



**Faculty Senate
Minutes
Monday, January 27, 2025
4:00 – 5:30 PM, Microsoft Teams**

The meeting was called to order by Faculty Senate Vice President Evan Eyler at 4:00 PM

Senators in Attendance: 64

Absent: 13 Senators: Anthropology (VanKeuren), English Rep1 (vacant), Mathematics & Statistics Rep1 (Julianelle), Medicine Rep2 (deJager), Orthopaedics & Rehabilitation (vacant), Pediatrics Rep2 (Todd), Psychiatry Rep 1 (Hall), Psychological Science Rep1 (vacant), Radiology Rep1 (vacant), RSCA Co-Chair (Hurley/Smith), School of the Arts Rep1 (vacant), Sociology (Kaelber), Surgery (vacant)

1. Faculty Senate President's Welcome Remarks – Evan Eyler made the following remarks:

- The UVM Board of Trustees will meet Thursday through Saturday this week. The meetings are open, except when in Executive Session, and faculty are encouraged to attend. The sessions regarding educational policy and budgetary matters are scheduled for Friday, January 31 at the Alumni House, Silver Pavilion.
- Admitted Student Visit Days begin February 14th.
- Reminder to support the reopening of the Waterman Manor.

2. Degree Conferrals

It was moved, seconded and voted that the following numbers of graduates be recommended by the Senate to the President for the awarding of the appropriate degrees or certificates as authorized by the Board of Trustees. Individual names of the graduates will be recorded with the minutes of this meeting in the permanent Senate records.

Degrees:

Agriculture and Life Sciences (51)
Arts and Sciences (158 Bachelor of Arts, 38 Bachelor of Science)
Education and Social Services (22)
Engineering and Mathematical Sciences (43)
Graduate College (108)
Grossman School of Business (30)
Nursing and Health Sciences (16)

Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources (35)
Patrick Leahy Honors College (6)

Vote: 53 approved, 0 opposed, 0 abstained. The motion carried

3. **Consent Agenda**

- A. Minutes of the December 2024 Senate meeting.
- B. Curricular Affairs

- 1) Name Changes to program and major in Medical Laboratory Sciences to Biomedical & Clinical Sciences (CNHS)
- 2) New Undergraduate Certificate in Autonomy and Robotics (CEMS)
- 3) New Minor in Civic Engagement (PLHC/CAS)
- 4) New Undergraduate Certificate in Speech-Language Pathology Assistant (CNHS)

Motion: Evan Eyler stated that the consent agenda came to the Senate moved and seconded by the Executive Council. No requests were made to pull items from the consent agenda.

Vote: 49 approve, 0 oppose, 0 abstain. The motion carried.

4. **Call for Nominations** – Evan Eyler announced that the following leadership positions will be open on the Faculty Senate:

- Faculty Senate Vice President, for the 2-year term beginning July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2027. This is open to all eligible faculty.
- One (1) member at-large seat on the Executive Council to fill a vacant seat. The term will begin immediately and end on June 30, 2026. Elected Senators are eligible.
- Two (2) member at large seats on the Executive Council for a two-year term beginning July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2027. Elected Senators are eligible.

The nomination window opened today, and will close on Monday, February 24th. Nominations should be sent to Faculty.Senate@uvm.edu. Self-nominations are encouraged.

5. **Center for Community News** – Evan Eyler presented the following resolution:

Resolution to Establish the Center for Community News as a University-wide Center housed in the Provost's Office

Whereas in AY 2022, the Center for Community News was established in the College of Arts and Sciences “to grow and support student partnerships between student reporting programs at U.S. local colleges and their local news outlet”;

Whereas the Center for Community News has received substantial extra-mural grants to support this work;

Whereas the Center for Community News has plans to support and research news-academic partnerships around the country while “refining the student reporting model at UVM and being of service to the entire University”;

Whereas the Center for Community News' goals are in close alignment with the University [mission](#), "To create, evaluate, share, and apply knowledge and to prepare students to be accountable leaders who will bring to their work dedication to the global community, a grasp of complexity, effective problem-solving and communication skills, and an enduring commitment to learning and ethical conduct," and the [Academic Success Goals](#) (e.g. 1.2, 3.1, and 1.2);

Whereas Richard Watts, the Executive Director of the Center for Community News, has developed a proposal to make the Center a University-wide Center housed in the Provost's Office;

Whereas the University Manual states that "Proposals to establish, substantially change or eliminate academic centers and institutes must be approved by the Board of Trustees, upon recommendation of the President and Provost following application of appropriate governance protocols, the latter to include Faculty Senate approval" (University Manual, 208.5);

Whereas the Research, Scholarship, and Creative Arts Committee of the Faculty Senate reviewed the proposal to establish the Center for Community News on behalf of the Faculty Senate and recommends that the Faculty Senate accept the proposal to establish the Center for Community News as a University-wide Center (recommendation attached); now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Faculty Senate of the University of Vermont agrees with and accepts the proposal to establish the Center for Community News as a University-wide Center housed in the Provost's Office.

The floor was opened for discussion. No questions or comments were received.

Vote: 48 approve, 3 oppose, 4 abstain. The resolution was approved.

