



THE UNIVERSITY *of* TEXAS SYSTEM

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U. T. SYSTEM  
WHITE PAPER

BEST PRACTICES IN ADMISSIONS  
PROCESSES FOR UNDERGRADUATE AND  
PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS

Prepared by The University of Texas System  
Office of Academic Affairs

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# Best Practices in Admissions for Undergraduate and Professional Programs

## Introduction

In 2009, The University of Texas System (U. T. System) assessed the use of standardized test scores and class rank in the admissions decision process. Given the impact of the legislative requirement to use class rank in public university undergraduate admissions in Texas, the U. T. System found that most U. T. System institutions were using multiple factors when making admissions decisions.

The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign was recently the focus of negative media attention due to reports of undue influence in admissions. The State of Illinois Admission Review Commission was established to evaluate the university's admissions practices and found that a shadow admissions process existed, catering to applicants who were supported by public officials, University Trustees, donors, and other prominent individuals.<sup>1</sup> The damage done by the existence of this hidden, yet institutionalized, process undermined public confidence in the university and its leadership.

The suspicion of a double standard that favors well-connected students is not new, particularly for more selective institutions.<sup>2</sup> Ensuring that fair and transparent admissions processes exist across the U. T. System is necessary to maintain public trust. Recruitment and admissions policies that are disclosed to the public and are consistent with stated university goals garners public trust that student admissions are centered on merit.

The integrity of the admissions processes at each of the University of Texas institutions depends upon the unbiased determination of the appropriate merits of each applicant. Attempts to influence those processes by use of a person's community stature, promise of financial donation (or threat to discontinue financial donation) or any other means that do not directly address the merits of the applicant are inappropriate and not consistent with the status of the university as a public institution of the state of Texas.

## Purpose

The importance of transparency and fairness in admissions processes cannot be over-emphasized. The admissions process serves as a gateway to many higher education opportunities and future career options and often places young adults at the beginning of a unique pathway that will lead them to a promising future. The U. T. System and each institution must ensure the integrity of the admissions process through implementation of the best practices outlined in this report.

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<sup>1</sup> State of Illinois Admissions Review Commission Report & Recommendations, August 6, 2009.  
<http://www2.illinois.gov/gov/admissionsreview/Documents/FinalReport.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Golden, D. (2006). *The price of admission: how America's ruling class buys its way into elite colleges – and who gets left outside the gates*. New York, NY: Crown Publishers.

## **Current State and System Policies Affecting Admissions**

In 1997, the Texas Legislature passed a law that extended automatic admission to Texas public universities for eligible students who placed in the top ten percent (top 10 percent law) of their high school class. Though modified slightly since that time to provide flexibility to The University of Texas at Austin, this legislation does provide a clear criterion to prospective students interested in attending a Texas public university..

With the exception of the top 10 percent law, the Legislature has granted authority to each Boards of Regents to set admissions policies as set forth in Texas Education Code (TEC) Section 51.352, which assigns responsibility to governing boards to “set campus admission standards consistent with the role and mission of the institution and considering the admission standards of similar institutions...” The Rule states that the policies governing admission to academic programs “shall be designed to maximize opportunity and access for all Texans, with parameters established by applicable laws.”

U. T. System Regents’ Rule 40301 which promulgates TEC, Section 51.352, states that “the institutions of The University of Texas System will make maximum use of resources, consistent with standards of appropriate accrediting bodies and enrollment and admissions policies approved by the Board of Regents, to admit and educate as many qualified students as possible.” Texas Education Code Sections 51.803, 51.804, and 51.805 outline the criteria for admission of first-time freshman students, including automatic admission. For students who do not qualify for automatic admission, a policy must be developed that specifies the criteria to be considered when making admission decisions. Texas Education Code Section 51.842 lists the factors that an institution may consider when making admission decisions for graduate or professional programs. Each institution must adopt policies for admission that comply with this statute.

Changes to admissions policies require Board of Regents’ approval. Institutions have maintained responsibility for ensuring appropriate processes are in place to support approved admissions policies.

## **Understanding Current U. T. System Admissions Processes**

In fall 2013, U. T. System staff met with admissions directors from across the nine academic campuses to discuss current admissions processes and to gain a better understanding of the challenges and concerns of admissions staff, focusing on general undergraduate admissions processes. (See Appendix A for the list of institutions participating in the meetings and the programs of study represented at those institutions.)Based on issues raised during this meeting, U. T. System staff developed a survey tool that was sent to admissions contacts in the following programs: architecture, business, engineering, law, and pharmacy (Appendix B). These programs were chosen because they are considered to be more selective and typically use a holistic review of admissions criteria during the decision-making process. Appendix C contains a summary of the survey responses.

At a meeting of graduate deans and their staff in September 2013, admissions policies and decisions were discussed. Additionally, in December 2013, a meeting was held with select program directors and admissions staff from across the U. T. System. Discussion from the December meeting helped to clarify survey responses and identify potential best practices that could be shared across the U. T. System.

### *Undergraduate Admissions*

All institutions use basic admissions criteria such as class rank, GPA, high school curriculum, and standardized test scores when evaluating applications for undergraduate programs. Undergraduate admissions decisions are made in a centralized office for all majors. For less competitive programs, admissions decisions are often made by individual reviewers. For more competitive programs, institutions utilize a holistic review process that involves multiple reviewers. Holistic reviews are useful because they allow consideration of factors such as extracurricular activities, essays, and honors and awards received, expanding beyond GPA, class rank and standardized test scores initially considered.

### *Professional Program Admissions*

Like the graduate programs, professional program admissions decisions are made at the program level. Professional programs included in the survey are pharmacy, law, Master of Business Administration programs, and master's-level engineering programs —programs which have as a primary purpose to gain knowledge for application in professional practice. Because of the competitiveness of these programs, holistic review by a committee of reviewers is typical, in large part, though the methods used to conduct these reviews varies.

### *Graduate Admissions*

Although, this paper does not address best practices in graduate admissions, the use of the term “graduate programs” refers to research-oriented programs that lead to a Ph.D. or equivalent terminal degree. In most cases, applicants to graduate programs submit specified materials to a centralized office, commonly called a graduate school. Complete application files are then sent to the department that offers the graduate program. Most graduate admissions decisions are made by departmental committees comprised of faculty members teaching in the graduate program. While the application requirements are similar for most graduate programs, Graduate Admissions Committees apply a holistic review process considering both academic and personal qualifications. The weight given to any particular requirement may vary from program to program within an institution and between institutions. Additionally, admissions committees may make decisions about the best fit between an applicant's goals and background and the graduate program's admission criteria and objectives.

### *Overall Findings Regarding Transparency and Holistic Reviews*

In the review of survey responses and during the admissions meeting discussions, U. T. System staff discovered that all institutions and programs of study have implemented specific policies designed to increase transparency and provide an appropriate level of objectivity into the holistic review process. This is important, since holistic reviews have the potential to be subjective and thereby viewed as being inconsistent in final outcome. The institutions also provide clear and consistent information to students throughout the process. Key decision makers and committee members with diverse backgrounds and expertise provide balance to consideration of the applicants overall qualifications. Of note, U. T. Austin has developed a sophisticated methodology for evaluating academic and personal achievement of freshman applicants, including a scoring rubric and continuous reviewer training (See Appendix D for an overview of the freshman admissions process at U. T. Austin).

While many similarities in processes are clear, some differences do emerge, largely due to program size and organizational structure. In these instances, establishing clear communication with students regarding expectations and providing an appeals process, when appropriate, might help to improve equity. However, communication with prospective students varies, depending upon the organizational structure. Some programs are able to provide a more personal experience to prospective students, responding to questions in a timely fashion and providing a single contact for inquiries. Others have a less centralized structure, which sometimes causes confusion on the part of students and frustration on the part of program directors.

While institutions and individual programs have been practicing fairness, equity, and transparency, U. T. System has identified a few key areas of best practices that could only further clarify and improve the admissions processes across the U. T. System.

