

The 2014 Inside Higher Ed Survey of **College & University Admissions Directors**

Conducted by Gallup®

SCOTT JASCHIK & DOUG LEDERMAN
EDITORS, INSIDE HIGHER ED

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THE 2014 INSIDE HIGHER ED SURVEY OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS DIRECTORS

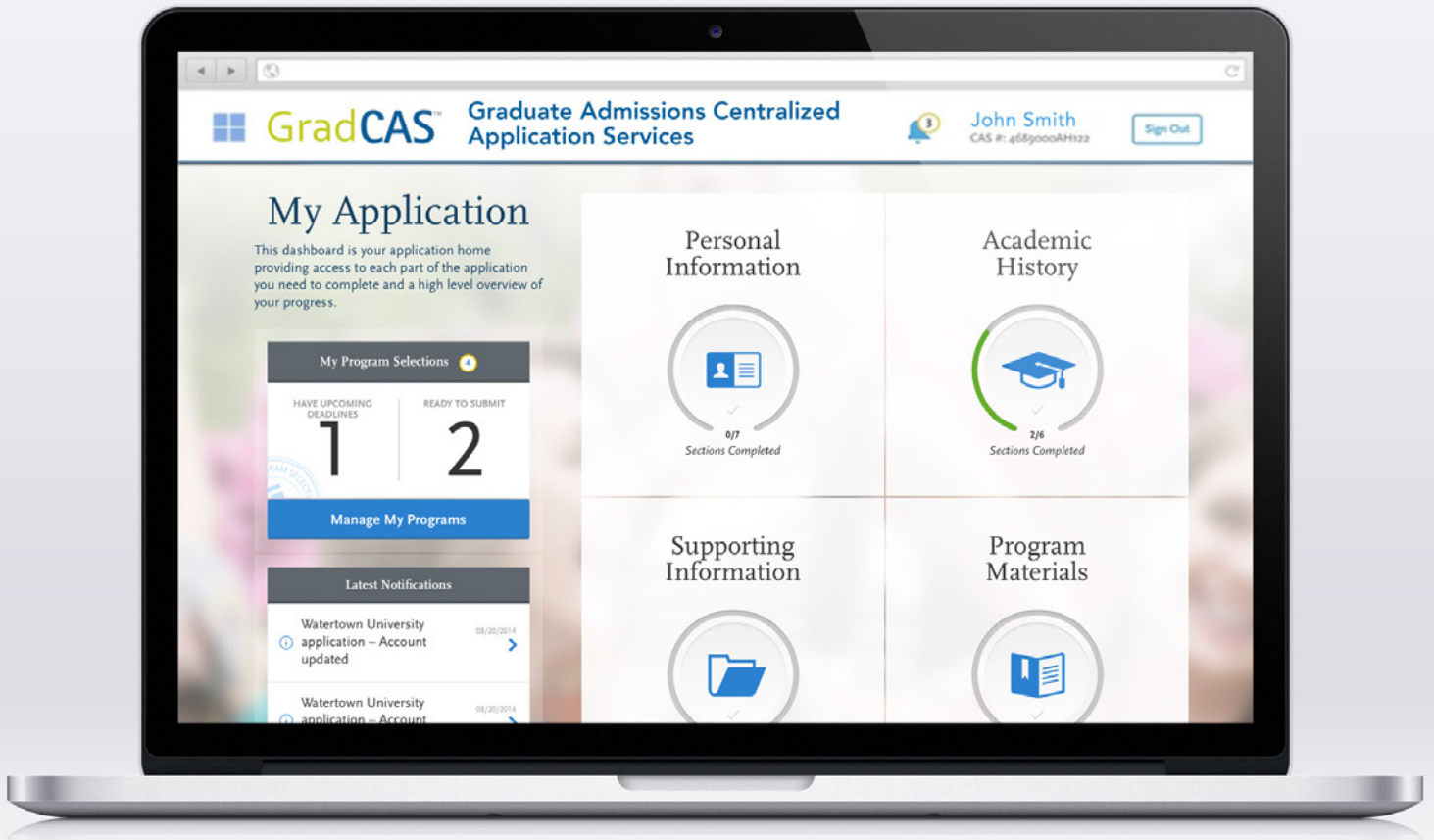
A STUDY BY GALLUP AND *INSIDE HIGHER ED*

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FOREWORD

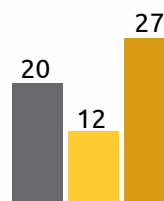
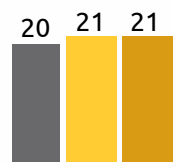
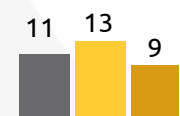
Increasingly, colleges and universities are rethinking their admissions and recruiting practices to draw students who will be a good fit with their institutional culture – and sometimes to make sure that they have enough students at all.

This study addresses important questions about higher education admissions and recruiting policies and procedures as perceived by leaders grappling with the key issues. The following are some of the questions addressed by the study:

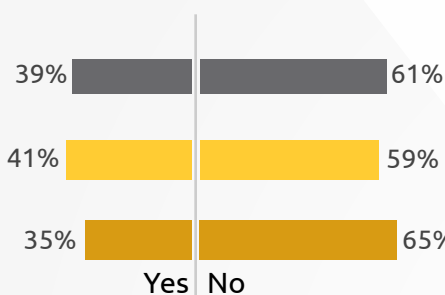
- What undergraduate student populations are the focus of admissions recruitment efforts?
- Should institutions admit applicants from some subgroups who apply with lower grades and test scores than those typically admitted?
- Do admissions directors favor or oppose the SAT changes being made by the College Board?
- Do admissions directors believe President Obama's proposed college rating system will help applicants better understand their institutions?
- Do institutions use the Common Application and will they continue using the system in the future?
- Are admissions directors' institutions concerned about meeting their new student enrollment goals this year?
- Do respondents' institutions retain agents who are paid to recruit international undergraduates?
- What is a reasonable amount of loan debt from all sources for an undergraduate student to accumulate over a four-year period?
- Are respondents' institutions increasing attention to the ability of degree programs to help students get a good job?
- Are two-year institutions experiencing increased competition with for-profit colleges and universities to enroll students across all fields and programs?

