

TEST-OPTIONAL POLICY EXPANDS EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

(From *Rivier Today*, Fall 2015)



Undergraduate students applying to Rivier University for fall 2016 are no longer required to submit SAT/ACT scores for admission consideration to most programs. This admissions policy change will provide greater accessibility to a college education, streamline the application process, and encourage a more diverse applicant pool.

“The shift to a test-optional policy allows us to apply a more holistic approach to the admissions process,” says Sister Paula Marie Buley, IHM, President. “This decision supports the University’s mission to acknowledge, respect, and educate the whole person and to increase opportunities for educational enrichment.”

Research conducted by College Board, the nonprofit organization that administers the SAT and Advanced Placement exams, has found that SAT scores are highly correlated to socio-economic status. According to The National Center for Fair and Open Testing, test-optional policies “promote both equity and excellence” in college admissions. The Center maintains that the emphasis placed on standardized test scores deters students from minority racial and ethnic groups, and students from first-generation-to-college and lower-income families from applying to colleges and universities. The new policy also benefits good students whose low SAT/ACT test scores can prohibit college acceptance.

“Removing the SAT/ACT application requirement makes our admissions policy more inclusive,” says Karen Schedin, Vice President for Enrollment Management. “We consider high school academic performance, the most reliable indicator of college preparedness, as well as the student’s extracurricular activities, volunteerism, and employment. Adopting the test-optional policy will offer admission to a more diverse population of qualified students.”

The test-optional policy applies to all majors except nursing, a profession that demands standardized testing proficiency to meet professional licensing requirements. All students do have the option to submit test scores as part of their application.

High school students can apply to Rivier University using the Common Application or Rivier’s online application form. There is no application fee for fall 2016 applicants. ■

** Test optional policy does not apply to nursing applicants.*