

Creating a Legacy of Fairness in Admissions

Low-income students face many more obstacles to earning a college degree than affluent ones. Preferences for alumni children shouldn't be among them, argues Peter McPherson.

By [Peter McPherson](#) // March 21, 2019

1 COMMENT 

Public universities have a public purpose, including serving students of all backgrounds. That starts with an admissions process rooted in fairness. This commitment to fairness is central to the identity of public universities and their mission to improve the lives of their students and society at large. Preferential admissions decisions for relatives of alumni – known as legacy admissions – are not consistent with this commitment to fairness.

A recent poll showed that only **6 percent** of admissions directors at public universities said that legacy status is a factor in admissions decisions at their institutions. Nevertheless, it's a practice that is at odds with public universities' commitment to fairness.



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C7. Relative importance of each of the following academic and nonacademic factors in your first-time, first-year, degree-seeking (freshman) admission decisions.

	Very Important	Important	Considered	Not Considered
<i>Academic</i>				
Rigor of secondary school record	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Class rank	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Academic GPA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Standardized test scores	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Application Essay	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Nonacademic</i>				
Interview	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Extracurricular activities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Talent/ability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Character/personal qualities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
First generation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alumni/ae relation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Geographical residence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State residency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religious affiliation/commitment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Overview

May 1st is the national reply date for freshmen to confirm their intention to enroll at a specific institution. As of May 2nd we have received 6967 confirmation for the summer and fall terms, 519 for PaCE and 289 for Innovation Academy. The information below outlines the characteristics of the entering class.

Summer/Fall:

39% Admitted

47% Confirmed

60% Women

79% Florida Residents (3% awaiting a final residency decision)

21% 1st Generation

16% Low Income

28% Legacy

30% Minority (Black, Hispanic, Native American)

4.42 Average GPA

1352 Average Revised SAT

30.04 Average ACT