SNAPSHOT OF FINDINGS

- More than half of admission directors (58 percent) strongly agree that they are very likely to increase efforts to recruit full-time undergraduates and 43 percent strongly agree they are likely to increase the recruitment of transfer students.
- About one-third (34 percent) of admissions directors believe that admitted minority applicants have lower grades and test scores than do other applicants.
- Half of admissions directors say minority students (51 percent) and veterans (50 percent) should be given preferential treatment in admissions.
- Only 14 percent of admissions directors feel that President Obama's proposed college rating system will help college applicants better understand their institution.
- The large majority of admissions directors (91 percent) say that they favor the SAT changes being made by the College Board.
- About half of admissions directors (47 percent) say they are very concerned about meeting their new student enrollment goals this year.



To what extent does your institution consider SAT and/or ACT writing scores in your admissions decisions?



Did your institution meet its new student enrollment goals this year prior to May 1, 2014?

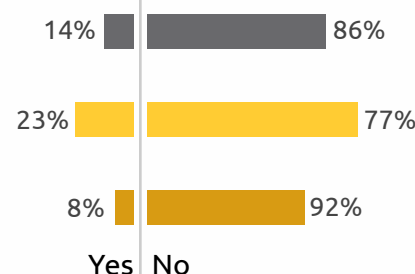
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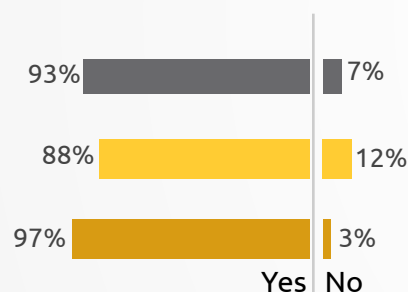
Survey of College & University Admissions Directors

Summary Infographic

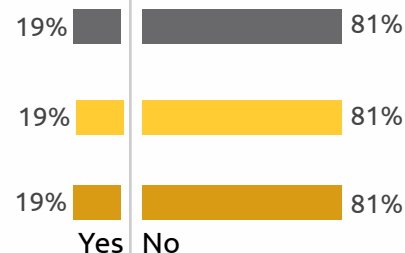
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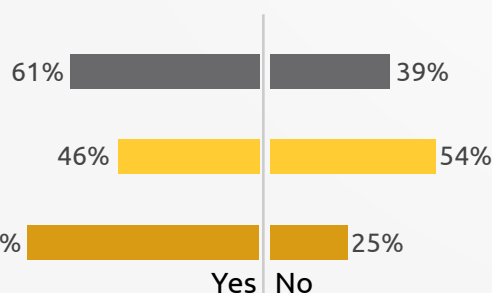
In your opinion, will President Obama's proposed college rating system help college applicants better understand your institution?



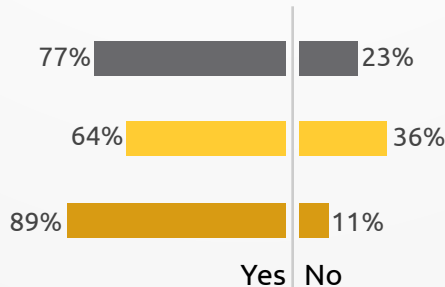
Do you think other higher education institutions have falsely reported standardized test scores or other admissions data?



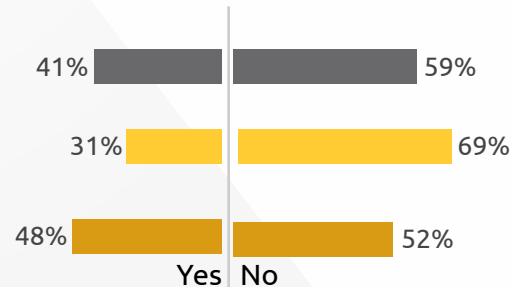
Does your institution retain agents who are paid in part or in full on commission to recruit international undergraduates?



Do you think that gapping is an ethical practice or not?



Do you think that your institution is losing potential applicants due to concerns about accumulating student loan debt?



In your opinion, is it a good idea for students to take out private loans to pay for college?

- Few admissions directors (19 percent) say they retain agents with commission-based pay who recruit international students. Of those who do not use such agents, 19 percent are considering using them.
- Four in 10 (41 percent) admissions directors believe it is a good idea for students to take out private loans to pay for college. Three-quarters (76 percent) believe too many students are taking out private loans to pay for college.
- Nearly 6 in 10 admissions directors (58 percent) feel that gapping is a necessary practice for institutions.
- While nearly all admissions directors (99 percent) say their institution has not falsely reported standardized test scores or other admissions data, nearly as many (93 percent) are convinced that other institutions have falsely reported such data.
- About 4 in 10 admissions directors at two-year institutions (44 percent) say there has been an increase in the enrollment of “traditional” students who in the past might have enrolled at public or private four-year colleges or universities.