### **Recommendations for Best Practices**

As a result of the survey responses, conversations among U. T. System and institutional admissions staff, and based on nationally recommended best practices and policies, the U. T. System Office of Academic Affairs recommends the following best practices for implementation at the U. T. System institutions.

#### ***1. Ensure transparency throughout the admissions process.***

Prospective students need to clearly understand how the admissions process works for all undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. Universities should establish written admissions policies that outline expectations and requirements for admission to each program and list them on the university or program website. All necessary forms, academic records, letters of reference, and required standardized test scores should be clearly and accurately stated. Admissions policies should also outline the appeals process for those students that are denied admission, or clearly indicate that admissions decisions are final when no appeals process exists. Important deadlines, notification dates, and response dates should be publicly available and clearly stated.

#### ***2. Identify for prospective students the criteria used in holistic review.***

A list of criteria to be considered as part of the holistic review process should be included on the university/program website. Given the nature of holistic reviews and the difficulty in setting minimum standards for each criterion, programs should publish profiles of students admitted in prior years, including average standardized test scores. This information will provide prospective students with a basis for comparison when preparing their applications.

#### ***3. Promote consistency in holistic reviews.***

Holistic review of applicants requires the balancing of academic accomplishments with personal attributes and characteristics. The goal when conducting holistic reviews, needs to be evaluating these criteria consistently and fairly. Evaluation rubrics should be developed to assist reviewers to objectively score the criteria. In addition, regularly training reviewers and routinely testing the reliability of reviewers will help ensure that the holistic review process is consistent from applicant to applicant. Examples of such processes exist at other universities, including Tufts University<sup>3</sup> and the University of California-Los Angeles.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Steinberg, R. J. (2010). *College admissions for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

<sup>4</sup> Mare, R. D. (2012). *Holistic review in freshman admissions at the University of California-Los Angeles*.

<http://www.senate.ucla.edu/committees/cuars/documents/UCLAReportonHolisticReviewinFreshmanAdmissions.pdf>

#### ***4. Uphold the integrity of the admissions process by eliminating external influences and conflicts of interest.***

As noted above, the integrity of the admissions processes at the University of Texas System institutions depends upon the unbiased determination of the appropriate merits of each applicant. Attempts to influence those processes by use of a person's community stature, promise of financial donation (or threat to discontinue financial donation) or any other means that do not directly address the merits of the applicant are inappropriate.

Thus, university policies should be in place to prohibit undue external influence in the admissions process. One strategy to reduce this possibility is to use multi-member committees that evaluate applicants. For example, the State of Illinois Admission Review Commission recommended that universities emulate the admissions process of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's College of Medicine, which uses a 25-member faculty admissions committee to collectively make admissions decisions. The Commission found that the multi-member admissions committee was more resistant to external influence. Additionally, letters of recommendation that are not submitted through the formal application process are never considered as part of the applicant's file. Moreover, the college dean or Dean of Admissions maintains a clear buffer between outside influences and the admissions committee.

Following the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's College of Medicine admissions model, the use of a multi-member committee for holistic reviews will reduce the influence of individuals external to the formal admissions process. Furthermore, to prevent real or perceived conflicts of interest, admissions committee members should not be permitted to consider applications for prospective students that they know either directly or indirectly.

For highly competitive and professional programs, the perception of external influence in admissions decisions can most often creep in when materials that are not part of the official admissions student file are considered in the review process. Typically, these materials may be provided in the form of an unsolicited letter of support, recommendation letters submitted by third parties, or potentially negative information submitted without the applicant's knowledge. While an additional show of support for a student may come from the best of intentions, it may not be equitable for all applicants when institutions permit third party information or additional application materials to become part of a formal admissions review.

Unsolicited materials, including letters of recommendation, electronic communications and other forms of correspondence should not be included in any aspect of the review of the application. A list of materials to be accepted for a formal admissions review should be easily accessible on the admissions website for each campus.

Each institution should adopt a policy and outline a process that staff and admissions committee members must follow when responding to admissions-related inquiries from external individuals.. Ideally, a "firewall" should be established around the admissions process that would prevent anyone, even those within university administration, from unduly influencing admissions decisions.

### ***5. Encourage accurate and timely communication between students and admissions staff.***

Provide a single contact point to manage questions from prospective students. For example, a designated website with email account can be set up for prospective students to address their questions. The account should be consistently monitored to ensure rapid responses to questions. A single source for official communications to applicants can also prevent confusion for students. Students could be referred to individuals in various departments for additional information, but such referrals would be issued from the single contact point. Some universities centralize communication to a single office on campus, reducing the frustration and burden on program directors to respond to inquiries.

Establish appropriate policies that address prospective student's rights to privacy. Ensure that prospective students understand that all communication with admissions staff may be considered as part of the application review, including email correspondence and phone calls. Admissions policies should include a statement on the university's use of social media in the admissions process.

Provide a way for students that are denied admission to gain information that will guide them in strengthening future applications. This can be as simple as providing information about the characteristics of the entering class (average GPA, average test scores, etc.).

### **U. T. System Requirements: Next Steps on Each Campus**

Given the variation that exists in admissions processes across the U. T. System, it would be inefficient to apply a "one-size-fits-all" approach to all programs. Some programs are more selective than others, resulting in varying applications of holistic review. However, there are best practices that should be implemented across all programs, particularly those involving transparency and communication. To ensure that the spirit of the best practices is followed, the Office of Academic Affairs will require the following:

- I. Each campus shall identify one individual as an "admissions contact" for U. T. System communications. This individual would be responsible for sharing the best practices identified in this document and ensuring that every program on campus has a fair and transparent admissions process aligned with this document. Future communications regarding admissions policies would flow through this individual for implementation and distribution.
- II. Each institution shall develop a written policy, available to staff, administration, faculty, and prospective students, that outlines directions for prohibiting undue influence in the admissions process, especially as it relates to unsolicited letters of support and other communications submitted outside of the formal admissions process. The policy should be developed with input from a variety of admissions officials, faculty, and students. The policy should be developed by institutional officials and be approved by the U. T. System.

At a minimum, the policy should include at least the following sections:

- a) An Admissions Committee shall be constituted to include multiple officials, such as faculty and academic administrators. It is exceedingly important to have an Admissions Committee that is of adequate size to prevent undue influence on an admission officer or a small Admissions Committee.
  - b) Letters of recommendation are considered only if they are part of the formal admission process as defined by the campus or application service.
  - c) Any letter of recommendation submitted outside the formal admission process should be kept out of the applicant's file and not provided to anyone associated in admissions decisions.
  - d) When an appeal process exists, the appeal process of an admission decision must be clearly outlined on the school, college, or program website and must be strictly followed.
  - e) A policy shall be established requiring that the Admissions Committee must be able to maintain independence and make decisions without undue external influence.
  - f) Each campus should develop a policy to avoid conflict of interest, including candidates who may be otherwise identifiable to the Admissions Committee.
  - g) Each campus should develop a process using a single point of contact to handle all inquiries.
  - h) Outside inquiries must follow the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) with respect to the privacy of student education records.
  - i) University personnel who violate any such policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- III. The Office of Academic Affairs will facilitate future meetings of admissions staff to allow the sharing of best practices and strategies for improving the recruitment of high-quality students. These meetings will reinforce accountability and commitment to the transparency of admissions processes, which are focused on student success. Further, the group may discuss recruitment strategies that streamline the admissions process and continue to further the commitment to excellence among all U. T. System institutions.

## Examples of Admissions Policies

### **The University of Michigan Medical School Admissions Policies and Procedures**

<http://med.umich.edu/medschool/admissions/apply/Admissions-Policies-Procedures.pdf>

#### I. Admission Policy Summary

*The goals of the University of Michigan Medical School (UMMS) include educating individuals who are imbued with achieving the highest ethical performance standards required to provide exemplary patient care, and graduating physicians who will assume leadership roles in the areas of clinical medicine, research, and teaching.*

The University of Michigan Medical School is dedicated to providing a cadre of physicians capable of caring for the diverse medical needs of the people of the state of Michigan and beyond. Those needs range from the immediate diagnostic and therapeutic needs of an individual patient to the need of our population for research into disease entities and the means by which to treat them. This medical school trains physicians who will be directly involved in patient care, physicians who will teach the next generation of physicians, and physicians who will become clinician scientists, expanding the medical knowledge base. The admissions policies therefore are designed to ensure that our selection process each year matriculates a class made up of individuals collectively and individually capable of meeting a variety of the needs of our current and future patients.

