from test scores: Effects of variation within and between high schools. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 37(2), 9-19.**

Most studies predicting college performance from high-school grade point average (HSGPA) and college admissions test scores use single-level regression models that conflate relationships within and between high schools. Because grading standards vary among high schools, these relationships are likely to differ within and between schools. This study used two-level regression models to predict freshman grade point average from HSGPA and scores on both college admissions and state tests. When HSGPA and scores are considered together, HSGPA predicts more strongly within high schools than between, as expected in the light of variations in grading standards. In contrast, test scores, particularly mathematics scores, predict more strongly between schools than within. Within-school variation in mathematics scores has no net predictive value, but between-school variation is substantially predictive. Whereas other studies have shown that adding test scores to HSGPA yields only a minor improvement in aggregate prediction, our findings suggest that a potentially more important effect of admissions tests is statistical moderation, that is, partially offsetting differences in grading standards across high schools.

**Noble, J. P., & Sawyer, R. L. (2004). Is high school GPA better than admission test scores for predicting academic success in college?. *College and University*, 79(4), 17.**

This study compared the effectiveness of high school GPA and ACT score for predicting different levels of first-year college GPA. We estimated predictions of achieving first-year GPA levels ranging from 2.00 to 3.75 at 84 post-secondary institutions. Both high school GPA and ACT score were effective predictors of achieving moderate levels of first-year GPA (e.g., 2.00). High school GPA was somewhat more accurate than ACT score at predicting success at these levels. High school GPA was not an effective predictor of success at higher levels of first-year GPA, however. ACT score, in contrast, was effective in predicting success at all first-year GPA levels.

**Radunzel, J., & Noble, J. (2013). Differential Effects on Student Demographic Groups of Using ACT® College Readiness Assessment Composite Score, Act Benchmarks, and High School Grade Point Average for Predicting Long-Term College Success through Degree Completion. ACT Research Report Series, 2013 (5). ACT, Inc.**

This study evaluated the differential effects on racial/ethnic, family income, and gender groups of using ACT® College Readiness Assessment Composite score and high school grade point average (HSGPA) for predicting long-term college success. Outcomes included annual progress towards a degree, degree completion, and cumulative grade point average at year 6 and year 3 for four- and two-year institutions, respectively. Total-group predictions based on ACT Composite score generally overestimated the long-term college success of underrepresented minority students, lower-income students, and male students and, to a lesser extent, underestimated the success of White students, higher income students, and female students. For each student demographic group, test scores increased prediction accuracy over that for HSGPA. Contrary to prior claims made, results from this study suggest that minority and lower income students are not disadvantaged by using ACT Composite score to predict long-term college success. This finding held across multiple college outcomes at both two- and four-year institutions.

**Sackett, P. R., Kuncel, N. R., Arneson, J. J., Cooper, S. R., & Waters, S. D. (2009). Does socioeconomic status explain the relationship between admissions tests and post-secondary academic performance?. *Psychological bulletin*, 135(1), 1.**

Critics of educational admissions tests (e.g., ACT/SAT) assert that tests measure nothing more than socioeconomic status (SES) and that their apparent validity in predicting academic performance is an artifact of SES. The authors examined multiple large data sets containing data on admissions and related tests, SES, and grades showing that (a) SES is related to test scores ( $r = .42$  among the population of SAT takers), (b) test scores are predictive of academic performance, and (c) statistically controlling for SES reduces the estimated test– grade correlation from  $r = .47$  to  $r = .44$ . Thus, the vast majority of the test–academic performance relationship was independent of SES: The authors concluded that the test– grade relationship is not an artifact of common influences of SES on both test scores and grades.