METHODOLOGY

The following report presents findings from a quantitative survey research study that Gallup conducted on behalf of *Inside Higher Ed*. The overall objective of the study was to learn the practices and perceptions of senior-level college and university admissions and enrollment officers related to recruitment policies, admissions procedures, financial aid, and other issues.

Gallup education consultants developed the questionnaire in collaboration with Scott Jaschik and Doug Lederman from *Inside Higher Ed*. Specialized colleges, namely Bible colleges and seminaries with a Carnegie Code classification of 24, and institutions with enrollment < 500 students, were excluded from the sample.

Gallup conducted the surveys in English from July 31 through August 18, 2014. Email reminders were sent to reach respondents who had not yet participated throughout the survey period. Invitations were sent via email to 3,317 potential respondents.

Gallup collected 406 Web surveys from individuals serving in these roles, a 12 percent response rate. Respondents represented 187 public institutions, 192 private institutions, and 16 institutions from the for-profit sector. Each institution is represented only once in the results.

Data are not statistically adjusted (weighted). Some sectors do not have data reported due to low N sizes. Sector groupings are determined based on the 2010 Carnegie Code for the institution.

In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls. The following paper presents key findings of the survey. In some cases, reported frequencies may not add up to 100% due to rounding. “Don’t know” and “Refused” responses are excluded from the results.

Total Participation by Sector

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR				PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT		
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	FOR-PROFIT*	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S / BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S	BACC.
Total N	406	187	192	16	31	64	87	86	82	3

*Data are not reported for these groups due to small sample size.

DETAILED FINDINGS

FOCUS ON RECRUITMENT

Admissions directors were asked to reflect on different student groups and whether they were likely to increase their recruitment efforts for those groups.

Full-time undergrads, transfers, and minority students topped their lists. More than half (58 percent) strongly agree they will increase recruitment of full-time undergraduate students, and 43 percent strongly agree they will increase recruitment of transfer students.

About one-third strongly agree they will push recruitment of minority students (38 percent), out-of-state students (32 percent), international students (32 percent), and first-generation college students (31 percent).


About one-quarter strongly agree they will increase recruitment efforts for full-pay students (25 percent), veterans/military personnel (26 percent), and students recruited with merit scholarships (25 percent). Just 17 percent strongly agree they will increase recruitment of part-time undergraduates.

Recruitment of international students has been debated in recent years; many of these students pay full price to attend college, but an increase in international students can decrease the number of spaces available for in-state or other U.S. students.

In this survey, only 26 percent of admissions directors at public institutions strongly agree that they are very likely to increase recruitment of international students while a larger percentage from private institutions, 39 percent, strongly agree.

Another area in which there are differences by institutional control is with the priority for recruiting veterans/military personnel. Public institution admissions directors (31 percent) are more likely to see them as a target than are their private college peers (18 percent).

Using a five-point scale, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about undergraduate applicant populations. This year at my institution, I am very likely to increase my recruitment efforts for the following populations of undergraduate applicants to my institution:								
	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
Students recruited with merit scholarships								
%5 Strongly agree	25	20	31	32	26	11	36	25
%4	30	33	27	39	26	35	21	31
%3	28	25	33	16	31	24	38	29
%2	10	13	5	10	10	15	4	6
%1 Strongly disagree	8	10	5	3	8	15	1	9



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	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
Full-time undergraduates								
%5 Strongly agree	58	55	63	53	63	51	64	63
%4	23	26	21	30	23	27	18	23
%3	14	14	13	7	13	18	16	9
%2	3	3	1	10	0	2	1	0
%1 Strongly disagree	3	2	3	0	2	2	1	5
Part-time undergraduates								
%5 Strongly agree	17	20	10	0	5	38	14	2
%4	12	20	5	7	10	30	10	2
%3	29	33	23	33	41	28	25	21
%2	18	15	22	26	28	4	19	24
%1 Strongly disagree	24	12	40	33	16	1	33	52
International students								
%5 Strongly agree	32	26	39	41	32	16	44	39
%4	26	27	24	34	37	16	24	26
%3	22	24	21	14	20	32	21	18
%2	10	12	8	7	7	18	7	8
%1 Strongly disagree	10	12	7	3	5	18	4	10
Transfer students								
%5 Strongly agree	43	38	49	52	53	20	49	50
%4	24	25	23	24	29	24	27	20
%3	22	23	19	21	16	31	14	21
%2	7	10	4	3	0	21	5	4
%1 Strongly disagree	4	4	4	0	2	4	5	5
Minority students								
%5 Strongly agree	38	46	30	47	42	48	33	29
%4	30	27	33	40	32	18	33	29
%3	25	18	31	10	15	24	28	36
%2	5	8	3	3	8	9	5	0
%1 Strongly disagree	3	2	3	0	2	3	2	5

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
First-generation college students								
%5 Strongly agree	31	37	23	30	26	46	26	23
%4	29	34	27	43	33	30	26	27
%3	32	23	42	20	31	19	41	42
%2	6	6	4	7	10	4	5	4
%1 Strongly disagree	2	1	3	0	0	1	2	5
Out-of-state students								
%5 Strongly agree	32	32	33	61	41	14	33	34
%4	30	28	31	29	41	18	29	38
%3	20	15	27	10	11	19	28	20
%2	8	9	6	0	3	19	8	6
%1 Strongly disagree	10	16	3	0	3	31	4	3
Full-pay students								
%5 Strongly agree	25	21	28	28	20	20	23	34
%4	22	14	29	28	18	6	37	23
%3	34	40	29	40	41	39	26	29
%2	11	14	9	0	14	18	9	8
%1 Strongly disagree	8	11	5	4	8	17	5	6
Veterans/military personnel								
%5 Strongly agree	26	31	18	23	24	37	19	17
%4	31	39	24	45	47	31	24	24
%3	32	24	40	29	22	25	48	32
%2	8	4	13	3	5	4	9	16
%1 Strongly disagree	4	2	5	0	2	4	1	11