The University of Michigan Medical School recognizes that, in training physicians, there is a dual responsibility to be met. The first is to the medical students, to provide a medical education of the highest quality so that they may become highly effective and competent physicians. The second responsibility is to the future patients of the graduates of the medical school. Graduates should be well trained in all aspects of medicine and able to make appropriate diagnostic and treatment decisions in a manner that recognizes and respects the individual patient's needs, including cultural, financial and social nuances. Each matriculating class will be selected in light of this dual responsibility.

Each applicant will be evaluated not only on his or her ability to become a competent physician, but also on his or her potential to contribute to the educational experience of fellow medical students. The admissions process will evaluate both the individual capabilities of a student, and the overall composition of the matriculating class, with the goal of providing a rich and diverse educational experience for all members of the class. The UMMS follows the guidelines and policies regarding diversity as put forth by the University. The UMMS complies with all applicable federal and state laws. The UMMS defines diversity as the inclusion of individuals with varying backgrounds and perspectives so as to enhance the learning climate and promote innovation, mutual respect and connections with the communities being served. Factors taken into consideration include, but are not limited to, educational background, life experiences, cultural identity, and socioeconomic background. The UMMS does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, disabilities, marital status, sexual orientation, or body habitus.

A. Each applicant will be treated with respect, and will be individually assessed for their potential as a physician. Information used to assess individual potential may include:

1. Application form
2. Letters of recommendation
3. Personal statement
4. Supplemental essay and information (i.e. secondary, including course requirements)
5. Interview with U of M Admissions Committee
6. Personal communication from those acquainted with the individual

Each applicant will be considered in the pool of the entire group of applicants, and will be individually assessed on both **essential attributes** and on their **unique potential** to contribute to the educational experience at the Medical School and to the profession of medicine. The first are those attributes considered essential to the practice of medicine, and therefore are required of all students admitted to the University of Michigan Medical School. Unique potential relates to the unique and valued, but not required, characteristics that an applicant may possess, which would enhance their potential to contribute to the educational experience and diversity of the Medical School, and to the profession of medicine. The parameters of both the essential attributes and the unique potential to contribute to the educational experience at the Medical School and to the profession of medicine characteristics will be reviewed on an annual basis.

B. Each applicant will be individually assessed for his/her essential attributes and unique potential to contribute to the medical school class.

#### 1. Essential Attributes

a. *Academic Excellence:* The curriculum at the University of Michigan Medical School is academically rigorous and requires that the applicants demonstrate prior ability to perform well in a challenging academic setting. The undergraduate grade point average and the Medical College Admissions Test scores are two measures that are used to assess the applicant's ability. Other factors which are used in the evaluation may include the quality of the undergraduate institution, the rigor of the course load and steadily improving grades.

b. *Competency:* We strive to enroll students capable of accumulating the scientific knowledge, the diagnostic acumen, the technical skills, and the interpersonal skills required for the competent care of patients. Assessment of competency will include intellectual competency, technical competency, and communication competency. All applicants must sign the medical school technical standards form (attached).

c. *Dedication to Medicine:* Every effort will be made during the admissions process to assess the applicant's dedication to a practice of medicine. Assessment of dedication to medicine will include, but is not limited to, assessment of the application materials for documented interest in medicine, focused questioning in the interview, and the applicant's knowledge of current medical issues.

d. *Altruism:* Altruism, or the devotion to the needs of others, can be assessed through review of the applicant's activities such as participation in community service, or volunteer activities as well as responses to interview questions about the applicant's goals and desires for a life of providing patient care.

e. *Integrity*: Honesty and integrity are essential in both the medical education process and eventual practice of medicine. Applicants should be able to articulate an understanding of the importance of ethical behavior, of honesty, of professionalism in medicine. Dishonesty on the application form or in the interview as well as information provided in the letters of evaluation will be considered in assessing integrity.

f. *Communication skills*: Potential physicians should demonstrate to the Admissions Committee an ability to communicate effectively. The personal statement, letters of recommendation, and the interview provide opportunities to assess effective communication skills.

## 2. Unique Potential to Contribute to the Medical School Educational Experience and to the Profession of Medicine

Each year, there will be many more applicants who possess all of the essential attributes to become a competent and effective physician than there are positions available. Many of the applicants will also possess unique attributes that can contribute both to the educational experience of their fellow classmates and eventually to the field of medicine. Although each applicant will present a unique set of academic and other attributes, many will have an approximately equivalent potential to contribute to medicine, albeit in a wide variety of ways. The selection process cannot therefore focus solely on the individual, as many applicants will be equally, if differently, suited to the practice of medicine. The admission process, following evaluation and rating of the individual applicant, will seek to build a richly diverse class both to enhance the educational experience of the class itself, and to provide for future patient care of the highest quality.

a. *Future Potential re Underserved Populations of Patients*: “Chronically underserved” may be either geographic (rural, inner city), or involve specific populations of patients (e.g. financially disadvantaged, minority populations, or uninsured). Applicants who provide evidence, stated or otherwise, that they are inclined to serve in one of these areas may be ranked as highly desirable for admissions to the medical school. Assessment would include, but is not limited to, demographic factors, past experiences, and demonstrated interest in practicing in an underserved area or with underserved populations.

b. *Underserved medical specialties*. This assessment can include particular underserved specialties such as primary care, but will also include neglected medical areas such as bioethics, the understanding and teaching of cultural competency, medical education, and so on. These underserved areas will change from time to time, and will be continuously monitored.

c. *Leadership*: The physician is the leader of the health care team and must be able to effectively direct the diagnosis and treatment course of patients. Previous team leadership experience (for example, advancement in the military, captain of an athletic team, selection for a leadership position in an organized environment), or leadership training experiences will be considered in assessing leadership.

d. *Life Experiences*: Each physician must care for patients with a wide variety of racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Experiences with other ethnicities and cultures are deemed valuable, such as study abroad, involvement with multicultural organizations, or other unique life experiences.

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e. *Scientific or social research experience*: Advancement of medical knowledge benefits large populations of patients, and applicants with skills in research have the potential to provide such benefits. While involvement in research is not an absolute requirement, it is considered a very desirable experience for the admission evaluation.

f. *Additional degrees*: Applicants who present with another graduate degree such as JD, Masters in Public Health, Ph.D. etc, bring a unique set of skills that will be valuable both to the other members of the class and to the future cohort of physicians.

g. *Educational background*: Although the practice of medicine is heavily grounded in the sciences, the art of medicine requires an understanding of and appreciation for psychosocial issues such as economics, history and philosophy among others. Students who have undertaken studies in these areas will be assessed for their potential to contribute to the educational experience of the class.

h. *Socioeconomic Status (SES)*: In order to train future physicians who have the potential to serve our communities in need, it is important to seek students from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds.,

## II. Admission Procedures

### A. Processing of applications

1. Applicants to the University of Michigan are required to have completed 90 hours of undergraduate level education in an undergraduate institution in the United States, take the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT), and submit an application through the American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS).

2. Applicants are required to be United States citizens or hold a permanent resident alien visa (“green card”)

### B. Screening of application

1. Each applicant’s file will be reviewed individually and holistically to assess his or her suitability for a career in medicine. Materials reviewed will include the application, all secondary materials and any additional information requested by the Admissions Office

2. A select group of applicants will be invited for an interview. The admissions counselors, the Director of Admissions and the Assistant Dean for Admissions will screen application materials for the interview decision.

3. As a courtesy, interviews may be offered to applicants with specific or significant ties to the University of Michigan. Other than the opportunity for interview, no special considerations will be offered to these applicants.

