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Chicago State University Makes Sweeping Overhaul of Admissions, Transfer Policies

CHICAGO (NOVEMBER 25, 2008) — Chicago State University is making sweeping changes to its admissions policies and eliminating barriers for transfer students. These changes replace previous standards, which were based on a set of fixed ACT scores and high school grade point averages. CSU admissions officials will now rely on a variety of data that should reveal which students are most likely to succeed in college.

The changes respond to a study conducted by CSU researchers Dr. Samir Miari, Dr. Daniel Block and Dr. Eric Peters. The team looked at the ACT scores and high school GPAs of the incoming classes of 2006 and 2007 and compared those scores to their grades at the end of their first years of college. Based on those results, they created a sliding scale that much more realistically indicates which combination of scores should be the standard for admitting new students.

Until now, students were granted or denied admission primarily on a minimum ACT score of 18, and a minimum GPA of 2.5. Now admissions officials will look at a combination of those scores to more accurately determine which students are likely to succeed and which ones are not.

“Because of the research, we now have a much better idea of which students we should be admitting,” said Dr. Sandra Westbrooks, provost and vice president for academic affairs. “We will be able to admit students we would have rejected out of hand in the past. For example, a student who had a 3.2 GPA in high school but had a 17 ACT score would not have been admitted. Similarly, a student with a 22 ACT and a 2.0 GPA would have been denied.”

The change in University policy was ratified by the Board of Trustees on November 19.

In a related move, the University is eliminating mandatory entrance tests in English, reading and math for transfer students with associate degrees. In the past, all students transferring from other schools were required to take the tests. If they failed, they would have to take remedial classes. Under the new policy, students who already have an associate’s degree or a second degree will have the tests waived. CSU officials said the tests were unnecessary and discouraged students from applying to the University.