Applicant Admissions

Admissions directors were asked whether they felt their institutions admitted applicants from the following groups, on average, with lower grades and test scores than other applicants. About one-third (34 percent) say that admitted minority applicants have lower grades and test scores than do other applicants. Roughly one-quarter (26 percent) say that athletes, on average, had lower grades and test scores. Only 4 percent agree that women (for gender balance) are admitted despite applying with lower grades and test scores; 9 percent say the same about admitted men.

Many institutions admit some applicants who apply with lower grades and test scores than those typically admitted. For the following groups, do your institution's admitted applicants, on average, have lower grades and test scores than other applicants?

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
Athletes								
%Yes	26	30	23	55	19	27	28	19
%No	74	70	77	45	81	73	72	81
Children of alumni								
%Yes	13	11	15	7	9	17	16	17
%No	87	89	85	93	91	83	84	83
Minority students								
%Yes	34	32	38	32	28	33	35	43
%No	66	68	62	68	72	67	65	57
Men (for gender balance)								
%Yes	9	7	11	7	2	17	13	9
%No	91	93	89	93	98	83	87	91
Women (for gender balance)								
%Yes	4	6	2	3	4	12	1	4
%No	96	94	98	97	96	88	99	96
Full-pay students								
%Yes	8	4	12	0	4	9	10	15
%No	92	96	88	100	96	91	90	85
International students								
%Yes	13	9	17	10	8	11	23	11
%No	87	91	83	90	92	89	77	89
Veterans								
%Yes	20	23	19	21	26	17	21	19
%No	80	77	81	79	74	83	79	81

When admissions directors were asked if they feel institutions like theirs should admit applicants from specific groups even if they apply with lower grades and test scores than other applicants, half say minority students (51 percent) and veterans (50 percent) should be given preferential treatment. Women (for gender balance) and full-pay students receive the lowest proportion of “yes” responses (21 percent each).

In your opinion, should institutions like yours admit some applicants from the following groups even if they apply with lower grades and test scores than other applicants?								
	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
Athletes								
%Yes	37	43	33	57	36	43	38	31
%No	63	57	67	43	64	57	62	69
Children of alumni								
%Yes	33	30	36	17	25	47	35	38
%No	67	70	64	83	75	53	65	62
Minority students								
%Yes	51	53	52	45	47	60	51	55
%No	49	47	48	55	53	40	49	45
Men (for gender balance)								
%Yes	25	26	25	7	15	49	26	24
%No	75	74	75	93	85	51	74	76
Women (for gender balance)								
%Yes	21	25	19	3	17	48	16	19
%No	79	75	81	97	83	52	84	81
Full-pay students								
%Yes	21	20	23	7	10	41	25	26
%No	79	80	77	93	90	59	75	74
International students								
%Yes	28	26	30	13	22	38	35	29
%No	72	74	70	87	78	63	65	71
Veterans								
%Yes	50	53	49	48	53	53	50	49
%No	50	47	51	52	47	47	50	51

Admissions Practices

Admissions directors were asked a set of questions about admissions practices generally and at their institution specifically. Approximately one-quarter of admissions directors (24 percent) strongly agree standardized test scores (such as SAT or ACT) should be optional for students applying to their institution.

Admissions directors show very little faith that President Obama's proposed college rating system would help applicants make informed choices. Only 3 percent strongly agree that this would be the case; 44 percent strongly disagree.

While nearly one-quarter (24 percent) of admissions directors strongly agree that application essays are important, only 1 percent strongly agree that plagiarism is a prevalent problem with student admissions essays at their institution.

Only 1 percent also strongly agree that because of the financial downturn, their institution is prioritizing an applicant's ability to pay in making admission decisions; 68 percent strongly disagree.

Using a five-point scale, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree, please indicate your level of agreement with the following items.								
	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
Standardized test scores (such as SAT or ACT) should be optional for students who apply to my institution.								
%5 Strongly agree	24	26	22	7	23	40	17	23
%4	16	14	17	7	11	21	20	15
%3	14	14	14	10	16	13	14	14
%2	21	19	24	30	24	10	20	30
%1 Strongly disagree	25	28	22	47	26	17	30	19
Because of the financial downturn, we are prioritizing an applicant's ability to pay in making admissions decisions.								
%5 Strongly agree	1	1	0	0	2	2	0	0
%4	5	3	5	0	0	7	8	3
%3	10	6	14	0	3	12	12	19
%2	16	8	23	3	18	2	20	25
%1 Strongly disagree	68	82	58	97	77	77	60	53
The rate of increase in our discount rate is sustainable.								
%5 Strongly agree	9	9	8	6	14	0	9	4
%4	27	25	27	31	24	20	33	19
%3	30	27	32	19	28	30	27	40
%2	19	16	22	25	14	10	23	24
%1 Strongly disagree	15	23	10	19	21	40	9	13
Increases in the discount rate have reduced our net tuition revenue.								
%5 Strongly agree	10	11	10	5	12	25	8	11
%4	23	17	25	35	8	0	17	34
%3	23	20	23	10	28	25	23	23
%2	29	30	29	25	36	13	34	22
%1 Strongly disagree	15	22	13	25	16	38	17	9

