

The DIAMOND project
An overview of DePaul's
introduction of Non-cognitive
measures in
Freshman Admission
prepared for
Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

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April 17, 2014

Outline for today

- What is the DIAMOND project ?
- How is it implemented ?
- What are the preliminary results ?

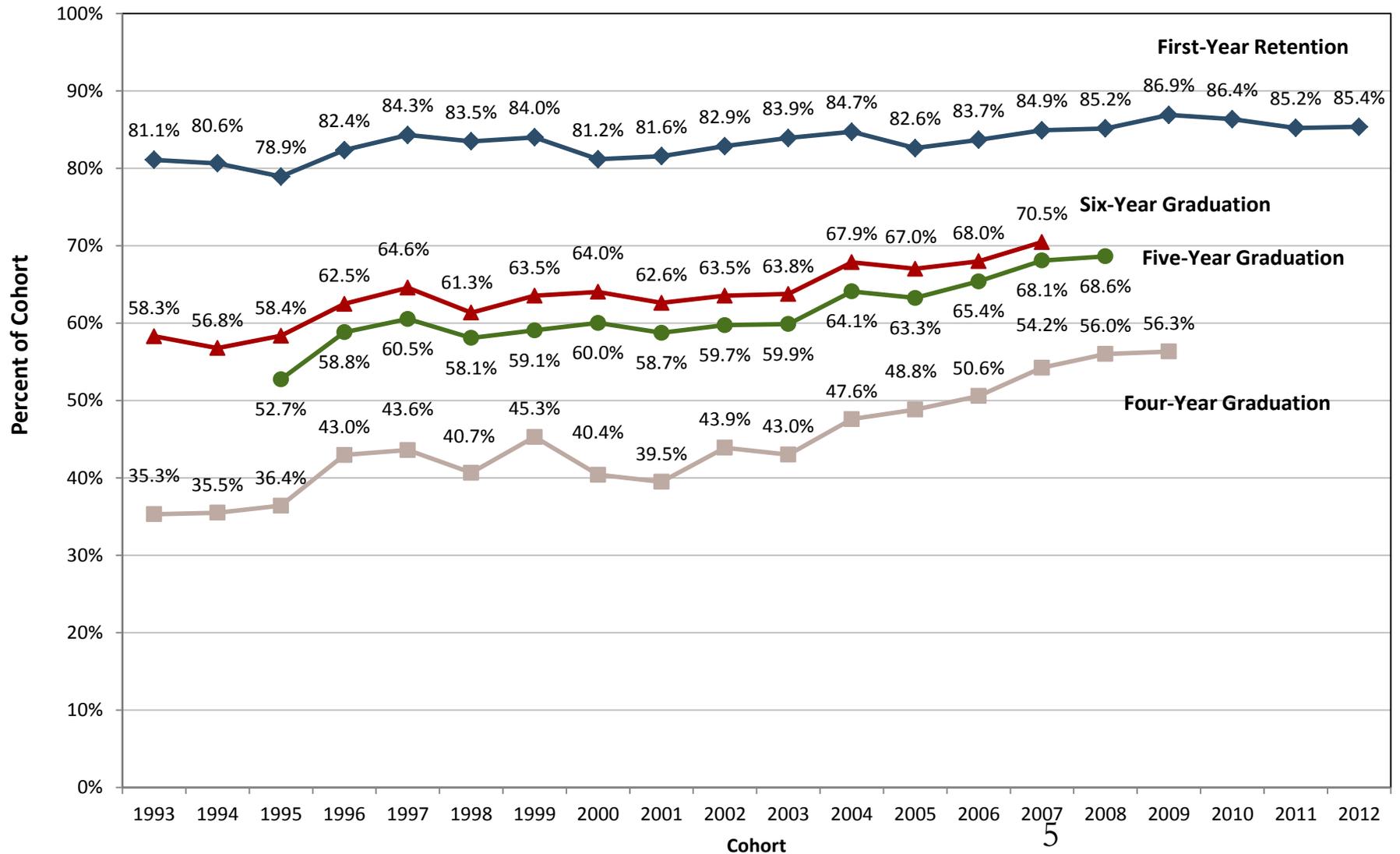
DePaul Context

- Fall 2013 Freshman – 2,425 students
- 34% students of color*
- 33% first-generation
- 33% Pell-eligible
- 12% Chicago Public Schools
- Mean HSGPA 3.65
- Mean ACT 25.4

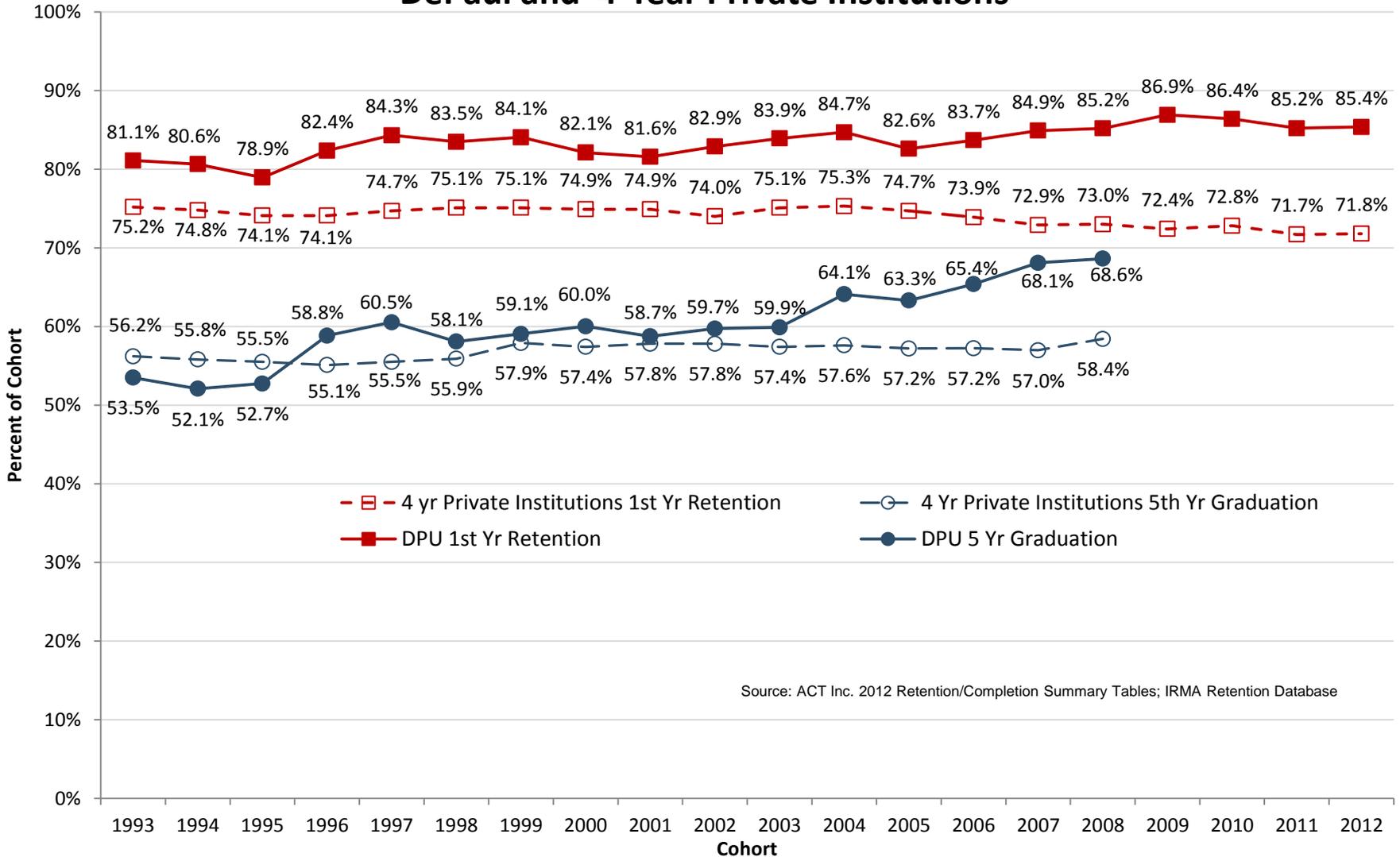
- 2,113 Undergraduate Transfer Students enrolled (2012)

*students of color include American Indian, Black, Asian, Hispanic, Pacific Islanders, & Multiracial

First-Year Retention, Four-Year Graduation, Six-Year Graduation Rates 1993-2012

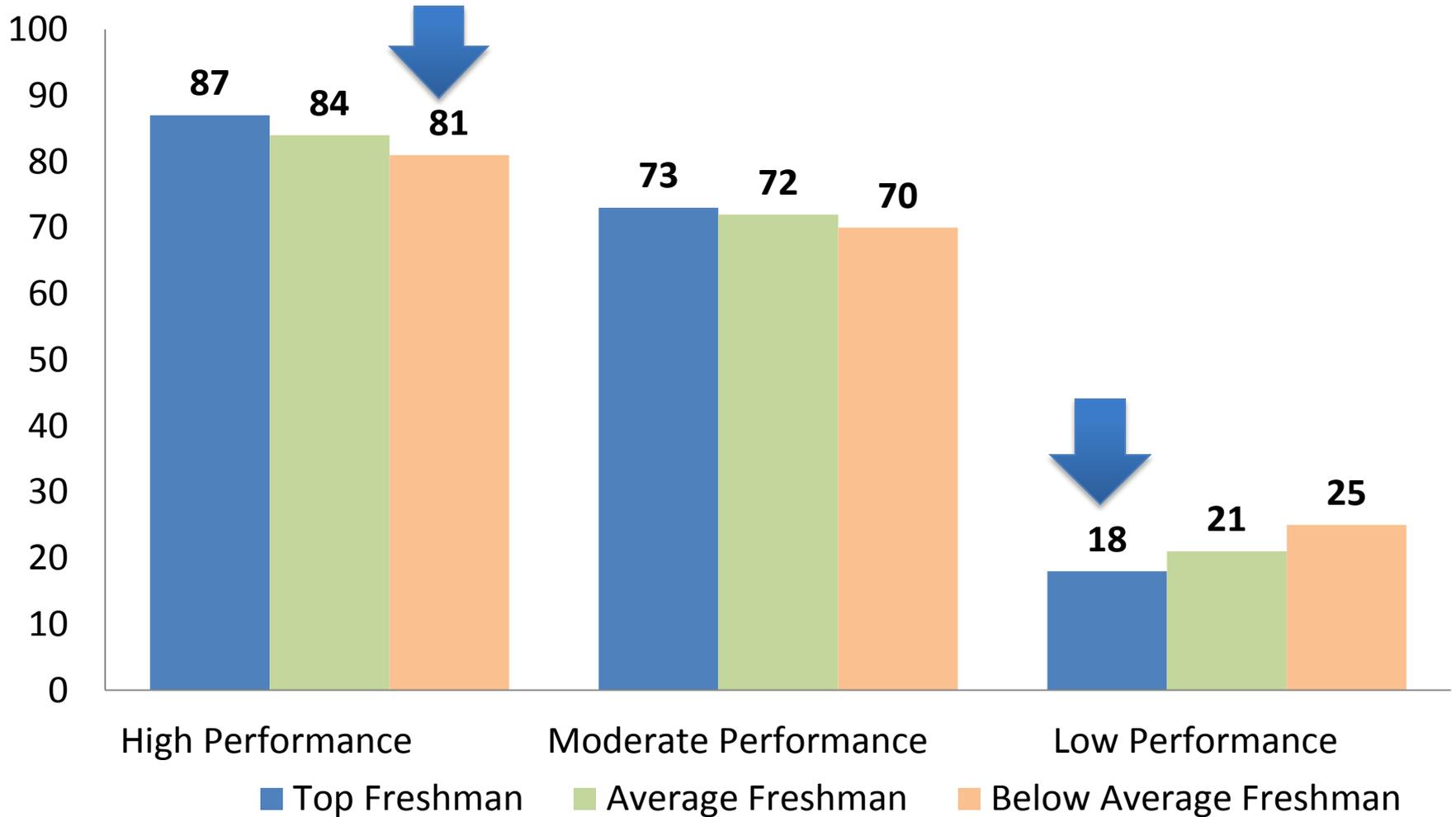


First-Year Retention and Five-Year Graduation Rate Comparison: DePaul and 4-Year Private Institutions



Source: ACT Inc. 2012 Retention/Completion Summary Tables; IRMA Retention Database

Will I Graduate? First-year performance is key.