6. **Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws** – Evan Eyler presented the following resolution:

Resolution to accept the proposed changes to the Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws and recommend that the UVM Faculty approve the proposed changes

Whereas the Faculty of the University of Vermont shares governance of the effective management of the University's academic affairs with the administration, and authority in matters related to the academic mission is vested in the faculty by the Board of Trustees, and this authority is exercised in the Faculty Senate by elected senators and by committees authorized to act on their behalf;

Whereas the Faculty Senate relies on the Constitution and Bylaws (CBL) to guide its actions;

Whereas in 2019, the accreditors of the University of Vermont, the New England Commission on Higher Education (NECHE) required UVM to expand its general education program;

Whereas UVM has done so through the establishment of the Catamount Core Curriculum, which was approved by the Faculty Senate in 2021;

Whereas the Catamount Core Curriculum is managed by the Catamount Core Curriculum Committee as a joint committee of the Faculty Senate and Provost's Office;
Whereas the Section 1.1.b of the CBL states that the UVM "Faculty Senate is empowered to review and establish policy with respect to all curricular matters, including establishment, dissolution and substantial changes of degree programs," which is interpreted to mean that the Catamount Core Curriculum Committee should be a standing committee of the Faculty Senate;
Whereas a new standing committee of the Faculty Senate requires a change to the CBL;
Whereas amendments to the CBL may be proposed by recommendation of the Executive Council (6.1.c);
Whereas Faculty Senate President Borchert appointed an ad hoc subcommittee of the Executive Council to review the CBL and propose amendments;
Whereas the Executive Council reviewed these proposed amendments in September and October 2024, and sent its recommendations to the Faculty Senate;
Whereas the Faculty Senate has reviewed the amendments proposed by the Executive Council, including the formation of two new standing committees, the Catamount Core Curriculum Committee and a Faculty Affairs Committee, and discussed these proposals in October, November and December 2024; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Faculty Senate accepts the proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws as presented at the meeting of January 27, 2025, and recommends to the full Faculty of the University of Vermont that they approve these amendments in an electronic referendum ballot.

The floor was opened for discussion. No questions or comments were received.

Vote: 49 approve, 2 oppose, 4 abstain. The resolution was approved.

7. Reports that do not require a Senate vote:

- Curricular Affairs Committee (CAC) Report – The CAC approved 1) the addition of a concentration (Applied Biomedical Science) to the Medical Lab Sciences major and a new subject code for the major, BMCS (Biomedical and Clinical Sciences), and 2) an accelerated 3 plus 2 pathway for undergraduate Communication Sciences & Disorders (CSD) students into the corresponding graduate program in the College of Nursing Health Sciences and Graduate College

8. **Test Optional Policy** – Jay Jacobs, Vice Provost for Enrollment Management presented the history of test optional admissions at UVM, data trends, impact on yields, retention data, and what our comparators are doing. There is a spectrum of potential paths forward. The Department of Enrollment Management recommends staying test optional permanently, with regular review of the data, and a review by the Senate Student Affairs Committee every 3-5 years. The presentation slides are attached to these minutes. The floor was opened for discussion and included reasons that students may choose to submit/not submit test scores, and support for keeping test optional for equity reasons.

9. **New Business**

- Jeremy Barry, Neurological Sciences, announced that the Neuroscience and Behavioral Health Forum will be held on Friday January 31 and Saturday, February 1, 2025. Keynote speaker: John F. Cryan, Ph.D. from University College Cork. “Gut Feelings – Unlocking the Secrets of the Microbiota-Gut-Brain Axis”
- There will be an update on the Presidential search at the February Faculty Senate meeting.
- President Prelock announced that a message will be distributed on Tuesday to address the uncertainty resulting from the recent federal executive orders and proposed legislation and how they may affect the work at UVM. Educational sessions for faculty, staff and students will be held.
- A championship parade and celebration of the UVM Men’s Soccer team was held on Sunday, January 26th on Church Street Marketplace. President Prelock reported that it was an extraordinary event, and thousands came out to celebrate the team winning the National Title.

10. **Adjourn** –Julia Perdrial moved to adjourn at 5:07 PM. The motion was seconded and carried.

