Self-Reporting Scores: Better for Colleges, Better for Students

Jordan Crenshaw  Birmingham-Southern College, AL
Jamal Gaddis  Washington University in St. Louis, MO
Rebecca Rutsky  Alabama School of Fine Arts, AL
Mary Tipton Wooley  Georgia Institute of Technology, GA

SACAC Annual Conference 2018
New Orleans, LA
The Issue - Roadblocks:

- “Send your official scores!”
- Cost
- Logistics
Cost of Sending Test Scores

• What does it cost to send an official score report? Hint: More than you think.

• How do College Board/ACT fee waivers work?

• Affects far more than just fee waiver-eligible applicants, but often hit the least savvy students & families the hardest.
Logistics

- Student Confusion:
  - When scores arrive
  - Score choice policies
  - Use of fee waivers, if available
  - “Rush” and “Priority” reporting services
  - Using a credit card
  - Contacting score agencies

- School Counselor Hassles:
  - Which scores to send
  - Did our students have all their scores reported to high school?
  - Will colleges accept only “official” score stickers vs. screen shots?
  - Some accept fax but not email.
  - Many won’t accept scores from schools, but students ask us anyway.

- Which scores do colleges use to read?
Test Score Self-Reporting Movement

Started small, but already well underway.

Now, let’s get the word out!
Who Accepts Student-Reported Test Scores?

- 96 college & universities. Just to name a few:
  - Agnes Scott
  - University of Chicago
  - Columbia
  - Harvard
  - Harvey Mudd
  - University of Iowa
  - Johns Hopkins
  - Olin College of Engineering
  - Pomona
  - Stanford
  - Texas Christian
  - Williams…

- List is growing weekly…
Presentation Goals

- Best practices
- Implement at your offices
- Learn from the experts

Spread the word!
Six Years and Not Looking Back: University of Iowa
Institutional Background: University of Iowa

- Total Undergraduate Enrollment: 24,476
- Number of First-Year Applications: ≈28,000
- Rolling admission
- Transparent, Index-Based Admission Criteria Set by Board of Regents
- Transparent, Criteria-Based Scholarships
- Homegrown CRM (MAUI) and Application
Factors Influencing the Move to Self-Reporting

• Students both self-report test scores AND courses & grades as part of their application.

• Desire to reduce the number of incomplete applications.

• Desire to turn around admission decisions more quickly.

• Conversations with peers who already made the move.
Self-Reporting ACT

ACT Test Scores
If you have taken the ACT test more than once, list the set of scores with the highest composite. Note: Please do not "superscore" i.e. combine subscores from multiple test dates.

ACT Date Taken

ACT English
ACT Math
ACT Reading
ACT Science
ACT Composite

☐ I have not taken the ACT test.

Date you plan to take or retake the ACT test.

(yyyy)
Self-Reporting SAT

ACT Test Scores

If you have taken the ACT test more than once, list the set of scores with the highest composite. Note: Please do not "superscore" i.e. combine subscores from multiple test dates.

ACT Date Taken

ACT English
ACT Math
ACT Reading
ACT Science
ACT Composite

☐ I have not taken the ACT test.

Date you plan to take or retake the ACT test.

(yyyy)
**Self-Reporting GPA, Class Rank, Courses**

**Mathematics**

*3 years required* including one year each of algebra I, geometry, algebra II.

*A course beyond algebra II is required for the College of Engineering.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>8th</th>
<th>9th</th>
<th>10th</th>
<th>11th</th>
<th>12th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algebra</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geometry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algebra II</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trigonometry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Math/Pre-calculus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calculus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2012-2017: Admission Offers Revoked Due to Falsified Self-Reported Test Scores
Impact: What We Learned

- Self-reporting is now part of the culture.
- Do it once--it’s a pilot. Do it twice--it’s a tradition.
- Better for students.
- Better for school counselors.
- Better for admissions staff members.
- Fewer incomplete applications.
- What we don’t miss: all the missing document communication throughout the fall and spring.
- Confusion: We might have an official score, but not the score from the test date a student reported on the application.
- Encourages students to list the University of Iowa in their choice set.
A Recent Implementation: Washington University in St. Louis
Background

- Total Undergraduate Enrollment (5 Schools) ~7,400
- First-Year Applicants ~30,000
- Early Decision 1 and 2, Regular Decision
- Common App or Coalition App with Supplement
- Need-Based Financial Aid 100% Demonstrated Need
- Merit-Bases Scholarships
Goals

• Removing a cost barrier for students, especially those from low-income backgrounds

• Decreasing the number of students who don’t complete their applications

• Increasing the number of students who complete earlier

• Very low numbers of inconsistencies was extra motivation
Tech Process

• Implemented Slate this year
  – Big undertaking to have it rolled out or file reading, but we’re glad it worked out!

• Scores on the Common App/Coalition Application
  – System simply pulls this data directly
  – Students can report the highest individual section scores across test dates, so we can superscore right from the application.
Tech Process

- Emphasis is on making it easier for students
  - Students who did not report on their application could work with us on a case-by-case basis to get scores, usually via an email from counselor.
  - Students could also update us with new scores via email from a counselor.

