



**TOPIC:** SU Test-Optional Admissions: Annual Report on Outcomes

**COMMITTEE:** Education Policy

**DATE OF COMMITTEE MEETING:** November 11, 2010

**SUMMARY:** In December 2007, the Board of Regents acted favorably on the recommendation of its Committee on Education Policy and approved a request from Salisbury University for an exception to the test requirement for freshman admission for a period of five years, with the proviso that SU report back to the Education Policy Committee at the end of the first year of the pilot program and on an annual basis thereafter.

The exception granted to Salisbury University was to make optional the standardized test requirement for freshman admission for applicants presenting a high school grade point average of 3.5 or higher. In its proposal, SU stated that, as a Maryland public university, it "seeks to ensure an admissions process that is fair to Maryland residents." The five-year pilot program allows the University to analyze the outcomes of the program and evaluate its effectiveness.

This year's report contains results of the performance of the first three classes admitted under SU's five-year pilot program. The fall 2007 freshman class has completed three years, followed by the subsequent classes that entered in 2008 and 2009 that have completed two years and one year, respectively. This report on the pilot program shows that the policy positively influences enrollment and retention goals as these three classes progress. Students from the fall 2007, 2008 and 2009 test-optional cohorts continued to perform as well as those admitted with test scores based on the following major indicators: retention, academic performance (GPA) and course completion.

SU has also provided data requested by the Committee examining students with grade point averages at or above 3.5. In tracking the progress of admitted students by similar bands of high school grade point averages (HS GPA), two groups were created to compare regular admits with  $\geq$  to 3.5 HS GPA and the test-optional admits, all of whom must have a minimum 3.5 HS GPA. As SU GPAs were reviewed for both groups by similar HS GPA bands, the regular admits  $\geq$  3.5 HS GPA earned higher SU GPAs. Currently, for the 2007 cohort, the GPA variance for regular admits and test-optional admits is 3.29 vs. 3.07. The regular admit group has increased their SU GPA by 0.15 from freshman year to junior year, while the test-optional admits have increased their SU GPA by 0.29 over the same time. A similar trend occurred for the 2008 cohort.

Dr. Ellen Neufeldt, SU Vice President of Student Affairs, will make a brief presentation to the Committee and will respond to questions about the third year of the pilot program.

**ALTERNATIVE(S):** This item is for information only.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** This item is for information only.

**CHANCELLOR'S RECOMMENDATION:** This item is for information only.

---

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Received as information. DATE: November 11, 2010

---

BOARD ACTION: DATE:

---

SUBMITTED BY: Irwin L. Goldstein (301) 445-1992 irv@usmd.edu

---