From The Mission Statement:

“Originally founded for students from the greater Chicago area, and still serving them predominantly, DePaul continues its commitment to the education of **first generation college students**, especially those from the **diverse cultural and ethnic groups in the metropolitan area.**”

<http://mission.depaul.edu>

Mission and Market Realities

Increasing Selectivity

- DePaul's Traditional Response:
 - Grow
 - The high tide lifts all boats
- New Realities
 - Increasing applications
 - Increasing selectivity
- Normally, institutions following a pure “quality” agenda would celebrate limited capacity against growing demand; they simply skim the best applicants off the top.
- *However, first-generation, low-income, and minority students would likely be affected in greater proportions.*

Non-Cognitive Variables

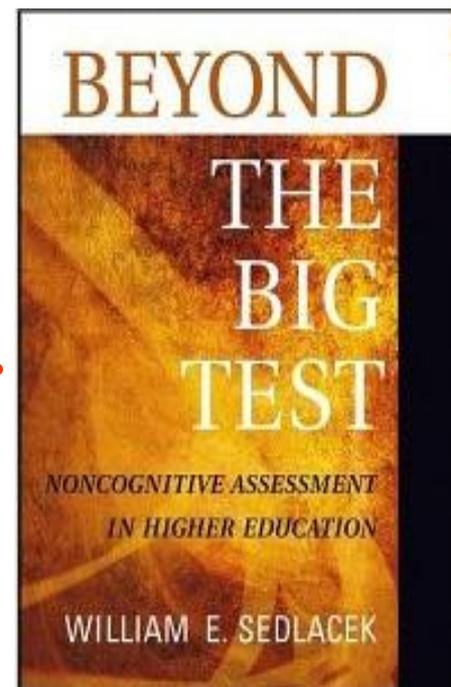
Developing Insights for
Admission through the Mining of Non-traditional Data

DIAMOND

Non-cognitive Model

Addresses what is missing from standardized test scores and adds to the range of attributes that are considered in the admissions process.

- Positive self-concept
- Realistic self-appraisal
- Successfully handling the system
- Preference for long-term goals
- Availability of strong support person
- Leadership experience
- Community involvement
- Knowledge acquired in field



Implementing the DIAMOND Project

- Establishing the committee and leadership
- Developing and scoring the essays
- Building the web-based scoring and management tool
- Recruiting & training the readers
- Creating diagnostics to assess the process

The Basics

- Four essay questions (average 100 words) to measure eight dimensions of Sedlacek's model. (In 2009 replaced two existing short essays in the current application.)
- Reader gives one score for each of the eight non-cognitive dimensions; sums to one overall score.
- Each set of essays read by two readers; where the difference of the scores is greater than 4, essays are read a third time.

Sample DIAMOND Questions

- Describe your short and long term goals and how you plan to accomplish them.
- **Describe a personal challenge you have faced, or a situation which you found to be particularly difficult. How did you react and what conclusions did you draw from the experience? Were you or others treated unfairly? Were you able to turn to others for support?**
- Discuss how involved you have been with your community through volunteer, neighborhood, place of worship, or other activities. Describe why community is or is not important to you. Give examples of playing a leadership role in your school or community.
- Think about the interests you have pursued outside of your high school classes (e.g. independently or through a student organization, part-time work, sports, playing a musical instrument, volunteering, independent study, etc.) Describe any knowledge or mastery of skills you have gained as a result.

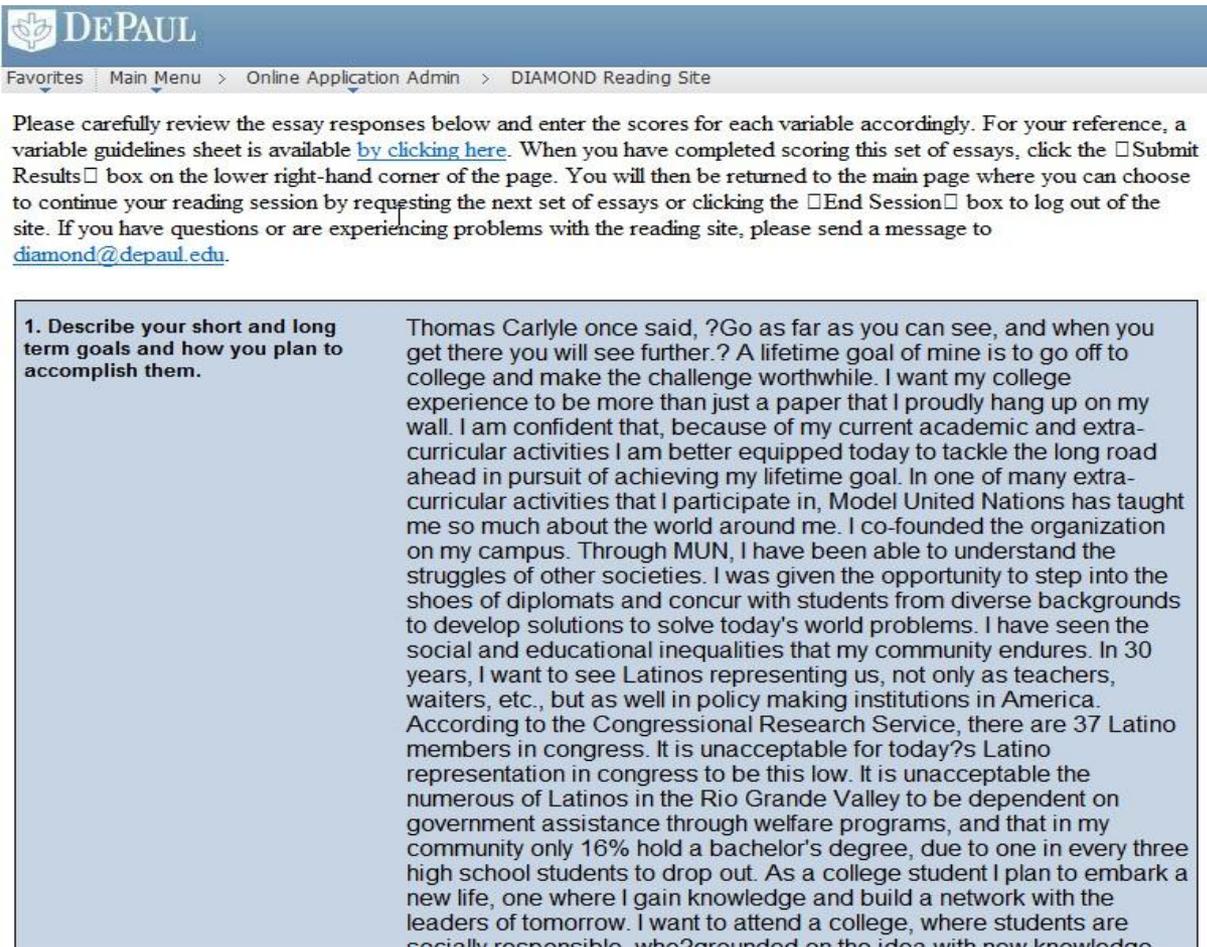
Sample DIAMOND Scoring Rubric

Leadership Experience

- 3= Substantial behavioral evidence of taking initiative, assuming responsibility and consistent collaborative group participation over time; evidence of helping to resolve disputes
- 2= Some evidence of taking initiative, assuming responsibility and consistent collaborative group participation over time; some evidence of helping to resolve disputes;
- 1= Very limited or no evidence of taking initiative, assuming responsibility. No collaboration with or influence on others

This is the way the essays appear for readers doing essay evaluation.

Readers view each response as one essay and then evaluate for evidence after completing all sections.



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the DIAMOND Reading Site, including the DePaul University logo and a breadcrumb trail: Favorites | Main Menu > Online Application Admin > DIAMOND Reading Site. Below the navigation is a paragraph of instructions for reviewers, followed by a table with one row containing an essay prompt and a student's response.

Please carefully review the essay responses below and enter the scores for each variable accordingly. For your reference, a variable guidelines sheet is available [by clicking here](#). When you have completed scoring this set of essays, click the Submit Results box on the lower right-hand corner of the page. You will then be returned to the main page where you can choose to continue your reading session by requesting the next set of essays or clicking the End Session box to log out of the site. If you have questions or are experiencing problems with the reading site, please send a message to diamond@depaul.edu.

<p>1. Describe your short and long term goals and how you plan to accomplish them.</p>	<p>Thomas Carlyle once said, "Go as far as you can see, and when you get there you will see further." A lifetime goal of mine is to go off to college and make the challenge worthwhile. I want my college experience to be more than just a paper that I proudly hang up on my wall. I am confident that, because of my current academic and extra-curricular activities I am better equipped today to tackle the long road ahead in pursuit of achieving my lifetime goal. In one of many extra-curricular activities that I participate in, Model United Nations has taught me so much about the world around me. I co-founded the organization on my campus. Through MUN, I have been able to understand the struggles of other societies. I was given the opportunity to step into the shoes of diplomats and concur with students from diverse backgrounds to develop solutions to solve today's world problems. I have seen the social and educational inequalities that my community endures. In 30 years, I want to see Latinos representing us, not only as teachers, waiters, etc., but as well in policy making institutions in America. According to the Congressional Research Service, there are 37 Latino members in congress. It is unacceptable for today's Latino representation in congress to be this low. It is unacceptable the numerous of Latinos in the Rio Grande Valley to be dependent on government assistance through welfare programs, and that in my community only 16% hold a bachelor's degree, due to one in every three high school students to drop out. As a college student I plan to embark a new life, one where I gain knowledge and build a network with the leaders of tomorrow. I want to attend a college, where students are socially responsible, who are grounded on the idea with new knowledge</p>
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The grid used to determine the level of evidence for each NCV can be viewed below and allows readers to skip and flag essays if necessary.