### C. Interview process

1. Invited applicants will interview with members of the Admissions Committee, including a faculty member.

2. Interviewers will be provided with guidelines and an orientation to the basics of the interview process, including concepts such as treating the applicant with respect, which questions or topics are inappropriate for the interview, and which qualities are to be evaluated.

3. Interviewers will complete a standardized evaluation form for each interviewee that provides a clear definition of qualities to be evaluated.

4. Interviewees will be provided an opportunity to anonymously evaluate the interview process and provide feedback to the Admissions Executive Committee about the quality of the interview experience.

#### D. Ranking process

1. The Admissions Executive Committee (AEC) will review the complete files of each of the interviewed applicants, including the assessment by the interviewers, and provide a rating of the future potential of the interviewee as a physician.

2. No quotas will be set up for any particular quality sought in future physicians.

3. Certain Medical School programs, such as the Medical Scientist Training Program or the Oral Maxillofacial Surgery Program, have variable numbers of positions available in any given year, depending on funding or numbers of qualified applicants. If fewer than the desired number of individuals is found in any year for these special programs, the remaining spots in the entering class will be filled with standard applicants. The AEC reviews and renders an admissions decision on all candidates for the dual degree programs.

4. The final decision regarding which applicants will be offered admission resides with the AEC. Every effort will be made to select a class of individuals who, in the aggregate, are capable of addressing the specific different needs of future patients, and the educational environment for their classmates.

#### E. Evaluation of Admissions Policies, Procedures and Activities

1. The Office of Admissions is within the Office of Medical Student Education and is directly supervised by the Associate Dean for Medical Student Education. Each year the Assistant Dean for Admissions will provide to the Associate Dean a report of the policies, procedures and activities for the year.

2. These Admission Policies shall be reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee of the Medical School on a regular basis.

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### III. Admissions Committee and Admissions Executive Committee

#### A. Purpose

##### 1. Admissions Committee

The Admissions Committee is the body of the medical school that is responsible for the assessment of an individual applicant, both via review of the applicant's file and the face to face interview

## 2. Admissions Executive Committee (AEC)

The AEC is the body that is responsible for assessment of the individual applicant in the pool of all of the applicants. In addition to a review of the files and interview comments of each of the interviewed applicants, the AEC will assign each applicant a rating score indicating desirability among all current applicants.

### B. Responsibilities

#### 1. Admissions Committee

Members of the Admissions Committee will interview and provide an assessment of the essential and unique attributes of each interviewed applicant to the Admissions Executive Committee.

#### 2. Admissions Executive Committee

- The AEC will admit suitable candidates, and reject unsuitable candidates. The AEC will provide an approximate rating of the desirability of each applicant among the pool of all applicants.
- The AEC will advise the Assistant Dean for Admissions on appropriate policies and procedures for the evaluation and admissions of applicants to the Medical School.
- On occasion, the AEC will review requests for waivers of existing requirements and make recommendations regarding the action on such requests to the Associate Dean for Medical Student Education and the Executive Committee of the Medical School

### C. Structure and Membership

#### 1. Admissions Committee

- Membership will be sufficient to interview the 700-800 applicants interviewed each year. Members may be current or retired faculty members, house officers, medical students, or alumni of the University of Michigan Medical School.
- Membership is for four years, renewable terms. Each interviewer is expected to participate in at least four interview days during each year.
- Nominations for the Admissions Committee will be solicited from Departmental Chairs, members of the Admissions Committee, from the leadership of the medical school, and from the faculty at large.
- Nominations for the medical student members of the Admissions Committee will be solicited from the medical student leadership, former student members of the Admissions Committee, from the medical school leadership, and from the medical student body at large. Each student nominated for membership shall submit a personal statement regarding their desire to join the committee, and should include any previous experience with admissions.

- Individuals selected to join the Admissions Committee will be provided with specific instruction and guidelines regarding the policies and procedures of the Admissions Committees and the interview process. In addition, each new member of the Admissions Committee will observe a limited number of interviews with an experienced faculty committee member.
- Admissions Committee members whose actions are not in accordance with the Admissions Policies and Procedures will be counseled by the Assistant Dean for Admissions or the Director of Admissions, and may be removed from the Committee if necessary.

## 2. Admissions Executive Committee

- The AEC shall consist of the Assistant Dean for Admissions, the Director of Admissions, 12 to 15 faculty members, and two student members.
- Nominations for the Admissions Executive Committee will be solicited from Departmental Chairs and from the leadership of the Medical School. Nominees should be current or former members of the Admissions Committee and be well versed in the policies and procedures of the Admissions Committee. The credentials for the nominee will be presented to the Associate Dean for Medical Student Education and to the Dean of the Medical School who will appoint the membership.
- Each member shall serve three-year, renewable terms of service.
- Every effort will be made to include appropriate faculty representation of the constituents of the Medical School. A quorum shall be constituted when a minimum of 5 voting faculty members are present for AEC business.
- The Associate Dean for Medical Student Education, the Associate Dean for Diversity and Career Development, and the Director of the Medical Scientist Training Program shall serve as *ex officio*, non-voting, members of the Admissions Executive Committee.

## IV. Committee Membership and Schedule

A. The schedule of interview days will be made available to the Admissions Committee members in early summer and members will be asked to pick a minimum of four days for participation.

B. Each invited applicant will typically have three 30-minute interviews, an introduction to the curriculum and mission of the school, a financial aid presentation, and lunch and a tour with current medical students.

C. Interviewers are encouraged to meet with other Admissions Committee members for lunch following the final interview. This provides an opportunity to discuss common experiences with interviewees, and to come to a consensus regarding the applicant's suitability for acceptance.

D. The Admissions Executive Committee will meet as necessary to review each interviewed applicant and to assign a rating score. The rating score represents a comparative assessment of the entire

application and not just the interview evaluation. Frank and open discussion of the applicant's merits and deficiencies, and essential and unique attributes, is encouraged.

E. The Assistant Dean for Admissions, based on the decisions of the AEC, will make sufficient admission offers by March 15th to fill the entering class.

## **University of Illinois Admissions Code of Conduct**

<http://www.vpaa.uillinois.edu/policies/Admissions-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>

All University of Illinois admission policies are set with the approval of the campus Senates. Only faculty, college representatives designated by the dean or admissions officers whose jobs involve direct responsibility for admissions will be involved in admissions decisions. Other faculty and more senior administrators will provide policy guidance and are available for consultation at the request of those involved in admissions decisions. In addition, admission processes will continue to follow the general University Code of Conduct and the codes of conduct established by the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) and National Association of Graduate Admissions Professionals (NAGAP). Violators will be subject to discipline up to and including discharge.

### **The University of Illinois-Urbana Champagne Admissions Policy**

The goal of the campus' admissions review process is to select, from the large and growing pool of applicants, those individuals who have challenged themselves academically and shown commitment to activities and service expected of University of Illinois alumni. To achieve a class that embodies rich diversity, college representatives and other University staff participate in the recruitment, identification, and selection of students.

Applicants selected for admission are those who are expected to contribute to and immerse themselves in Illinois' learning environment. Although high school grades and standardized test scores are important indicators of academic achievement, they only tell part of the story.

As a public, land-grant institution of higher learning, Illinois has a mandate to serve the State of Illinois by educating its future leaders in research, teaching, and public engagement. Student diversity is a compelling interest, as it contributes to a rich and stimulating learning environment that prepares students for the challenges and opportunities in Illinois, the nation, and beyond.

### **The Review Process**

In order to meet their educational missions, each college at the University of Illinois seeks students who meet and exceed standards for incoming freshmen and have the potential to be leaders in their chosen fields upon graduation. When students apply to Illinois, their applications for admission are subject to a rigorous, careful, thoughtful, and complete review by admissions professionals from the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and the college to which the student has applied.