**Sanchez, E. I. (2013). Differential Effects of Using ACT® College Readiness Assessment Scores and High School GPA to Predict First-Year College GPA among Racial/Ethnic, Gender, and Income Groups. ACT Research Report Series, 2013 (4). *ACT, Inc.***

This study examines the differential effects on student subgroups of using the ACT® College Readiness Assessment Composite (ACTC) score and high school grade point average (HSGPA) for making admission decisions. The subgroup characteristics investigated include race/ethnicity, gender, and income. For each student subgroup, we examine the effect of using a total group cut point for ACTC score, HSGPA, or both to predict first-year college grade point average (FYGPA) and the estimated effects of using these predictors to make admission decisions. Across student subgroups, the joint use of ACTC score and HSGPA resulted in greater prediction accuracy than when either predictor was used alone. Furthermore, the use of a total group cutoff score for both ACTC score and HSGPA slightly over predict the probability of success of Hispanic and African American students, males, and lower-income students. Both

ACTC score and HSGPA slightly underpredict the probability of success of White students, females, and higher-income students. These findings suggest, therefore, that African American, Hispanic, and lower-income students are not disadvantaged using a total-group cutoff for making admission decisions.

**Schmitt, N., Keeney, J., Oswald, F. L., Pleskac, T. J., Billington, A. Q., Sinha, R., & Zorzie, M. (2009). Prediction of 4-year college student performance using cognitive and noncognitive predictors and the impact on demographic status of admitted students. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 94*(6), 1479.**

This study was conducted to determine the validity of noncognitive and cognitive predictors of the performance of college students at the end of their 4th year in college. Results indicate that the primary predictors of cumulative college grade point average (GPA) were Scholastic Assessment Test/American College Testing Assessment (SAT/ACT) scores and high school GPA (HSGPA) though biographical data and situational judgment measures added incrementally to this prediction. The authors concluded that both the biodata and situational judgment measures could be useful supplements to cognitive indexes of student potential in college admissions.

**Westrick, P. A., Le, H., Robbins, S. B., Radunzel, J. M. R., Schmidt, F. L. (2015). College performance and retention: A meta-analysis of the predictive validities of ACT scores, high school grades, and SES. *Educational Assessment, 20*, 23–45.**  
doi:[10.1080/10627197.2015.997614](https://doi.org/10.1080/10627197.2015.997614)

This meta-analysis examines the strength of the relationships of ACT Composite scores, high school grades, and socioeconomic status (SES) with academic performance and persistence into the 2nd and 3rd years at 4-year colleges and universities. ACT Composite scores and high school grade point average (GPA) are highly correlated with 1st-year academic performance. First-year academic performance emerges as the best predictor of 2nd- and 3rd-year retention. SES is a weak predictor of both academic performance and retention. Moderator analyses of admission selectivity indicate that although the estimated mean validity coefficients for ACT Composite scores and high school GPA vary slightly, the credibility intervals indicate they are valid predictors across levels of admission selectivity. This longitudinal study demonstrates the importance of precollege academic preparation and how success in the 1st year of college strongly influences persistence toward completing a degree.



## Methods and Analyses for Reviewing Pre- and Post-COVID Testing-Related Practices at UT's Comparable and Aspirational Peer Institutions

### Executive Summary

In December 2021, UT System Office of Academic Affairs and Student Success staff sent email inquiries to all peer and aspirational peer institutions for the Knoxville, Chattanooga, and Martin campuses.<sup>1</sup> The first round of emails were sent to leaders in the positions of Enrollment Management, Undergraduate Admissions, Student Success, or Academic Affairs. Two weeks later, follow-up emails were sent to non-respondents. In early January, Vice President Linda Martin contacted the provost at non-responding institutions; in all, 41 responses were received for a return rate<sup>2</sup> of about 80%. Peer and aspirational peers reported their testing policies pre-COVID, what changed as a result of COVID, and what additional changes are forthcoming in the short- and long-term.

The analysis of the responses revealed that 79-100% of all peers required standardized test scores for admissions before COVID; those that did not were already either test optional or test flexible; a small number that required the test only did so for scholarships, enrollment or course placement, but did not use test scores to determine admissions decisions.

Approximately 70% of all UT peers that required test scores before COVID went test optional during COVID. Despite not being asked, about a fourth of responding peers mentioned that they were conducting a pilot study to determine whether they would continue COVID-related admissions practices.