Test Optional Admissions

November 7, 2024

Student Affairs Committee, Faculty Senate

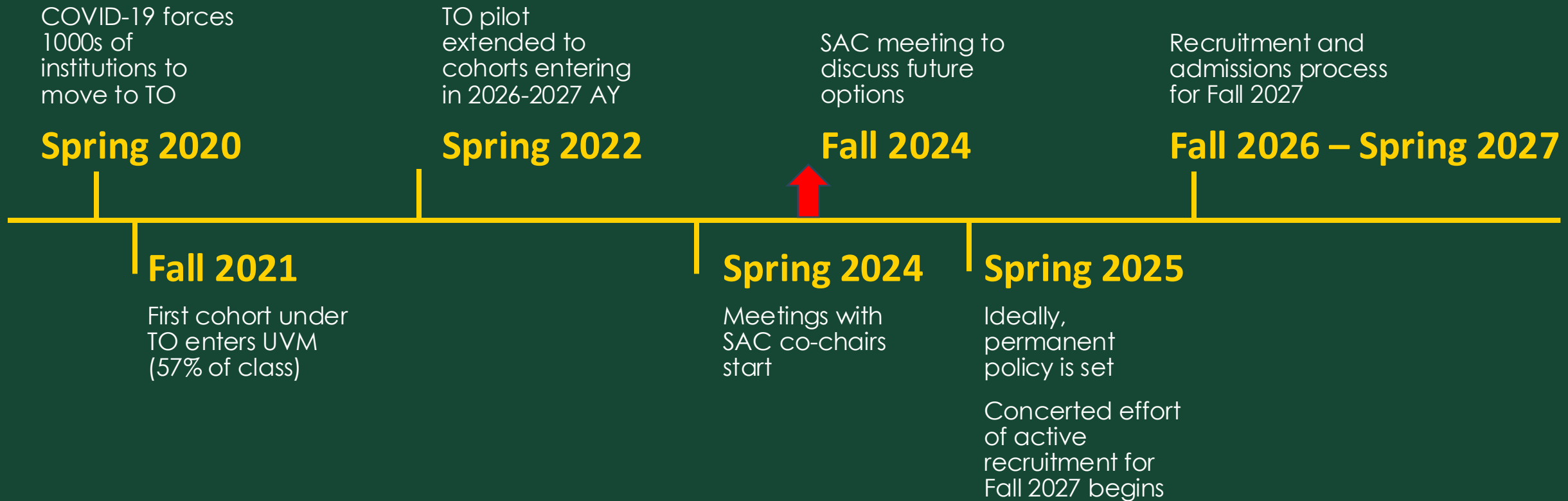
Jay Jacobs, Ed.D., Vice Provost for Enrollment Management

Moses Murphy, Director of Admissions

Agenda

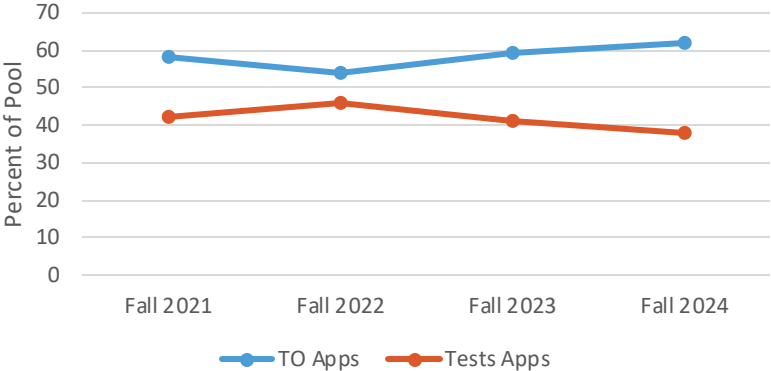
1. Timeline of test optional admissions
2. UVM Test Optional data
3. Experiences of Admissions Officers
4. Options for future state
5. Recommendation from DEM
6. Discussion

Test Optional Timeline at UVM



UVM Test Optional Data

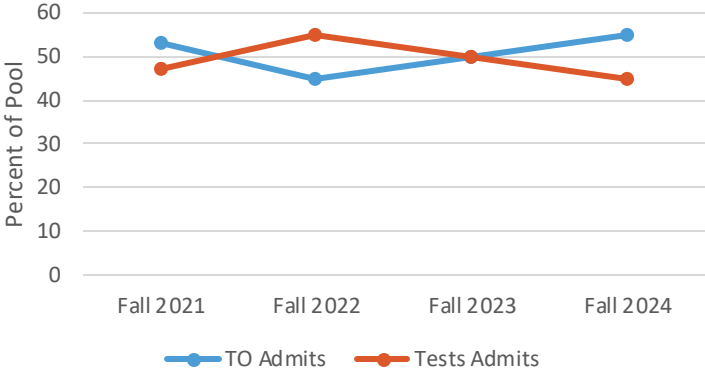
% of Apps TO Over Time



Applicants

Over the past 3 years, the number of students applying without test scores continues to increase

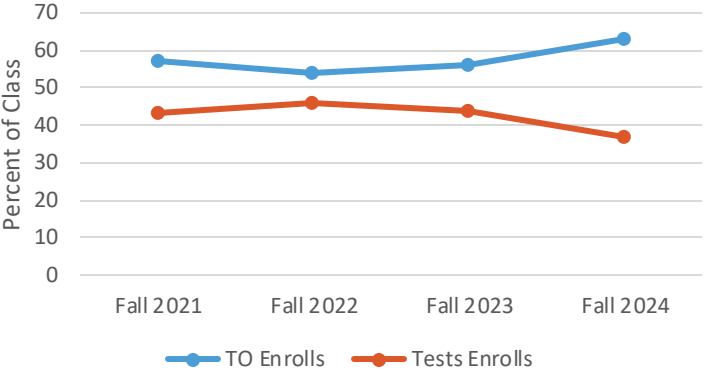
% of Admits TO Over Time



Admits

Fall 2022 was the only term where there were more admits with test scores than without; largely due to yield behaviors