A variety of factors are considered upon review. Primary among the criteria is academic performance and rigor. When reading applications, the admissions and college professionals rank the application using a holistic approach by combining the criteria being evaluated. Most applications receive at least two readings. The Office of Admissions checks all preliminary decisions in order to assure a high level of consistency while recognizing that professional judgment is being used to make individual decisions about each applicant. In fact, individual applicants are evaluated in the context of the opportunities available. The multiple readings and the review for consistency creates a system of quality control that leads to the best possible decisions of professional judgment.

While reading an application, admissions and college professionals carefully consider the wide range of information provided by the applicant. Applicants should understand that every word of the application is considered in making an admissions decision. Readers consider all evidence provided by the applicant, the context of the personal and academic circumstances, and the strength of the

applicant pool in each college and to the University of Illinois overall. The weight of each criterion in the admissions decision depends on the combination of qualities presented by the applicant. There is no set formula of weighting criteria. Final decisions are made on the evaluation of a variety of criteria and not by a single point system or formula.

Readers make admissions decisions based on the evidence included in the application. Applicants should be sure to present themselves and their stories accurately and completely. The academic record will be carefully and thoughtfully evaluated. The other sections of the application including the personal statement, list of activities, achievements, honors, etc. will be given equal, careful, and thoughtful attention. The best applicants create an application that is thoroughly prepared with close attention to detail and consideration of personal strengths and future goals.

Applicants to Illinois have the opportunity to apply directly into a college and major. Due to this fact, an applicant's strengths and experiences as they relate to their intended program of study will be taken into consideration. For example, the College of Engineering will focus on the student's proficiency in math and science as shown through subscores on the ACT or SAT and grades and rigor in those areas. Applicants to talent-based programs in the College of Fine and Applied Arts such as Art, Music, Theatre and Dance must be academically eligible as well as pass a talent review either conducted through an audition or portfolio review. The College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences will make note of experiences or activities that directly correlate with the specific field of study the applicant has chosen. Therefore, each of the nine academic communities reviews applications with the goal of admitting students who demonstrate that they will succeed and thrive within their chosen academic program.

#### Review Criteria:

Looking for a record of successful achievement at the highest possible level, readers of applications will evaluate the following criteria:

Academic achievement in the highest level of rigor available at the applicant's high school. Consistent achievement at the highest level is the best possible demonstration of strong academic performance. Application readers will review the rigor of individual courses and the grades earned in those courses when evaluating the strength of a student's academic record.

Evidence of rigor is demonstrated in the number of honors, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) and/or college-level courses included in the student's four-year academic program. Readers will take the student's high school course offerings into account. Recognizing that different high schools provide different levels of opportunity and rigor, we expect each applicant to challenge themselves with the best offered at their school. In-progress courses are included in the review, and a senior year with strong academic rigor is an important factor in evaluating an applicant's academic record.

Because admission to Illinois is so competitive, the minimum course requirements rarely satisfy admission expectations. In reviewing a high school record, readers will also look for grade patterns. For example, it is always better for grades to improve over time rather than decline.

Achievement outside the classroom that demonstrates personal strengths and skills.

Illinois is looking for students who have the personal qualities, as well as the academic qualities, to succeed and thrive on our campus. Readers expect that students with strong academic achievement will also demonstrate strong achievement outside of the classroom in school and/or community activities. Through such activities, applicants have the opportunity to demonstrate leadership ability, perseverance, creativity, generosity, determination, motivation, concern, intellectual curiosity, etc.

In the application, students have the opportunity to provide the readers with evidence of their strongest qualities by submitting careful and complete information in the listing of activities and their essays. Illinois does not use letters of recommendation in the admissions process and asks that applicants not submit letters of recommendation, as they will not be considered.

#### Academic interest.

Students applying to the University of Illinois apply directly to the major they wish to study. Students should discuss their academic interests clearly and concisely in the essays and application questions so that readers understand why they are applying to the program and how they developed this interest. Depending on this information, readers will consider students for other majors or those related to the original major to which they applied. Readers may determine that another program will be the best fit for a student.

#### Performance on standardized tests.

Illinois does not have any minimum scores or “cutoffs” for making any undergraduate admissions decisions. Readers evaluate the results of the required ACT and/or SAT test results. The highest composite score is used for evaluation. Colleges will often evaluate results from the sub-scores (English, Math, etc.). If an applicant submits scores from more than one test date, the highest sub-score(s) will be used in this evaluation. However, Illinois does not combine the highest sub-scores from different test sittings to create a “super-score” composite.

Other test results such as SAT Subject Tests, Advanced Placement, or International Baccalaureate Higher Level examinations are not evaluated and not seen by the readers of the applications. Readers evaluate test scores in the context of the academic information in the application.

#### Other achievements.

Readers will consider worthy and sustained achievement in a variety of areas of endeavor (intellectual, creative, artistic, athletic, entrepreneurial, employment, leadership, etc.) in which the applicant has demonstrated significant impact or level of accomplishment in his or her school, community, state, and/or national activities. Students on college campuses thrive when studying and working with the other students who contribute to the intellectual, cultural, and social life of the campus. Therefore, readers look for evidence of an applicant’s potential to contribute to a vibrant, diverse, and talented campus.

#### Opportunities.

Because individual applicants are evaluated in the context of the opportunities available, each reader will consider the high school curriculum, Advanced Placement courses, honors courses, extra-curricular activities, etc. that are available to the student. Each applicant to Illinois is expected to take full advantage of the resources that are available.

Illinois has no limits to the number of applicants that can be admitted from a high school. We make decisions based on the quality of the individual application.

#### Personal characteristics.

The University is committed to our land-grant mission to serve the population of the state of Illinois. Admitting such a wide variety of students helps create the rich cultural experience found on campus. In order to continue to provide an atmosphere that values students who have a unique set of experiences and knowledge, readers consider each applicant’s background. This includes diversity, veteran status, geographic location, and first-generation status.

#### Individual circumstances.

Many applicants have unique stories that provide important context for an admissions decision. The Illinois admissions application provides an opportunity for students to share information about individual circumstances that may assist in the evaluation of the application.

Applicants should take advantage of this opportunity to explain those circumstances, which may demonstrate qualities and/or skills important in a successful applicant. Additionally, some students have one semester or course in which the performance does not match each of the other semesters or courses. Applicants may wish to explain the circumstances for this variation.

## University of California-Los Angeles Undergraduate Admissions Policy

[http://www.admissions.ucla.edu/Prospect/Adm\\_fr/FrSel.pdf](http://www.admissions.ucla.edu/Prospect/Adm_fr/FrSel.pdf)

### FRESHMAN SELECTION OVERVIEW

FALL 2014

Undergraduate Admissions and Relations with Schools

Final: 10/31/13

Each year, UCLA considers many more excellent applicants for freshmen admission than it can possibly admit. The goal of the campus' admissions review process is to single out from a large and growing pool of academically strong applicants those unique individuals who have demonstrated the intellectual curiosity, tenacity, and commitment to community service expected of the UCLA graduate. These select applicants are the ones who would contribute the most to UCLA's dynamic learning environment; they are also the applicants who would make the most of being immersed in it. Although high school grade point average and standardized test scores are important indicators of academic achievement used in UCLA's admissions review, they only tell part of the story.

As a public, land grant institution of higher learning, UCLA has a mandate to serve the State of California by educating its future leaders in research, industry, and the arts. California's future depends heavily on this important charge. While California law prohibits the consideration of an applicant's race and/or gender in individual admission decisions, the University also has a mandate to reflect the diversity of the state's population in its student body. Student diversity is a compelling interest at UCLA. It contributes to a rich and stimulating learning environment, one that best prepares leaders-in-the-making for the challenges and opportunities of California, the nation, and beyond.

### Admission Review Process

Selection is based on a comprehensive review of all information—both academic and personal—presented in the application. All applications are read twice, in their entirety, by professionally trained readers. After independently reading and analyzing a file, the reader determines a comprehensive score that is the basis upon which the student is ultimately admitted or denied. In addition, admissions managers conduct multiple checks for consistency and completeness throughout the reading process. While this evaluation process is based on human judgments rather than a system that quantifies factors and incorporates them into a numerical formula, the extensive reader training, comprehensive reading of files, as well as other monitoring procedures, ensure that the process is highly reliable. Formal tests of reliability are conducted regularly to assure quality control.