At least half (50-75%) of all peer groups remained undecided or unclear about final decisions regarding future use of test scores. Reasons for the noted uncertainty included awaiting guidance from state legislatures or governing boards, faculty votes, or results of an internal evaluation.

Finally, regarding what changes institutions anticipate, peers for UTK (27%), UTC (43%), and UTM (17%) planned to return to requiring the test rather than abandoning it, while about one-fifth of all peers (7%, 21%, and 33%, respectively) planned to retain a new test optional or test flexible admissions policy. Only one institution (UTK peer Purdue University) did not require scores pre-COVID (though they preferred them), but expects to require the test for admissions following the pandemic. The table on following page provides additional information supporting these findings.

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<sup>1</sup> Inquiries were not sent on behalf of UT Southern, as a set of comparable and aspirational peers has not yet been identified.

<sup>2</sup> The response rate is calculated using the total number of unique peer institutions (50, rather than 51) as one peer institution—Murray State serves as a peer for both UTC (comparable) and UTM (aspirational).

	UT System (Combined)	UT Knoxville	UT Chattanooga	UT Martin
<i>Total Peers Identified:</i>	50 Peers <sup>a</sup>	17 (6 A, 11 P) <sup>b</sup>	18 (6 A, 12 P) <sup>b</sup>	16 (6 A, 10 P) <sup>b</sup>
<i># and % Responses Received:</i>	41 Responses <sup>c</sup> (82%)	15 Responses <sup>c</sup> (88%)	14 Responses <sup>c</sup> (78%)	12 Responses <sup>c</sup> (75%)
<i># and % Requiring Scores Pre-COVID:</i>	36 (88%)	5 A / 10 P 13 (87%)	3 A / 11 P 11 (79%)	4 A / 8 P 12 (100%) <sup>d</sup>
<i># and % That <u>Changed</u> from Test Required to Test Optional Due to COVID:</i>	29 (71%)	4 A / 9 P 11 (73%)	3 A / 8 P 9 (64%)	6 A / 10 P 9 (75%) <sup>d</sup>
<i># and % TBD, Unknown, or Awaiting Pilot Study Results / Further Guidance</i>	27 (66%)	3 A / 8 P 11 (73%)	3 A / 6 P 7 (50%)	4 A / 5 P 9 (75%)
<i># and % Anticipating <u>No Changes</u> to Pre-COVID Policy</i>	12 (29%) <sup>e</sup>	3 A / 8 P 4 (27%)	3 A / 4 P 6 (43%)	4 A / 5 P 2 (17%)
<i># and % Expecting to Retain a <u>New</u> COVID-Related Test Optional or Flexible Policy</i>	8 (20%)	2 A / 2 P 1 (7%) <sup>f</sup>	0 A / 6 P 3 (21%)	0 A / 2 P 4 (33%)
<i># and % Expecting to Move from <u>Test-Optional</u> pre-COVID to <u>Test-Required</u> post-COVID</i>	1 (2%)	1 A / 0 P 1 (7%)	3 A / 0 P 0	1 A / 3 P 0

- a There are only 50 unique peers; Murray State serves as peer for UTC and an aspiration peer for UTM; thus, system %s are calculated using 50, not 51.
- b “A” indicates Aspirational Peer and “P” indicates a comparable Peer.
- c For all rows shown, % values use the total number of responding institutions, not the total number of peers.
- d During COVID, three UTM peers (Arkansas Tech, Morehead State, and Austin Peay) required the test for enrollment, placement, and/or scholarships only; they did not require or consider test scores in admissions decisions.
- e Note: The bottom three rows of the table do not equal the total peer responses received because these categories are not mutually exclusive. For instance, a campus may be awaiting official guidance, but highly anticipate returning to requiring test scores; others may be conducting a pilot study, but anticipate moving away from requiring test scores for admissions decisions.
- f Two state systems were unique: Florida never went test optional and Georgia again requires test scores effective Spring 2022, much more quickly than others reached a final decision. Both states include multiple peers for UTK and UTC.