% of TO Enrolls Over Time



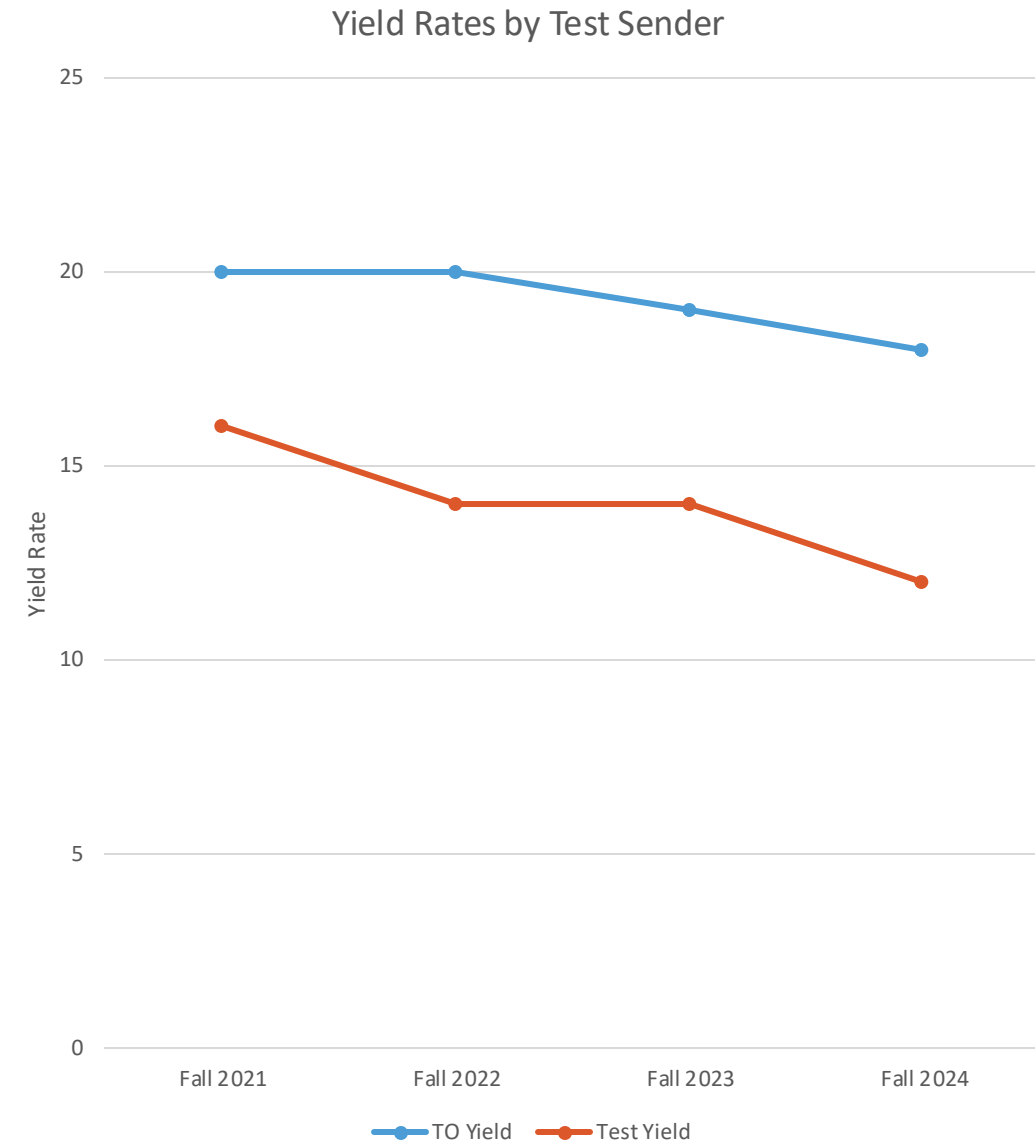
Enrolled Students

An increasing number of students enrolling without test scores since Fall 2022



TO's Impact on Yield

- Students who apply TO yield higher than students with tests on record
- Doesn't mean that we admit students without test scores only
- Allows more flexibility in shaping class



UVM Test Optional Data

Greater portions of certain applicants (and therefore admits and enrolls) are TO:

- Vermonters
- Pell eligible students
- First generation students
- BIPOC students

Application Review in a Test Optional World

What are the experiences of admission officers reading and reviewing applications with and without test scores?

Application Review Process

- Holistic approach to application review
- Core performance and strength of schedule
- Test optional doesn't mean low score
- Flexibility with applications from Vermont

Student Performance at UVM

Analysis done by OIRA

Comparators Test Optional Policies

Indefinitely Test-Optional

- Rutgers University
- St. Lawrence University
- Stony Brook University
- Binghamton University
- Northeastern University
- University of Buffalo
- University of Colorado – Boulder
- University of Delaware
- University of Massachusetts – Amherst
- University of Rochester
- University of New Hampshire

Still in Pilot Phase

- UNC Chapel Hill ((Fall 26)
- Boston University (Fall 25)
- Middlebury College (Fall 25)
- Penn St. – State College (Fall 25)
- Syracuse University (Fall 25)
- University of Virginia (Fall 25)
- Tufts University (Fall 26)
- University of Connecticut (Fall 26)

Test Required

- Cornell University (starting Fall 26)