The admission review reflects the readers' thoughtful consideration of the full spectrum of the applicant's qualifications, based on all evidence provided in the application, and viewed in the context of the applicant's academic and personal circumstances and the overall strength of the UCLA applicant pool. Using a broad concept of merit, readers employ the following criteria which carry no pre-assigned weights:

1. The applicant's full record of achievement in college preparatory work in high school, including the number and rigor of courses taken and grades earned in those courses. Consideration will be given to completion of courses beyond the University's a-g minimums; strength of the senior year course load; and performance in honors, college level, Advanced Placement (AP), and International Baccalaureate Higher Level (IBHL) courses *to the extent that such courses are available to the applicant*. In assessing achievement levels, consideration will be given to individual grades earned, to the pattern of achievement over time, and to an applicant's achievement relative to

that of others in his or her high school, including whether he or she is among those identified as Eligible in the Local Context.

2. Personal qualities of the applicant, including leadership ability, character, motivation, tenacity, initiative, originality, creativity, intellectual independence, responsibility, insight, maturity, and demonstrated concern for others and for the community. These qualities may not be reflected in traditional measures of academic achievement. They may be found elsewhere in the application and judged by the reader as positive indicators of the student's ability to succeed at UCLA and beyond.

3. Likely contributions to the intellectual and cultural vitality of the campus. In addition to a broad range of intellectual interests and achievements, consideration will be given to evidence of an applicant's ability and desire to contribute to a campus that values cultural, socioeconomic, and intellectual diversity. This includes the likelihood that the student would make meaningful and unique contributions to intellectual and social interchanges with faculty and fellow students, both inside and outside the classroom.

4. Performance on standardized tests, including the ACT plus Writing or SAT Reasoning, and any AP or IBHL examinations the applicant may have taken. Applicants who have not had the opportunity to take AP or IBHL courses or who have chosen not to take the examinations for these courses will not be disadvantaged. Test scores will be evaluated in the context of all other academic information in the application and preference will be given to tests that show a demonstrable relationship to curriculum and to Academic Senate statements of competencies expected of entering college students. Under no circumstances does UCLA employ minimum scores or "cut-offs" of any kind.

5. Achievement in academic enrichment programs, including, but not limited to, those sponsored by the University of California. This criterion will be measured by time and depth of participation, by the academic progress made by the applicant during that participation, and by the intellectual rigor of the particular program.

6. Other evidence of achievement. This criterion will recognize exemplary, sustained achievement in any field of intellectual or creative endeavor; accomplishments in the performing arts and athletics; employment; leadership in school or community organizations or activities; and community service.

7. Opportunities. All achievements, both academic and non-academic, are considered in the context of the opportunities an applicant has had, and the reader's assessment is based on how fully the applicant has taken advantage of those opportunities. In evaluating the context in which academic accomplishments have taken place, readers consider the strength of the high school curriculum, including the availability of honors, AP, and IBHL courses, and the total number of college preparatory courses available, among other indicators of the resources available within the school. When appropriate and feasible, readers look comparatively at the achievements of applicants in the same pool who attended the same high school and therefore might be expected to have similar opportunities to achieve.

8. Challenges. For an applicant who has faced any hardships or unusual circumstances, readers consider the maturity, determination, and insight with which he or she has responded to and/or overcome them. Readers also consider other contextual factors that bear directly on the applicant's achievement, including linguistic background, parental education level, and other

indicators of support available in the home.

In applying the criteria above, readers carefully consider evidence provided in the personal statement, as well as in the academic record and list of honors and achievements. It is important that the student as an individual comes through in the personal statement.

**Appendix A: List of U. T. System Academic Programs Represented at Admissions Meetings**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Undergraduate</b>	<b>Graduate</b>	<b>Professional</b>
UT Arlington	General	x		
UT Arlington	Business		x	
UT Austin	General	x		
UT Austin	Pharmacy			x
UT Austin	Architecture		x	
UT Austin	Business	x	x	
UT Austin	Engineering	x	x	
UT Austin	Law			x
UT Brownsville	General	x		
UT Dallas	General	x		
UT Dallas	Engineering		x	
UT Dallas	Business		x	
UT El Paso	General	x		
UT El Paso	Engineering	x	x	
UT El Paso	Business		x	
UT Pan American	General	x		
UT Pan American	Engineering		x	
UT Pan American	Business		x	
UT Permian Basin	General	x		
UT Permian Basin	Engineering	x		
UT San Antonio	General	x		
UT San Antonio	Engineering	x	x	
UT San Antonio	Architecture	x	x	
UT San Antonio	Business		x	
UT Tyler	General	x		
UT Tyler	Engineering	x		
UT Tyler	Business		x	

## Appendix B: Survey Instrument

### Fall 2013 Survey on Admissions Processes in Selected Programs at UT System Academic Institutions

Name and Title:

Institution:

College:

Degree Programs (please indicate graduate or undergraduate):

#### Admissions Data:

**Note: Please base your responses on data from the Fall 2013 cohort, and please refer to your admissions processes for the 2013 – 2014 academic year.**

Please list the number of applied/admitted/enrolled students by college/degree program. If relevant, please list the initial number of wait-listed students as well.

Degree Program/College	Number of Applicants	Number Admitted Students	Number Enrolled	Number Wait-Listed

#### Admissions Criteria:

1. Approximately what percentage of students who were wait-listed during the initial review process was ultimately admitted?
2. What percentage of students who applied was automatically admitted based on class rank?
3. What percentage of students who applied was reviewed under a holistic review process? Please list the factors considered in your holistic review process.
4. Of the remaining students who applied and were admitted, what are the additional minimum admissions criteria (test scores, GPA requirements, etc.)?

#### Admissions Review Process:

1. Are admissions decisions made primarily at the institutional level, the college level, or the program level?
2. Are admissions decisions made by individuals, groups, or committees?
3. Who are the key decision makers in the admissions process and their respective roles? If decisions are made by a committee, what type of backgrounds do committee members typically have?

**Please provide any additional information about your admissions process that is relevant to the decision making process at your institution, college, or program. If you have a flow chart or diagram that depicts the admissions process, please include it in your response.**

**Thank you for your time and insight.**

### Appendix C: Summary of Survey Responses

Undergraduate Admissions									
Institution	College	Program	Selectivity	Holistic Review	Waitlist?	Review Level	Individual Decision	Committee Decision	Notes
UT Austin	Business		Highly Selective	100% for major	Undergrad Studies	Institution	x		Decisions made by senior staff members
UT Austin	Engineering		Highly Selective	100% for major	Undergrad Studies	Institution	x		Decisions made by senior staff members
UT Dallas	N/A		Selective	13%	No	Institution	x	when not clear	40% auto admitted
UT El Paso	Engineering		Somewhat Selective	1.40%	No	Institution	x		Admissions Counselors review applications
UT Permian Basin	Engineering		Almost Open	None	No	Institution	x		Individual, for students not meeting min standards
UT San Antonio	Architecture		Selective	100%	No	Program	Pre-Arch		Must apply for major at end of 1st yr -- Pre-Arch as freshmen
UT San Antonio	Engineering		Somewhat Selective	10%	No	College		x	Committee; Freshmen admitted to Pre-Eng unless ready for Calc I.
UT San Antonio	Engineering	BioMed Eng	Selective	None	No	Program		x	
UT Tyler	Engineering		Somewhat Selective	If do not meet min standards	No	Institution	x	Appeals only	

