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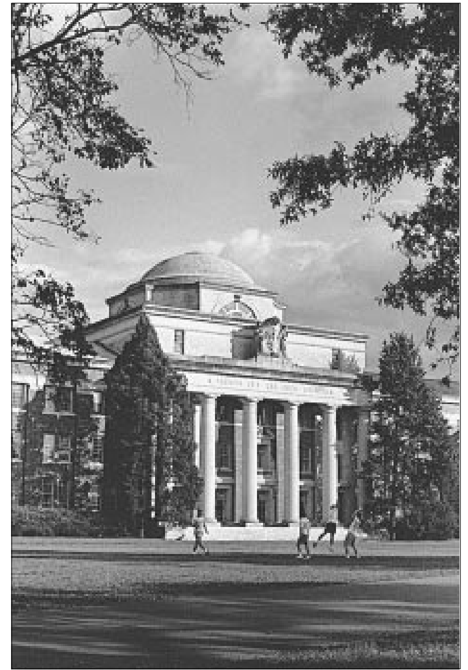
Getting Into College

Why is the competition for admission so fierce?



A college degree is no longer seen as a luxury reserved mainly for the rich and well-connected. The increasingly tight job market has made higher education a virtual prerequisite for career advancement, while sharpening the competition for admission to top-ranked colleges. At the same time, the declining number of traditional applicants has forced colleges to recruit older students and students from overseas, as well as members of underrepresented minority groups. With tuition and related expenses rising faster than the overall inflation rate, attending college often stretches the financial reserves of even middle-class families to the limit. But now many institutions are offering honors programs, merit scholarships and tuition discounts to high-achieving applicants to improve the schools' academic reputations.

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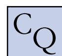

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Getting Into College

BY RICHARD L. WORSNOP

THE ISSUES

In a tense ritual played out every spring, high school seniors across the country suddenly turn into compulsive mail-watchers. They're looking for fat envelopes — not thin ones — from the colleges to which they have applied. As all college-bound students know, thick envelopes bear a coveted acceptance letter and the necessary admissions documents. A thin envelope merely contains one of those painfully perfunctory rejection letters: "We've had many good applicants this year, and we're sorry . . ."

More than 12.2 million undergraduates were enrolled in college in 1994 — a near record — underscoring how highly Americans prize a college degree. A generation ago, a secondary school diploma often sufficed as an entry-level job credential. Today, however, employers increasingly expect job seekers to have an undergraduate degree. The more demanding job market helps explain why college enrollment remained high, even as the smaller "baby-bust" generation came of age in the 1980s and early '90s.

During the post-baby boom period, colleges compensated for the dip in the traditional pool of students by introducing new programs and more aggressive recruiting to reach out to potential students long underrepresented on campus. They launched efforts to recruit African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans and prospective students over 25 — once thought too old to attend college. They developed marketing campaigns that often included financial incentives like merit scholarships and tuition discounts. And they even reached out to affluent students overseas, where an American sheepskin is especially coveted — and usually paid for in cash.

At Stanford University, as at many

institutions of higher education, the changes over the years were dramatic. Jean H. Fetter, a former dean of undergraduate admissions at Stanford, notes in her recent memoir that the 1948 Stanford yearbook "contains no more than a handful of non-white faces, and all of those are Asian. In 1993, almost half of the undergraduate population [was] non-white."

In 1948, moreover, women had to undergo a separate admissions process to get into Stanford, and many of them studied to be nurses or teachers. In 1993, Fetter notes, almost half of the university's undergraduates were women, and they were enrolled "in all disciplines." [1]

Despite the changes on campus, some things have largely remained the same. Getting into school still depends, to a large extent, on grades and test scores. (*See table, p. 172.*) And while some schools must beat the bushes to fill the next freshman class, top-rated institutions continue to get droves of applicants. Unsuccessful applicants sometimes blame their rejection on affirmative action, saying schools favor lackluster minority candidates over those with superior academic credentials. [2]

But admissions officials explain that grades and test scores, while critical, are by no means the only factors weighed during the application-review process. At many schools, sought-after athletes often receive special consideration, as do the children of alumni or applicants from distant states. And yes, top schools acknowledge, they will take a chance on minority students who show promise but didn't have the advantages enjoyed by more affluent applicants.

"Once we factor in criteria beyond the academic record," Fetter writes, "the process becomes . . . more complex. What could have been a scientific selection process, based on tables with weighted quantitative measures of academic achievement, now becomes a scientific art."

Fetter notes that "the dilemma of unequal opportunities so apparent in the academic criterion is ever-present in these considerations, too. Students from economically disadvantaged classes have many fewer opportunities to engage in extracurricular activities and, in many cases, time outside of class needs to be spent on essentials — such as supplementing the family income." [3]

Richard Shaw, dean of admissions and financial aid at Yale University, views admissions decisions as the end product of numerous mini-decisions. "We look at just about every piece of information a student submits," he says. "The essay that accompanies the application is part of it. So are teacher and school recommendations and activities outside the classroom.

"No single factor makes or breaks a candidate. But all the factors, in combination, do make a difference. For example, if students don't engage the essay seriously, that's going to count against them."

In short, there is no one way, let

Joan Q. Student
Class of 2000

How Colleges Weigh Academic Achievement

High school grade-point average (GPA) or class rank is the most important academic factor in admissions decisions, according to a national survey. Admissions test scores and the difficulty of high school coursework are next in importance.

H.S. TRANSCRIPT
S.A.T. SCORE

Average Importance of Factor in 1992

	Public institutions	Private institutions
High school GPA or rank	4.0	4.0
Admissions test scores	3.6	3.4
Achievement test scores	1.6	1.9
Letters of recommendation	1.9	3.0
Interviews	1.7	2.7
Essays	1.7	2.6
Health statement	1.4	1.4
State of residence	1.8	1.2
Portfolios, auditions, etc.	1.7	1.9
High school coursework	2.9	3.3
College-level work in high school	2.7	2.9
Declaration of major	1.8	1.7
Minority group membership	2.2	1.8
Gender	1.2	1.4
Disability group membership	1.4	1.2
Financial need	1.2	1.3

Average importance was computed as the mean where:

1 =Not considered
2 =A minor factor
3 =A moderately important factor
4 =A very important factor
5 =The single most important factor

Source: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, Challenges in College Admissions: A Report of a Survey of Undergraduate Admissions Policies, Practices and Procedures, *1995. The survey was taken in 1992 and included responses from 2,000 two-year and four-year institutions.*

alone a shortcut, to get into the college of one's dreams. But the endless stream of books and computer software offering tips on submitting a winning application underscores how intense the competition for higher education has become. (*See story, p. 180.*)

For increasing numbers of college-bound students, getting accepted by a college is only the first of two difficult steps toward a degree. Many families find that putting enough money together can stretch their financial reserves to the limit, or even beyond. When that happens, the family usually seeks grants or loans from federal, state and school sources. In the 1994-95 academic year, The College Board reported, $46.8 billion in such aid was available, an 8 percent increase from the previous year. [4]

Demand for loans and grants seems likely to mount in coming years, because annual increases in college costs continue to rise at a higher rate than the Consumer Price Index. The trend has dimmed the college hopes of many high school students. According to a recent national survey, 53 percent of the high school students who responded said they would have more trouble paying for college than their parents did. [5] And the National Center for Education Statistics has reported that 58 percent of the full-time undergraduates in colleges or vocational and technical schools in 1992-93 obtained financial help. [6]

The affordability issue is of particular concern to students hoping to attend Ivy League and other highly selective institutions. After Yale announced last May that the cost for the 1995-96 year would rise to a breathtaking $27,630, the *Yale Daily News* complained: "The university's administrators must pursue other avenues that will enable them to stabilize the increase in the term bill, or at least keep it consistent with the inflation rate. At this pace, our children may only hear stories about the Yale experience and education, since by the time they are of college age, a four-year Yale education will cost a mere $240,000." [7]

Yale's Shaw is well aware of the money woes facing families of prospective college students — and not just low-income families. Like many schools, Yale admits students on a "need-blind" basis — without considering a student's ability to pay. "We meet the full demonstrated need of students who apply to the institution," Shaw says. "We see more and more families in the $80,000 to $100,000-and-better [income] range that really have not, for whatever reason, had the ability to save for college."

Robert Chernak, vice president of student and academic support services at George Washington University (GW), in Washington, D.C., notes that inflation has forced changes in saving strategies for college. In the 1960s, he recalls, the rule of thumb was that you saved for four years, paid college bills until you had to take out a loan, and then had maybe four years of loan repayments. "Today," he says, "families start saving earlier, if they can, and take longer to work down the loan debt. You're looking at 15 to 18 years, just as a guess, as the average [loan] payout period."

Roger Swanson, associate executive director of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions

Officers, points to "the difficulties that can arise when a college student amasses a significant amount of loan debt." To make matters worse, if two students with college bills get married, "they've got double the amount of debt, and if they both go on to graduate school, they're looking at an even heavier burden."

Despite the crushing cost of attending a highly selective college, many students and parents regard it as money well spent. According to educators Philip J. Cook and Robert H. Frank, "Many of our best and brightest high school seniors know what most of our higher-education leaders have been reluctant to admit: An increasingly small number of colleges and universities have become the gatekeepers of society's top-paying jobs." [8]

Cook and Frank, who authored a 1995 book on the widening gap between rich and poor Americans, *The Winner-Take-All Society,* pointed out that 59 percent of the finalists in the Westinghouse Science Talent Search in the 1980s attended one of just seven institutions — Cornell, Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, Yale, California Institute of Technology and Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Today, an estimated 75 percent of all college-bound seniors apply to only 25 percent of the country's colleges and universities. [9]

As this year's crop of high school seniors sets its sights on college, these are some of the questions being asked:

Is rising competition for top students good for higher education?

Just as many high school seniors are struggling to get into selective colleges, many colleges are competing for the most scholastically gifted students. The aim is to boost the institution's academic ranking, ideally to the elite level. One popular strategy is to award merit scholarships, issued on the basis of academic performance rather than financial need. Some colleges offer tuition discounts on the same basis.