2021 Cohort

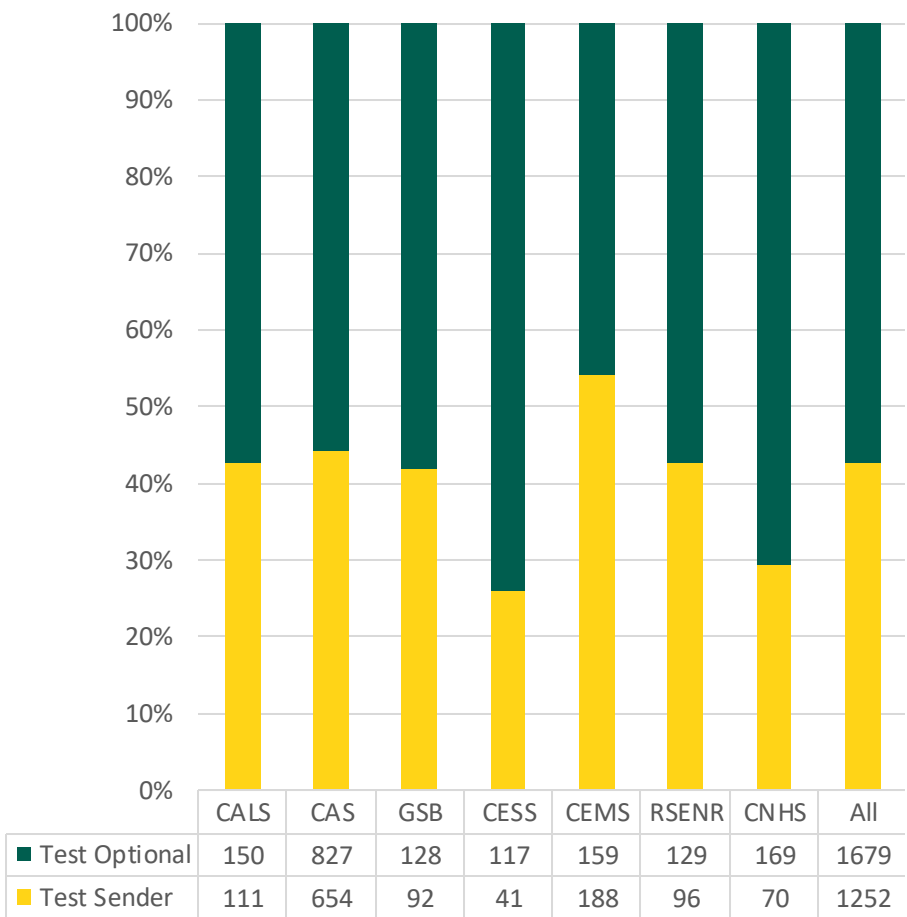
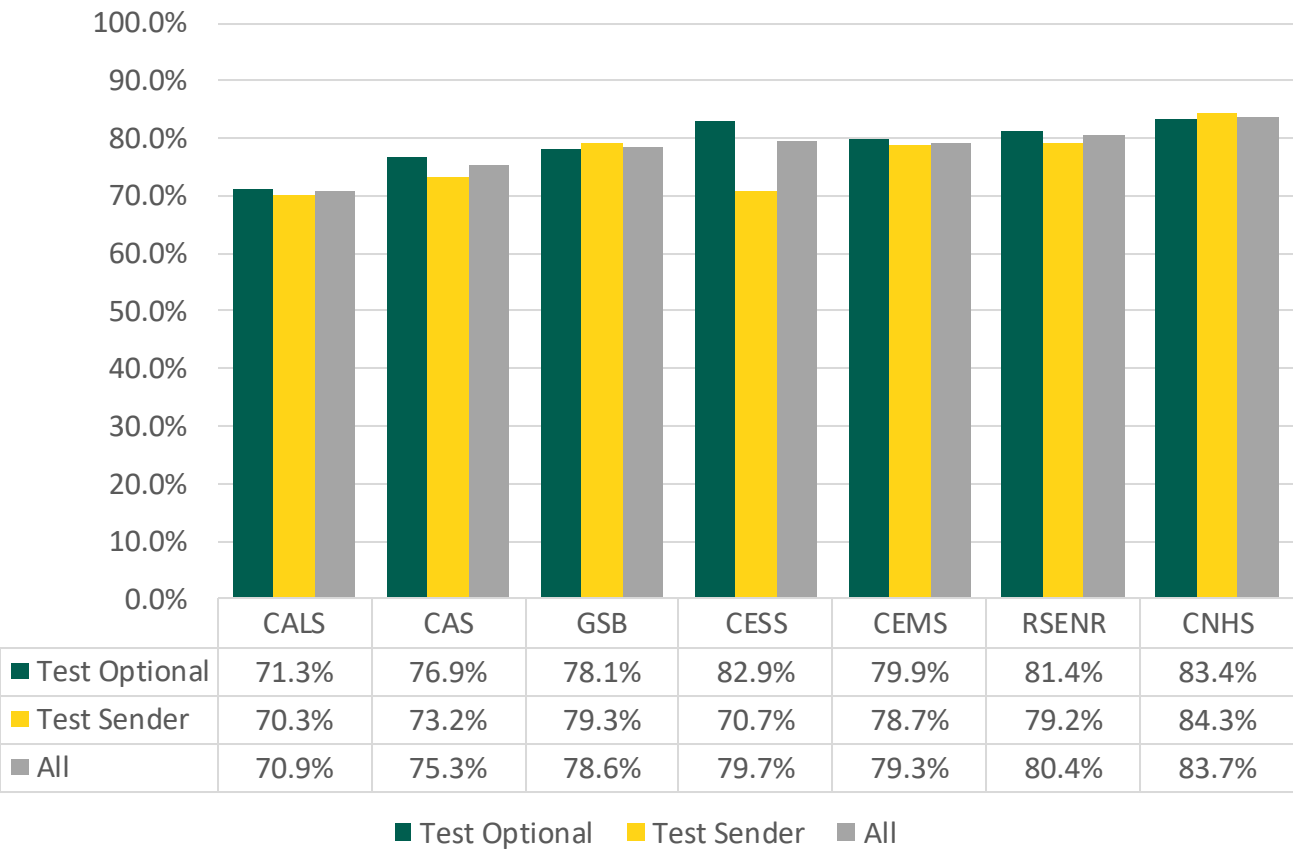
Test Optional Effect on Three- Year Retention Rates and First Fall GPA