	1 - Low	2 - Med	3 - High
Positive Self-Concept	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Realistic Self-Appraisal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Successfully Negotiating the System	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Long-Term Goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership Experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge in a field	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of Strong Support Person	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10/31/2008 12:12:51 PM

22:46

DIAMOND Essay Student View

This is the page students see when they log-in to submit their supplemental essays.

Instructions PLEASE READ

At DePaul, we understand that education takes place in many settings beyond the classroom so we would like to learn a little more about you as an individual and a candidate for admission. The following questions provide an opportunity for you to tell us more about yourself and your experiences. We encourage you to think about your responses carefully and provide examples to illustrate your statements. Each response should be given in 1-2 paragraphs; some students have provided very appropriate responses in as few as 100 words for each question.

Please note that this window will time-out after 15 minutes of inactivity and all unsaved changes will be lost. Therefore, please develop and edit your essays in a word editor such as MS Word and then copy/paste your final responses in the space provided below each question to avoid losing unsaved work. You may save your progress at any time by clicking "Save for Later". When you have finished, simply hit "Submit" and your responses will be made available to our admission staff for review.

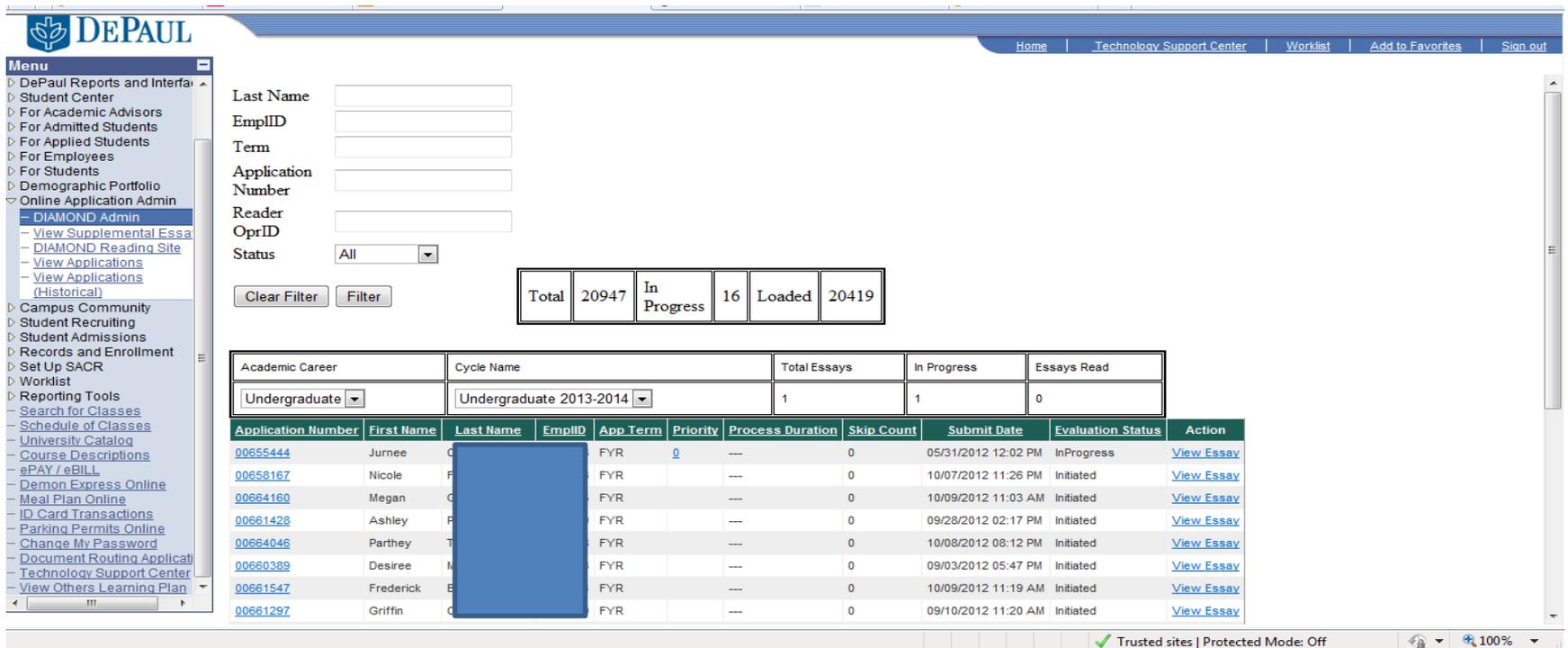
1. Describe your short and long term goals and how you plan to accomplish them.

Maximum remaining: 2000

2. Describe a personal challenge you have faced, or a situation which you found to be particularly difficult. How did you react and what conclusions did you draw from the experience? Were you or others treated unfairly? Were you able to turn to others for support?

Administrative Functions -- - student view

- Track the number of current essay submissions
- View the status of essays (submitted, under evaluation, results loaded)
- Determine how long it took from submission for essays to be evaluated
- Search for a specific student's essays
- Search for essays evaluated by a particular reader



The screenshot shows the 'DIAMOND Admin' interface. On the left is a 'Menu' sidebar with options like 'DePaul Reports and Interfaces', 'Student Center', and 'Reporting Tools'. The main area contains search filters for 'Last Name', 'EmplID', 'Term', 'Application Number', 'Reader', and 'OprID'. A 'Status' dropdown is set to 'All'. Below the filters is a summary table:

Total	20947	In Progress	16	Loaded	20419
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Below the summary table are two dropdown menus for 'Academic Career' (set to 'Undergraduate') and 'Cycle Name' (set to 'Undergraduate 2013-2014'). A second summary table shows:

Academic Career	Cycle Name	Total Essays	In Progress	Essays Read
Undergraduate	Undergraduate 2013-2014	1	1	0

The main data table lists individual essays with columns for Application Number, First Name, Last Name, EmplID, App Term, Priority, Process Duration, Skip Count, Submit Date, Evaluation Status, and Action. A blue box highlights the 'Last Name' column for several rows.

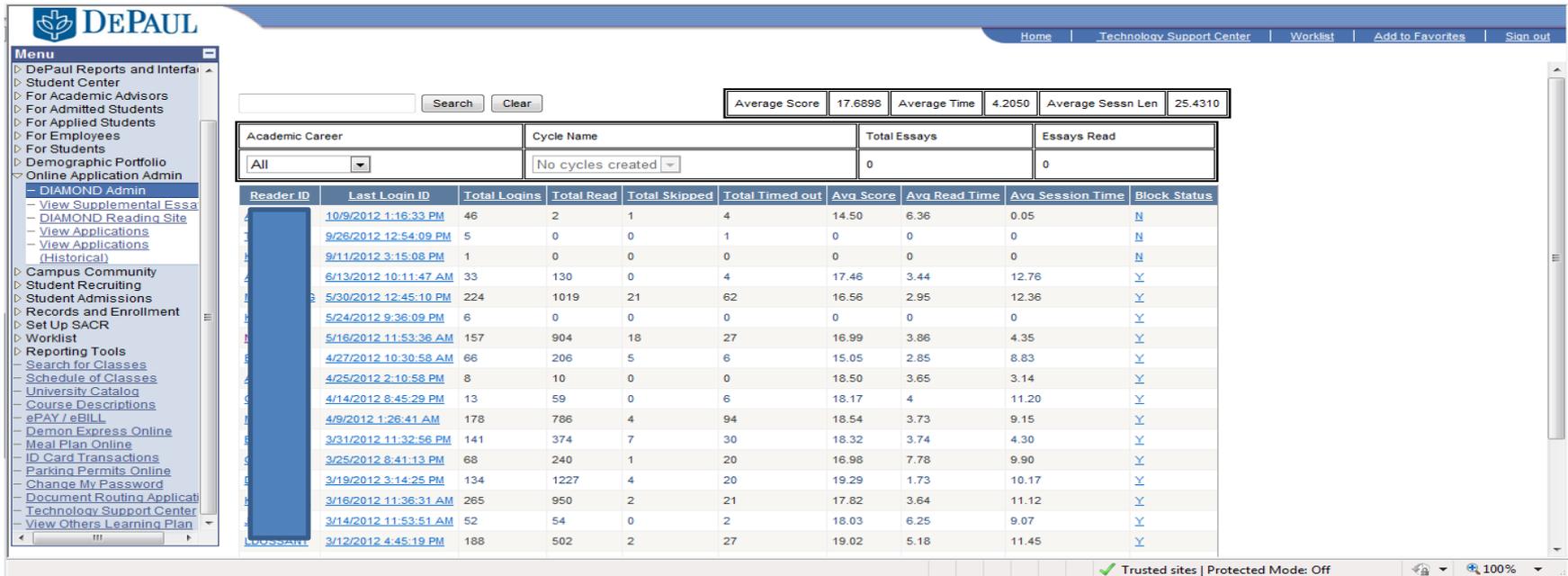
Application Number	First Name	Last Name	EmplID	App Term	Priority	Process Duration	Skip Count	Submit Date	Evaluation Status	Action
00655444	Jurnee	C		FYR	0	---	0	05/31/2012 12:02 PM	InProgress	View Essay
00658167	Nicole	F		FYR	---	---	0	10/07/2012 11:26 PM	Initiated	View Essay
00664160	Megan	C		FYR	---	---	0	10/09/2012 11:03 AM	Initiated	View Essay
00661428	Ashley	F		FYR	---	---	0	09/28/2012 02:17 PM	Initiated	View Essay
00664046	Parthey	M		FYR	---	---	0	10/08/2012 08:12 PM	Initiated	View Essay
00660389	Desiree	M		FYR	---	---	0	09/03/2012 05:47 PM	Initiated	View Essay
00661547	Frederick	B		FYR	---	---	0	10/09/2012 11:19 AM	Initiated	View Essay
00661297	Griffin	C		FYR	---	---	0	09/10/2012 11:20 AM	Initiated	View Essay

Administrative Function: Reader View

View each reader's total logins and number of essays read

Evaluate read-time averages and reader evaluation outcomes to ensure consistency

Determine average amount of time readers dedicate to reviewing essays in one sitting



Home | Technology Support Center | Worklist | Add to Favorites | Sign out

Search Clear

Average Score	17.6898	Average Time	4.2050	Average Sessn Len	25.4310
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Academic Career	Cycle Name	Total Essays	Essays Read
All	No cycles created	0	0