W. Patrick Hinely/Washington and Lee University

Washington and Lee University began admitting women in 1985. Tuition at the 1,600-student school in Lexington, Va., will be $15,280 in fall 1996, up 5 percent from the previous year.

GW instituted a merit-aid program several years ago to boost its number of coveted National Merit Scholarship finalists. The program succeeded beyond expectations, at which point the school capped the amount of aid offered. "It was an intentional decision," says Chernak, "because we're now at the level where we wanted to be all along — accepting roughly 40 National Merit finalists in each freshman class of about 1,300."

More significantly, GW's scholarship initiative seems to have affected overall applications. "Applications increased from about 6,000 in 1988 to a record 10,400 last year," Chernak reports. "The average SAT scores and high school class ranking of our incoming freshmen also have continued to rise. Of course, to convert those accepted applicants into GW students, we've had to be a little more generous with them in terms of merit aid than we had been in the past."

Large state universities often choose a different approach to lure top students. Many have established highly selective honors programs that give students a small-college experience amid the big-campus setting. One of the oldest such programs is operated by the University of Colorado at Boulder. The 600 students in the Colorado honors program may choose among 30 or so courses per semester, with enrollment limited to 15 students per course. "What we really offer are seminars," says program director Dennis Van Gerven.

His ultimate aim is to convert the honors program to a full-fledged honors college that could tap the resources of the entire university. The program currently focuses on the arts and sciences, with some work offered in engineering and business.

Honors colleges are becoming an increasingly effective way to attract top students, Van Gerven says, in part because "parents are becoming very careful shoppers. They don't want to send an outstanding young man or woman to an institution that can't provide something more than the tradi-

How Personal Qualities Affect Admissions Decisions

Private institutions emphasize personal qualities in admissions decisions far more than public colleges and universities, according to a national survey of four-year schools.

	Percentage that considered personal quality important	
Personal quality	**Public institutions**	**Private institutions**
Leadership ability	45%	76%
Extracurricular activities	45	73
Community and church activities	34	74
Motivation and initiative	48	86
Work experience	34	51
Compatibility with school's philosophy	42	84

Source: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, Challenges in College Admissions: A Report of a Survey of Undergraduate Admissions Policies, Practices and Procedures, *1995. The survey was taken in 1992 and included responses from 2,000 two-year and four-year institutions.*

tional kind of large-lecture-format experience. They don't want to think of their children wandering about a campus with 25,000 other students." Honors programs, in contrast, provide "a neighborhood experience, a small community environment for undergraduates." And the cost is often less than half that of a high-level, private institution.

Van Gerven believes that "the flagship institutions of state systems can no longer afford to be inattentive to the curricular needs, the quality-teaching needs, of the undergraduates they serve. Parents are rebelling at the idea of faculty who don't teach but do research. We have to make it clear that we're committed to quality undergraduate education in addition to the research mission of the institution."

Shaw acknowledges that state university honors programs draw from the same applicant pools that selective private institutions use. "Having been admissions director at the University of Michigan, which has a strong honors program, I know those are attractive programs to students," he says. "They're trying to capture what we do [at Yale] as a matter of course in smaller microcosms of their campus environments."

Critics of merit scholarships, public university honors programs and other incentives say they benefit a relatively small percentage of college applicants. "A college is going to make aid more available to students who bring to it something the college wants," says Swanson of the registrars' association. "For instance, the lucky student could be a National Merit scholar, an outstanding tuba player or a Native American." On the other hand, "the average middle-class student" without unusual credentials may be left in the cold.

Current trends in admissions policies also trouble two economics professors who often address student-aid issues. "Intensifying competition for students, especially for affluent students with strong academic credentials, raises difficult policy questions for colleges and universities and society," Michael S. McPherson and Morton Owen Schapiro wrote recently. "Individual institutions must weigh the potential gains in prestige and student recruitment that may result from a successful merit scholarship program against the risks of getting caught up in a self-destructive, zero-sum competition with other institutions for the same small set of students." [10]

Chernak says GW considered the zero-sum hazard when it launched its merit-aid program, but he says the university dodged the bullet. "Sometimes you need a booster rocket to improve the quality of entering freshmen," he says. "The National Merit finalist program helped us do that. Eventually, though, you have to wean yourself off that kind of major financial commitment, and hope that it translates into a better applicant pool over the long term.

"There can be a halo effect when you penetrate certain high schools in areas where you weren't strong before. You hope the students from those schools who attend GW act as role models for other kids in their communities. And that's how it has worked out for us."

Can the pool of college applicants be broadened?

For years, conventional wisdom

among educators held that nationwide college enrollment totals were hostage to demographic trends. As a result, foreboding gripped the higher education community as the 1970s drew to a close. That's when the last members of the baby-boom generation were entering college, leaving behind a much smaller baby-bust cohort. The Census Bureau projected an 18 percent drop in the country's college-age population during the 1980s, with most of the decrease — an estimated 11 percent — likely to occur during the first half of the decade. Most observers said the U.S. college-student population faced significant shrinkage and that some small institutions would have to close.

But the gloomy predictions were far off the mark, according to *Challenges in College Admissions,* the 1995 report on a recent national survey. "Between 1979 and 1992, the number of 18-year-olds in the United States decreased by 1 million, and the number of 18-year-old high school graduates decreased by over half a million," the report states. "Yet total enrollment in higher education increased substantially." In addition, the 1985-1992 period saw hefty increases in applications to four-year institutions and in the average number of applicants per enrolled freshman. [11]

These counter-intuitive developments, the report suggests, grew out of aggressive marketing. Colleges spent more on such traditional recruiting tools as campus visits by prospective students and their families, visits to high schools by college admissions staffers and direct-mail appeals. But the greatest increases in recruiting activity were more narrowly focused, targeting racial and ethnic minorities, academically talented students, international students and adults. Toward the end of the decade, moreover, a majority of institutions responding to the survey said they had expanded their geographic recruiting ranges.

One such college was GW. "From 1988 to 1994, we invested considerable time and money to reach out west of the Mississippi," says Chernak. "We felt we were perceived primarily as an Eastern school. We're now getting a pretty good applicant flow from areas where we weren't well represented before. In 1988, maybe 10 percent of our incoming freshmen came from west of the Mississippi. Now it's probably closer to 30 percent."

Recruiting drives during the 1980s paid off for U.S. higher education as a whole, as well as for individual schools. Although the number of U.S. high school graduates fell by about 500,000 between 1980 and 1985, first-time college enrollments fell by fewer than 300,000. The reason, according to *Challenges in College Admissions,* is that "the proportion of high school graduates going directly on to college or university increased from 50 to 58 percent during this period." [12]

The trend continued through the rest of the decade. "Between 1985 and 1990, the number of high school graduates decreased by [an additional] 300,000, making the total decline since 1980 almost three-quarters of a million students. But the proportion of high school graduates going directly on to college increased from 58 to 60 percent . . . and first-time freshman enrollment decreased by only 29,000 students." By 1992, 62 percent of high school graduates were heading to college. [13]

The 1980s showed that unfavorable demographic trends can be blunted or even neutralized by expanding the pool of qualified college applicants. The National Center for Education Statistics expects undergraduate enrollment to increase steadily over the next 10 years, reaching a peak of almost 14 million students by the year 2005. For both public and private institutions, growth of full-time enrollment is projected to outpace part-time enrollment by a substantial margin.

Electronic technology may push the potential market for higher education

An Academic Profile of Undergraduates

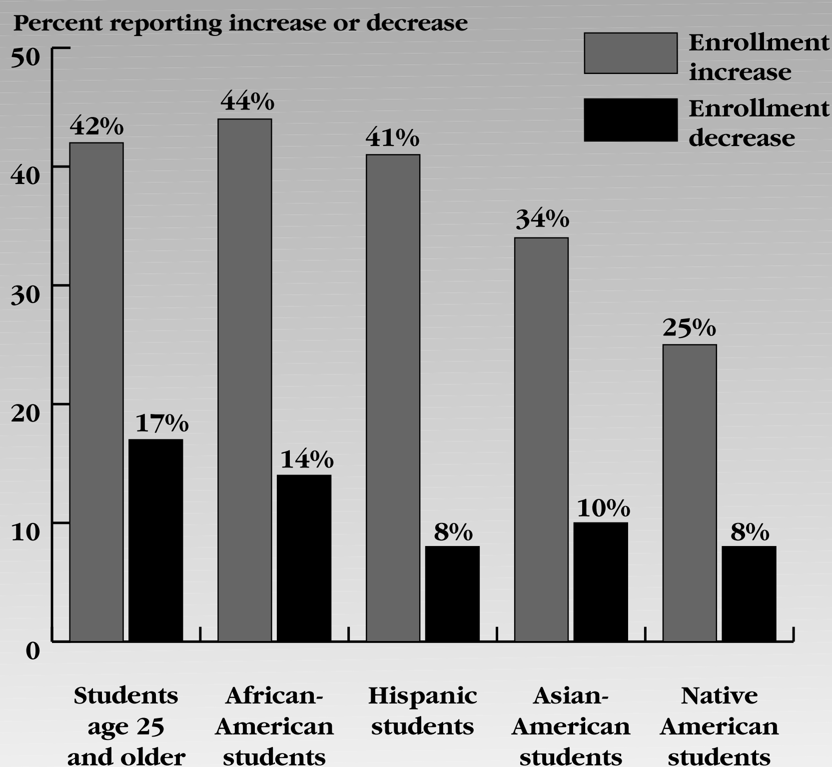
More than a quarter of the nation's undergraduates needed remedial English and math in 1994, according to a national survey. Fewer than 10 percent had earned college credits while in high school.

Percentage of undergraduates who. . .	
Needed financial aid	63%
Needed remedial math	33%
Needed remedial English	27%
Earned college credits in high school	9%
Are degree-seeking	81%

Source: Elaine El-Khawas, *Campus Trends,* 1995, American Council on Education. The 1995 survey included responses from 407 two-year and four-year public and private colleges and universities.

Monitoring Changes in Enrollment

More than 40 percent of U.S. colleges and universities reported enrollment gains among African-Americans, Hispanics and students age 25 and older in 1994.