### Graduate and Professional Admissions

Institution	College	Program	Selectivity	Holistic Review	Waitlist?	Review Level	Individual Decision	Committee Decision	Notes
UT Arlington	Business	MS, MA, MPA, MBA	Selective	100%	No	Program	x	x	Some committees; some directors
UT Austin	Architecture	MLA, MID, MSCRP, MArch	Highly Selective	100%	MSCRP: 39%	Program	Final Decision	x	Committee Presents; Director decides
UT Austin	Architecture	MS, MA, PhD	Selective	100%	No	Program	Final Decision	x	Committee Presents; Director decides
UT Austin	Business	MBA, MPA	Selective	100%	No	Program		x	
UT Austin	Business	MS in Finance, MS in IROM	Selective	100%	No	Program		x	
UT Austin	Business	MS in Tech Comm	Somewhat Selective	100%	No	Program	x		
UT Austin	Engineering	MS, PhD	Selective	100%	No	Program		In most cases	
UT Austin	Law		Highly Selective	98%	10-15%	Program	x	Law Adm Committee	Individuals and subset of Admission's comm
UT Austin	Pharmacy		Highly Selective	100%	Yes	College		x	Committee Presents; interviews
UT Dallas	Business	MBA, MS, PhD	Highly Selective	100%	No	College		x	
UT Dallas	Engineering	MS, PhD	Highly Selective	100%	No	Program		x	
UT Dallas	Engineering	MS, PhD in Comp Sci	Somewhat Selective	100%	15%	Program		x	
UT Dallas	Engineering	MS, PhD in Elec Eng	Selective	100%	No	Program		x	

UT Dallas	Engineering	MS, PhD in ME	Selective	100%	No	Program		x	
<b>Institution</b>	<b>College</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Selectivity</b>	<b>Holistic Review</b>	<b>Waitlist?</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Individual Decision</b>	<b>Committee Decision</b>	<b>Notes</b>
UT El Paso	Business	PhD	Somewhat Selective	100%	No	College		x	
UT El Paso	Engineering	MS, PhD	Somewhat Selective	100%	No	Program		x	
UT Pan American	Business	MBA	Somewhat Selective	100%	No	Program	x	Appeals only	Individual (Appeals Process in place)
UT Pan American	Business	PhD	Somewhat Selective	100%	No	College		x	
UT Pan American	Engineering	MSEM; MS in ManE	Almost Open	< 2.75 GPA	No	Program	x		
UT Pan American	Engineering	MS in ME	Almost Open	< 2.75 GPA	No	Program		x	
UT Pan American	Engineering	MS in EE	Somewhat Selective	None	No	Institution		x	Committee; Primarily based on GPA
UT San Antonio	Architecture	MS, MArch	Somewhat Selective	100%	No	Program		x	
UT San Antonio	Business	MA, MS, PhD	Selective	100%	5-12% for PhD	College		x	
UT San Antonio	Business	MBA	Somewhat Selective	100%	No	College		x	
UT San Antonio	Engineering	MCE	Somewhat Selective	None	No	Program		x	Based on GRE and GPA
UT San Antonio	Engineering	PhD in ME, PhD in ESE	Somewhat Selective	100%	No	Program		x	
UT San Antonio	Engineering	PhD in EE	Somewhat Selective	None	No	Program		x	

UT San Antonio	Engineering	MSME, MS in AMEE	Almost Open	100%	No	Program	x	when not clear	
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<b>Institution</b>	<b>College</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Selectivity</b>	<b>Holistic Review</b>	<b>Waitlist?</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Individual Decision</b>	<b>Committee Decision</b>	<b>Notes</b>
UT San Antonio	Engineering	MS in Adv Mat Eng	Almost Open	100%	No	Program		x	
UT San Antonio	Engineering	MSCE	Somewhat Selective	None	No	Program		x	Based on GRE and GPA
UT San Antonio	Engineering	MSEE, MSComPE	Almost Open	100%	No	Program	x		
UT San Antonio	Engineering	MS, PhD in Biomed Eng	Somewhat Selective	100%	No	Program		x	
UT Tyler	Business	MBA, MAcc	Somewhat Selective	None	No	Program	x		2nd review if do not meet standards
UT Tyler	Business	MS & PhD HRD, MSIM	Somewhat Selective	100%	No	Program	x		2nd review if do not meet standards

## Appendix D



### **An Overview of the Freshman Admissions Process at The University of Texas at Austin**

#### **Abstract**

The freshman admissions process at The University of Texas at Austin considers two computed numerical values: The Academic Index (AI) and the Personal Achievement Index (PAI). The AI is a predicted freshman year GPA derived from a multiple regression equation using test scores and class rank as explanatory variables. PAI is the result of a holistic review by readers of an applicant's complete application file, including two required essays.

#### **The UT Austin Admissions Process**

The admissions process of any university is an exercise in both selecting qualified students with a high probability of success, and crafting an entering class that also meets the university's mission.

The UT Austin admissions routine for determining the college and school placement for students who are automatically admissible under SB 175 and for students *not* automatically admitted is elaborate and entails a broad concept of merit. Beginning with the entering class of 1997, the idea of merit was expanded from class rank and test scores exclusively to the inclusion of the following factors:

#### **The Academic Index (AI)**

High School Record:

- Class rank
- Completion of UT required high school curriculum
- Extent to which students exceed the UT required units
- SAT/ACT score

## The Personal Achievement Index (PAI)

- Scores on two essays
- Leadership
- Extracurricular Activities
- Awards/honors
- Work experience
- Service to school or community
- Special circumstances:
  - Socio-economic status of family
  - Single parent home
  - Language spoken at home
  - Family responsibilities
  - Socio-economic status of school attended
  - Average SAT/ACT of school attended in relation to student's own SAT/ACT
  - Race/Ethnicity (beginning with fall 2005)

Thus, merit includes the ambition to tackle rigorous high school coursework, the production of quality prose, and the desire to make a difference in one's school, home, or community. Evidence of employability (work), and some sense of having excelled in any number of areas are also considered. Moreover, admissions officials place these attributes in the context of the circumstances under which the student lived.

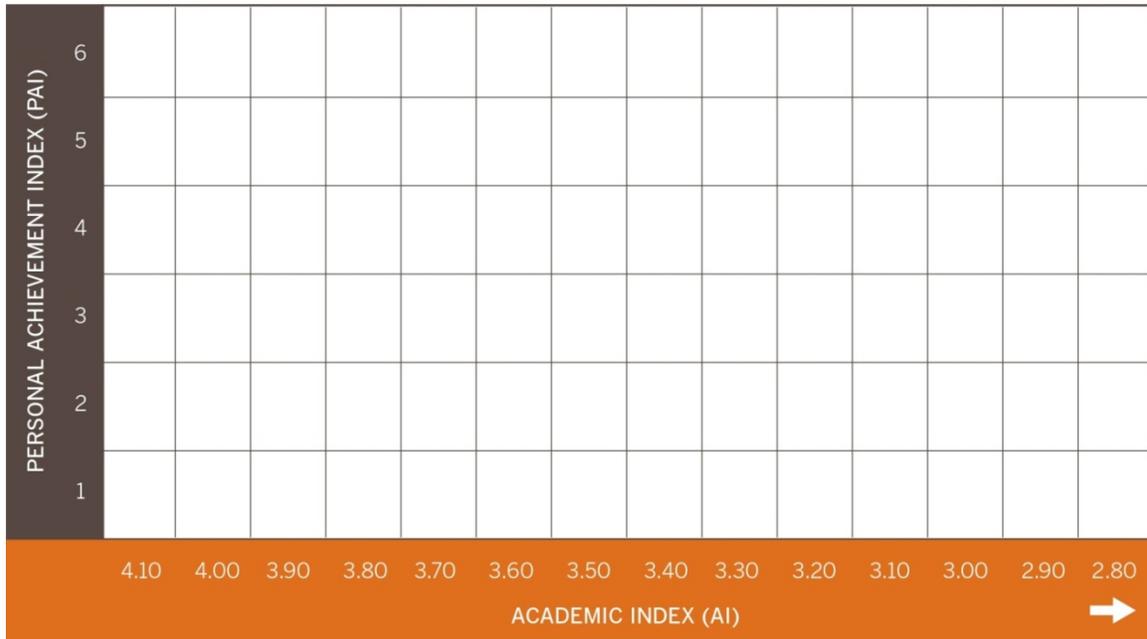
The Academic Index (AI) is determined by a multiple regression equation utilizing a high school percentile derived from an explicit class rank and class size  $[1-(\text{class rank}/\text{class size})]*100$ , and verbal, math, and writing test scores from the ACT Assessment or the SAT Reasoning Test. The equation produces a predicted freshman year grade point average.<sup>i</sup>

The Personal Achievement Index (PAI) is UT Austin's holistic approach to admissions. Admissions officers are trained each year to conduct comprehensive reviews of every completed application. All applicants are required to submit two essays. They are encouraged to include a resume detailing their civic and academic activities during their high school years. The resume, including letters of recommendation and all other items an applicant chooses to include, is then reviewed and scored on a scale of 1-6.