Reader ID	Last Login ID	Total Logins	Total Read	Total Skipped	Total Timed out	Avg Score	Avg Read Time	Avg Session Time	Block Status
	10/9/2012 1:16:33 PM	46	2	1	4	14.50	6.36	0.05	N
	9/26/2012 12:54:09 PM	5	0	0	1	0	0	0	N
	9/11/2012 3:15:08 PM	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	N
	6/13/2012 10:11:47 AM	33	130	0	4	17.46	3.44	12.76	Y
	5/30/2012 12:45:10 PM	224	1019	21	62	16.56	2.95	12.36	Y
	5/24/2012 9:36:09 PM	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	Y
	5/16/2012 11:53:36 AM	157	904	18	27	16.99	3.86	4.35	Y
	4/27/2012 10:30:58 AM	66	206	5	6	15.05	2.85	8.83	Y
	4/25/2012 2:10:58 PM	8	10	0	0	18.50	3.65	3.14	Y
	4/14/2012 8:45:29 PM	13	59	0	6	18.17	4	11.20	Y
	4/9/2012 1:26:41 AM	178	786	4	94	18.54	3.73	9.15	Y
	3/31/2012 11:32:56 PM	141	374	7	30	18.32	3.74	4.30	Y
	3/25/2012 8:41:13 PM	68	240	1	20	16.98	7.78	9.90	Y
	3/19/2012 3:14:25 PM	134	1227	4	20	19.29	1.73	10.17	Y
	3/16/2012 11:36:31 AM	265	950	2	21	17.82	3.64	11.12	Y
	3/14/2012 11:53:51 AM	52	54	0	2	18.03	6.25	9.07	Y
	3/12/2012 4:45:19 PM	188	502	2	27	19.02	5.18	11.45	Y

Trusted sites | Protected Mode: Off | 100%

Volume of Essays – Readers

Fall Term	Applicants	Enrolled	Essays Scored	Readers
2009	11,596	2531	9696	103
2010	12,031	2241	8622	62
2011	16,711	2458	404 deferred students only	20
2012	18,160	2593	1173 TOPP + deferred	35
2013	19,957	2425	1080 TOPP + deferred	13**
2014	19,300*		780* TOPP + deferred	22

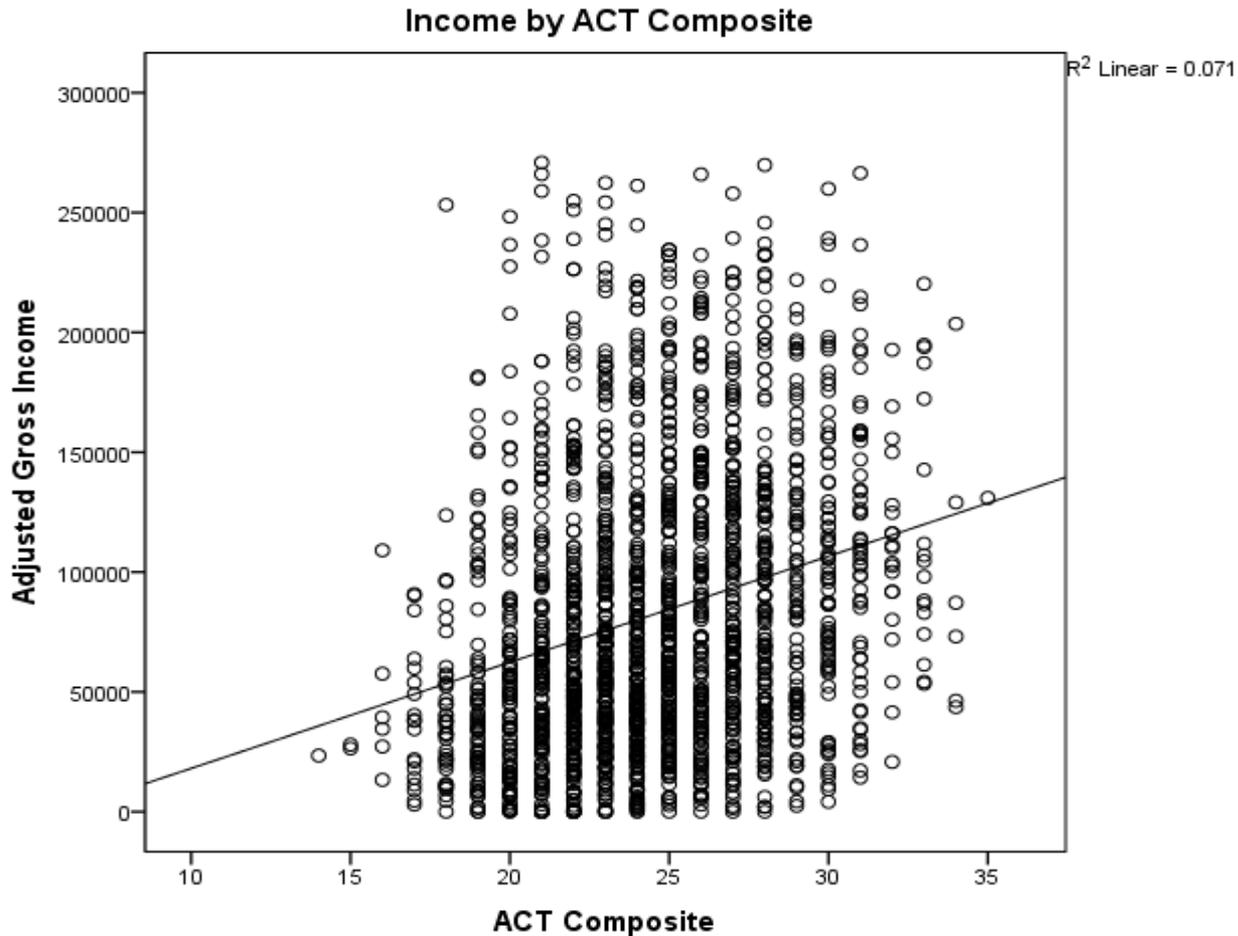
*as of 4-10-14 – loading delays this year due to Common App revisions

**five paid graduate readers were used this year

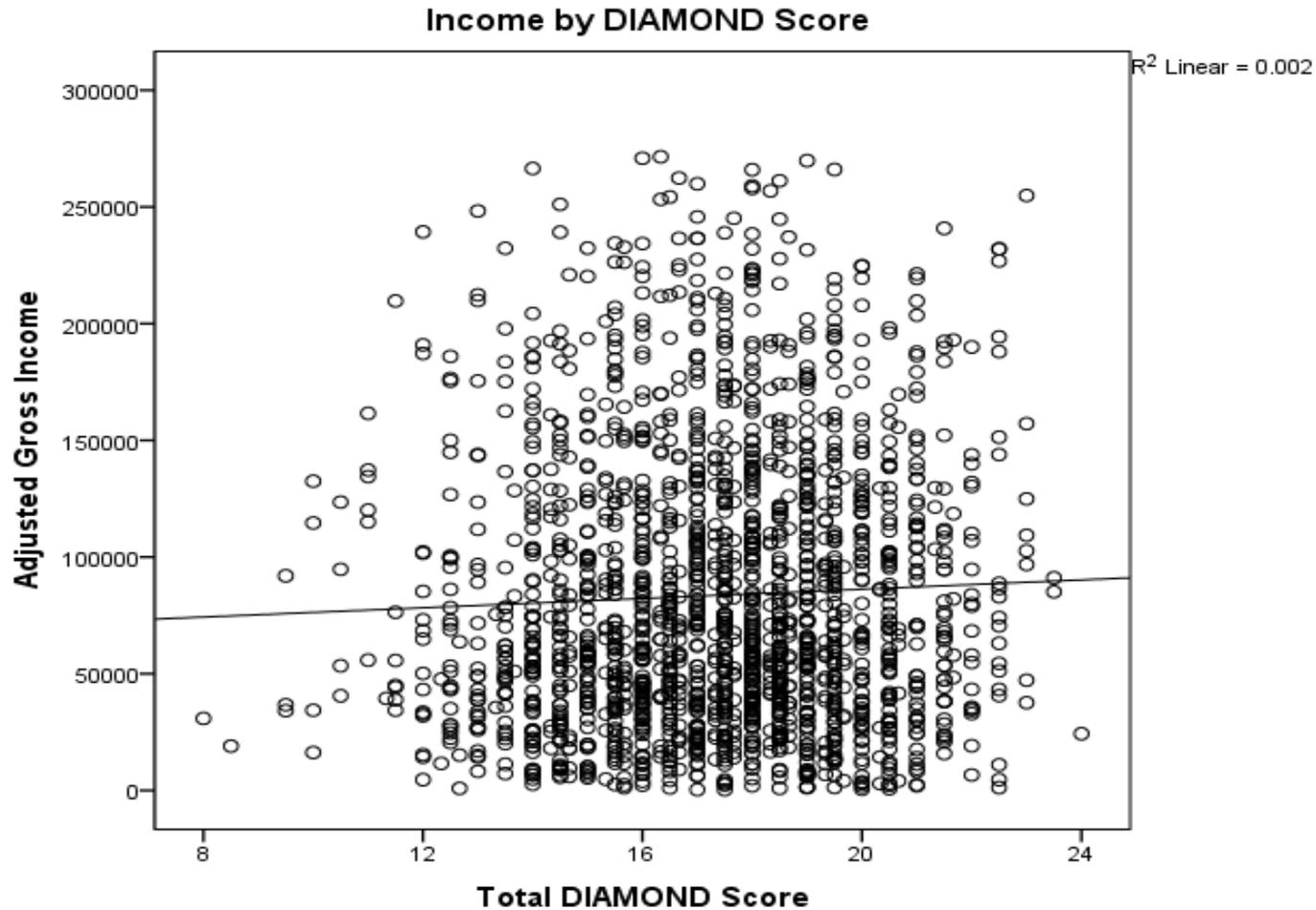
Preliminary Questions

- Do DIAMOND scores level the playing field ?
- Do DIAMOND scores predict student success ?