Note: Totals do not add up to 100 because percentages for "no change" were not included.

Source: Elaine El-Khawas, Campus Trends, *1995, American Council on Education. The 1995 survey included responses from 407 two-year and four-year public and private colleges and universities.*

well beyond current projections (*see p. 187*). The list of possibilities includes interactive video, CD-ROM instruction packages and, possibly, breakthroughs not yet on the horizon. As these new options emerge, degree-certification standards could undergo substantial change.

Will minorities be penalized by the University of California Board of Regents' decision to prohibit affirmative action?

The most dramatic development in college admissions policy in recent years was last summer's decision by the University of California (UC) Board of Regents to bar affirmative action in admissions, hiring and contracting (*see p. 183*). Preliminary projections by the university indicate that, under the new guidelines, the number of black students attending UC's nine campuses could drop by as much as 50 percent and the number of Hispanic students by as much as 24 percent. At the same time, the number of Asian students may rise by up to 25 percent, with white enrollment remaining basically unchanged. *

The fight against affirmative action was led by UC Regent Ward Connerly, who attracted wide media notice because he is an African-American. In his view, affirmative action is a polite term for racial bias. "It's interesting that the university community is probably the only government institution fighting to preserve the right to discriminate on the basis of race," he said shortly before the regents voted on his proposal. "I'm saying, 'Let's take a new look at this. . . . [W]hy aren't we out there trying to figure out how to create an inclusive university community without taking race into account?' " [14]

Carl C. Jorgensen, an African-American Harvard graduate who is now an associate sociology professor at the University of California, Davis, feels the ban on affirmative action could have unanticipated results. By the year 2002, he writes, "white or Asian-American graduates of some UC campuses may have much less personal knowledge of black and brown people and their perspectives than did graduates in 1992." [15]

In Jorgensen's opinion, moreover, "Ending affirmative action is not particularly in business' interest. Most businesses now want a diverse work force so that they can sell to diverse communities. So, I'm sure a lot of business people are pressuring the regents to change [their decision]. It's hard to tell what will happen, but I wouldn't be surprised to see some modification" of the new policy.

But some observers believe the new policy leaves enough "wiggle room" for campus administrators to maintain a

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* According to statistics released Feb. 13, 1996, a record 45,939 high school students applied for the fall semester at UC, but applications from American Indians and Latinos dropped 9.8 percent and 2.3 percent, respectively, and applications from African-Americans rose just 0.6 percent. By comparison, applications from all three groups rose by several percentage points in the previous two years.

racially diverse student body. It does so by allowing admissions officials to consider an economically disadvantaged student's background, provided they do so in a race-neutral way. This approach would have the effect of "providing affirmative action preferences to the disadvantaged of all races," writes Richard D. Kahlenberg. "Defining beneficiaries by class, not race, would restore fairness to a system that has strayed far from the goals of the early proponents of affirmative action." [16]

Swanson feels that Californians and other Americans still support action to help members of underrepresented groups gain admission to college — "but not in the particular way that affirmative action spelled out." While further retreat from preferential admissions practices may occur, he doesn't sense "any withdrawal of commitment to the spirit" of helping disadvantaged students better themselves through higher education. ■

BACKGROUND

Diverse Standards

Until the late 19th century, criteria for admission to American colleges varied widely from institution to institution. Consequently, many colleges operated preparatory academies to help students acquire the academic background they needed. If a college lacked such a program, prospective students often either enrolled in another academy or hired a private tutor.

Entrance exams typically consisted of the college president and several faculty members testing the applicant's knowledge of Latin, Greek and mathematics — the essential building blocks of a classical education. The interrogation often lasted from dawn to dusk, with only a short break for lunch.

According to education historian Harold S. Wechsler, "the decision to admit a student . . . was determined by the quality of his answers, the college's financial picture and not infrequently on the kindliness of a faculty member." [17] When subjects such as geography, English grammar and history became entrance requirements, many colleges replaced the oral exams with a battery of written tests.

Davidson College

Davidson College students Jin Chang, a Korean-American from Charlotte, N.C., and Arsiyanti Ardie, from Jakarta, Indonesia.

Colleges sought to secure their status in American society by portraying themselves as "capstones" of a system from which the next generation of national leaders was sure to emerge. To succeed, they sought cooperation from private academies and, later, public high schools in tailoring the secondary school curriculum to fit college requirements. But the diversity of college entrance standards made the task difficult. Wilson Farrand, headmaster of Newark Academy, touched on the problem in a speech in 1895: "Princeton and Columbia call for six books of the *Aeneid;* Yale requires, in addition, the *Ecologues.* These do not count for maximum standing at Princeton unless combined with the *Georgics.* . . . Princeton requires Latin of candidates for one course, but not for others. Yale demands it of all, Columbia of none." [18]

Certificate System Launched at University of Michigan

While colleges and high schools in the East continued to bicker over entrance requirements, the University of Michigan in the early 1870s pioneered a new approach — admitting all graduates of high schools in the state that had been accredited by a team of inspectors. The policy was modeled on the German system of secondary schools, the gymnasia. Many of those who supported admission by a certificate, Wechsler wrote, saw it as a "potential solution for solving a basic problem faced by most American colleges in the 19th century — the need to maintain and, if possible, to increase enrollments." [19]

Only 5 percent of American 17-year-olds graduated from high school in 1890, and only a fraction of that group went on to college. Many institutions adopted the certificate system with the expectation that more students would seek admission once demanding entrance exams were dropped. As more colleges joined the movement, regional associations were formed to inspect and accredit secondary schools.

By the turn of the century, the

certificate system had become the most popular method of regulating college admissions. Not surprisingly, it gained broadest acceptance in the Midwest, where the movement began. Resistance was strongest among the older, elite colleges of the New England and Middle Atlantic states.

"Such institutions," Wechsler wrote, "opposed certification because it was new and they revered traditions; because it threatened their domination of the high schools . . . and because it implied that they were in competition for students, something their high enrollments did not support in fact and their high self-estimate did not allow in principle." [20] Over time, however, all of the Ivy League schools except Harvard, Princeton and Yale adopted the system.

Standardized Exams

The elite colleges were never comfortable with certification, but neither were they satisfied with widely divergent standards for college entrance. For this reason, presidents Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia and Charles W. Eliot of Harvard led a campaign to bring about closer cooperation between institutions of higher learning and secondary schools, while keeping the final decision on admissions with the colleges. Their efforts culminated in the creation of the College Entrance Examination Board in 1900.

The College Board supplied standardized entrance examinations to its members. Only 12 schools joined at the outset: Barnard, Bryn Mawr, Columbia, Cornell, Johns Hopkins, New York University, University of Pennsylvania, Rutgers, Swarthmore, Union, Vassar and Women's College of Baltimore. Gradually the board attracted more members, who saw in it the chance to reach a larger and more varied group of students. Examinations soon were available to students throughout the nation. By 1910, even the "Big Three" — Harvard, Yale and Princeton — had joined the fold.

In the 1919-20 academic year, almost 600,000 students in search of credits or degrees attended the country's 1,041 institutions of higher learning. Many were World War I veterans. "As was to be demonstrated repeatedly in later decades, military service undoubtedly had alerted veterans to the value and need of college training and stimulated their re-enrollments, as well as initial entry, into college," wrote Garland G. Parker, an authority on college enrollment patterns. [21]

During the 1920s Americans came to place an increasingly high value on education, including higher education. "There was a strong feeling among parents generally, especially immigrants, that educational advancement offered a sure outlet from ghetto life and a high road to success for their children," Parker wrote. "The colleges largely were populated by the offspring of the well-to-do, but many thousands of lower-middle-class students from urban, as well as rural, areas found their way onto college campuses. The nation was on the threshold of the greatest experiment in mass education at the collegiate level that the world had yet seen." By the end of the decade, the number of college students had doubled to 1.1 million.

In the 1930s, the Depression exerted the major influence on higher education. Enrollments held steady or even continued to rise through 1931, fell off noticeably from 1932 to 1934 but climbed significantly in the next two years and maintained an upward curve through the balance of the decade. The rise in enrollment during the middle and late 1930s stemmed in part from New Deal legislation, which included federal aid to needy college students. "Despite the throes of the Depression," Parker observed, "the American people continued to have faith in higher education as a stepping stone to success for themselves and their children. Even though times got harder, every effort was made to support their sons, especially, in school as long as financial resources permitted."

Meanwhile, changes were occurring in standardized college entrance examinations. The original College Board tests had been essay exams, but educators began to question whether that was the best way to identify candidates who would succeed in college. After World War I, the College Board became interested in testing programs developed by the government to measure soldiers' ability to perform various assignments.

Aptitude Tests Introduced

In 1926, the board administered its first aptitude test, the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), a multiple-choice exam covering a wide array of topics. The aim was to measure "future ability" rather than "past mastery," to reveal the broad expanse of a student's knowledge, not the minute details of his preparation. Colleges generally preferred the new SAT, and most of the older exams were dropped during World War II, never to return.

By 1946, the College Board had expanded its testing program far beyond college entrance examinations. Among its clients were the State Department, the U.S. Naval Academy and the National Administrative Board for Pepsi-Cola Scholarships. But many board members felt the board had strayed too far from its original mandate, and on Dec. 19, 1947, the board, in cooperation with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the American Council on Education, established the Educational Testing Service (ETS). The new organization was given responsibility for developing all the tests formerly handled by the board itself.

A report published by the President's Commission on Higher Education in 1946 noted that only a fraction of those who could benefit from higher educa-

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Chronology

1800s-1920s

Individual colleges set their own admission standards until the late 19th century, when higher education becomes more widely available and uniform standards for admission begin to win acceptance.

1900
The College Entrance Examination Board — now known as the College Board — is established to provide standardized tests to member institutions.

1926
The College Board administers its first Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) as an alternative to traditional essay exams.

1940s

Higher education undergoes explosive growth after World War II as returning G.I.s jam campuses across the country.

1944
President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs the Servicemen's Readjustment Act (the G.I. Bill), the largest college scholarship program in the nation's history.