# ACT SAT Peer Tracking

UT Campus	Peer Type	Peer Institution	Initial Contact	Response?	Provost Contact	Pre-COVID Practices	Changes Due to COVID	Timing of Changes: Short-Term	Timing of Changes: Long-Term	
Chattanooga	Peer	Southeast Missouri State University	Dr. Below	YES	Mike Godard	Test Optional (always has been)	Test Optional (always has been)	N/A	No change from pre-covid practices	
		University of Nebraska Omaha	Abby Freeman	YES	N/A	Test Optional (always has been)	Test Optional most likely to continue (always has been optional)	TBD; Fall 2020 could award merit without ACT	TBD/Unknown	
		University of West Georgia	R. Cowen	YES	Jon Preston	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional for 2021 and 2022; University System of GA requires it going forward effective Spring 22	Spring 2022	None at this time	
		Florida Gulf Coast University	Mitch Cordova	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Required	Test Required (FL never went Test Optional)	None	
		Georgia College and State University	Joel Robinson	YES	Costas Spirou	Yes; Test Required	Test Required	Fall 2022	None at this time	
		Valdosta State University	Rodney Carr	YES	Robert Smith	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional for 2021 and 2022; University System of GA requires it going forward effective Spring 22	Spring 2022	None at this time	
		University of Central Arkansas	K. Thomas	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional with previous metrics	TBD	State requirements may stay tied to ACT	
		Jacksonville State University	T. Casey	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional for Fall 2022	TBD - Under review for 2023	TBD but currently monitoring	
		Northeastern State University	Dr. Larsen	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Option Pilot from F2021 to F2025	NA	TBD depending on pilot results	
		Stephen F. Austin University	Brandon Frye	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional Waiver for 2022	Fall 2023 Test Optional	TBD depending on research	
	Tennessee Tech University	BJ. Johnson	YES	N/A	No; Test Optional - only required < 3.0	No; Test Optional will continue (always has been)	N/A	No change from pre-COVID practices		
	Murray State University	Dr. Fister	DNR	Tim Todd	DNR	DNR	DNR	DNR		
	Aspirational	Appalachian State	JJ Brown	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional Waiver for 2022	No guidance provided beyond AY 2022	Test Optional or Test Blind (most likely)	
		UNC Wilmington	LK. Davis	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional Waiver for 2022	No guidance provided beyond AY 2022	Test Optional or Test Blind (most likely)	
		UNC Greensboro	T. McEntire	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional Waiver for 2022	No guidance provided beyond AY 2022	Test Optional or Test Blind (most likely)	
		College of Charleston	Dr. Caudill	DNR	Susan Austin	DNR	DNR	DNR	DNR	
		University of Arkansas Little Rock	WC Decker	DNR	Ann Bain	DNR	DNR	DNR	DNR	
		University of North Florida	Terrence Curran	DNR	Karen Patterson	DNR	DNR	DNR	DNR	
Knoxville		Peer	University of Nebraska Lincoln	Patrick Winter	YES	N/A	Test Optional (always has been)	Test Optional (always has been optional)	Will not require (as pre-Covid), but could award merit without ACT	TBD/Unknown
			NC State University	Doneka Scott	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Required	Returning to Test Required in Fall 2023	None
	University of Kentucky		Clayton Abernathy	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional through AY 2024-25	TBD	TBD depending on research	
	Virginia Tech		Juan Espinoza	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional Waiver for Fall 2022	TBD	TBD/Unknown	
	University of Missouri		Kim Humphrey	YES	Latha Ramchand	Yes; Test Required	Unknown; Likely to be test optional, but gathering data now	Fall 2023	TBD/Unknown but Optional is likely to continue	
	University of Alabama		Bradley Barnes	YES	Jim Dalton / Luoheng Han	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional; current pilot that will conclude in 2023-24	Fall 2024 admissions cycle	TBD; depends on the results of the research	
	Auburn University		Joffery Gaymon	YES	Bill Hardgrave	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional through 2022	No firm decision made beyond 2022	TBD; No firm decision made going forward	
