

LAMEIRE COLLEGE CONSULTING NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2020



TESTING UPDATES

BY CLAIRE SCHADLER

The status of standardized testing and information about testing options is constantly changing these days. I'd like to review a few important updates that have happened since our May newsletter.

The biggest news is that the University of California has come out with a new comprehensive plan for California students. For Fall of 2021 and 2022, submitting SAT or ACT test scores will be optional. For Fall 2023 and 2024, UC will be test blind, meaning test scores will not be considered as part of the admissions process. Starting in 2025, UC is hoping to have developed their own test to use for admissions purposes; however, even if they do not create a test that meets their


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needs, UC has already stated that they will not return to using the SAT or ACT.

This news is big for students who plan on applying to UC, but it's also important because the schools will be looking to UC as an example, which mostly likely means the trend of becoming test optional or test blind will become even more common.

For this SAT, there has been a lot of uncertainty about test dates, test center capacity, and how students are expected to take the test in time for their early decision/early action deadlines. During the last week of May, registration opened for fall test dates, but there have been multiple technical problems reported from teachers and counselors across the country. The College Board has stated that they will provide an at-home exam if they are not able to provide in-person tests in the fall, but they have not provided any details about this option.

The ACT has also stated that they will offer an at-home exam; however, they have not provided details about the cost, date, or security details. They have said that, unlike the at-home AP exams, they will not be modifying the test in any way in terms of length or content. The ACT is currently still moving forward with their June 13th test date; however, they have clearly stated that they may need to cancel the test date at any time.

With all this uncertainty, many people are frustrated and the number of colleges deciding to go test optional for the upcoming admissions cycle continues to increase. A few recent additions to that list include University of Southern California, The Cooper Union, Rochester Institute of Technology, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and University of Virginia, among many others. Some schools are only moving to a test optional policy for the upcoming year, while others are using this moment as an opportunity to make a more long term decision.

WAITLIST ACTIVITIES

BY DEVRIC KIYOTA

A confluence of factors, including a reduction of incoming international students, unprecedented spikes in admission deferrals, and the prioritization of attending universities closer to home, have all contributed to a banner year for waitlists.

Historically, waitlists are employed when admissions offices are operating with a degree of uncertainty, considering certain candidates or incoming class size; as the COVID-19 crisis has increased uncertainty within all facets of modern life, the frequency of waitlisting has increased nearly invariably.

Global pandemic aside, it's possible the number of 2020 waitlist admissions would've followed an upward trend regardless, as the number of waitlist admissions in 2019 more than doubled the number of 2018 waitlist admissions.

To give a few examples, the University of Pennsylvania has not yet increased waitlist admissions, but their Dean of Admissions has been quoted as saying he "fully expects the waitlist will be utilized heavily this year." Brown University has already recorded their first rise in acceptance rate since 2016, and will increase their waitlist pool to around 800 students this year.

Conversely, Cornell University has responded to this situation by delaying the publication of their admissions statistics until mid-summer, and have otherwise remained close-to-the-chest with all information concerning their admissions practices this year.

It's anticipated that waitlist acceptances will continue into late summer months, at some universities, as they wade through waves of acceptances, deferrals, and rejections. These late acceptances, waitlist or otherwise, will be likely pursued until universities are able to fill their intended class sizes.



PATH TO BEING PRE-MED ARTICLE 1: SCHOOL LOCATION

BY BELINDA TANG

Path to Being Pre-Med is a series of articles that aim to help high schoolers who are interested in medicine TO better understand the four years to come. The articles will provide some clarity about being pre-med so that students can make more informed decisions about where to start their own pre-med journey. Over the next three months, we will answer questions such as, "Is it necessary to go to a research institution to be accepted into medical school?" or "How will going to a rural school impact my experience as a pre-med?" The articles will also show students that all colleges will offer unique experiences and opportunities, and at the end of the day, it is not what a college can offer but the passion and initiative a student has and is willing to give that will carry him/her far.

Path to Being Pre-Med: School Location

"I am 100% a city person. One hundred percent!"

"I definitely cannot survive in the city... Slow down, please!"

If you can imagine yourself saying either of these statements, then you probably already know the college location meant for you. If neither line really fits how you feel and you don't have a strong preference of one over the other, let me help you consider how school location may influence your pre-med journey. A large part of your medical school application will be centered on your extracurricular activities, and the location of your undergraduate school can really impact the types of experience that will be available.

Going to an urban school will give you the chance to experience different types of healthcare systems. From community hospitals that serve the homeless to research hospitals focused on finding the next drug that can cure cancer, working in various clinical settings will give you a better perspective about the structure of healthcare. Additionally, being in the city will give you the opportunity to shadow doctors in various specialties that will help you understand the medical profession on a deeper level.

Though a rural college will probably not provide opportunities for you to work in different hospital systems as often as an urban campus would, going to a rural school can also have its advantages. Being at a rural college exposes you to rural medicine and allows you to understand the challenges that come with working in a rural setting. One of the largest problems our healthcare system faces today is the shortage of health professionals working in rural areas. In fact, this is such a big issue that some medical schools specifically seek out students who are interested in rural medicine. By attending a rural university and being exposed to challenges in rural medicine early on, you make yourself more appealing to schools that specifically recruit students interested in rural medicine. Even if you are not interested in actually going into rural medicine, your understanding of rural medicine can be an interesting perspective to bring up at medical school interviews to showcase your deep understanding of our current healthcare problem.

Though experiences differ in urban and rural schools, being able to take advantage of opportunities depends on the student and not the location of the school. So, which type of experience do you want?

Next month on Path to Being Pre-Med, we will look at how research opportunities can shape your pre-med experience. I will answer questions like "Why does everyone keep talking about research opportunities in college?" and "Is it necessary for pre-med students to have research experience?" Until then, I want you to do a little research about research! What do you know about research at the collegiate level? Can you see yourself working in a lab? What types of questions would you want to answer during your college years? Happy researching!