Dec. 19, 1947
The College Board, in cooperation with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the American Council on Education, establishes the Educational Testing Service (ETS) to develop the tests formerly handled by the board itself.

1950s-1970s

College cost increases outstrip rises in the Consumer Price Index, stirring alarm among parents of college-age children.

1959
The American College Testing Program (ACT) is founded in Iowa City, Iowa.

Nov. 8, 1965
President Lyndon B. Johnson signs into law the Higher Education Act, which provides aid to needy college students through grants, Guaranteed Student Loans and work-study programs.

June 28, 1978
The U.S. Supreme Court rules in *University of California Regents v. Bakke* that institutions of higher learning may weigh race as a factor in admissions policies but may not designate a set number of places for minority applicants.

1990s

Student aid and preferential admissions policies stir controversy among higher education officials and the families of students planning to attend college.

July 23, 1992
President George Bush signs the Higher Education Act Amendments of 1992, making federal aid more widely available to college students from middle-income families.

Aug. 10, 1993
President Clinton signs the Student Loan Reform Act, which provides direct federal loans to college students. The new loan program largely replaces the existing system, which provided costly subsidies to the commercial banks that acted as middlemen in loan transactions.

July 1995
University of California (UC) Board of Regents votes to end racial preferences in hiring and contracting by January 1996 and in student admissions by January 1997.

Jan. 23, 1996
UC President Richard Atkinson announces that the ban on using race and gender as factors in undergraduate admissions decisions will not take effect until January 1998.

Jan. 23, 1996
In his State of the Union address, President Clinton proposes "a tax deduction for all education and training [expenses] after high school" as part of his Middle-Class Bill of Rights.

Jan. 28, 1996
Atkinson concedes he overstepped his authority in changing the regents' timetable on implementing the affirmative action ban.

Feb. 15, 1996
University of California regents compromise and agree to end preferences beginning with the spring 1998 term.

Feb. 21, 1996
The required number of signatures must be gathered by this date to put the California Civil Rights Initiative 1996 on the state ballot in November. The initiative seeks approval of a ban on racial preferences in state colleges and universities, public employment and government contracting.

Annual College Rankings Find Ready Market

Given the high premium placed on a college education, it's little wonder that rankings of colleges by academic distinction, affordability and myriad other criteria have found a ready market. So, too, have books and magazines offering advice on selecting the right college, and getting in.

The rising cost of college is in large part responsible for the popularity of such publications. With many institutions charging between $10,000 and $25,000 a year for tuition and other services, students and their families are determined to get maximum value for their money. Annual college rankings are published by such periodicals as *Barron's*, *Money* and *U.S. News & World Report.* Admissions tips are offered by such guides as *Playing the Selective College Admissions Game* and *Scaling the Ivy Wall in the '90s.*

The *U.S. News* survey is probably the best-known of the magazine rankings. It divides the country's 1,400 accredited, four-year colleges and universities with more than 200 students into four categories — national universities, regional universities, national liberal arts colleges and regional liberal arts colleges. Each institution then is judged in terms of how it rates in terms of reputation, selectivity, faculty, student retention, financial resources and student satisfaction. The school's ranking in each area is then weighted in accordance with a statistical formula. [1] After these six sub-scores are added together, the schools are listed in descending order of combined score.

Campus officials often complain about the methodology used in college rankings, saying some factors receive either too little or too much consideration. For their part, survey-takers accuse certain administrators of handling their data in a way that produces a higher survey ranking than is justified. Last spring, for instance, *The Wall Street Journal* reported that a number of colleges had inflated the composite SAT score of their freshman class by tossing out the scores of foreign students, student athletes and other low academic achievers. [2]

Such practices lend support to the claim that schools are becoming increasingly competitive for students, and that as a result higher education is becoming more of a buyer's than a seller's market. Mel Elfin, the editor in charge of the *U.S. News* college survey, thinks a shakeout among colleges is overdue. In his opinion, "We should be closing one school a week." [3]

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[1] Reputation and selectivity each count for 25 percent, faculty for 20 percent, student retention for 15 percent, financial resources for 10 percent and student satisfaction for 5 percent.

[2] *The Wall Street Journal,* April 5 1995, p. A1.

[3] Quoted by Bill Gifford, "The Arbiter," *Lingua Franca,* January-February 1995, p. 42.

Continued from p. 178

tion actually were enrolled in colleges. "American colleges must envision a much larger role for higher education in the national life," the commission stated. "They can no longer consider themselves merely the instrument for producing an intellectual elite; they must become the means by which every citizen, youth and adult, is enabled and encouraged to carry his education, formal and informal, as far as his native capacities permit."

Enrollment Skyrockets

As it happened, American colleges and universities experienced unparalleled growth and expansion over the next 20 years. This new era in higher education had been launched by the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 — the G.I. Bill — the largest scholarship program in the nation's history. Veterans who were enrolled as full-time students were provided with living allowances, while the government made direct payments to their institutions for tuition, fees and other normal school costs.

The coming of the generation born after World War II — the baby boom — boosted college enrollment to unprecedented levels in the 1960s. Between 1959-1960 and 1969-1970 enrollment more than doubled, rising from 3.5 million to 8 million. Not only was there a hefty increase in the number of college-age students, but the proportion actually attending college rose also. By 1970, 34 percent of the 18-21 age group were enrolled in degree or credit programs in higher education, compared with 23 percent in 1960, 15 percent in 1950 and 11 percent in 1940.

Social pressure to go to college increased enormously during the 1960s. One reason was that higher education was seen as the most likely path to economic success and individual fulfillment. In addition, a steady rise in per capita income throughout the decade meant that more parents could afford to send their children to college than ever before. And as more and more persons obtained degrees, employers began recruiting college

graduates for jobs that formerly had gone to high school graduates.[22]

Around this time, however, a college degree became more difficult to obtain. As enrollments soared in the late 1950s and the '60s, many private institutions, and some public ones, began to limit the size of their student bodies and raise admission standards. Greater stress was placed on national college aptitude tests, including the SAT. So pressing was the demand for tests to screen students that the American College Testing Program (ACT) was founded in 1959 in Iowa City, Iowa. (*See story, p. 182.*)

One of the key developments in higher education during this period was the growth of two-year community colleges. Vocationally oriented junior colleges had been around since the mid-19th century, but they remained a minor feature of American postsecondary education until the late 1950s. By the mid-1960s, these colleges, now called community colleges, were opening at the rate of about one a week.

In the 1959-1960 school year, some 640,500 students were enrolled in two-year colleges. A decade later, the number had grown to almost 2 million full- and part-time students, or nearly 30 percent of all U.S. undergraduates. The rapid advance of community colleges was attributed to their open-admission policies, their wide geographic distribution and their low tuition fees. In addition, two-year institutions generally offered night courses for working students.

Aid From Congress

As the community college boom proceeded, families across the country were starting to worry that they could not afford to send their children to college. Tuition and other fees were rising at a higher rate — often substantially higher — than the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Congress addressed this concern by passing the Higher Education Act, signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on Nov. 8, 1965. Title IV of the far-reaching measure established several programs offering grants and loans to college students on the basis of family income. They included grants, which recipients did not have to repay (now known as Pell Grants); Guaranteed Student Loans, later known as Stafford Loans, which students had to repay after graduation; and work-study programs, which enabled students to pay for part of their education by working during the school year at on-campus or public-sector jobs.

Davidson College

Professor William Mahony takes his class in Asian religious thought outdoors at Davidson College, near Charlotte, N.C. Tuition at the 1,400-student school will be $18,954 in fall 1996, up 5.3 percent from the previous year.

By today's standards, the amount of aid provided by the 1965 law was modest: $70 million annually in fiscal years 1966-1968 for first-year scholarships as well as the money needed to continue each scholarship beyond the first year. Moreover, the law required that scholarship funds be distributed in accordance with each state's proportionate share of the U.S. college student population. For their part, colleges were required to encourage needy high school students to seek a college education.

Though the education act relieved some of the financial burden on lower- and middle-income families, increases in tuition and other charges continued to outstrip the overall inflation rate. Congress provided more relief when it reauthorized the act in 1992.

The revised law made federal aid available to more middle-income students by allowing them to deduct the value of the equity in their families' home or farm from calculations to determine the students' eligibility for aid. It also increased the amount of money that lower-income, full-time students could obtain through Stafford Loans.

The most controversial provision of the reauthorization bill called for issuing the federal loans to students directly through their college, bypassing the commercial banks and guarantee agencies that typically had acted as middlemen. The banks objected to being frozen out, and President George Bush also complained. After the direct-loan provision was changed

Standardized Tests Take Differing Approaches

When college admissions officers evaluate applicants, high school grades and class standings count for much. But academic standards at the nation's thousands of secondary schools vary widely, making valid comparisons difficult. Thus, many institutions also consult standardized test scores to provide a more rounded picture of a candidate's ability to handle college work.

The two most widely used college-entrance exams are the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT), dating from 1926, and the American College Testing Program (ACT), introduced in 1959. Although both are widely used, they differ somewhat in approach.

The SAT (now called the SAT I: Reasoning Test) is a three-hour, two-part exam that measures academic aptitude in terms of verbal and mathematical reasoning. Each of the two sections is scored on a scale ranging from 200 to 800 (students earn 200 points just by signing their name), and the two scores then are added together. In addition to SAT I, some students take one or more SAT II: Subject Tests in such fields as literature, biology, American history and French.

Starting this year, SAT I scores will be reported on a scale "recentered" at 500, the midway point between 200 and 800. The change was made in response to the long downward drift in SAT scores. Last year, the nationwide average score was 428 on the verbal portion and 482 on the mathematical portion. Even if this year's scores turn out to be precisely the same, they will appear to be some 75 points higher because of recentering.

According to the College Board, "recentering does not affect the way test-takers compare to each other within the test-taking pool, and therefore will cause no student to either gain or lose a seat in college." The board further notes that, "As the unwavering performance percentiles will show, the new scores do not mean that students are suddenly performing at a higher level." [1] In any case, the maximum total SAT I score will remain 1,600.