- About 57% did not submit test scores
- The one-year retention rate of those who chose not to submit test scores and those who submitted test scores is about the same (88.3% versus 89.1%).
- The two-year retention rate of those who chose not to submit test scores and those who submitted test scores is comparable (82.6% versus 80.3%).
- The three-year retention rate of those who chose not to submit test scores and those who submitted test scores is comparable (78.2% versus 75.2%)
- Those who chose not to submit test scores had about the same average first Fall GPA as those who chose to submit either an SAT or ACT score for the 2021 Cohort, as a whole (3.29 vs 3.38)
- “Did they submit test scores?” was a significant predictor (p-value of .01) of three-year retention rates after controlling for high school GPA, first-fall semester GPA, and College/School (see Appendix for model).

Test Optional	Original Cohort Size	Retention 1-yr Later	Retention 2-yr Later	Retention 3-yr Later	Average First Fall GPA
Test Optional	1679	88.3%	82.6%	78.2%	3.29
Test Sender	1252	89.1%	80.3%	75.2%	3.38
All	2931	88.6%	81.6%	76.9%	3.33

2021 Cohort Three-Year Retention (FTFY Students only)

Three-year Retention Rate by College



*Test Optional – Did they opt out of submitting test scores?

2022 Cohort

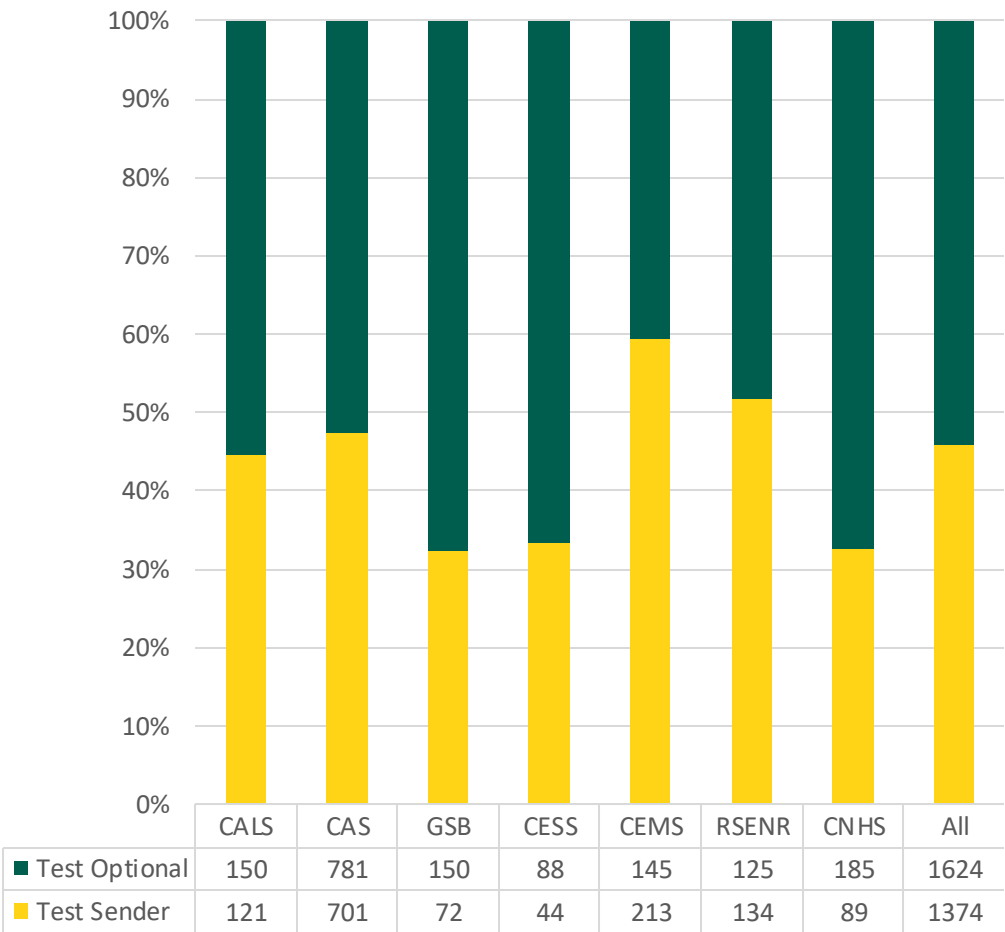
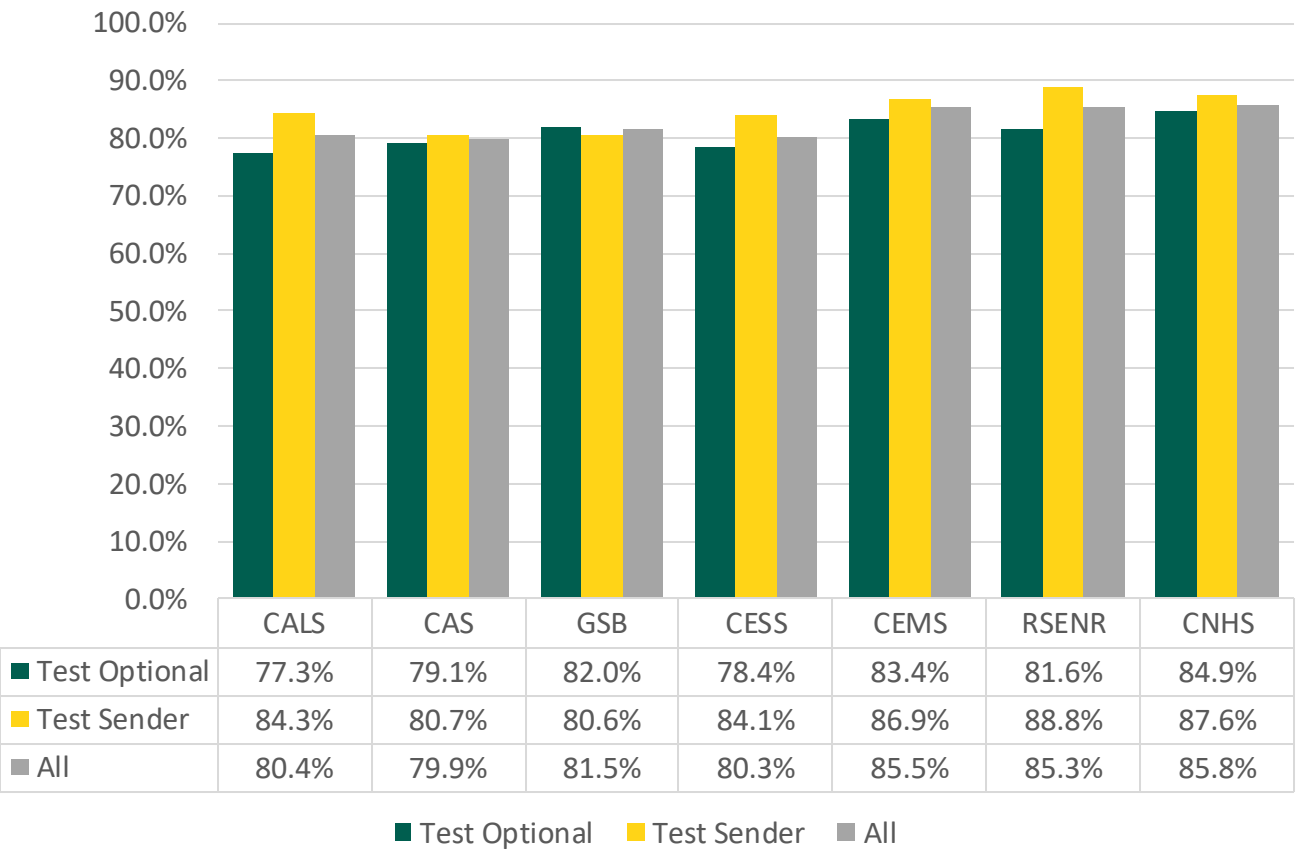
Test Optional Effect on Two-Year Retention Rates and First Fall GPA

