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TEST-OPTIONAL COLLEGES LIST SOARS PAST 775 AS LEADING ADMISSIONS GROUP URGES MORE SCHOOLS TO RECONSIDER SAT/ACT STANDARDIZED EXAM REQUIREMENTS AND STOP MISUSE OF SCORES OF SCHOLARSHIPS

As the nation's leading organization of college admissions professionals calls for more schools to reevaluate their use of SAT and ACT test results, a new survey concludes that more than 775 bachelor-degree granting colleges and universities already do not require most applicants to submit scores from either exam.

The number of "test-optional" schools has soared since "new" versions of the SAT and ACT were introduced, according to the National Center for Fair & Open Testing (FairTest), which applauded the report released today by the National Association for College Admissions Counseling (NACAC). The NACAC Commission on the Use of Standardized Tests in Undergraduate Admission echoed many recommendations long advocated by FairTest and other assessment reformers, including:

- encouraging additional institutions to consider ending their admissions exam mandates;
- stopping the use of "cut-scores," or minimum test requirements, for determining tuition aid eligibility; particularly in programs such as the National Merit Scholarship competition; and
- condemning reliance on ACT/SAT results for "ranking" institutional quality;

"The NACAC report accurately captures the concerns about test score misuse and overuse shared by many high school guidance counselors and college admissions officers," said FairTest Executive Director Jesse Mermell. "The test scores obsession is undermining both equity and educational quality in our nation's schools." More than 40 institutions have dropped admissions testing requirements for all or most applicants in the past four years.

FairTest Public Education Director Bob Schaeffer added, "We expect the ACT/SAT optional list to continue growing as more institutions recognize that the tests remain biased, coachable, educationally damaging and irrelevant to sound admissions practices." A recent report from the College Board, the test's owner, concluded that high school grades predict college performance more accurately than does the SAT. Several of the nation's most selective institutions, including Smith College and Wake Forest University, are among those recently dropping admissions testing requirements.

A regularly updated FairTest directory of test score schools is available free online at <http://www.fairtest.org/university/optional>. Nearly 200,000 students, parents, and guidance counselors use these lists each year.

The first national administration of the SAT for the 2008-2009 academic year will be Saturday, October 4. The ACT will be offered three weeks later on Saturday, October 25.

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A chronology of recent test-optional policy adoptions and a list of top schools which do not require ACT or SAT scores are available on request