ACT Assessment, the American College Testing counterpart of SAT I, comprises separate multiple-choice exams in English, mathematics, reading and science reasoning. All are graded on a scale of 1 to 36, with fractional scores converted to the nearest whole number. The numbers then are added together and divided by four to produce a composite score.

There is one further scoring difference between the ACT and SAT I. ACT scores are based solely on the number of correct answers, with no penalty imposed for guessing. With SAT I, in contrast, incorrect answers are subtracted from the final score and additional points are taken off to compensate for possible guesses. (SAT I test-takers are allowed to use calculators on the math test, but ACT test-takers are not.)

The SAT I tends to be the college entrance exam of choice on the East Coast and West Coast, while the ACT tends to be more popular in the Middle West and Far West. But overall, "The trend these days is toward accepting either," says Kelley Hayden, corporate communications director for American College Testing. According to Hayden, institutions generally use the higher score, "depending upon which one looks best for the individual student."

[1] The College Board, "The New SAT," May 1995, p. 1.

to a four-year demonstration program, Bush withdrew his veto threat and signed the measure.

Congress returned to the student-loan issue after Bill Clinton became president in 1993. Under the 1993 omnibus budget-reconciliation bill, direct loans were to be phased in over four years, reaching 60 percent of total new loan volume in the 1998-1999 academic year. The measure also lowered the interest-rate cap on both direct loans and guaranteed student loans from 9 percent to 8.25 percent. Students, moreover, were given several options for repaying their loans. Direct-loan advocates said the changes would save $4.6 billion over five years.

Affirmative Action

In recent decades, affirmative action has rivaled the availability of student aid as a hot-button issue among students and educators alike. Supporters of affirmative action say race- and gender-conscious remedies are designed to ensure that otherwise fully qualified minorities have access to institutions — in this case, places of higher learning — that historically had excluded them. Opponents, by contrast, argue that affirmative action is a politically correct euphemism for quota systems that often admit unqualified applicants.

Two Supreme Court cases in the 1970s showed how divisive affirmative action could be. In *DeFunis v. Odegaard,* plaintiff Marco DeFunis, a white Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Washington, charged that in 1971 he was denied admission to the university's law school so that a less-qualified minority student could be accepted. The law school, which had received 1,600 applications for 150 openings, acknowledged that 36 minority candidates had been admitted with grades and test scores lower than DeFunis'. By a 5-4 vote, the court refused to decide the case because DeFunis had been allowed to attend the law school while the case was

being adjudicated.

In *University of California Regents v. Bakke,* a 1978 case similar to *DeFunis,* two closely divided rulings were handed down by the high court. Allen Bakke, a white college graduate, had sought admission to 13 medical schools in 1972 and '73, only to be rejected by all of them. Applying to the University of California, Davis, for the second time in 1974, Bakke again was turned down. On both occasions, 16 minority applicants were admitted to Davis under affirmative action programs. Bakke sued the university, saying his grades and test scores were better than those of most of the minority applicants who were admitted.

This time, also by a 5-4 margin, the court held that state universities may not set aside a fixed quota of seats in each class for minority group members, denying white applicants the opportunity to compete for those places. But at the same time, the court — in yet another 5-4 vote — held that it is constitutionally permissible for admissions officers to consider race as one of the many factors that determine which applicants are accepted.

With these guidelines in mind, UC officials began crafting a quota-less affirmative action policy for the system's nine campuses. In its current form, the policy provides that 60 percent of UC applicants are admitted solely on the basis of high school grades and test scores. The remaining 40 percent are admitted on grade points and test scores, with supplemental points awarded for such factors as residency, veteran's status, disability, community service, underrepresented minority and economically disadvantaged status.

UC's admissions formula is credited with giving the university one of the nation's most racially and ethnically diverse student bodies. Almost 4 percent of the 162,000-plus students are black, 25 percent are Asian-American and 12 percent are Hispanic. According to *New Republic* Associate Editor Hanna Rosin, the California approach is a "workable model" that has "achieved what the convulsive national debate on affirmative action has been seeking: the elusive middle ground." [23] ■

CURRENT SITUATION

California Controversy

Many educators share Rosin's high regard for UC-style affirmative action. But the feeling is far from unanimous, as shown by last July's 14-10 decision by the university Board of Regents to bar racial and gender preferences in admissions, effective Jan. 1, 1997. A month earlier, Republican Gov. Pete Wilson had issued an executive order curbing affirmative action programs that gave special consideration to women and minorities in state hiring and contracts. The regents' vote and Wilson's order were widely viewed as efforts to jump-start the governor's brief campaign for the 1996 Republican presidential nomination.

Wilson, however, insisted he acted out of belief that individual merit should be the controlling factor in college admissions. "Racial preferences are by definition racial discrimination," he wrote in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. "They were wrong 30 years ago when they discriminated against African-Americans. And they're wrong today, when they discriminate against Asian- or Caucasian-Americans." The best way to build a diverse student body, he added, "isn't to grant special preferences in admissions to some students at the expense of others, it's to ensure that every student receives the elementary and secondary education that will allow them to compete for admissions to UC . . . regardless of the color of their skin, their race, ethnicity or gender." [24]

Connerly, the regent who proposed the affirmative action ban, voiced similar thoughts. "People have consciously, in the academic world, bought . . . the notion that groups ought to be represented, that there ought to be parity," he said. "It is a fundamentally different view than the one I grew up with, of individuals working hard to move up that ladder on the basis of individual effort." [25]

But Regent Roy T. Brophy, who opposed the ban, saw "no need to act so abruptly and unilaterally." (*See "At Issue," p. 185.*) In his opinion, the policy shift "put the university at the center of a political debate and set the regents against UC's administration, faculty and students — including those students who someday might want to attend our campuses." Instead, he argued, the regents should have conducted a study "to identify equitable options that would have preserved what worked well about affirmative action and addressed what needed attention." [26]

Brophy's misgivings apparently echoed the feelings of many college students and faculty members, both in California and elsewhere. For instance, the faculty senates of all nine UC campuses have publicly opposed the ban. Moreover, a recent nationwide survey of 240,082 college freshmen conducted by UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute found that 70 percent of the respondents felt race should receive at least "some special consideration" by college admissions officers. On the other hand, opinion was evenly split among respondents as to whether "affirmative action in college admissions should be abolished."

The seemingly contradictory responses on affirmative action prompted the survey's associate director, Linda J. Sax, to note: "This discrepancy highlights the fact that people are willing to support the consideration of race in admissions, but are less willing to commit themselves to the more politically loaded

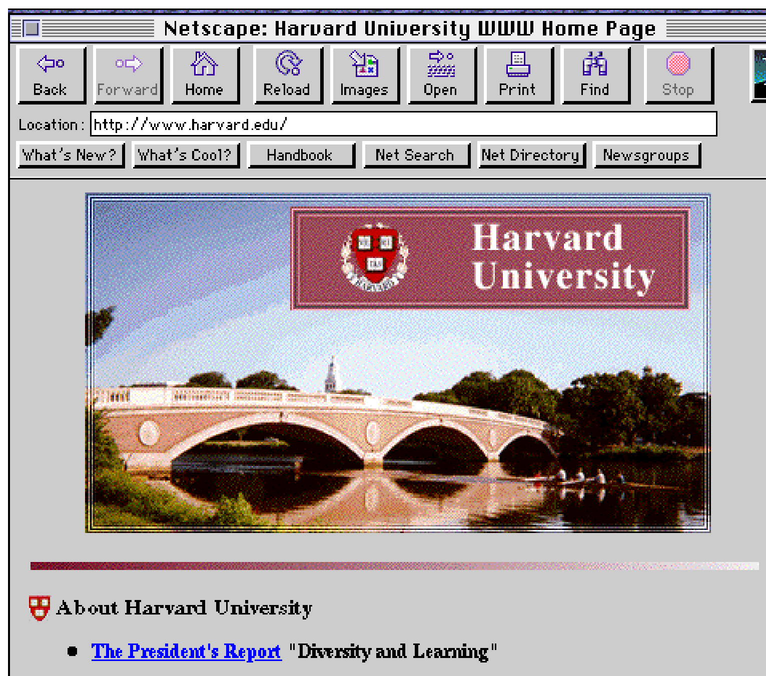
phrase, 'affirmative action.' "[27]

The UC admissions controversy heated up again Jan. 23, when University President Richard C. Atkinson said the ban on factoring race and gender into admissions decisions would be postponed until fall 1998. Wilson and Connerly immediately accused Atkinson of foot-dragging and said they would accept no change in the regents' 1997 timetable. Atkinson beat a partial retreat Jan. 25, informing Wilson and the UC regents by letter that the delay in implementing the ban would apply only to undergraduate admissions. Full capitulation came Jan. 28, as Atkinson conceded he had overstepped his authority. On Feb. 15, 1996, the Regents compromised and voted unanimously to eliminate preferences in undergraduate admissions beginning with students applying for the spring 1998 term.

At least one additional chapter in the California affirmative-action saga remains to be written. It centers on the California Civil Rights Initiative, which Wilson and Connerly hope to place on the Nov. 5 ballot. If approved by voters, the initiative would amend the state constitution to abolish preferences based on race, gender or ethnic origin in state employment and contracting as well as admissions to public institutions of higher learning. Feb. 21 is the deadline for collecting the required number of signatures.

Financial Aid

College students in California and across the country seem at least as concerned about the cost of college as they are about affirmative action. The recent UCLA survey, the 30th in an annual series, reported that a record 71.4 percent of respondents said they worried about having enough money to complete their education. The previous high, 64.9 percent, was recorded in 1966. In addition, 39.5 percent of those questioned said they believed they would have to take a job to help pay for college expenses.



Harvard University is among many higher education institutions that are providing information to applicants via the World Wide Web.

The cause for concern is real. Tuitions have risen 6 percent at public and private universities each year for the past three years; costs this year are expected to rise 4-5 percent at many schools.[28]

Financially pinched students no doubt applauded the student-aid initiatives President Clinton proposed in his Jan. 23 State of the Union address to Congress. They included $1,000 merit scholarships to the top 5 percent of graduating seniors in every American high school and expansion of the federal work-study program from the current 700,000 students to 1 million by the year 2000. In addition, the president repeated earlier proposals for a $300 increase this year (to $2,620) in the size of the maximum Pell Grant, and for a tax deduction of up to $10,000 for money spent on college tuition or job training. "Higher education is more important today than ever before," he declared.

