
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: TRACEY SCHWARZE, FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT
FROM: LORI UNDERWOOD, UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE CHAIR
SUBJECT: MODIFICATION OF MANDATORY SAT SCORE POLICY
DATE: 5/19/2016
CC: VIRGINIA PURTLE, VICE PROVOST

NEW SAT POLICY FOR ADMISSIONS

The University Admissions Committee has for some time been concerned with fashioning an admissions policy that maximizes our ability to attract students to CNU that can be successful here. One of our concerns was that a number of students with exemplary academic records were failing to gain admission to the university due to low SAT scores. Vice Provost Purtle has done substantial research in the areas of student success and retention and has determined that high school GPA is a much better indicator of future academic success than SAT score. However, SAT averages are important for the continued improvement of our university's reach and reputation. This policy would allow us to admit promising students with poor test scores without damaging our reported SAT average. To those ends, the UAC recommends a change to our current recruitment policies.

We recommend that the reporting of SAT scores be made optional for two specific subsets of students. This would allow for more discretion in the admissions process and would allow CNU to continue to report strong SAT averages. Versions of this policy have been implemented at a number of well-respected institutions including George Mason University. The specifics of the proposal are as follows:

- Students earning an Advanced Studies diploma with at least a 3.5 GPA would not be required to submit SATs scores to be considered for admission to the university.
- Students in the upper 10% of their classes who are earning an Advanced Studies diploma would not be required to submit SATs scores to be considered for admission to the university.
- Students in either of the above categories who wished to be considered for the Honors program or the President's Leadership Program would be required to submit an SAT score as part of the admissions process for those programs.
- According to Patty Cavender, there would likely be fewer than 80 students admitted each year under this policy that would not be admitted under current admissions standards. U.S. News requires that 50% or more of students submit SAT scores for the average score to be included in their rankings.

The UAC asks the Faculty Senate to review our report and make a recommendation to Provost Summerville as soon as possible so that next year's recruitment class may benefit from the proposed policy.

Virginia Purtle has indicated that she would be glad to answer any questions concerning the policy at your September 8th meeting if you would like for her to do so.

We thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Lori Underwood, Chair

Undergraduate Admissions Committee