AIs and PAIs of applicants not automatically admitted are then plotted on an admissions decision grid. (See Figure 1 below.) The most-qualified candidates are located in the cells closest to the upper left corner. Admissions liaisons, and/or representatives of Deans' offices or faculty, then make decisions as to which cells to select as admitted students. Applicants who are Texas residents are either admitted, "cascaded" to their second choice of major, offered Pathway to Admission through Co-Enrollment (PACE) or to the Coordinated Admission Program (CAP) at a UT System component school. Thus, Texas residents submitting a completed entering freshman application by published deadlines are never permanently denied admission to UT Austin. All non-residents compete with one another in accordance with the routine described above and are either admitted or denied.

Figure 1

## Office of Admissions Decision Grid



SB 175 and the routine described above apply to admission to the university. At the college and major level there are cases where there are more SB 175 eligible student applicants than available spaces. (Examples include the McCombs School of Business, College of Nursing, College of Communication, and the majors in the Cockrell School of Engineering.) In those cases automatic admission is limited to 65-75% of the admitted class for the impacted programs. Thus, in some cases, automatically admitted students, while guaranteed a place at UT Austin, will nonetheless compete for a slot in their first-choice major. These students compete as described above.

For Texas residents the admission decision grid is used three times: first to determine who will be admitted to their first-choice major; second to determine who will be admitted to their second-choice major; and finally, to fill remaining spaces with applicants who will be offered admission to the University. Additionally, senior staff members in the Admissions Office do a “second read” of applicants just beyond the admissions line across all colleges and schools to assure accuracy and consistency in the admissions process. Texas residents not offered admission are offered an opportunity to participate in Pathways to Admission through Co-Enrollment (PACE) or to the Coordinated Admissions Program (CAP). PACE is a new program initiated in 2013, offering co-enrollment opportunities for Top 10% applicants not offered admission under SB175. CAP offers conditional admission as a transfer student after the completion of 30 semester hours on a participating UT System campus.

**Figure 2**  
**Score Scale for the Personal Achievement Index**  
**Since 1997**

Personal Achievement Score	Essay Score
<p><b>Score of 6</b>            A score in this category means that the applicant demonstrates superior achievement in terms of leadership, service, or special honors. This achievement can be demonstrated in any field: academics, athletics, the arts, or extracurricular activities. Or it can be demonstrated through extraordinary circumstances: working to help support a family, developing a life skill, or facing a personal crisis. The applicant's achievement shows an unusually high level of maturity, commitment, and perseverance.</p>	<p><b>Score of 6</b>            An essay in this category demonstrates <u>clear and consistent competence</u> though it may have occasional errors. Such an essay:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>effectively and insightfully addresses the writing task</li> <li>is well organized and fully developed, using clearly appropriate examples to support ideas</li> <li>displays consistent facility in the use of language, demonstrating variety in sentence structure and range of vocabulary</li> </ul>
<p><b>Score of 5</b>            A score in this category means that the applicant demonstrates commendable achievement in terms of leadership, service, or special honors. This achievement can be demonstrated in any field or through unusual circumstances. The applicant's achievement shows a high level of maturity and commitment.</p>	<p><b>Score of 5</b>            An essay in this category demonstrates <u>reasonably consistent competence</u> though it will have occasional errors or lapses in quality. Such an essay:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>effectively addresses the writing task</li> <li>is generally well organized and adequately developed, using appropriate examples to support ideas</li> <li>displays facility in the use of language, demonstrating some syntactic variety and range of vocabulary</li> </ul>
<p><b>Score of 4</b>            A score in this category means that the applicant demonstrates creditable achievement in terms of leadership, service, or special honors. This achievement can be demonstrated in any field or through unique circumstances. The applicant's achievement shows a good level of maturity and commitment, though the achievement itself might not be extraordinary.</p>	<p><b>Score of 4</b>            An essay in this category demonstrates <u>adequate competence</u> with occasional errors and lapses in quality. Such an essay:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>addresses the writing task</li> <li>is organized and somewhat developed, using examples to support ideas</li> <li>presents minimal sentence variety</li> </ul>
<p><b>Score of 3</b>            A score in this category means that the applicant demonstrates slightly below average achievement in terms of leadership, service, or special honors. This achievement can be demonstrated in any field or through personal circumstances. The applicant's achievement shows some level of maturity but an inconsistent level of commitment. There may also be only slight evidence of meeting a challenge or pursuing an opportunity.</p>	<p><b>Score of 3</b>            An essay in this category demonstrates <u>developing competence</u>. Such an essay may contain one or more of the following weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>inadequate organization or development</li> <li>inappropriate or insufficient details to support ideas</li> <li>an accumulation of awkward expressions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Score of 2</b>            A score in this category means that the applicant demonstrates below average achievement in terms of leadership, service, or special honors. The applicant's achievement shows some level of maturity, but the level of commitment is either short-term, superficial, or merely active participation. There may also be little evidence of meeting a challenge or pursuing opportunity.</p>	<p><b>Score of 2</b>            An essay in this category demonstrates <u>some incompetence</u>. Such an essay is flawed by one or more of the following weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>poor organization</li> <li>thin development</li> <li>little or inappropriate details to support ideas</li> <li>frequent awkward expressions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Score of 1</b>            A score in this category means that the applicant demonstrates well below average achievement in terms of leadership, service, or special honors. The applicant's achievement shows little maturity or commitment, and there may be no evidence of interest beyond classroom requirements. There may also be no evidence of meeting a challenge or pursuing opportunity.</p>	<p><b>Score of 1</b>            An essay in this category demonstrates <u>incompetence</u>. Such an essay is seriously flawed by one or more of the following weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>very poor organization</li> <li>very thin development</li> <li>expressions so awkward that meaning is somewhat obscured</li> </ul>

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' The equations are as follows:

Business – ACT Model

$$-.630 + (\text{HSR} * .015) + (\text{ACT M} * .062) + (\text{ACT EngComp} * .031)$$

Business – SAT Model

$$-2.668 + (\text{SAT M} * .002) + (\text{SAT W} * .001) + (\text{HSR} * .032) + (\text{SAT CR} * .001)$$

Engineering – ACT Model

$$-1.661 + (\text{ACT EngComp} * .045) + (\text{HSR} * .020) + (\text{ACT M} * .060)$$

Engineering – SAT Model

$$-2.254 + (\text{SAT W} * .002) + (\text{HSR} * .023) + (\text{SAT M} * .003)$$

The Liberal Arts Group – ACT Model

$$.125 + (\text{ACT EngComp} * .046) + (\text{ACT M} * .046) + (\text{HSR} * .007)$$

The Liberal Arts Group – SAT Model

$$-.285 + (\text{SAT W} * .002) + (\text{SAT M} * .001) + (\text{HSR} * .009) + (\text{SAT CR} * .001)$$

The Natural Science Group – ACT Model

$$-1.179 + (\text{ACT EngComp} * .052) + (\text{ACT M} * .051) + (\text{HSR} * .017)$$

The Natural Science Group – SAT Model

$$-1.617 + (\text{SAT Math} * .003) + (\text{HSR} * .020) + (\text{SAT CR} * .001) + (\text{SAT W} * .001)$$