Not surprisingly, college admissions officials welcomed Clinton's proposals. "People should acknowledge that higher education is an expenditure that will benefit the country in the long term," says Yale's Shaw. "If families can be encouraged to put up the money to send their children to college, and receive some tax relief in return, it would be sort of like getting a federal loan, wouldn't it? It's a way to encourage families to give kids the kind of quality education that they often have earned — and deserve."

Few educators expect the Republican-controlled Congress to embrace tax deductions for tuition outlays. Indeed, GOP leaders have called for cuts of more than $10 billion in student aid over the next seven years. Reports of widespread abuse of student loan and grant programs lent substance to the demands for reform.

On Jan. 22, however, the Education Department announced that the rate at which college students default on their loans fell from 22.4 percent in 1990 to 11.6 percent in 1993. Moreover, the department said it had collected more than $2 billion in overdue loans. Education Secretary Richard W. Riley credited more vigorous action

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At Issue:

Was the University of California Board of Regents justified in ending affirmative action preferences for admissions?

yes

GOV. PETE WILSON, R-CALIF.
FROM *THE SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE,* JAN. 18, 1996.

Last July, the University of California's Board of Regents decided . . . that every high school graduate in California should have an equal opportunity to compete for admissions to the UC system based on individual merit, regardless of race.

It was the right decision then. It's the right decision now.

Racial preferences are by definition racial discrimination. They were wrong 30 years ago when they discriminated against African-Americans. And they're wrong today, when they discriminate against Asian- or Caucasian-Americans.

Abolishing them . . . was not only necessary to meet the University of California's mission as an institution of higher learning committed to the fundamental American principles of equal opportunity and individual merit, it was critical to maintaining for the university support and credibility among the millions of hard-working Californians whose taxes finance this institution.

Admission to UC isn't an entitlement that should be distributed based on some quota. It's something to be earned — based on hard work and individual excellence.

Ending racial preferences in admissions at UC was also necessary to comply with the law of the land as articulated by the U.S. Supreme Court. In a series of decisions last spring, the court made it abundantly clear that classifying individuals by race, except in the narrowest circumstances, is unconstitutional. . . .

Rather than constantly revisiting this decision, we must get on with implementing it and making the other changes necessary to ensure that every Californian has the opportunity to pursue the world-class education offered by all nine UC campuses. In the past five years, we've more than doubled the student aid available to California's college students. And this year, an expanding economy has allowed us to keep student fees from increasing.

But we cannot ignore the failure of a K-12 system that has allowed so many Californians to graduate from high school unprepared for college. The best way to ensure diversity at UC isn't to grant special preferences in admissions to some students at the expense of others; it's to ensure that every student receives the elementary and secondary education that will allow them to compete for admissions to UC based on individual merit, regardless of the color of their skin, their race, ethnicity or gender. . . .

Today, we must renew our commitment to fundamental fairness. The regents must fulfill their obligation to set policy for this institution and continue moving forward to equal opportunity for all Californians by rejecting motions to retreat from last July's principled decision — a retreat which, however well-intended, would commit this university system to a morally indefensible policy of explicit racial and gender preferences.

no

ROY T. BROPHY
Member and past chairman of the University of California Board of Regents

FROM *THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE,* NOV. 14, 1995.

It was a mistake for the University of California Board of Regents to abolish affirmative action practices at UC — a mistake that needs fixing. This was clear to me when the regents acted last July. That's why I voted against the action. . . . I believe there's a better way to proceed. It centers on two key factors: a proposed ballot measure called the California Civil Rights Initiative (CCRI) and UC's traditional respect for the principle of "shared governance."

If passed by voters, the CCRI would amend the state Constitution to eliminate preferences based on race, gender or ethnicity in state employment, public contracting and college and university admissions. The backers of the initiative are currently far short of collecting enough signatures to qualify it for the November 1996 ballot. They have until Feb. 21 to do so. If they succeed, the voters will decide the future of affirmative action as we know it in this state and within the University of California.

The Board of Regents could have waited for this to play out. We could have used the time to consult with faculty and students, administrators, staff and others who have a stake in this issue. The regents could have taken a vote, but held off final adoption of any changes pending the fate of the CCRI. We could have conducted a study . . . to identify equitable options that would have preserved what worked well about affirmative action and addressed what needed attention. I proposed an amendment to this effect at the July regents' meeting. It was defeated 14-10. If CCRI fails to qualify for the ballot, I fully intend to raise the issue again. I will formally propose to the regents that they reconsider their vote of last July, examine this most sensitive issue more carefully and fairly and, in so doing, revive the principle and practice of shared governance.

Shared governance is one of the qualities that has made UC one of the world's great universities. Put simply, it means that the regents, in governing the university, delegate the implementation of policy to the president and the chancellors, and entrust to the faculty academic matters such as academic policy, hiring and promotions and the conditions for admission.

At the heart of shared governance is the idea of communication and consultation. This is especially important in matters that affect the role of the faculty and the educational experience we provide to students. The regents, by voting as they did last July, broke from this valued tradition. . . .

What the regents did was wrong. How they did it was wrong. We need to work together, all of us at UC, to make it right.

Setting Academic Standards for Athletes

At many colleges, the most closely watched admissions decisions are those involving student athletes. Jean H. Fetter, former dean of undergraduate admissions at Stanford University, put it this way: "[W]hen the Stanford team does well, the coach gets a lot of credit; when the team performs badly, the dean of undergraduate admissions is held responsible." [1]

At Stanford, one of the nation's most selective private universities, students who want to participate in intercollegiate athletics are considered "through fundamentally the same admissions process as every other applicant for the freshman and transfer classes," Fetter noted. But many other institutions hold incoming student athletes to lower academic standards than other freshmen must meet.

The current standards, approved in 1983 by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), require incoming athletes at Division I schools to have at least a 2.0 high school grade-point average (out of 4.0) in a core curriculum of 11 courses. They also must score at least 700 points (out of a possible 1,600) on the combined Scholastic Achievement Tests (SATs) or average 15 points (out of 36) on each of the four parts of the American College Testing Program (ACT).

In 1992, however, the NCAA tightened the standards. Under the revised rules, which take effect Aug. 1, 1996, freshman athletes will be ineligible for Division I teams unless they have a high school grade-point average (GPA) of 2.5 in 13 core courses. In addition, they must get at least 700 on the SATs, as before, or average 17 on the ACT. [2] A new sliding scale allows athletes to gain eligibility with a core GPA as low as 2.0, provided they offset it with substantially higher standardized test results.

Also starting Aug. 1, athletes who fall short of the new academic requirements but meet other minimum standards can practice and receive athletic aid as freshmen. Such athletes, called partial qualifiers, can meet a sliding scale that allows for a combined SAT score as low as 600 (or an ACT average score of 15) if it is offset by a core GPA of at least 2.75. These athletes retain three years of eligibility.

On Jan. 8, 1996, Division I delegates to the NCAA's annual convention in Dallas, Texas, narrowly defeated a proposal to eliminate standardized-test scoring requirements for student athletes with solid grades in high school core courses. The 163-161 vote mirrored a longstanding split in NCAA Division I ranks between institutions determined to hold athletes to some minimum academic-performance standards and those who say such rules discriminate against youngsters from low-income families. [3]

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[1] Jean H. Fetter, *Questions and Admissions: Reflections on 100,000 Admissions Decisions at Stanford* (1995), p. 152.

[2] The NCAA is now adding together individual ACT scores to yield a combined total. Thus, starting Aug. 1, incoming freshmen athletes must score at least 68 points (out of 144) on the four segments.

[3] For background, see "High School Sports," *The CQ Researcher,* Sept. 22, 1995, pp. 825-848, and "College Sports," *The CQ Researcher,* Aug. 26, 1994, pp. 745-768.

against defaulters by the Clinton administration and a healthier national economy. "These significant default reductions and loan collections should quiet critics who claim we aren't up to the task, and therefore shouldn't be entrusted to manage the direct-loan program," Riley declared. [29]

Competition for Students

Top colleges say that students are so worried about getting into good schools that the number of applications has increased at least 50 percent in the last decade. At Georgetown University, for example, the number of applications grew from 6,500 in 1991 to more than 10,000 this year. [30]

To gain an edge in attracting the top students, many selective colleges and universities are turning to binding early-admissions programs, in which applications typically are due by Nov. 1 of the high school senior year. Such programs are open to students who promise to attend the school if admitted.

When Yale switched from non-binding to binding early admissions last fall, the number of early applicants dropped by 31 percent. "It wasn't a surprise to us; we kind of anticipated that," Shaw says. At the same time, he adds, "Our overall applications are up. More students are using the regular application process, which is something we feel perfectly comfortable with." According to the College Board, 471 institutions had early-admission programs last year, compared with 371 in 1990.

Meanwhile, a U.S. college education is becoming increasingly sought by students abroad. And foreign students, in turn, are prized because, typically, they pay higher fees than U.S. students and are ineligible for financial aid. Although students from abroad usually seek degrees from four-year universities, many initially enroll in a two-year community college to improve their English and stretch their financial resources.

In the United States, competition for students now extends well beyond traditional recruiting territories. Some institutions have opened recruiting offices in neighboring or distant states in an effort to build student bodies that are geographically or ethnically more diverse. Others have gone electronic, making glossy campus "tours" available via CD-ROM.

Such promotions are beyond the reach of many small, private colleges. These institutions often turn to private recruiting firms to drum up applicants

— a practice deplored by many education officials. "How can a salesperson who is quota-driven be thinking about the best interest of the kids as opposed to themselves?" asked William McClintick, vice president of admission practices at the National Association of College Admission Counselors.[31] ■

OUTLOOK

Continued Growth?