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
Application essays convey important information about applicants.								
%5 Strongly agree	24	20	25	35	18	5	22	27
%4	27	27	27	23	26	32	31	23
%3	31	30	32	27	33	26	28	35
%2	13	16	13	12	18	21	13	16
%1 Strongly disagree	4	7	3	4	5	16	6	0
Plagiarism is a prevalent problem with student admissions essays at my institution.								
%5 Strongly agree	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	2
%4	6	9	4	11	10	8	5	6
%3	20	20	20	16	23	15	22	9
%2	42	48	41	58	50	31	37	51
%1 Strongly disagree	30	23	33	16	17	46	35	32
Apparent coaching by parents or college counselors on admissions essays is making it difficult to learn about applicants.								
%5 Strongly agree	6	9	5	9	8	18	9	2
%4	22	28	19	30	24	36	18	20
%3	37	31	40	26	38	18	42	34
%2	27	26	29	30	24	18	28	34
%1 Strongly disagree	8	5	8	4	5	9	3	11
President Obama's proposed college rating system would help applicants make informed choices.								
%5 Strongly agree	3	6	2	4	4	9	1	3
%4	6	9	4	12	9	7	5	1
%3	19	24	16	12	21	28	17	16
%2	27	24	29	35	25	19	31	27
%1 Strongly disagree	44	38	49	38	42	37	45	53

President Obama's College Rating System

Continuing the negative perception of President Obama's proposed college rating system, only 14 percent of admissions directors feel that it will help college applicants better understand their institution.

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
In your opinion, will President Obama's proposed college rating system help college applicants better understand your institution?								
%Yes	14	23	8	14	25	23	8	8
%No	86	77	92	86	75	77	92	92

The Common Application

Admissions directors were asked a series of questions regarding the Common Application system, problems with the website, and the Common Application's exclusive pricing system.

A little more than one-third of admissions directors (36 percent) indicate that their institution uses the Common Application. Of those institutions, 98 percent say they plan to continue using the system in the future even though 81 percent say their institution experienced problems with the Common Application website within the last year.

One-third of admissions directors (33 percent) say their institution used the Common Application's exclusive pricing system, although 70 percent say the pricing system is problematic.

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
Does your institution use the Common Application?								
%Yes	36	19	53	16	24	13	53	61
%No	64	81	47	84	76	87	47	39
Did you experience problems with the Common Application website within the last year?*								
%Yes	81	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
%No	19	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Does your institution plan to continue using the Common Application system in the future?*								
%Yes	98	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
%No	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Does your institution take advantage of the exclusive pricing system for the Common Application?*								
%Yes	33	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
%No	67	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

*Asked only of those who indicated they use the Common Application. For institutions that use the Common Application and received these items (N=136).

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
In your opinion, is the Common Application exclusive pricing system problematic?								
%Yes	70	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
%No	30	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses)

Massive open online courses (MOOCs) are still not widely accepted for official credit at many colleges and universities. Only 10 percent of admissions directors report that their institution is currently accepting completed MOOCs as official credit. Fewer than 1 in 10 (6 percent) report that recent applicants at their institutions cited MOOCs as evidence of their educational accomplishment.

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
Recently, have applicants to your institution cited MOOCs as evidence of their educational accomplishment?								
%Yes	6	7	7	3	2	12	11	3
%No	94	93	93	97	98	88	89	97
Is your institution currently accepting completed MOOCs as official credit at your institution?								
%Yes	10	10	10	0	15	10	16	8
%No	90	90	90	100	85	90	84	92

Changes in the SAT

The vast majority (91 percent) of admissions directors say that their institution favors the SAT changes being made by the College Board. A similar majority (92 percent) also favors the decision of the College Board to revise the SAT writing test.

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
Overall, do you favor or oppose the SAT changes being made by the College Board?								
%Yes	91	86	94	93	85	81	96	94
%No	9	14	6	7	15	19	4	6
Do you favor or oppose the decision of the College Board to revise the SAT writing test?								
%Yes	92	89	94	93	90	82	94	95
%No	8	11	6	7	10	18	6	5

Approximately 1 in 10 (11 percent) place a great deal of consideration on SAT and/or ACT writing scores in their institution's admissions decisions; almost half (48 percent) report that the writing scores are not considered at all.

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
To what extent does your institution consider SAT and/or ACT writing scores in your admissions decisions?								
%A great deal	11	13	9	20	18	8	12	9
%Somewhat	20	21	21	47	23	9	25	20
%Very little	20	12	27	3	18	11	22	33
%Not at all	48	53	43	30	42	72	41	38

Student Enrollment Goals

About half (47 percent) of admissions directors say they are very concerned about meeting their new student enrollment goals this year. Only 5 percent say they are not at all concerned. The level of concern seems warranted since only 39 percent say their institutions met their new student enrollment goal by May 1 of this year. Approximately one-third (32 percent) say that they recruited applicants after May 1 who had already committed to other colleges. Concern is more pronounced at the two-year colleges, where 63 percent of the admissions directors are very concerned; they are least concerned at the public doctoral institutions (23 percent). The group with the lowest percentage of institutions that met their enrollment goals is private baccalaureate colleges, at 29 percent; the group with the highest percentage of having met their enrollment goals is public doctoral universities, at 67 percent.

