

**Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS)
Systemwide “Compare Favorably” Report for 2014
April 2015**

In June 2011, BOARS adopted a policy¹ that the nonresident undergraduates admitted to a campus must compare favorably to the California residents admitted to that campus. BOARS also established procedures² that ask campuses to report annually to BOARS on the extent to which they are meeting the standard.

The nine undergraduate campuses have submitted their 2014 nonresident “compare favorably” reports to BOARS. All campuses reported that they are meeting the compare favorably standard, and described a variety of individual approaches for assessing it—including comparisons of high school academic performance measures and holistic review scores of the residents and nonresidents who were admitted, and the UC performance of those who enrolled.

Campuses reported that they use comprehensive review principles to assess all freshman applicants, regardless of residency status. Comprehensive review assesses the entire applicant file to account for a wide range of criteria using multiple measures of achievement and promise, including academic performance, extracurricular activities, special talents, intellectual curiosity, tenacity, commitment to community service, and achievement in the context of opportunity.

Campuses confirmed that they remain cognizant of the compare favorably standard throughout all stages of the admissions process. As campuses model the selection of a freshmen class, they compare key admissions factors for the resident vs. nonresident applicant pools, including unweighted GPA, SAT, and ACT test scores, the number of honors courses, and the number of “a-g” courses, to evaluate the extent to which nonresidents and residents targeted for admission compare favorably.

Campuses also described the difficulty of comparing residents and nonresidents. They noted that GPAs and standardized test scores are important indicators of achievement that inform admission decision-making, but are only two components of comprehensive review. As such, they have limited value in a compare favorably analysis due to the lack of equivalent local context information for international applicants. For example, a student’s high school API score, ELC status, and disadvantaged neighborhood status are not available from other states and countries. Still, campuses believe that GPA and standardized test scores are the closest equivalents across international and state boundaries. Campuses also note that the limitations of the pre-admissions analysis make it important to consider the performance of students after they enroll at UC.

Campuses also caution that the admit rate³ is not a meaningful measure to assess the compare favorably standard, because it provides no information about the strength of the various pools of applicants, and the admit rate for a particular residency category depends on the anticipated yield⁴ of students in that category. Because the yield rate of domestic nonresident admits tends to

¹ http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/senate/reports/DS_MGY_LPBOARSNRPrinciple6.pdf

² http://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/reports/RMA_MGYreBOARSresolutiononevalofresidents_non-residents_FINAL.pdf

³ Admit rate is the number of admits divided by the number of applicants.

⁴ Yield is the percentage of students who accept an offer of admission

be lower than for California resident admits, a campus must admit proportionally more domestic nonresident applicants to achieve a target for actual enrollees.

The following table summarizes systemwide data on average high school GPA and SAT score for California residents, domestic nonresidents, and international nonresidents admitted in fall 2014; average first-year UC GPA for students who enrolled in fall 2013; and the persistence rate of students who completed the 2013-14 academic year and re-enrolled in fall 2014. These data show that California resident admits have lower high school grades and test scores than nonresident admits, and that their first-year UC performance is also below that of the nonresidents who enroll at one of the campuses. The one exception that is of some concern and should be monitored is the slightly lower persistence rate among domestic and international nonresidents. This divergence does not appear to be related to the academic qualifications of these students and may be related to adjustment difficulties experienced by nonresident students new to California.

	Average High School GPA⁵	Average Total SAT Score⁴	Average First Year UC GPA⁶	Persistence⁷
CA Residents	3.63	1834	3.00	93.2%
Domestic Nonresidents	3.76	2016	3.13	90.7%
International	3.70	1946	3.13	92.6%

Data prepared by Institutional Research & Academic Planning, UCOP

In recent years, the number of nonresident applications has increased dramatically on some campuses, but the academic quality of applicants has also increased, which has reduced admission rates and allowed campuses to be more selective. BOARS expects these trends to continue, making adherence to the compare favorably standard easier. BOARS also expects the recently announced cap on nonresident enrollment growth at Berkeley and UCLA to drive more nonresident applicants to other UC campuses, thereby increasing selectivity and quality across the system.

As nonresident applications increase, campuses will also accumulate more data on the schools and communities that have sent applicants to them in the past. Some campuses already employ specially-trained application readers to evaluate nonresident applications, and several are taking steps to learn more about the educational systems and grading standards in different international regions to help inform their decisions, and ensure fairness.

Campuses are recruiting more nonresidents because the tuition funds access for additional California residents and enhances services that benefit all UC students, and because nonresidents contribute to campus diversity and enhance the quality of the undergraduate experience. Campuses continue to honor their commitment to California residents as they enroll more nonresidents.

As state funding continues to fall short of UC's enrollment needs, campuses are now being asked to meet strict enrollment targets and are more cautious about admitting California residents who

⁵ Academic indicator for students admitted for fall 2014

⁶ UC grade point average for students first enrolling in fall 2013.

⁷ Percent of students who completed the 2013-2014 academic year and re-enrolled in fall 2014.

are not state funded. Admissions offices on some campuses appear to be increasing their participation in enrollment management conversations as they evaluate the strength and depth of the resident and nonresident applicant pools and work to meet these specific targets for these groups. This work, in turn, helps campuses set realistic enrollment targets. While the increased collaboration is positive, BOARS is concerned that pressures on admissions offices to use wait lists may increase and become burdensome.

In addition, some campuses report that they are struggling to provide support services for a rapidly increasing nonresident population who may need additional English remediation and advising support. Some are also concerned that the concentration of international students in a handful of majors is straining those disciplines and reducing domestic student access to particular academic degree pathways. BOARS notes that UC should monitor these issues and provide adequate resources to support the academic success of nonresidents after they arrive on campus. The lower persistence rate among domestic nonresidents is also of some concern and should be monitored.

In sum, the campus reports provide strong evidence that the international and domestic nonresidents admitted to UC compare favorably with California residents, and are performing at least as well as California residents after they arrive at UC. BOARS is satisfied that campuses are meeting the compare favorably standard, but will continue to monitor campus practices and outcomes to ensure that campuses continue to do so.