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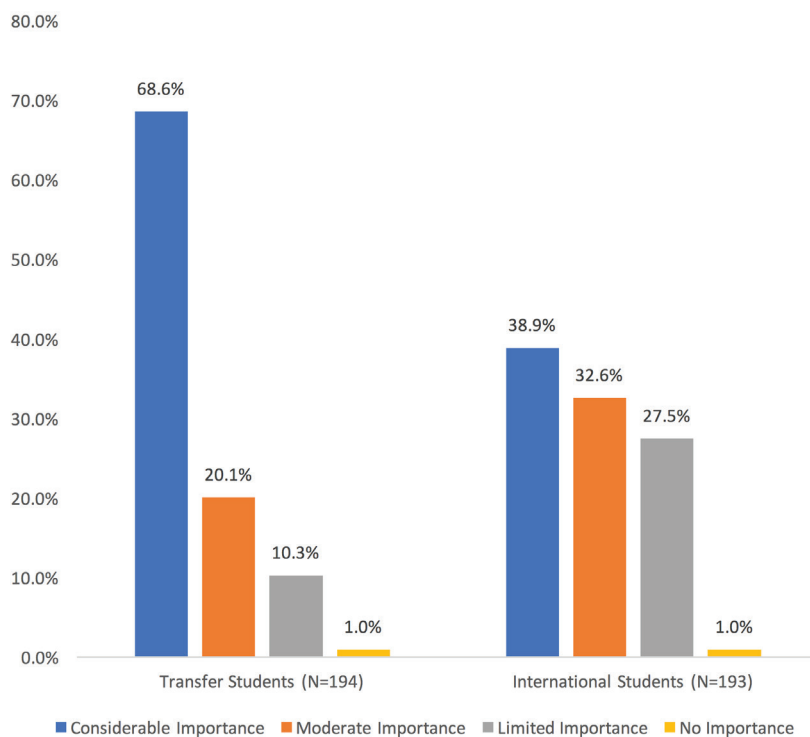
CHAPTER 2 RECRUITMENT AND YIELD STRATEGIES

Beyond the High School Graduate

As shown in Figure 2, more than two-thirds of Admission Trends Survey respondents indicated that transfer students are considerably important to meeting overall recruitment goals, and only 11 percent reported that they had little or no importance. A greater proportion of public colleges rated transfer students as considerably important as compared to private colleges (80 percent versus 62 percent). Colleges with larger enrollments and those with higher acceptance rates also rated transfer students as more important.

Almost 40 percent of colleges rated international students as considerably important to their enrollment goals, and nearly one-third indicated moderate importance for this group. Larger colleges tended to rate international students as more important to meeting enrollment goals.

FIGURE 2. IMPORTANCE OF PROSPECTIVE STUDENT POPULATIONS IN MEETING INSTITUTIONAL ENROLLMENT GOALS



SOURCE: NACAC Admission Trends Survey, 2016.

Recruitment Strategies by Prospective Student Group

Results of NACAC's 2016 Admission Trends Survey indicate that many of the recruitment methods used for traditional domestic high school students are also useful with other populations. For example, contacting students through email and engaging with them through the institution's website were the most important

recruitment strategies that colleges and universities use for first-time freshmen, transfer students, and international students. For high school students, an additional four factors were each rated as considerably important by at least 50 percent of colleges. They were: hosting campus visits, outreach to high school counselors, high school visits, and direct mail. More than half of colleges (56 percent) also

MEAN NUMBER OF COUNTRIES IN WHICH COLLEGES RECRUIT



TABLE 4. PERCENTAGE OF COLLEGES ATTRIBUTING “CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE” TO VARIOUS RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES, BY PROSPECTIVE STUDENT POPULATION: FALL 2016

Factor	First-Time Freshmen	Transfer	International (First-Time Freshmen)
Website	87.6%	86.0%	88.1%
Email	79.7	72.1	78.5
Hosted Campus Visit	76.2	55.6	30.4
High School Counselor	57.3	15.4	36.1
High School Visit (in the US)	54.9	9.8	9.8
Direct Mail	50.5	25.0	2.8
College Fairs	41.7	19.7	15.5
Social Media	40.0	32.2	35.6
Community Based Organizations	20.2	3.4	4.2
Test-Optional Policy	15.3	9.8	11.8
Alumni	12.1	9.2	11.1
Articulation Agreements with Community Colleges	10.4	57.4	11.6
Community College Outreach/Partnerships	8.5	61.8	5.7
High School Visit (Outside the US)	6.0	0.6	19.4
Conditional/Provisional Admission Program	3.9	2.4	10.3
International Student Recruitment Agents	—	—	12.6
Partnerships with International Colleges/Universities	—	—	16.4
State or Regional Recruitment Consortium	—	—	4.5
Federal Government Support	—	—	11.7
Foreign Government Support	—	—	11.1
Pathways Programs	—	—	13.5

—Question was only asked for international students.

SOURCE: NACAC Admission Trends Survey, 2016.



49%

OF SELECTIVE COLLEGES
OFFERED EARLY DECISION

rated college visits as considerably important in recruiting transfer students (see Table 4). A variety of other strategies were used with both transfer and international recruitment, but only email and website were very highly rated as recruitment tools.