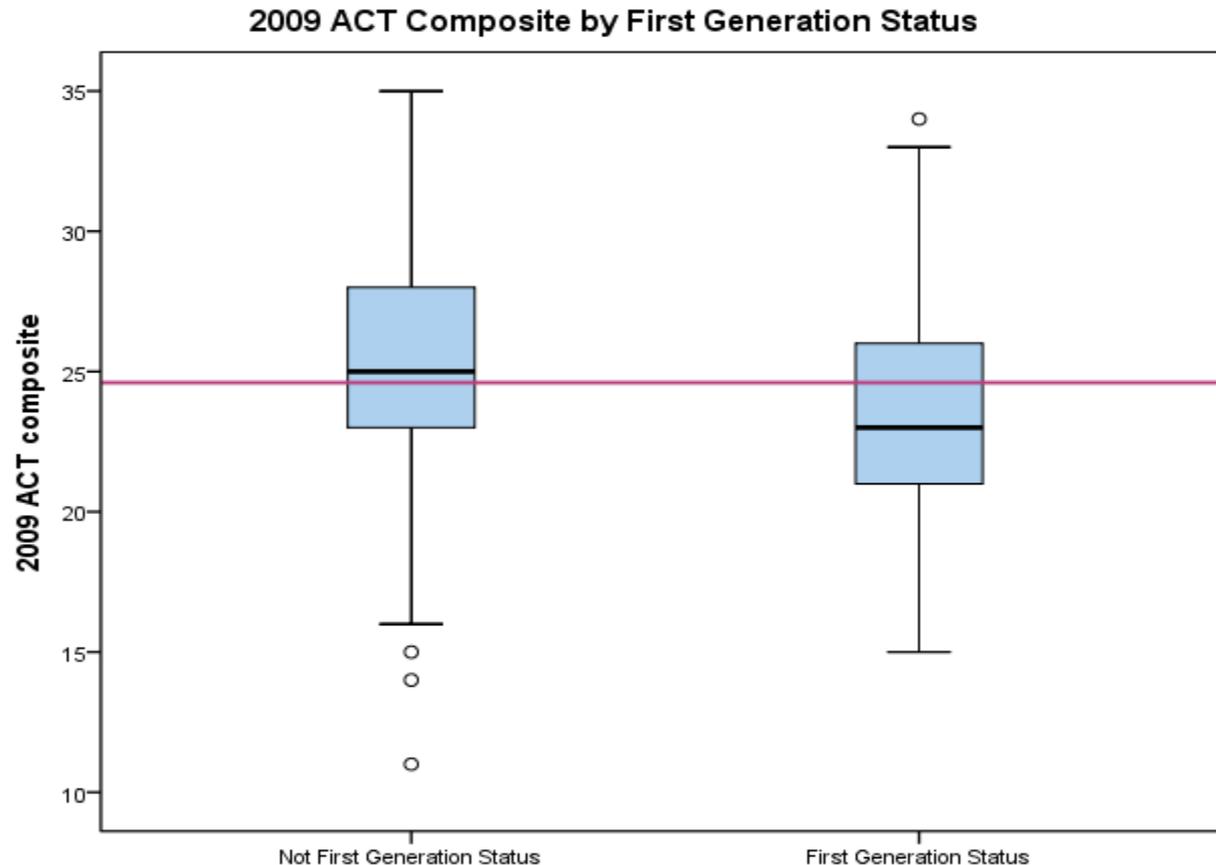
Standardized test scores are correlated with income.



DIAMOND scores are not related to family income.

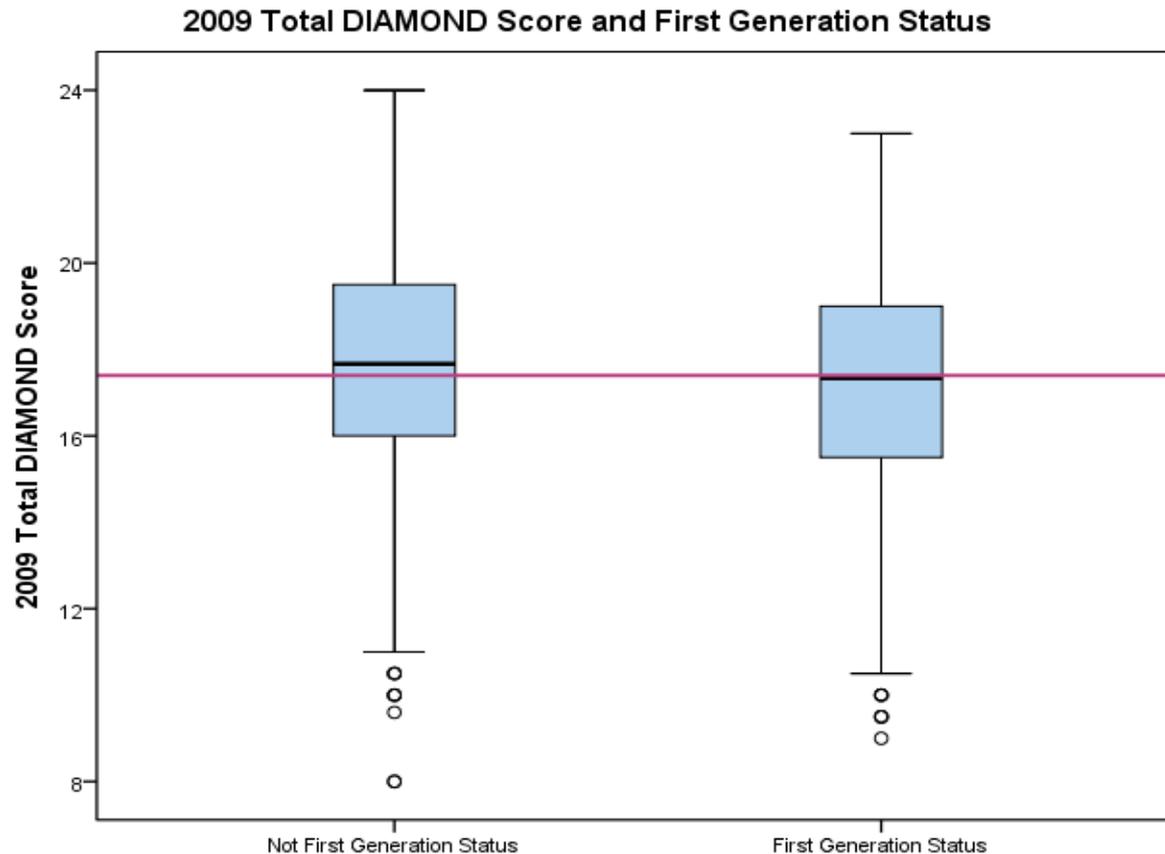


First generation students are at disadvantage with ACT scores.

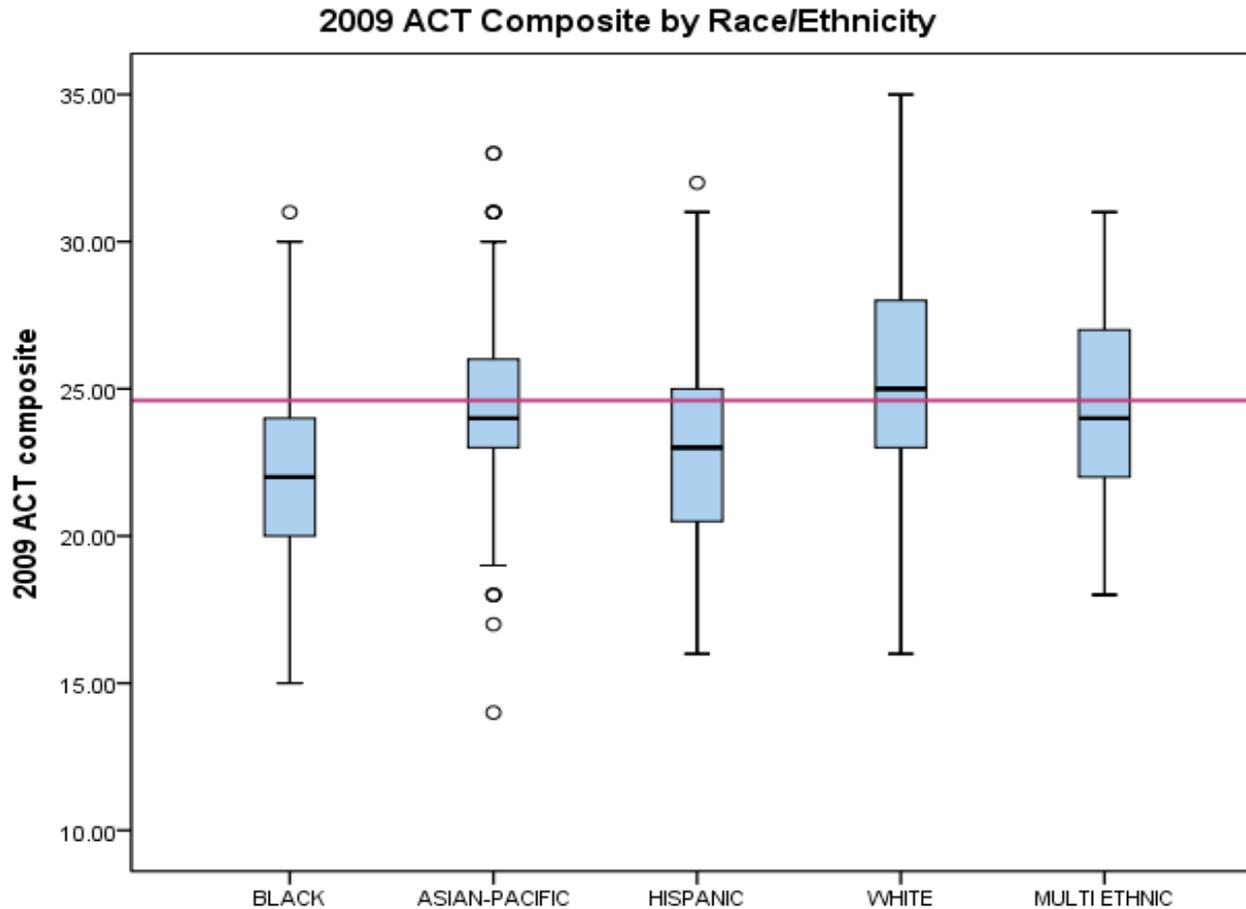


Circles represent outliers. Red line represents mean ACT Composite score

DIAMOND scores are similar for first generation students and students who are not first generation.