As they chart the future, college educators foresee continued growth of U.S. higher education. Part of it will come in the traditional way — expansion of existing campus facilities. Swanson notes, however, that some institutions have neither the space nor the desire to expand. That's particularly true, he says, of "smaller, liberal arts colleges that feel they have reached a size that's right for them."

Swanson also believes community colleges will assume a more significant role in coming years, since they often have a flexibility that many four-year institutions lack. "If the local fire department wants to offer a fire-science course, for instance, the community college can send some of its faculty to teach it at the firehouse. Community colleges aren't necessarily tied to specific locations."

Electronic instruction may hold the greatest potential of all for fueling higher education's growth. "With distance learning, you can offer a course at several sites simultaneously and have two-way communication between faculty and students," says Swanson. "We're also going to see more packaging of education through various electronic media, from the Internet to CD-ROM."

Elaine El-Khawas, vice president for policy analysis and research at the American Council on Education, notes that it's possible even now to obtain a college degree entirely by electronic means. At this point, however, the opportunity exists only "in very specific areas — a master's degree in certain engineering technology fields, for instance. But that kind of thing is going to advance further."

Mixing classroom and electronic instruction raises the question of who decides whether a student has qualified for a college degree. According to El-Khawas, "Most universities will require some minimum amount of coursework taken in their facilities to obtain a degree from them. That's the practice today. If you transfer into a college with a good number of credits toward a bachelor's degree, you may still have to take, say, one-quarter of your total courses at that institution. That kind of requirement is likely to remain in place."

So-called proprietary institutions could witness substantial growth in the future. "We tend to think of those as being very skill-specific — Connecticut School of Horseshoeing, or something like that," says Swanson. "But many of them offer bona fide transfer courses as well. Students may enroll primarily to take a certain skill course, but they can also take general-studies courses that can help them gain admission to another institution."

Because proprietary schools usually operate on a for-profit basis, adds Swanson, "they're looking very actively at expanding their markets." Victims of corporate downsizing could be particularly receptive to what the proprietaries have to offer: "Increasingly, people will need retraining in their original field or an entirely different field."

The celebrated baby-boom generation, which triggered the college enrollment boom of the 1960s and '70s, may come to higher education's rescue again. "Large numbers of baby boomers are going to be early-retiring

FOR MORE INFORMATION

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, 1 Dupont Circle N.W., Suite 330, Washington, D.C. 20036-1171; (202) 293-9161. AACRAO develops admissions and registration policies and conducts institutional research.

American College Testing, 2201 N. Dodge St., P.O. Box 168, Iowa City, Iowa 52243; (319) 337-1000. ACT prepares the ACT Assessment, a college-entrance exam taken by more than 1.5 million students a year.

American Council on Education, 1 Dupont Circle N.W., Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20036-1193; (202) 939-9300. This organization for colleges, universities, education associations and students with disabilities conducts research on a number of topics in higher education.

The College Board, 45 Columbus Ave., New York, N.Y. 10023; (212) 713-8000. The board and its more than 2,900 member institutions promote high learning standards, equity of opportunity and financial support for needy college students.

Educational Testing Service, Rosedale Road, Princeton, N.J. 08541; (609) 921-9000. ETS, the world's largest private organization devoted to education measurement, is best known as the source of the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT), one of the two leading U.S. college-entrance exams.

National Association of College Admission Counselors, 1631 Prince St., Alexandria, Va. 22314; (703) 836-2222. NACAC members help students make the transition from high school to college.

in their 50s," says Swanson. "These people are going to have a lot of time on their hands, and they are not known for sitting around doing nothing. So I think they'll be in the market for additional kinds of career training, or simply personal or cultural development: 'I've always wanted to take Latin.' We're seeing a bit of this already in certain areas of the country — Florida, Arizona and California in particular — and we're going to see a lot more of it in the next decade."

Besides phasing in new instruction technology, GW's Chernak believes that "schools will have to figure out more cost-efficient ways of managing themselves." That likely means that such thorny issues as tenure "will come up for debate and be challenged, maybe even abolished." [32] Another possibility is that "three-year baccalaureate programs will become more popular to cut out a year of cost and get students into the labor market earlier. Schools are not going to be able to sustain the continued increases in tuition beyond what the American public can afford."

El-Khawas agrees. "The world of higher education is changing, and the ability to project from the past no longer holds," she says. "My guess is that colleges will continue to be [priced] somewhat ahead of inflation for the next five to 10 years. To survive, colleges will have to find a market for whatever price they charge. Those that don't find a market will close, while those that do find one will be able to thrive." ■

Notes

[1] Jean H. Fetter, *Questions and Answers: Reflections on 10,000 Admissions Decisions at Stanford* (1995), p. 253.

[2] See "Rethinking Affirmative Action," *The CQ Researcher,* April 18, 1995, pp. 375-398.

[3] Fetter, *op. cit.,* p. 250.

[4] The College Board, *Trends in Student Aid 1985 to 1995,* September 1995. See "Paying for College," *The CQ Researcher,* Nov. 20, 1992, pp. 1001-1024.

[5] The survey by *Who's Who Among American High School Students,* released Jan. 17, 1996, was sent last summer to 8,000 high school juniors and seniors. Of the 3,351 respondents, 98 percent were planning to go to college.

[6] National Center for Education Statistics, *National Post-Secondary Student Aid Study,* 1995.

[7] "How High Is Too High?" *Yale Daily News,* March 1, 1995.

[8] Philip J. Cook and Robert H. Frank, "The Economic Payoff of Attending an Ivy League Institution," *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* Jan. 5, 1996, p. B3. Cook teaches public policy at Duke University; Frank teaches economics at Cornell University.

[9] Laura Elliott, "Getting In," *The Washingtonian,* October 1993, p. 69.

[10] Michael S. McPherson and Morton Owen Schapiro, "Pricing and Financial Aid in a Shifting Environment," *The College Board Review,* spring 1995, p. 21.

[11] Hunter M. Breland, et al., *Challenges in College Admissions: A Report of a Survey of Undergraduate Admissions Policies, Practices and Procedures* (1995), p. x. The report was sponsored by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, American College Testing, The College Board, Educational Testing Service and the National Association of College Admission Counselors.

[12] *Ibid.,* p. 3.

[13] *Ibid.,* p. 5.

[14] Quoted by Kit Lively, "Man Behind Cal. Proposal Has Felt Racism's Sting," *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* July 28, 1995, p. A27.

[15] Carl C. Jorgensen, "The Consequences in California," *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* Aug. 11, 1995, p. B2.

[16] Richard D. Kahlenberg, "Affirmative Action by Class," *The Washington Post,* July 17, 1995, p. A19. Kahlenberg recently authored a book on affirmative action due to be published in May.

[17] Harold S. Wechsler, *The Qualified Student* (1977), p. 7.

[18] From "The Reform of College Entrance Requirements," Farrand's inaugural address as president of the Schoolmaster's Association of New York and Vicinity, Oct. 12, 1895, quoted in Wechsler.

[19] Wechsler, *op. cit.,* p. 20.

[20] *Ibid.,* p. 57.

[21] Garland G. Parker, *The Enrollment Explosion: A Half Century of Attendance in U.S. Colleges and Universities* (1971), p. 23.

[22] See "Jobs in the '90s," *The CQ Researcher,* Feb. 28, 1992, pp. 181-204.

[23] Hanna Rosin, "Race Matters," *The New Republic,* Oct. 23, 1995, p. 21.

[24] Pete Wilson, "Why Racial Preferences Must End," *San Francisco Chronicle,* Jan. 18, 1996, p. A21.

[25] Quoted by Lively, *op. cit.,* p. A27.

[26] Roy T. Brophy, "Regents Erred on Affirmative Action," *San Diego Union-Tribune,* Nov. 14, 1995, p. B7.

[27] UCLA Public Information Office news release, Jan. 8, 1996.

[28] *USA Today,* Feb. 20, 1996, p. 1D.

[29] Quoted in "Big Drop in Student-Loan Defaults Disclosed by Education Department," *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* Feb. 2, 1996, p. A25.

[30] "The Top Colleges Are Reporting Record Numbers of Applications," *The New York Times,* National Edition, Feb. 18, 1996, p. 35.

[31] Quoted by Steve Stecklow, "Some Small Colleges Hire Recruiters to Get Bigger Freshman Class," *The Wall Street Journal,* Sept. 5, 1995, p. A1.

[32] See "Academic Politics," *The CQ Researcher,* Feb. 16, 1996, pp. 145-168.

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Books

Fetter, Jean H., *Questions and Admissions: Reflections on 100,000 Admissions Decisions at Stanford,* Stanford University Press, 1995.

Fetter, a former dean of undergraduate admissions at Stanford University, concludes: "One hundred thousand applications later, I am somewhat sadly . . . resigned to the fact that I made many more young people unhappy than happy with the decisions for which I was responsible. . . . I am older (certainly), wiser (probably) and humbler (unquestionably) — and persuaded that no one, including admissions officers, will ever master the art of human assessment. And that is probably a very good thing."

Greene, Howard, and Robert Minton, *Scaling the Ivy Wall in the '90s,* Little, Brown, 1994.

The authors of this guide write, "Our underlying philosophy . . . is that a determined student in the upper quarter of his or her secondary school can be offered admission to at least one of the [76] selective colleges we list." They caution, however, that "We say *can be,* not necessarily *will be*." To help applicants get into the college of their choice, the authors lay out a 12-step strategy, including "Excel Outside Class," "Make the Most of Campus Visits" and "Write an Exciting Essay."

Moll, Richard, *Playing the Selective College Admissions Game,* Penguin Books, 1994.

Moll, a former dean of admissions at Bowdoin College, Vassar College and the University of California-Santa Cruz, offers a wealth of tips on how to make a winning admissions application. His touch throughout is light.

Articles

Elliott, Laura, "Getting In," *The Washingtonian*, October 1993.

Elliott goes behind the scenes to find out how one selective private institution — Georgetown University — puts together an incoming freshman class. As might be expected, the hardest decisions come after the truly outstanding applicants are chosen and the obviously unqualified ones are rejected.

Lewis, Stephen R., "Ensuring Access, Strengthening Institutions," *The College Board Review,* spring 1995.