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
Please indicate how concerned you were about meeting your institution's new student enrollment goals this year:								
%Very concerned	47	46	48	23	39	63	40	57
%Moderately concerned	32	33	31	48	36	26	37	23
%Not too concerned	17	15	17	16	20	10	17	19
%Not concerned at all	5	5	4	13	5	1	6	1
Did your institution meet its new student enrollment goals this year prior to May 1, 2014?								
%Yes	39	41	35	67	37	32	40	29
%No	61	59	65	33	63	68	60	71
Did your institution recruit applicants after May 1, 2014, who had already committed to other colleges?								
%Yes	32	44	20	15	30	76	18	19
%No	68	56	80	85	70	24	82	81

International Recruiting

Few admissions directors (19 percent) say they retain agents with commission-based pay to recruit international undergraduates. Of those who do not use such agents, 19 percent are considering using them.

Half of admissions directors (51 percent) say that their admissions office makes the decision on whether to retain international recruiting agents. Private college admissions directors are more likely than public college admissions directors to say their office makes the decision about whether to retain paid international recruiting agents (74 percent vs. 29 percent, respectively).

One-quarter (25 percent) of admissions directors indicate that the NACAC decision to lift the ban on the use of commissioned agents has led their institution to be more inclined to expand the use of agents to recruit students.

Only 14 percent say that fabrications on international admissions applications are a prevalent problem at their institution; 56 percent say that in their opinion, paid agents often aid in such fabrications.

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
Does your institution retain agents who are paid in part or in full on commission to recruit international undergraduates?								
%Yes	19	19	19	14	36	8	22	16
%No	81	81	81	86	64	92	78	84
Is your institution considering the use of agents who are paid in part or in full on commission to recruit international undergraduates?*								
%Yes	19	17	22	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
%No	81	83	78	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Does the admissions office at your institution make the decision whether to retain paid agents for recruiting international undergraduate students?								
%Yes	51	29	74	45	28	22	78	75
%No	49	71	26	55	72	78	22	25
Has the decision made by NACAC to lift the ban on the use of commissioned agents made your institution more inclined to use or expand your use of agents to recruit students?								
%Yes	25	21	29	23	33	11	31	29
%No	75	79	71	77	68	89	69	71
Are fabrications on international admissions applications a prevalent problem at your institution?								
%Yes	14	16	13	29	15	13	15	12
%No	86	84	87	71	85	88	85	88
In your opinion, do paid agents often play a direct role in helping international applicants to fabricate information on their admissions applications?								
%Yes	56	60	57	88	62	33	56	59
%No	44	40	43	12	38	67	44	41

*Asked only of those who indicated they do not use commission-based pay agents (n=305).

STUDENT DEBT AND FINANCIAL AID

Loans

Four in 10 admissions directors (41 percent) believe it is a good idea for students to take out private loans to pay for college. Private college admissions directors (48 percent) are more likely to say it is a good idea than are their public sector peers (31 percent), and this is mostly driven by those at private baccalaureate institutions.

When asked if too many students are taking out private loans to pay for college, 76 percent of all directors say yes. About three-quarters (77 percent) believe that their institution is losing potential applicants due to concerns about accumulating student loan debt.

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
In your opinion, is it a good idea for students to take out private loans to pay for college?								
%Yes	41	31	48	31	34	26	40	55
%No	59	69	52	69	66	74	60	45
In your opinion, are too many students taking out private loans to pay for college?								
%Yes	76	84	72	75	84	88	77	65
%No	24	16	28	25	16	12	23	35
Do you think that your institution is losing potential applicants due to concerns about accumulating student loan debt?								
%Yes	77	64	89	86	77	46	87	89
%No	23	36	11	14	23	54	13	11

Senator Elizabeth Warren recently proposed a plan that would allow student loan borrowers to refinance their student loan debt at relatively low interest rates. When directors were asked if they favor or oppose the proposal, the majority (96 percent) indicate they are in favor.

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
Do you favor or oppose Senator Elizabeth Warren's proposal to let borrowers refinance their student loan debt at a relatively low rate of interest?								
%Favor	96	94	98	92	98	91	99	97
%Oppose	4	6	2	8	2	9	1	3

More admissions directors (40 percent) say \$20,000 to less than \$30,000 is a reasonable amount of loan debt for students to incur over a four-year period than other amounts. About one-quarter (24 percent) say \$10,000 to less than \$20,000 is a reasonable amount of undergraduate student loan debt.

In your opinion, what is a reasonable amount of loan debt from all sources for an undergraduate student to accumulate over a four-year period?								
	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
No amount of loan debt is reasonable	1	3	0	0	0	6	0	0
Under \$5,000	2	3	1	0	3	5	0	1
\$5,000 to less than \$10,000	10	16	4	3	15	21	2	4
\$10,000 to less than \$20,000	24	31	16	38	23	35	19	13
\$20,000 to less than \$30,000	40	33	46	41	43	22	51	49
\$30,000 to less than \$40,000	16	10	23	14	10	10	20	24
\$40,000 to less than \$50,000	6	2	9	3	2	1	7	9
\$50,000 or more	1	1	1	0	3	0	0	0

Three in 10 (29 percent) say that a reasonable debt amount for an undergraduate student depends a great deal on the degree program in which the student enrolls.

