

Learning Lab: Selective Admissions in the U.S. - An Inside Look & Conversation

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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE HIGHLY SELECTIVE?



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31 out of 1,613 four-year colleges and universities admitted fewer than 10% of applicants in 2021. These institutions are highly selective:

- Institutions where 10% or less of the applicants are admitted
- Institutions that receive more applications than there are spots available
- Institutions with a holistic approach to application review
- Institutions with no magic formula for admission (no cut-offs or ceilings)
- Institutions where fit – academic, intellectual, personal, social, and sometimes demonstrated interest – plays an important role in admission



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ADMISSION IS SELECTIVE, NOT
JUST COMPETITIVE. WHY?



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Sample first-year class: from prospects to alumni



SELECTIVE (30 - 60%)

Baylor University
George Washington University
Southern Methodist University
Trinity University
University of California - San Diego
Chapman University

VERY SELECTIVE (15 - 30%)

Georgia Institute of Technology
University of Texas - Austin
University of Florida
University of California - Irvine
University of Notre Dame

HIGHLY SELECTIVE (<10%)

Stanford University
University of Pennsylvania
Vanderbilt University
Yale University
Duke University



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IS IT AN EXACT SCIENCE?



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HOLISTIC REVIEW

- Each institution has set priorities that guide how they build a class
- Universities tend to share their overarching priorities within their strategic plan
- Can change from year to year

Why are holistic admission decisions difficult to predict?

- Decisions are based on institutional priorities and goals.
- The evaluation is both objective and subjective.
- Each year is different.



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APPLICATIONS & EVALUATION.



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Which application(s) should your students fill out?

- The Common Application
- The Coalition Application
- University Specific Applications

Encourage students to fill out everything in the application, in detail!

Utilize additional/optional components if your students wish to provide further context not found elsewhere.

- Additional Information/Statement
- Community Disruption Essay
- Admission Interviews
- Resume



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HOW TO BEST GUIDE YOUR STUDENTS.



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Actionable Insights

- Help parents and legal guardians of your students understand their role in the college search process.
- Advise students to self-reflect as they review their current activities and goals – what's important to them?
- Explore colleges and universities – create and maintain a relationship with admissions officers.
- Learn more about access and pre-college and college visit programs.
- Understand admissions terminology and lingo.
- Evaluate class profiles to aid in your advising (counseling to submit scores based on percentiles)



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THANK YOU!



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STAY CONNECTED!

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