Survey respondents reported that they actively recruited in 10.7 countries, on average. For the purpose of the survey, “active recruitment” was defined as engaging in recruitment activities that involve either maintaining an in-country office/staff presence or periodic staff travel to students’ home countries (e.g. attending education fairs, making high school visits, conducting site visits with international student recruitment agents.) Private colleges recruited in 15.8 countries, on average, nearly

twice as many as public colleges. The number of countries also increased with selectivity.

(A complete breakdown of how colleges rated various recruitment strategies by population can be found in Appendix Tables B.1 to B.3.)

Early Decision (ED)

Twenty percent of respondents to NACAC’s 2016 Admission Trends Survey offered ED. Private colleges were more likely than public institutions to offer Early Decision policies (30 percent compared to 5 percent), as were selective colleges. Nearly half (49 percent) of the most selective colleges (those accepting fewer than 50 percent of applicants) had an Early Decision application option. (See Appendix C for a detailed description of Early Decision and Early Action



43%

OF COLLEGES WITH LOW
YIELD RATES OFFERED
EARLY ACTION

policies.)

Early Decision applicants represent only a small portion of the total applicant pool at colleges that have ED policies. Only 6 percent of all applications for Fall 2016 admission to ED colleges were received through Early Decision. The proportion of all applications received through ED increased with the admission selectivity rate.

As expected, colleges with Early Decision policies reported a higher acceptance rate for their ED applicants as compared to all applicants (60 percent versus 48 percent). Given the binding nature of Early Decision policies, the average yield rate for Early Decision admits was 87 percent, substantially higher than the average yield rate for all students admitted to ED colleges (25 percent) (see Table 5). More

TABLE 5. KEY STATISTICS FOR EARLY DECISION COLLEGES: FALL 2016

	N	Mean Percent
Applications Received through Early Decision	69	5.8
Early Decision Selectivity Rate	69	59.5
Overall Selectivity Rate for Institutions with Early Decision Policies	79	47.9
Early Decision Yield Rate	57	86.6
Overall Yield Rate for Institutions with Early Decision Policies	79	25.2

SOURCE: NACAC Admission Trends Survey, 2016.

selective colleges tended to have higher ED yield rates.

Between Fall 2015 and Fall 2016, colleges reported an average increase of 5 percent in the number of Early Decision applicants and 6 percent in ED admits. In a prior survey, colleges also had reported increases in ED applications and ED admits between Fall 2014 and Fall 2015 (10 percent and 11 percent, respectively).

Early Action (EA)

Thirty-four percent of four-year colleges offered EA plans, according to results of the 2016 Admission Trends Survey. Private colleges were more likely than publics to have Early Action application options (39 percent compared to 26 percent, respectively). Colleges with the lowest yield rates also were more likely to offer Early Action. Forty-three percent of colleges with yield rates lower than 30 percent used Early Action.

For Fall 2016, 43 percent of applications to colleges that had Early Action admission plans were received through EA. Similar to the pattern with Early Decision, colleges with Early Action accepted a greater proportion of EA applicants when compared to the overall applicant pool (71 percent versus 65 percent). Unlike Early Decision, Early Action

did not provide a significant benefit to institutions in terms of yield rates. The average yield rate for EA admits was nearly identical to that of the overall applicant pool (25 percent and 23 percent, respectively) (see Table 6).

From Fall 2015 to Fall 2016, the number of Early Action applications increased by 15 percent and the number of students accepted through EA increased by 16 percent, on average. Colleges also had reported average increases in EA applications and EA admits between Fall 2014 and Fall 2015 of 7 percent each.

Wait Lists

For the Fall 2016 admission cycle, 39 percent of institutions reported using a wait list. Private institutions were more likely than public colleges and universities to maintain a wait list (45 percent compared to 31 percent), as were those with lower acceptance rates. Nearly three-quarters (72 percent) of the most selective institutions (accepting fewer than half of all applicants) maintained a wait list.

Institutions reported placing an average of 10 percent of all applicants on the wait list for the Fall 2016 admission cycle, and an average of 48 percent of waitlisted students opted to remain on the wait list. Private colleges and those



THE MOST SELECTIVE COLLEGES ADMITTED ONLY 14 PERCENT OF WAITLISTED STUDENTS

with lower acceptance rates placed a greater proportion of students on wait lists, on average.

Institutions admitted an average of 23 percent of all students who chose to remain on wait lists. Selective colleges were least likely to admit students from a wait list. Only 14 percent of students who accepted a wait list spot at the most selective colleges (those accepting fewer than half of all applicants) were ultimately admitted. Between Fall 2015 and Fall 2016, the average number of students offered a wait list position increased by 11 percent, and the number admitted increased by 31 percent. As reported on the 2015 Admission Trends Survey, between Fall 2014 and Fall 2015, the average number of students offered a wait list position increased by 16 percent, and the number admitted increased by 41 percent.

TABLE 6. KEY STATISTICS FOR EARLY ACTION COLLEGES: FALL 2016

	N	Mean Percent
Applications Received through Early Action	91	43.2
Early Action Selectivity Rate	88	71.1
Overall Selectivity Rate for Institutions with Early Action Policies	132	65.2
Early Action Yield Rate	84	24.8
Overall Yield Rate for Institutions with Early Action Policies	131	23.3

SOURCE: NACAC Admission Trends Survey, 2016.