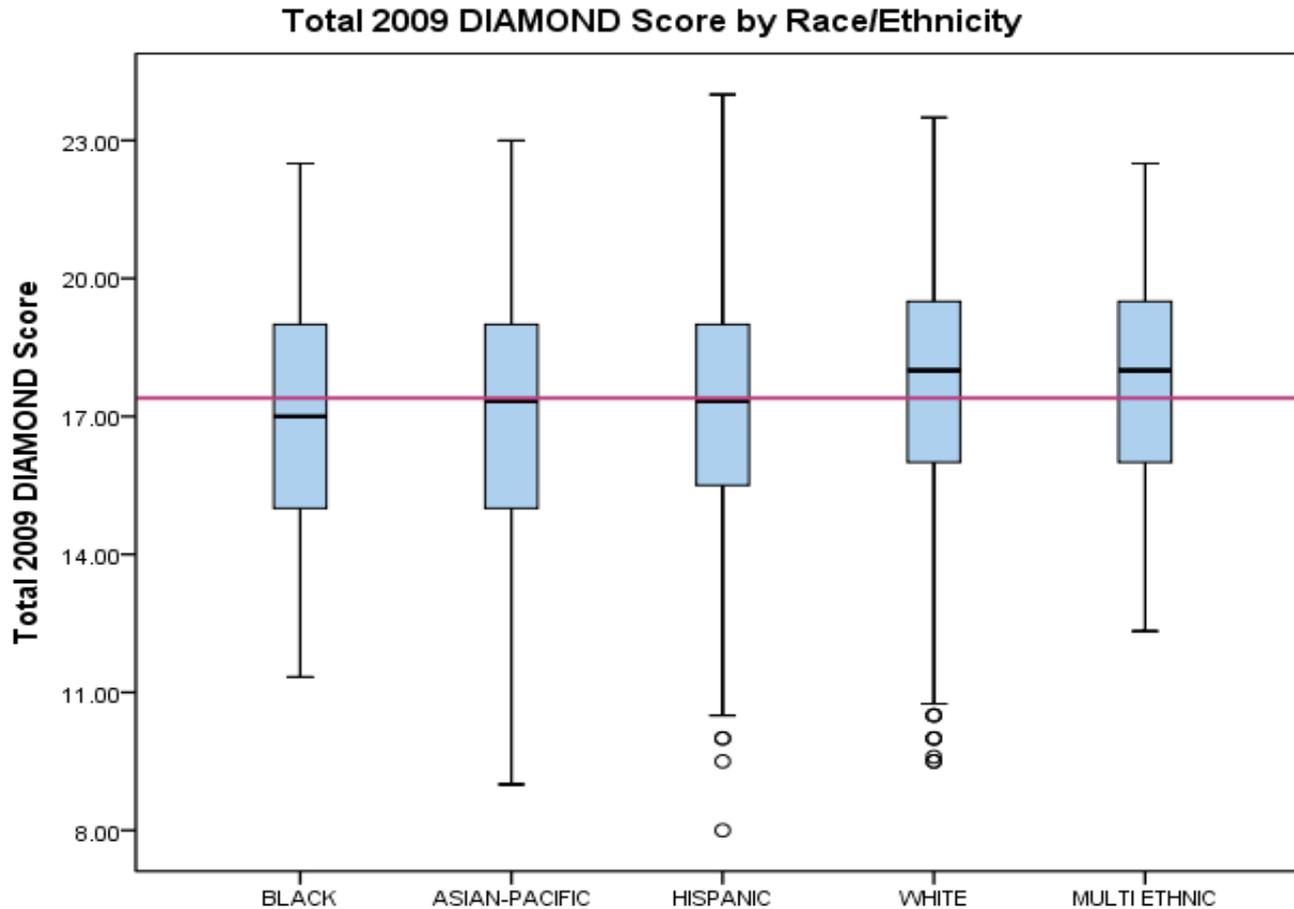


Standardized test scores vary significantly by race/ethnicity.

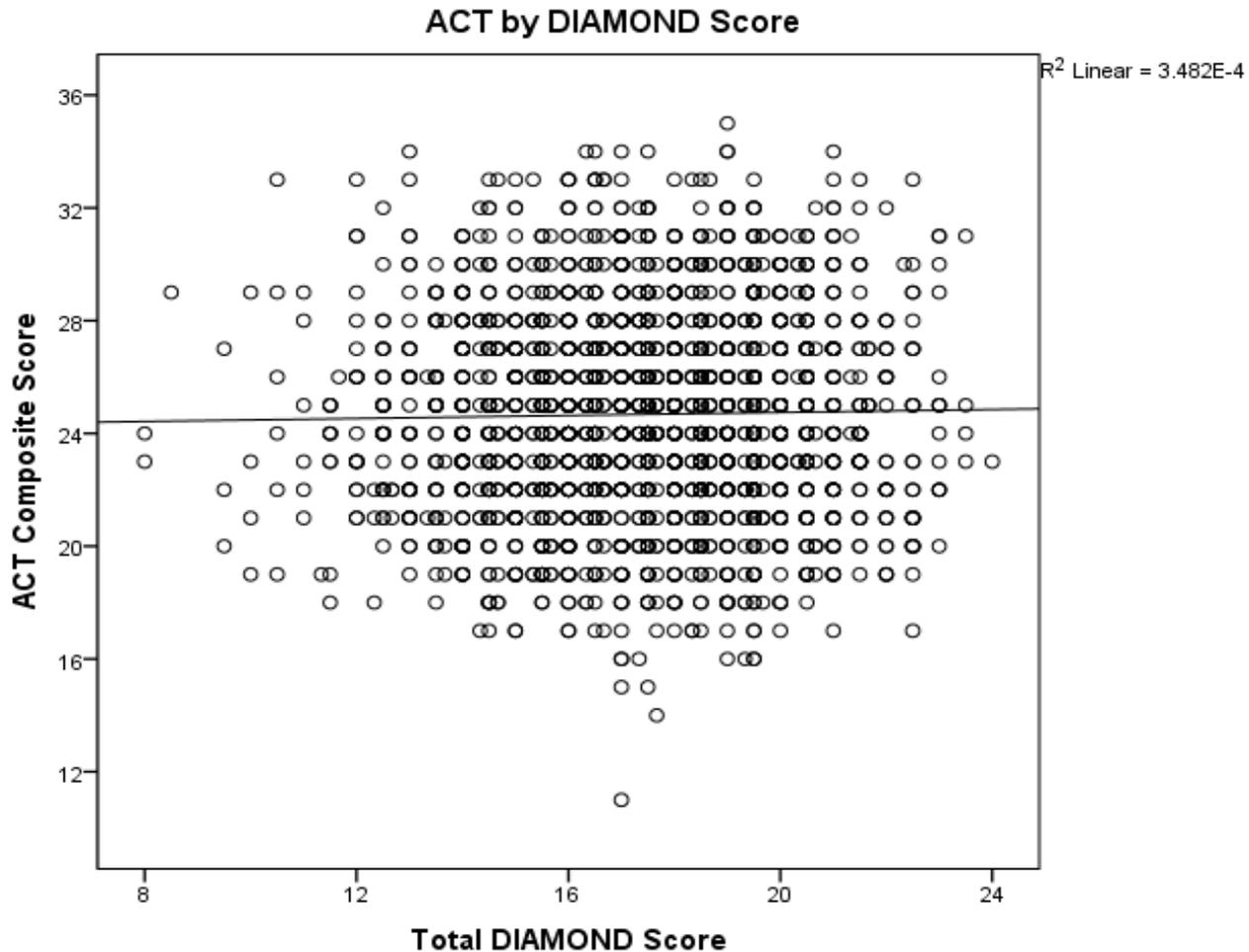


Circles represent outliers. Red line represents mean ACT Composite score

Less difference by race/ethnicity in DIAMOND scores.



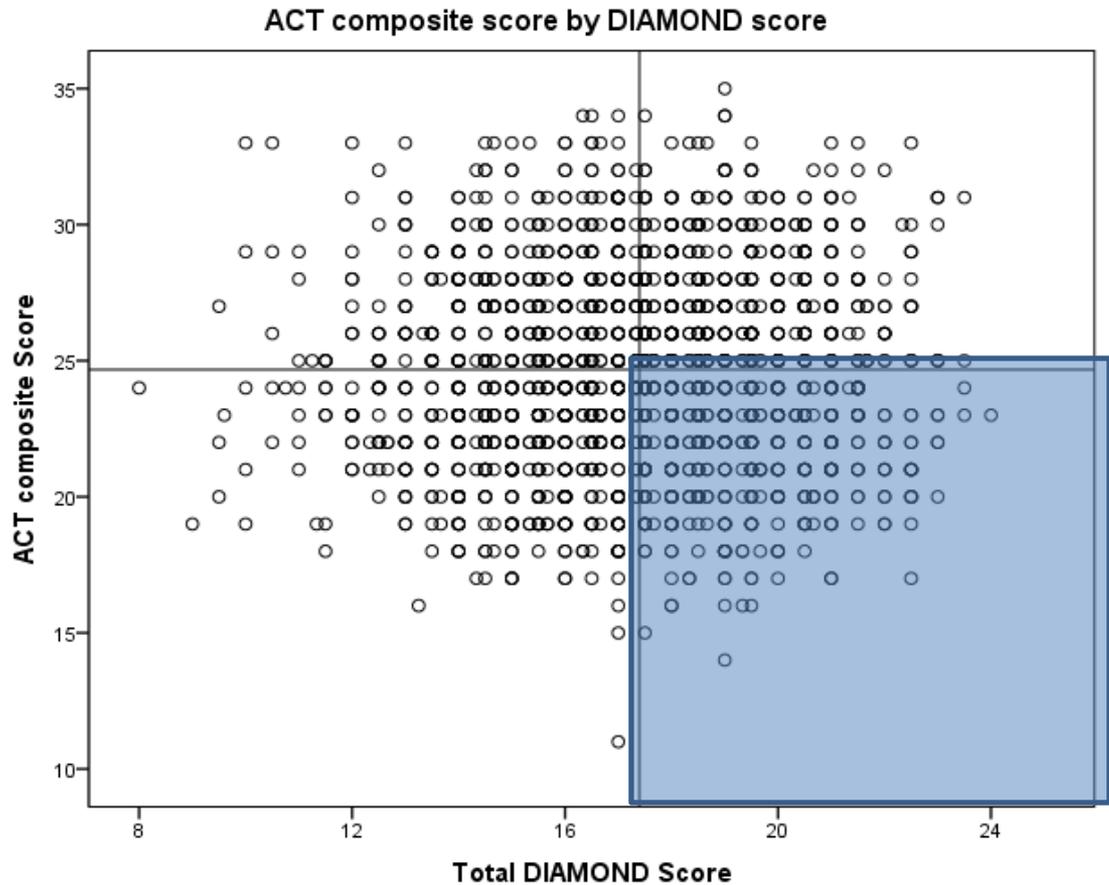
DIAMOND scores are not related to ACT scores.



