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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION	Senate	DATE	October 13, 2023
FROM	Peter Hall, Chair Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies	PAGES	1/1
RE:	SAT/ACT Admission Requirement Elimination (SCUS 23-83)		



Action undertaken by SCUS on October 12, 2023, gives rise to the following recommendations:

Motion

That Senate approve, commencing Fall 2024, that the SAT/ACT admission requirement for undergraduate applicants studying an American High School curriculum (i.e., US12) will be optional rather than required.



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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION SCUS DATE September 15, 2023
FROM Tom Nault
Registrar & Executive Director, Student
Enrolment
RE: Recommendation to Eliminate SAT/ACT Requirement for US High School Applicants

SAT/ACT

Motion 1:

“Commencing Fall 2024, the SAT/ACT admission requirement for undergraduate applicants studying an American High School curriculum (i.e., US12) will be optional rather than required.”

Background

During the COVID pandemic, many post-secondary institutions across North America, including SFU made the SAT/ACT requirement optional for post-secondary applicants due to the closing of testing centers across the world. In the years following, most institutions have not brought this requirement back for numerous reasons.

Rationale:

1. **Alignment with other Canadian universities:** Many reputable Canadian universitiesⁱ, including University of Toronto, McGill University, and University of British Columbia, have eliminated the SAT/ACT requirement for US high school applicants. Adopting a similar policy would place SFU in line with the practices of peer institutions, making us more competitive on the international stage and facilitating a more straightforward application process for US students.
2. **Equity and accessibility:** The SAT/ACT requirement presents a barrier to entry for systemically marginalized and historically underserved students who may not have access to test preparation resources or the financial means to write the SAT/ACT exam multiple times. By eliminating this requirement, SFU signals its commitment to EDI, more specifically equitable access to higher education by utilizing inclusive admission practices.
3. **Lack of correlation with student success:** Research discusses (Bennett, 2021; Syverson et al, 2023) that SAT/ACT scores have limited predictive value when it comes to determining an applicant's potential for success at the university levelⁱⁱ. These standardized tests are subject to biases related to socioeconomic status and race, and do not account for important non-cognitive factors that may contribute to a student's ability to thrive in a university setting.
4. **Alignment with our Canadian high school requirements:** By providing US12 applicants the opportunity to apply to SFU using a combination of junior and senior grades, their admission evaluation aligns more closely with our admission model for Canadian high school applicants.

Thank you,

Tom Nault
Registrar & Executive Director,
Student Enrolment

ⁱ The following Canadian universities do not require ACT/SAT test scores for admission: UBC, UVic, U of T, U of C, U of A, McGill, Queens, Waterloo, Memorial, Western, Ottawa, York, Guelph, Concordia, Dalhousie and Carleton.

ⁱⁱ References:

Bennett, C. T. (2021). Untested Admissions: Examining Changes in Application Behaviors and Student Demographics Under Test-Optional Policies. *American Educational Research Journal*, 59(1), 180–216.
<https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312211003526>

Syverson, S. T., Franks, V. W., & Hiss, W. C. (2023, January 29). *Defining access: How test-optional works*. National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC). <https://www.nacacnet.org/defining-access-how-test-optional-works/>
Top 100 Colleges That Are Test-Optional In 2023. Crimson Education CA. (n.d.). <https://www.crimsoneducation.org/ca/blog/the-complete-list-of-us-universities-going-test-optional-in-2021-22/>