	Clemson University		Dr. Koskowski	YES	Robert "Bob" Jones	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional for Fall 2022	No firm decision made beyond 2022	TBD; No firm decision yet	
	Louisiana State University	Laura Doering	YES	Matt Lee	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional for Fall 2022	TBD	TBD		
	University of South Carolina	Scott Verzyl	YES	Stephen Cutler	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional until 2022	TBD	TBD		
	University of Iowa	Dr. Doering	DNR	DNR	DNR	DNR	DNR	DNR		
	Aspirational	Purdue	Kristina Wong Davis	YES	N/A	Test Flexible but encouraged	Test Required most likely	Fall 2023	None	
		University of Georgia	Dr. Pagnattaro	YES	Jack Hu	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional; but University System of GA requires it going forward in Spring 22	Spring 2022 returning to test required	None at this time	
		University of Florida	Mary Parker	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Required	Test Required (FL never went Test Optional)	None	
University of Wisconsin		Derek Kindle	YES	John Karl Scholz	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional; Board of Regents approved test optional until 2025	Undergoing 3 year research study until 2025	TBD; depends on the results of the research		
University of Minnesota		Robert McMaster	YES	Rachel Orson	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional for Fall 2021: Nothing required in 2021; accepted if submitted	No firm decision made going forward	TBD; No firm decision made going forward		
Michigan State		Dave Weatherspoon	DNR	Teresa Kay Woodruff	DNR	DNR	DNR	DNR		
Martin	Peer	Arkansas Tech	J. Spicer	YES	Barbara Johnson	Yes; Required. Test optional for admission but required for scholarships, course placement, and enrollment.	Test Required; optional for admission/ required for scholarships, course placement, and enrollment. A proposal has been sent to the Executive Council to make institutional scholarships GPA-only, but that decision has not been made.	Either Fall 2022 or 2023	Test Required if legislature decides NOT to remove the test score reporting requirement.	
		Arkansas State University	Sivakumaran	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional	Fall 2022	None	
		University of Texas Tyler	G. Norton	YES	Amir Mirmiran	Yes; Test Required	Test Option for Fall 2021 and 2022	TBD	TBD, but institution prefers to remain test optional	
		Midwestern State University	Fred Dietz	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional	TBD, but still evaluating without scores	TBD/Unknown	
		Austin Peay State University	Nancy Kingsanders	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional but required for TN Promise	TBD - Faculty Senate will vote on this	Test Optional with Holistic Review in the future	
		McNeese State University	Chris Thomas	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional	Fall 2024; flexibility in policy adherence	Test Required for Scholarships; option for admission	
		Morehead State University	Tim Rhodes	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional but required for scholarships	2024; Test Optional for 2022 and 2023	Test Required most likely	
		Auburn University Montgomery	L. Higdon	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional Fall 2022; reinstate test 2023	Return to requiring test in 2023	UNIV mentors following students admitted without test scores to see if they need assistance	
	Aspirational	Frostburg State University	A. L. Travis	DNR	Michael Mathias	DNR	DNR	DNR	DNR	
		West Texas AM	M. Knox	DNR	Neil Terry	DNR	DNR	DNR	DNR	
		Murray State University	Dr. Fister	DNR	Tim Todd	DNR	DNR	DNR	DNR	
		University of Central Arkansas	Dr. Webster	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional with previous metrics	TBD	State requirements may stay tied to ACT	
		Marshall University	Cooley	YES	Avinandan Mukherjee	Yes; Test Required	Optional being considered for general admission	TBD - ongoing	TBD - Under evaluation	
Stephen F. Austin University	Erma Brecht	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional Waiver for 2022	Fall 2023 Test Optional	TBD depending on research			
Western Carolina University	Phil Cauley	YES	N/A	Yes; Test Required	Test Optional Waiver for 2022	TBD	Test Optional or Test Blind (most likely)			
Southeast Missouri State University	L. Hahn	DNR	Mike Godard	DNR	DNR	DNR	DNR			