"The month of April has become a vast, national 'used car lot' for admitted students," says Lewis, president of Carleton College in Northfield, Minn. "A decade ago students received an offer of financial aid and made a decision to accept it or reject it. Now the father or mother calls the financial aid officer and says, in effect, 'Your letter was an interesting first offer. What are you really going to do for us?'"

McPherson, Michael S., and Morton Owen Schapiro, "Pricing and Financial Aid in a Shifting Environment," *The College Board Review*, spring 1995.

"In many states, the public community colleges have held tuitions down, while state four-year colleges and universities are increasing tuition rapidly, which often puts them out of reach for economically disadvantaged students," McPherson and Schapiro write. "It is especially disturbing that public colleges and universities are increasing their spending on merit scholarships faster than they are increasing spending for need-based aid."

Tully, Shawn, "Finally, Colleges Start to Cut Their Crazy Costs," *Fortune,* May 1, 1995.

"Shielded by a web of laws, traditions and folkways, colleges have long proceeded at their own rhythms, blithely piling on costs and programs," Tully writes. "Productivity, a religion in the boardroom, has been heresy on campus." Now, however, economic realities are turning higher education into a buyer's market. Tully describes what colleges are doing to make their product more affordable.

Reports and Studies

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, *Challenges in College Admissions*, 1995.

The main challenge examined in this study is the sharp drop in the U.S. college-age population over the past 15 years. Despite widespread expectations of an enrollment crisis, colleges continued to thrive by adopting innovative and aggressive marketing strategies.

American Council on Education, *Campus Trends 1995*, July 1995.

Noting that "Active learning, uses of electronic technology and other changes are on the way," this report states that "Colleges and universities would be well-advised to maintain close ties with high schools and with educators in their communities, both to stay abreast of changing student needs and expectations and to keep in touch with the often substantial changes being made by the school systems themselves."

University of Colorado at Boulder, *Honors Program Self-Study,* spring 1996.

This internal study describes how the university's highly regarded honors program operates and how it compares with similar programs at other institutions. It ends with a review of plans for expansion and restructuring.

The Next Step

Additional information from UMI's Newspaper & Periodical Abstracts database

Affirmative Action

Ayres, B. Drummond Jr., "On affirmative action, Wilson's moderate path veered quickly to right," *The New York Times,* Aug. 8, 1995, p. A10.
Gov. Pete Wilson, R-Calif., has made the fight to eliminate affirmative action programs based on sex and race the center of his presidential bid, but this is a 180-degree turn for the politician, who for nearly 30 years has strongly supported affirmative action programs in hiring, contracting and college admissions.

Baumann, Marty, "What Voters Say on Affirmative Action, Preference," *USA Today,* March 2, 1992, p. A9.
The results of a *USA Today*/CNN/Gallup poll are presented. Voters in general and Southern white voters in particular were asked if they would be more or less likely to vote for a presidential candidate who favors strengthening affirmative action laws for all minorities or giving blacks preference for jobs and college admissions.

Bunzel, John H., "Race and college admissions," *Public Interest,* winter 1996, pp. 49-58.
University officials have failed to explain how the quest for racial diversity is balanced against other factors. The admission process at elite universities is discussed.

Dembner, Alice, "Academic leaders uphold affirmative action," *Boston Globe,* July 22, 1995, p. 1.
Struggling against California's power as a trendsetter, academic leaders across the nation vowed not to abandon affirmative action policies in hiring and admissions.

"Minority initiative remains top priority," *Educational Record,* spring 1995, pp. 95-98.
The "Minority Initiative" of the American Council on Education guides a substantial portion of the council's work on behalf of U.S. colleges and universities and is geared toward advancing minority participation and success in higher education at every level. The initiative and the council's activities are detailed.

"Regent softens stance on affirmative action," *The New York Times,* June 21, 1995, p. A14.
Ward Connerly, the University of California regent who touched off a statewide debate early in 1995 by calling for an end to affirmative action in college admissions, now says he sees merit in some cases of preferential treatment for black and Hispanic students.

"Rescind U.C. vote on affirmative action," *San Francisco Chronicle,* Jan. 13, 1996, p. A18.
An editorial calls for a closer look at the import and long-term ramifications of the 1995 University of California Board of Regents vote abolishing affirmative action. The vote represents a breach of academic respect and cooperation and should be rescinded, the editorial says.

Wallace, Amy, "4 U.C. regents seek meeting on affirmative action vote," *Los Angeles Times,* Dec. 6, 1995, p. A3.
Four University of California regents have called for a special board meeting in December 1995 to discuss allegations that the Board of Regents ignored the views of its faculty when voting to roll back affirmative action in the summer of 1995.

Athletics and Admissions Policies

Carmody, Deirdre, "Colleges Bend Admissions for More Than Athletes," *The New York Times,* Jan. 25, 1989, p. B6.
The NCAA's Proposition 42, which raises scholarship standards for freshman athletes, has been met with criticism from those who contend the rule discriminates against poor blacks and brings to light a college admissions principle of bending the rules in certain circumstances, such as when students' talents lie solely in science or the dramatic arts or if their parents are generous donors.

Kelly, Dennis, "Students Say Sports Is Key to College Aid," *USA Today,* Nov. 26, 1990 p. A1.
More high school students think their best chance for a college scholarship will come from athletics rather than academics or other special skill areas, according to a study conducted by the National Research Center for College and University Admissions.

MacFarquhar, Neil, "High grades, hoop dreams," *The New York Times,* June 5, 1995, p. B1.
In 1995 for the third year in a row, every graduating senior at St. Anthony High School in Jersey City, N.J., has been accepted at a college. The 47 seniors collecting diplomas on June 5 have amassed more than $1 million in financial aid. There is no question that the school's statistics are boosted by its champion basketball team and the fact that its players win full college scholarships, but those outside the team succeed as well.

Sperber, Murray, "Affirmative action for athletes," *Education Digest,* December 1995, pp. 57-59.
Sperber comments on what he calls the illogic and hypocrisy of the special-admissions loophole for college

athletes. Admissions inevitably will be denied to large numbers of minority applicants who present considerably higher grades and test scores — and much greater potential for academic achievement — than many athletes.

Efforts to Recruit Students

Biemiller, Lawrence, "Banners, brochures, small talk: An admissions director works college night at Bishop McDevitt," *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* Nov. 3, 1995, p. A67.

Mark Lapreziosa's work as admissions and financial aid director at Beaver College, Glen side, Pa., is described. Lapreziosa competes against Boston College and other schools during college night at high schools.

Curtis, Diane, "Early College Admissions — Many Schools Leery," *San Francisco Chronicle,* Feb. 12, 1990, p. A1.

The growing trend of expanded early college admissions programs has sparked debate among educators on the collegiate and high school levels. The controversy over whether it benefits the student is discussed.

Mathews, Jay, "New college rush: Signing high school seniors early," *The Washington Post,* Jan. 4, 1996, p. A19.

New university admissions policies have been putting pressure on American high school students to pick their college in the first weeks of their senior year, a change that some educators say is rushing what should be a longer, more thoughtful process.

Sanoff, Alvin P., and Kukula Glastris, "The consulting game," *U.S. News & World Report,* Sept. 18, 1995, pp. 119-122.

Many colleges, faced with dwindling enrollments and ballooning financial-aid budgets, are operating much more like corporate America, turning to consultants for sophisticated advice on a variety of issues. As a result, college fairs are out and sophisticated marketing is in. The techniques used by the University of Virginia and DePaul University to attract enrollees are discussed.

Stecklow, Steve, "Peddling schools: Some small colleges hire recruiters to get bigger freshman class," *The Wall Street Journal,* Sept. 5, 1995, p. A1.

Many colleges, scrambling for students at a time when tuition has risen too high for many families to afford, are taking extreme measures to recruit students. Bethany College in Scotts Valley, Calif., has outsourced its entire admission operation to D.H. Dagley Associates Inc. Other techniques include telemarketing, direct mailing, geodemographic research and computerized-inquiry tracking.

Stepp, Diane R., "Out-of-state schools losing to HOPE," *Atlanta Journal Constitution,* Jan. 21, 1996, p. D1.

As college admissions offices make last-minute pitches for the 1996-97 school year's freshmen class, out-of-state colleges are finding it tougher to attract students from Georgia, which is due mainly to the Helping Outstanding Students Educationally scholarship fund.

Tips on Applying

Arenofsky, Janice, "Do grades tell the whole story?" *Career World,* November 1995, pp. 6-12.

Some researchers believe that grades don't always represent a student's knowledge or skill level and that high grades are not the only thing that can lead to success. Extracurricular activities and volunteer experiences can help an average student in the college admissions process.

Daniels, Charlene D., "Do Your Application Legwork," *USA Today,* Oct. 27, 1992, p. D4.

Three members of *USA Today's* 1991 All-USA Academic Team, who have been through the college admissions and financial aid process and are now college sophomores, offer advice to future college students.

Hill, James, "ACT making a career for itself, opens office in Vernon Hills mall," *Chicago Tribune,* May 24, 1995, p. L2.

ACT, a nonprofit organization known nationally for its college admissions testing, now provides a wide range of assessments and related services in college financial aid, scholarship and recognition programs.

Ordovensky, Pat, "Early applicants get financial aid," *USA Today,* Oct. 27, 1994, p. D4.

Answers to some of the questions received from callers to *USA Today's* College Admissions/Financial Aid Hot Line are given.

Pina, Phillip, "Early lessons for the college-bound," *USA Today,* Nov. 15, 1995, p. D6.

Asking everything from how to pay for college to where to send applications, 1,400 employees and their children attended college planning seminars sponsored by communications giant GTE Corp. GTE originated the teleconference from four major plants and broadcast it live to 18 of the company's buildings across the country on Nov. 4, 1995.

Roberts, Raequel, "The Admissions Maze," *The Houston Post,* June 25, 1989, p. F1.

The world of modern-day college and university admissions process is examined.

Back Issues

Great Research on Current Issues Starts Right Here...Recent topics covered by The CQ Researcher are listed below. Before May 1991, reports were published under the name of Editorial Research Reports.

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