Preliminary Findings

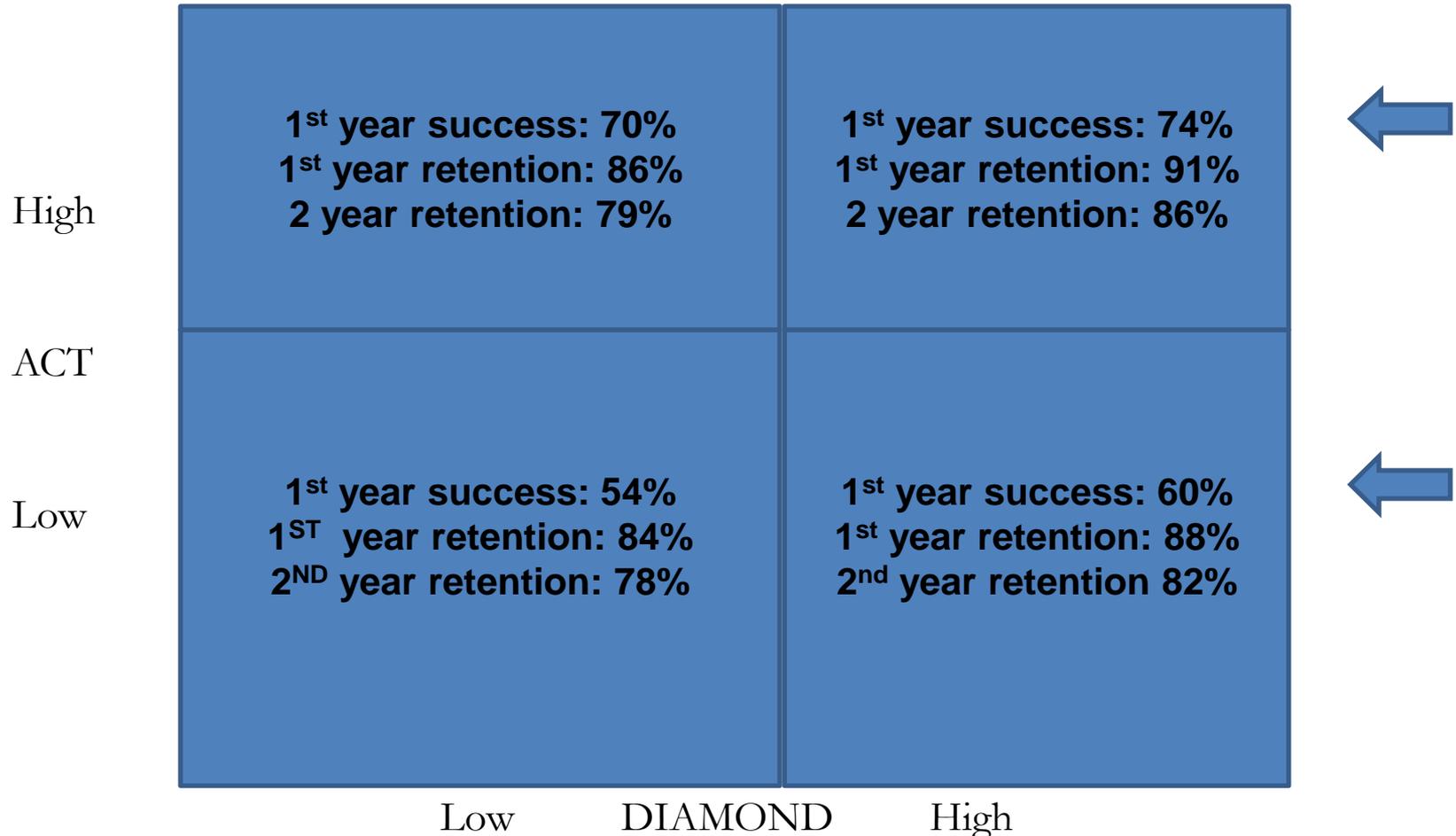
- Do DIAMOND scores level the playing field ? **YES**
- Do DIAMOND scores predict student success ?

There are many students with lower than average ACT scores and higher than average DIAMOND scores. How successful are these students?



. Horizontal line represents average ACT score, vertical line represents average DIAMOND score.

Students with higher than average DIAMOND scores have greater retention whether ACT is above or below average.



Horizontal line represents average ACT score , vertical line represents average DIAMOND score.

Findings : DIAMOND and Student Success

- **High school GPA is the most significant factor** for predicting first year success.
- There is evidence that **higher DIAMOND scores help predict first year success, and, in some cases, retention - -- for students with lower income, students of color, and students with lower ACT scores.**
- Preliminary findings suggest that the DIAMOND scores can **effectively bring additional information into the admissions review that is not statistically related to applicants' socioeconomic and racial/ethnic background.**

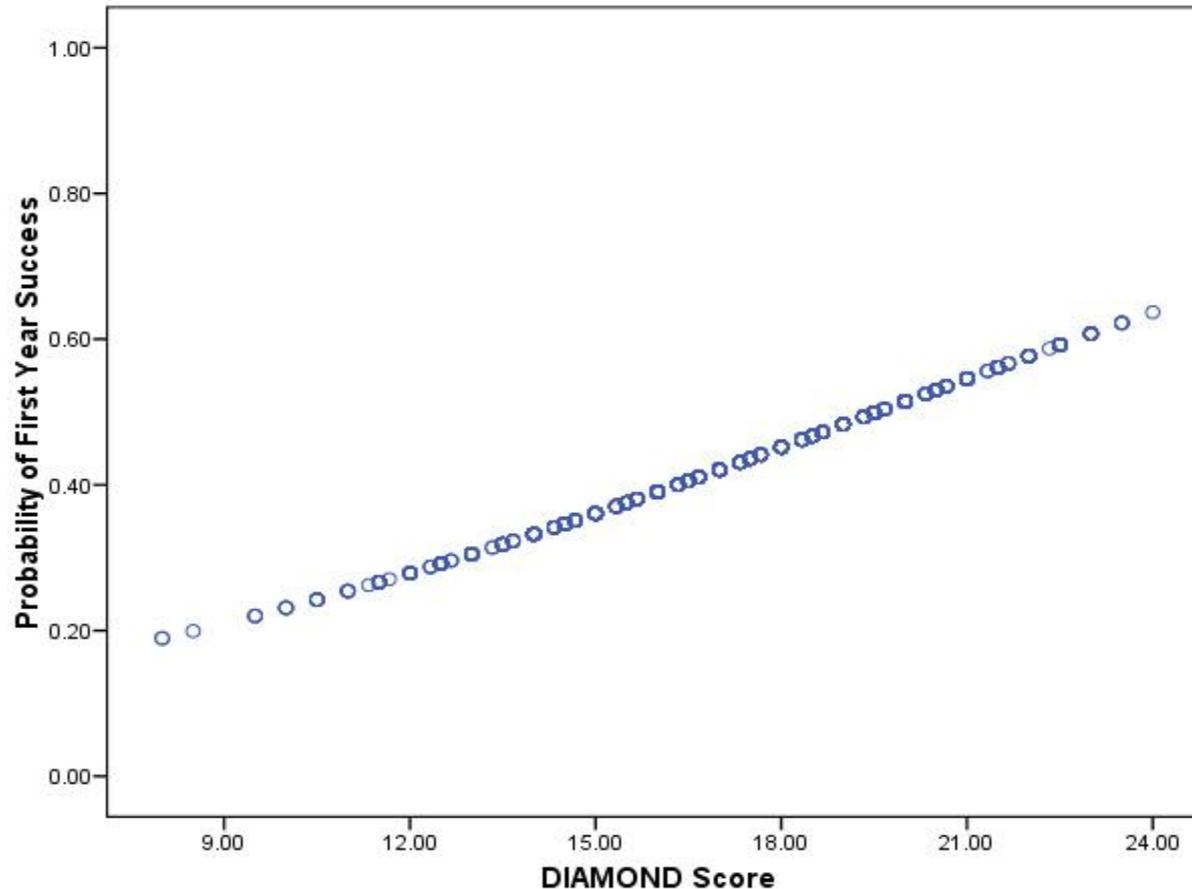
Findings : DIAMOND and Student Success

- “**Leadership**” scores are a significant **predictor for ALL success outcomes** studied: first-year GPA, first-year credits earned, first-year performance, first- to second-year retention, second- to third-year retention and second-year academic performance*.
- “**Total DIAMOND**” scores are predictive of first-year GPA, first-year retention, second-year retention and second-year academic performance*.
- “**Knowledge Acquired in a Field**” contributes to the prediction of first-year performance and second-year performance.

* Second year performance is earning 2.5 GPA and at least 96 credits (on a quarter system)

DIAMOND essays are especially predictive of first-year success for minority students with lower HSGPAs.

Probability of First Year Success Based on DIAMOND Score When Ethnicity/Race is Minority and HSGPA <3.0



*First year success defined as GPA ≤ 2.5 and credit hours earned ≥ 48 . Probabilities calculated using coefficients from logistic regression.

Preliminary Findings

- **DIAMOND** scores appear to help to provide a useful, more holistic assessment of the likelihood of student success, especially for :
 - **Students with low HSGPA**
 - **Minorities with low HSGPA**
 - **Students with low standardized test scores**
 - **Chicago Public School students**
 - **Students with low HSQ Index**
 - **Federal Pell Grant eligible male students**

Preliminary Findings

- Do DIAMOND scores level the playing field ? **YES**
- Do DIAMOND scores predict student success ? **YES**

Benefits to Applicant and DePaul

- Ties to student success.
- Looks at the whole person.
- Allows applicants to make their own case.
- Asks straightforward and specific questions based on student experience.
- **Establishes a process for more systematic review and assessment of admission essays.**
- Future: Provides additional information on student interests and goals for initial advising and educational planning.



Thank you.



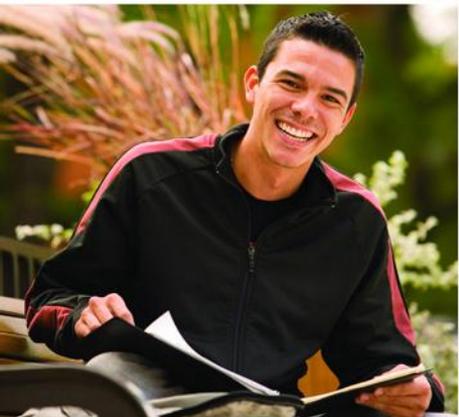
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Appendix

THE TEST-OPTIONAL DECISION

Bringing together market and mission realities
with retention research

Why did we make the Test-optional decision?

- Our purpose in offering a test-optional alternative is to elevate in the admission process **the best and fairest criteria for evaluating student potential**, namely students' academic performance in a rigorous, college-preparatory program in high school. That has always been DePaul's primary criterion for freshman admission.
- The objective of this new approach is to encourage a wider range of **high-achieving students** to consider a four-year degree at DePaul, including very talented and promising students who may be disadvantaged by admission criteria that emphasize standardized tests.