- About 54% did not submit test scores
- The one-year retention rate of those who chose not to submit test scores and those who submitted test scores is comparable (87.4% versus 89.3%).
- The two-year retention rate of those who chose not to submit test scores and those who submitted test scores is comparable (80.4% versus 83.3%).
- “Did they submit test scores?” was not a significant predictor (p-value of .72) of two-year retention rates after controlling for high school GPA, first-fall semester GPA, and College/School (see Appendix for model).
- Those who chose not to submit test scores had a slightly lower average first Fall GPA as those who chose to submit either an SAT or ACT score for the 2022 Cohort, as a whole (3.23 vs 3.42)

Test Optional	Original Cohort Size	Retention 1-yr Later	Retention 2-yr Later	Average First Fall GPA
Test Optional	1624	87.4%	80.4%	3.23
Test Sender	1374	89.3%	83.3%	3.42
All	2998	88.3%	81.8%	3.32

2022 Cohort Two-Year Retention (FTFY Students only)

Two-year Retention Rate by College



*Test Optional – Did they opt out of submitting test scores?

2023 Cohort

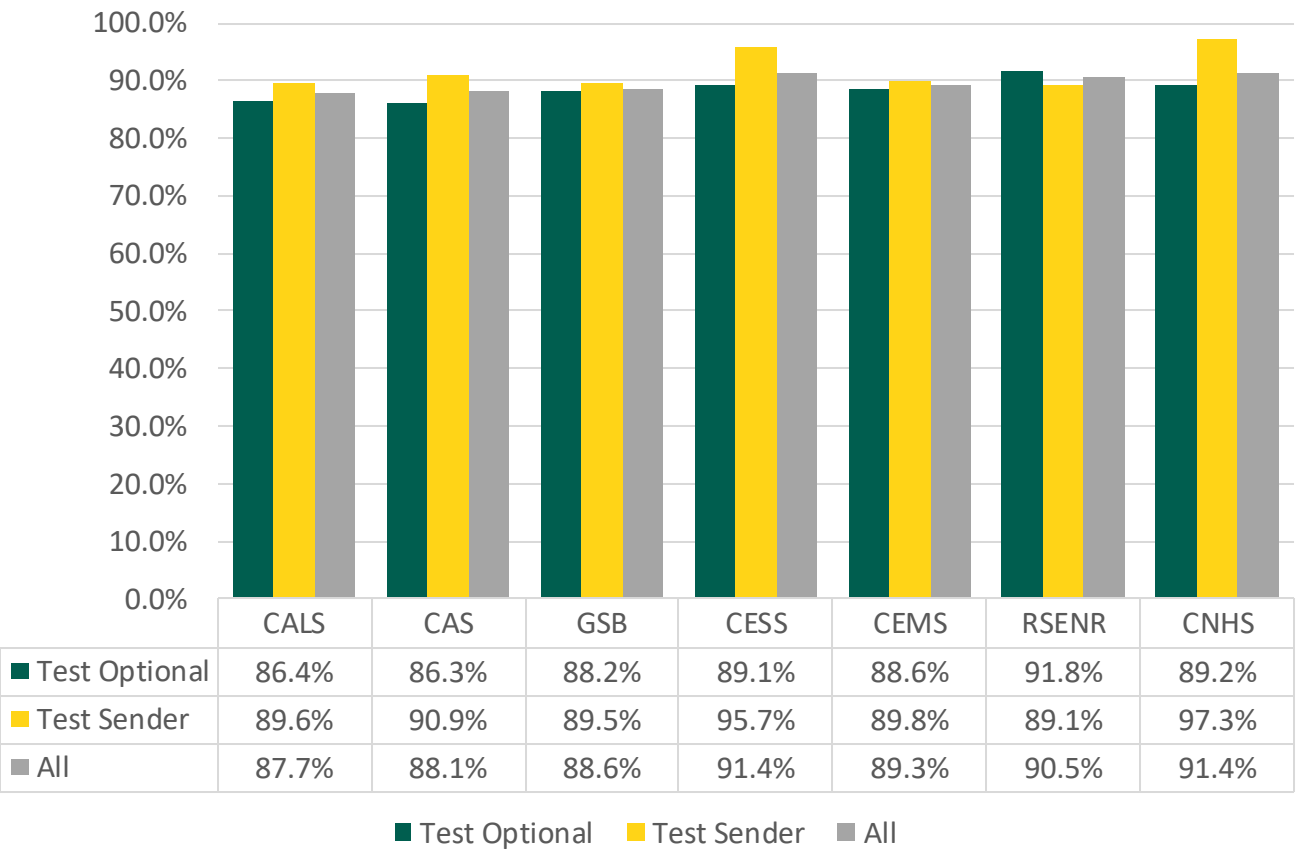
Test Optional Effect on One-Year Retention Rates and First Fall GPA

- About 60% did not submit test scores
- The one-year retention rate of those who chose not to submit test scores and those who submitted test scores is comparable (87.6% versus 90.9%).
- “Did they submit test scores?” was not a significant predictor (p-value of .47) of one-year retention rates after controlling for high school GPA, first-fall semester GPA, and College/School (see Appendix for model).
- Those who chose not to submit test scores had a slightly lower average first Fall GPA as those who chose to submit either an SAT or ACT score for the 2022 Cohort, as a whole (3.29 vs 3.46)
- “Did they submit test scores?” was a significant predictor (p-value of <.01) of first-fall semester GPA after controlling for high school GPA, and College/School (see Appendix for model).
- Both models had relatively low r-square suggesting that whether students submitting test scores does not have a large effect on whether a student is retained or their first fall academic performance.

Test Optional	Original Cohort Size	Retention 1-yr Later	Average First Fall GPA
Test Optional	1727	87.6%	3.29
Test Sender	1169	90.9%	3.46
All	2896	89.0%	3.36

2023 Cohort One-Year Retention (FTFY Students only)

One-year Retention Rate by College



*Test Optional – Did they opt out of submitting test scores?

Next Steps

Options and DEM recommendation

Potential Paths Forward

Test Required

Apps must include SAT/ACT

Pros:

- Consistent data across the full applicant pool/student body
- Added variables for predictive value

Cons:

- Expected decrease in applicant pool by at least 10%
- Lose a predictive variable in yield

Test Optional

Continuation of status quo

Pros:

- Gives students the ownership of what is evaluated
- Helps predict yield

Cons:

- Creates some confusion for applicants as to where and when to submit

Test Free

Admissions will NOT review test scores

Pros:

- Clear message to students; both operationally and value-based

Cons:

- Disadvantage students who are proud of their test scores
- Lose predictive yield variable

Other Options Not Considering

- “Strongly Encouraged”
 - Will be read as required; unclear messaging
- School/College/Program specific
 - Confusing for students; administratively burdensome; downstream impacts when students change majors
- Test “flexible”
 - Tests required, but may include AP, IB, or other types of standardized tests
 - Confusing for students; not tested on predictive value for student success

DEM Recommends to Stay Test Optional Permanently

- Gives students the flexibility to showcase their candidacy in ways that they believe best present their ability
- Continue to collect standardized test scores from enrolled students for research purposes
- Regularly review the data from Fall 2021 and beyond to understand how different groups perform on campus
- Review enrollment data annually and student success data every 3-5 years
- Review with the Student Affairs Committee every 3-5 years

Discussion

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