In your opinion, does a reasonable loan debt amount accumulated by an undergraduate student depend a great deal, some, or only a little upon the degree program in which the student enrolls?								
	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
A great deal	29	35	22	19	22	49	22	18
Some	48	45	51	61	50	35	53	50
Only a little	23	20	27	19	28	16	25	32

Gapping

“Gapping,” the practice of admitting students without giving them enough aid to enroll, provokes widely divergent opinions among admissions directors. More than half (55 percent) say they practice gapping at their institution, but private college directors are much more likely (72 percent) to say they use this practice than are public college admissions directors (39 percent). Almost 6 in 10 directors (58 percent) say that gapping is a necessary practice for institutions like their own, although again, there is a wide difference in opinion between admissions directors at private (76 percent) and public institutions (38 percent). However, over all, 61 percent say the practice is ethical, with private sector directors (75 percent) much more likely than their public sector peers (46 percent) to say so.

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
As you may know, "gapping" is the practice of admitting students to institutions without giving them enough aid to enroll. Do you practice gapping at your institution?								
%Yes	55	39	72	74	35	25	76	71
%No	45	61	28	26	65	75	24	29
In your opinion, is gapping a necessary practice for institutions like yours?								
%Yes	58	38	76	77	38	21	80	73
%No	42	62	24	23	62	79	20	27
Do you think that gapping is an ethical practice or not?								
%Yes	61	46	75	83	49	25	77	74
%No	39	54	25	17	51	75	23	26

Most admissions directors (76 percent) indicate that the practice of gapping is about as common as it was last year.

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
Compared with the last academic year, is the practice of "gapping" more common, less common, or is it about the same as it was last year?								
%More Common	16	19	15	20	16	24	11	20
%Less Common	7	7	8	5	5	12	3	14
%About the same	76	74	77	75	79	65	85	66

PROGRAM VALUE

Almost half of admissions directors (47 percent) strongly agree that prospective students place high importance on the ability of degree programs to help them get a good job. Not surprisingly, even more (69 percent) see the parents of applicants taking that view. Perhaps reflecting this interest, 46 percent strongly agree their institution is increasing the attention it pays to the ability of their degree programs to help students get a good job. Nearly half (47 percent) strongly agree that to stay competitive, liberal arts programs need to pay more attention to their ability to help students get a good job.

Pathways Programs

Admission directors were asked to respond to a series of questions relating to pathways programs for students, which are a combination of academic coursework and English language coursework designed to prepare international students for degree programs in the United States. Of respondents who say their institution has a pathways program, more than half (57 percent) mention that their pathways program is a key part of their institution's recruitment strategy. For those directors indicating their institution does not have a pathways program, 19 percent say they are considering implementing such a program.

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
Is your pathways program a key part of your applicant recruitment strategy?*								
%Yes	57	65	51	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
%No	43	35	49	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Are you considering implementing a pathways program at your institution?*								
%Yes	19	22	17	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
%No	81	78	83	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

* Asked only of respondents who indicated their institution has a pathways program (n=114).

**Asked only of respondents who indicated their institution does not have a pathways program (n=216).

POLICY

While nearly all admissions directors (99 percent) say their institution has not falsely reported standardized test scores or other admissions data, nearly as many (93 percent) are convinced that other institutions have falsely reported such data. Most (93 percent) overwhelmingly think rankings producers do not have reliable systems in place to prevent fabrications of standardized test scores or other data.

Seven in 10 (71 percent) feel institutions should not add a voluntary question on their admissions application about sexual orientation or gender identity.

Recently there have been academic scandals involving higher education institutions falsely reporting standardized test scores or other admissions data.								
	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
Has your institution falsely reported standardized test scores or other admissions data?								
%Yes	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	2
%No	99	100	98	100	100	100	99	98
Do you think other higher education institutions have falsely reported standardized test scores or other admissions data?								
%Yes	93	88	97	100	93	77	97	99
%No	7	12	3	0	7	23	3	1
Do rankings producers have reliable systems in place to prevent fabrication of standardized test scores or other such data?								
%Yes	7	9	6	0	7	18	5	5
%No	93	91	94	100	93	82	95	95

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
In your opinion, should higher education institutions add a voluntary question on their admissions application about sexual orientation or gender identity?								
%Yes	29	29	30	42	36	19	28	29
%No	71	71	70	58	64	81	72	71

ONLINE LEARNING

Eight in 10 admissions directors (79 percent) say their institution offers courses online, though admissions directors at public institutions (97 percent) are more likely than their counterparts at private institutions (60 percent) to say they offer online courses. About three-quarters (73 percent) say their institution offers complete degree or certificate programs online, and 80 percent say their institution is increasing enrollment in these programs.

	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
Does your institution offer courses online?								
%Yes	79	97	60	97	98	99	74	45
%No	21	3	40	3	2	1	26	55
Does your institution offer complete degree or certificate programs online?*								
%Yes	73	72	71	90	65	70	76	62
%No	27	28	29	10	35	30	24	38
Are you considering implementing a pathways program at your institution?**								
%Yes	80	81	78	76	82	81	80	89
%No	20	19	22	24	18	19	20	11

* Asked only of respondents who indicated their institution offers courses online (n=314).

**Asked only of respondents who indicated their institution offers complete degree or certificate programs online (n=200).

As seen on the following page, nearly 4 in 10 admissions directors who report that their institution offers online degree or certificate programs say that such programs (38 percent) are very important to their institution's total enrollment.

How important are your online degree or certificate programs to your institution's total enrollment?*								
	ALL INSTITUTIONS BY SECTOR			PUBLIC			PRIVATE NONPROFIT	
	ALL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE NONPROFIT	DOCTORAL	MASTER'S/ BACC.	ASSOC.	DOCTORAL/ MASTER'S	BACC.
Very important	38	35	40	19	26	46	34	48
Somewhat important	40	44	35	48	46	42	30	39
Not very important	20	19	25	22	28	12	34	13
Not at all important	2	2	1	11	0	0	2	0

*Asked only of respondents who indicated their institution offers complete degree or certificate programs online (n=227).

COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Only one-quarter of admissions directors at two-year institutions (25 percent) strongly agree that it is time to reconsider open admissions systems used by community colleges, which is roughly the same proportion as those who strongly disagree (27 percent).

IT IS TIME TO RECONSIDER OPEN ADMISSIONS SYSTEMS USED BY COMMUNITY COLLEGES.*	
%5 Strongly agree	25
%4	19
%3	14
%2	15
%1 Strongly disagree	27

*Asked only of two-year institutions.

About 4 in 10 admissions directors (44 percent) say there has been an increase in the enrollment of “traditional” students who in the past might have enrolled at public or private four-year colleges or universities.

IN THE LAST YEAR, HAS YOUR INSTITUTION SEEN AN INCREASE, A DECREASE, OR NO CHANGE IN THE ENROLLMENT OF “TRADITIONAL” STUDENTS WHO IN THE PAST MIGHT HAVE ENROLLED AT PUBLIC OR PRIVATE FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES OR UNIVERSITIES?*	
Increase	44
Decrease	28
No change	29

*Asked only of two-year institutions.

Among admissions directors at two-year institutions who report an increase in the enrollment of traditional students on their campus, 41 percent report a 1 to less than 5 percent increase, and 56 percent report a 5 to less than 15 percent increase.

WHAT PERCENT INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF “TRADITIONAL” STUDENTS HAS YOUR INSTITUTION SEEN IN THE LAST YEAR?**	
1% to less than 5% increase	41
5% to less than 15% increase	56
15% to less than 25% increase	0
25% or greater increase	4

**Asked only of respondents at two-year institutions who indicated their institution has seen an increase in the number of “traditional” students who in the past might have enrolled at public or private four-year institutions (n=27).

About one-quarter of admissions directors from two-year institutions (24 percent) say they are experiencing a great deal of competition with for-profit colleges and universities to enroll students in some selected programs, such as healthcare or information technology.

IS YOUR INSTITUTION EXPERIENCING A GREAT DEAL, SOME, OR ONLY A LITTLE COMPETITION WITH FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES TO ENROLL STUDENTS IN SOME SELECTED PROGRAMS, SUCH AS HEALTHCARE OR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY?*	
A great deal	24
Some	47
Only a little	29

*Asked only of two-year institutions.

Two in 10 admissions directors from two-year institutions (20 percent) say they are experiencing a great deal of competition with for-profit colleges and universities to enroll students across all fields and programs.

IS YOUR INSTITUTION EXPERIENCING A GREAT DEAL, SOME, OR ONLY A LITTLE COMPETITION WITH FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES TO ENROLL STUDENTS ACROSS ALL FIELDS AND PROGRAMS?*	
A great deal	20
Some	43
Only a little	37

*Asked only of two-year institutions.

The vast majority of admissions directors at two-year colleges (95 percent) say they have programs such as nursing or automotive technology that have highly competitive admissions.

ARE THERE ANY PROGRAMS AT YOUR INSTITUTION, SUCH AS NURSING OR AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY, FOR WHICH ADMISSIONS IS HIGHLY COMPETITIVE?	
%Yes	95
%No	5

*Asked only of two-year institutions.

FOR PROGRAMS WHICH ARE HIGHLY COMPETITIVE AT YOUR INSTITUTION, ARE STUDENTS REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE CERTAIN GRADES IN PREREQUISITE COURSES TO SECURE ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAM?**	
%Yes	95
%No	5

**Asked only of respondents at two-year institutions who indicated they have highly competitive programs (n=79).

Competitive programs at two-year institutions remain selective, according to admissions directors. The large majority of admissions directors from two-year institutions (95 percent) say students are required to achieve certain grades in prerequisite courses to secure admission to the programs.

About one-third of two-year-college admissions directors (35 percent) say they admit less than half of applicants who meet basic requirements for admission to highly competitive programs at their institution; 29 percent say they admit less than 25 percent of these applicants.

FOR STUDENTS WHO MEET BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION INTO HIGHLY COMPETITIVE PROGRAMS AT YOUR INSTITUTION, WHAT PERCENT OF APPLICANTS DO YOU ADMIT?**	
Less than 25%	29
25% to less than 50%	35
50% or more	36

**Asked only of respondents at two-year institutions who indicated they have highly competitive programs (n=69).

INSTITUTION AND PERSONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

WHAT IS YOUR AGE?	OVERALL %
Under 30	2
31 to 40	24
41 to 50	34
51 to 60	25
61 to 70	14
70 and older	1
WHAT IS YOUR GENDER?	OVERALL %
Male	57
Female	43
HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU SERVED AS THE CHIEF ADMISSIONS OFFICER AT THIS INSTITUTION?	OVERALL %
Less than 6 months	5
6 months to less than 3 years	33
3 years to less than 5 years	18
5 years to less than 10 years	21
10 years or more	23
HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU SERVED AS AN ADMISSIONS OR ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT OFFICER AT ANY INSTITUTION?	OVERALL %
Less than 6 months	1
6 months to less than 3 years	12
3 years to less than 5 years	5
5 years to less than 10 years	17
10 years or more	65
WHAT PROPORTION OF THE APPLICANTS FOR FULL-TIME UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS DO YOU TYPICALLY ADMIT TO YOUR COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY?	OVERALL %
Less than 20%	4
20% to less than 50%	19
50% or more	77

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