- Verification to begin mid-April, reaching out to students on a rolling basis
Messaging a policy change

- Updated website, presentations, email communications to prospective students
- Sent an e-newsletter to counselors
- Lucky to be mentioned in a news article about increasing number of schools allowing self-reported scores
- Created a new FAQ for the website, refined it as time went on and we got additional questions
- Knew that we didn’t have all the answers
  - Decision making was guided along the way by the desire to make things easier for students and to remove barriers to access. It was our guiding principle and all decisions were made with that in mind.
Lessons learned/What would we do differently?

• Self-reporting: Not that hard

• Working on allowing students to report through the online portal next year
  – Streamlining, avoids the need for email

• Something done specifically for low-income students, but benefits all students
A Recent Implementation: Georgia Tech
Rationale & Implementation

• Cost/stress benefits to applicants

• Support initiatives surrounding recruitment of low income, minority and first generation students

• Efficiency/timing benefits to admission

• Soft launch in 2018
  – Counselor/student newsletter
  – Counselor/student information sessions
  – Updated website

• Under 300 students closed incomplete due at least in part to testing
### Applicant Self-Reporting Behavior 2017-18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>SAT/ACT (Total)</th>
<th>SAT/ACT (Self-reported)</th>
<th>AP (Total)</th>
<th>AP (Self-reported)</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT/ACT</td>
<td>35,301</td>
<td>1,239</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.51% (45% both)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>17,955</td>
<td>13,078</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>72.84% (13% both)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT/ACT</td>
<td>7,977</td>
<td>137</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.72% (52% both)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>5,317</td>
<td>3,696</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>69.51% (18% both)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deposits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT/ACT</td>
<td>1,946 (as of 4/12)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.21% (51% both)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>1,279</td>
<td>618</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>48.32% (32% both)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Score Reporting by Ethnicity

- **Asian**: 2.16% Verified Only, 4.61% Self-Reported Only, 2.59% Both, 10.15% No Scores, 5.88% Total
- **Multiracial**: 4.61% Verified Only, 2.59% Self-Reported Only, 2.59% Both, 10.15% No Scores, 5.88% Total
- **White**: 2.59% Verified Only, 4.20% Self-Reported Only, 4.20% Both, 10.15% No Scores, 5.88% Total
- **Black/Af Am**: 10.15% Verified Only, 4.20% Self-Reported Only, 4.20% Both, 10.15% No Scores, 5.88% Total
- **Unknown**: 4.20% Verified Only, 4.20% Self-Reported Only, 4.20% Both, 10.15% No Scores, 5.88% Total
- **Hispanic**: 5.88% Verified Only, 5.88% Self-Reported Only, 5.88% Both, 10.15% No Scores, 5.88% Total
Score Reporting by First Gen Status

- Non-First Gen:
  - Verified Only: 2.97%
  - Self-Reported Only: 10.48%

- First Gen:
  - Verified Only: 10.48%
  - Self-Reported Only: 2.97%
Follow up

• All enrolling students must submit official SAC/ACT scores directly from the testing service.

• Deadline for receiving official SAT/ACT corresponds to date for final official high school transcript.

• Failure to submit official SAT/ACT scores will result in a hold in course registration for a student’s second term.

• AP scores are required only if a student is seeking course credit, and the deadline is prior to first-year orientation.
Two Years In and Going Strong: Birmingham-Southern
Why Did We Do This?

Self-Reporting Credentials

• In each of the two cycles before implementation, more than 1,500 applications remained incomplete because of missing test scores or transcripts
  – Many cannot afford to pay for testing agencies to send test scores.
  – It can become difficult to get HS counselors to send information.
• Allowing applicants to self-report test scores and transcript information enables students to complete their application and get an admission and scholarship decision.
• All self-reporting students are required to send official copies of test scores and/or transcripts if they chose to enroll at BSC.
My new favorite thing:

Screenshot Test Scores!
Our Process: After Admission

• Items added to deposited student checklist in portal:
  – Final official high school transcript by August 1
  – Official test scores by August 1 if not already submitted

• After May 1, admissions staff validate official test scores and final transcripts.
  – Official scores are often included with final transcript

ZERO ADMISSION OFFERS RECIDED DUE TO FRAUDULENT REPORTING
Outcomes and Outlook

• Before implementation:
  – Yield rate < 18.4%
  – Application completion rate < 50%

• After first year:
  – Yield rate: 22.6%
  – Application completion rate: 62.0%

This year:
• Highest admit number in BSC admission!
Wisdom from Early Self-Reporting Pioneers

“You will be amazed at how few issues you will encounter.”

--Early Self-Reporting Pioneers
Questions?

• Jordan Crenshaw Birmingham-Southern College, AL  
jcrensha@bsc.edu

• Jamal Gaddis Washington University in St. Louis, MO  
jamalbgaddis@wustl.edu

• Rebecca Rutsky Alabama School of Fine Arts, AL  
rrutsky@asfa.k12.al.us

• Mary Tipton Woolley Tipton Georgia Institute of Technology, GA  
marytipton.woolley@admission.gatech.edu