

Regulations on Supplemental Information about Academic Performance of Nonpublic School Students and Home Schooled Students

Some campuses have set special undergraduate admissions requirements for graduates of home schools and other high schools. The requirements have been applied to applicants from home schools because conventional measures of high school performance such as class rank, course grades, course content, and course rigor may be difficult to evaluate for such applicants. At some institutions these special policies have also been applied to applicants of nonaccredited high schools and high schools without conventional grading systems or curricula.

For all such applicants it may be difficult for the admissions officer to determine that the Board of Governors' minimum course requirements have been met. This is because transcripts from these applicants may show unconventional course labels, course content, course sequences, grading practices, and other information that make it difficult for the admissions officer to verify that the graduate has taken and mastered the content of courses required by the board's minimum course requirements. The uncertainty arises largely because there are often no external standards by which the curriculum and grading practices of these high schools can be evaluated to insure that they are consistent with the board's requirements.

In instances where an admissions officer feels the need to gather supplemental information about academic performance, in order to enforce the board's requirements, it is important that the board's procedures for implementing minimum course requirements permit that to occur. It is equally important that the supplemental information requested be related to enforcing the requirements and that it be interpreted by admissions officers in a manner that is not prejudicial to the applicant from whom it is requested. In order to meet these requirements, two tests – the ACT and the SAT-II achievement tests – shall be considered acceptable tests to provide the supplemental information required for this purpose.

This regulation limits the supplemental information an admissions officer may request to one of the two tests. It also directs that admissions officers refrain from setting any minimum scores on these tests unless and until they have been validated for predicting freshman performance and found to be nondiscriminatory against these special applicants.

[This is a rewrite of a memorandum from President Spangler to the chancellors, chief academic officers and directors of admission dated February 20, 1997.]