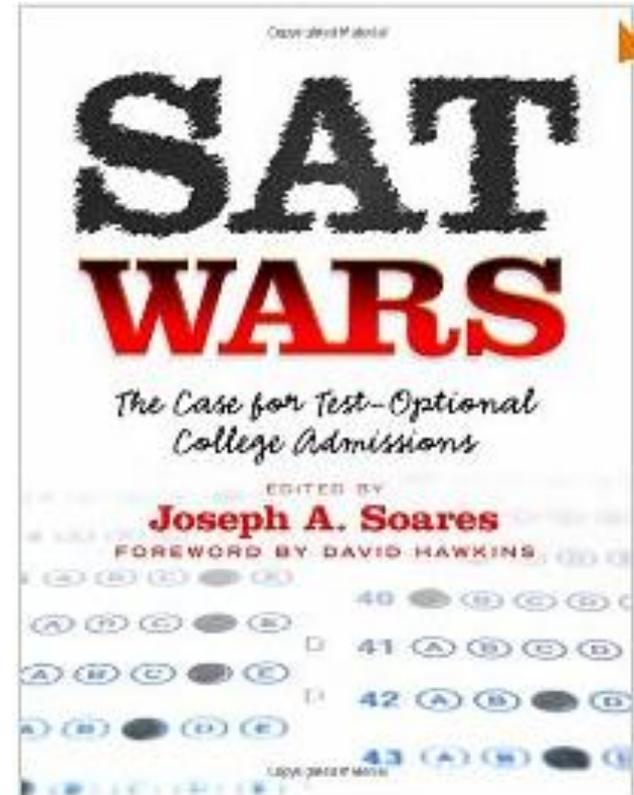
ACT versus HSGPA at DePaul

- High school GPA is a better predictor of first year grades than ACT scores
- Only HSGPA is significant to first-year retention
- ACT scores do not tell us about first to second year retention
- *First Year Performance** - a combination of first-year GPA of 2.5 and 48 credits earned - is the best predictor of retention and degree completion at DePaul*

Validity of tests

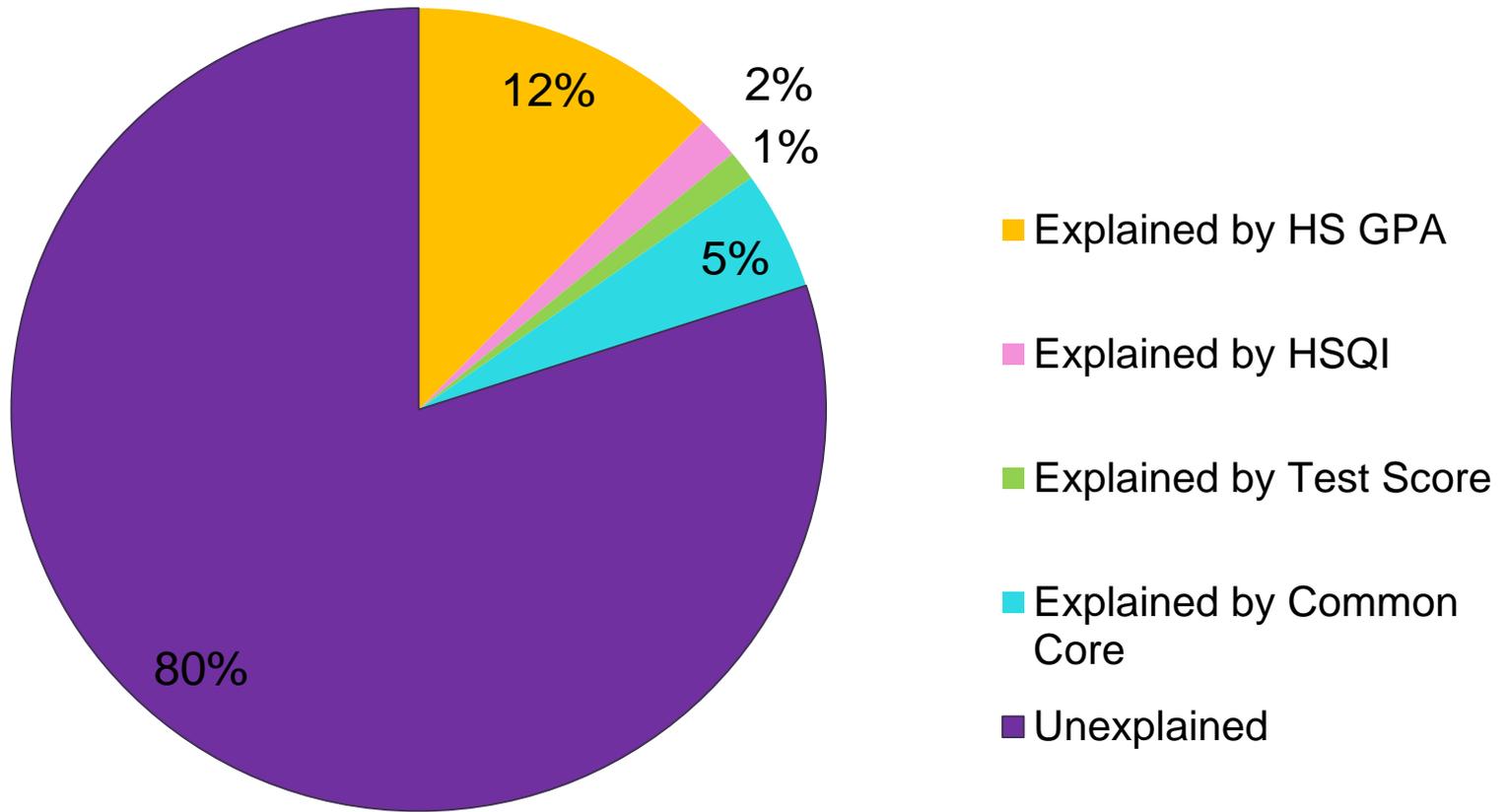
- NACAC 2008 report

“The Commission believes that there may be more colleges and universities that could make appropriate admission decisions without requiring standardized admission tests such as the ACT and SAT. The Commission encourages institutions **to consider dropping the admission test requirements if it is determined that the predictive utility of the test or the admission policies of the institution...support that decision** and if the institution believes that standardized test results would not be necessary for other reasons such as course placement, advising, or research.”



Predicting first-year performance

Percent of variance



Messaging is important

- Assuring students that the admission process is consistent and fair for all applicants
- **Undermatching** is an issue for underrepresented students who aspire to attendance at a four-year institution
- Telling students that their efforts in their high school classes matter

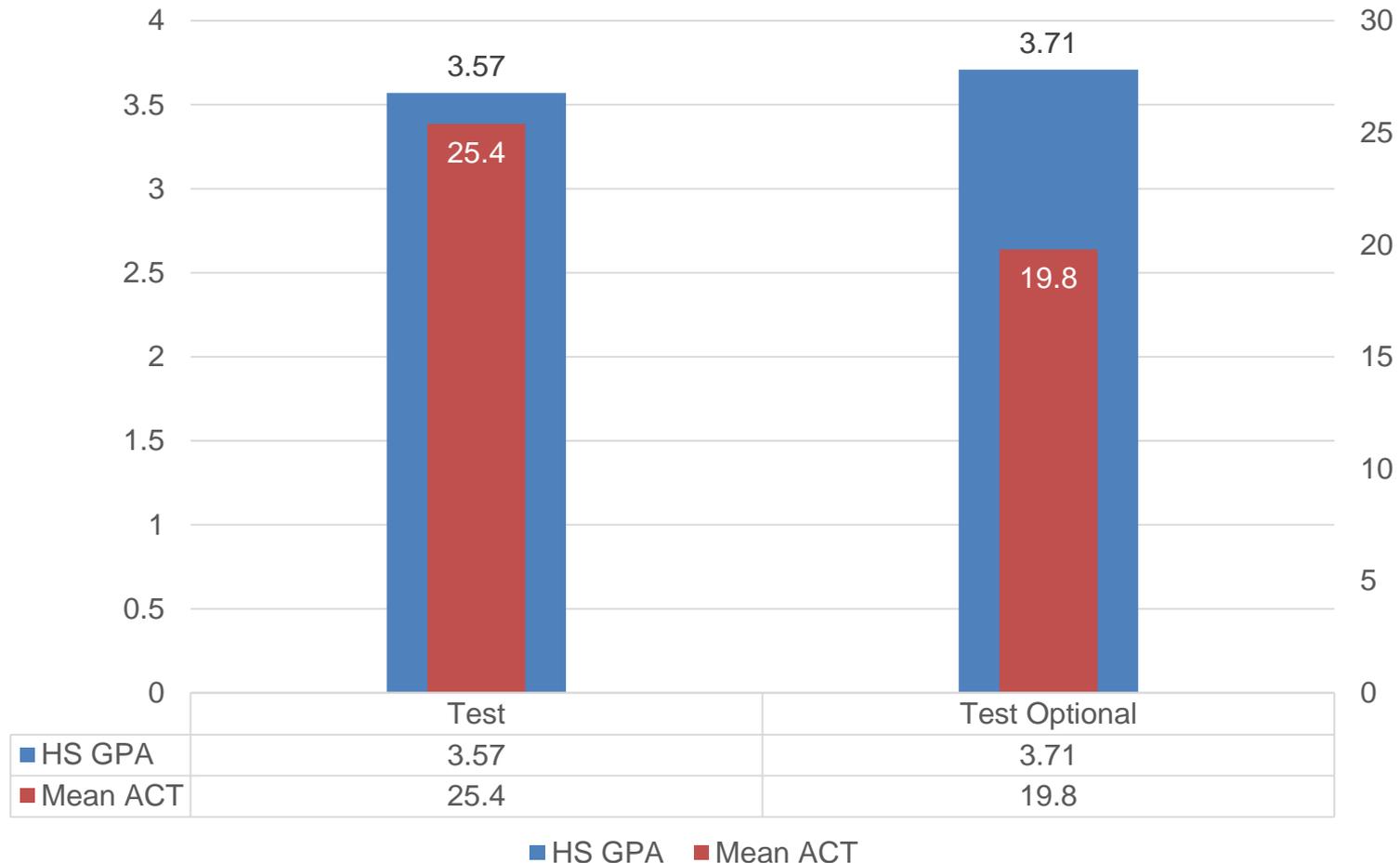
Study hard for four years of high school

Take a rigorous curriculum

Do not discount the possibility of a four-year private education

2012 Test Optional Students had a slightly higher High School GPA and a considerably lower Average ACT Score

NOTE: ACT of 25 is 79th percentile; 19 is 42nd percentile



Test-optional Admission Pilot Program (TOPP) 2012 Early Results

2012 Class	Test-optional	Test-submitter
First-year Retention	84%	85%
First-year GPA	3.25	3.33
HIGH first-year Performance	65%	71%

High: ≥ 48 credit hours earned, ≥ 2.5 GPA

Early outcomes are good despite the fact that **TOPP students were much more likely to be Pell-eligible, students of color and from Chicago Public high schools.**

DEFINING PROMISE: OPTIONAL STANDARDIZED TESTING POLICIES IN AMERICAN COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS

<http://www.nacacnet.org/research/research-data/nacac-research/Documents/DefiningPromise.pdf> (William Hiss)

- The study examines optional standardized testing policies at 33 colleges and universities, as measured by cumulative college GPAs and graduation rates.
- College admissions decisions are reliable for students admitted without SAT or ACT scores. **Testing may artificially truncate pools of applicants who will succeed.**
- Statistical analyses show **no significant differences in college cumulative GPA and graduation rates between submitters and non-submitters.**
Differences between submitters and non-submitters are .05 of a GPA point, and .6% in graduation rates.
- Students with strong HSGPAs generally perform well in college, despite modest testing. In contrast, students with weak HSGPAs earn lower college Cum GPAs and graduation rates, even with stronger testing. *A clear message: hard work and good grades in high school matter, and they matter a lot.*

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