

Student Success Committee Recommendations:

1. Require conditionally admitted students to enroll in and complete satisfactorily a summer Synergy program prior to full admission in the fall.
2. Consider gradually increasing standards GPA standards if the above program proves successful.
2. Do not admit students who fall below our high school GPA and test score requirements.

Rationale:

One of the tasks given to the Student Success committee was to evaluate the “Admission with conditions” category. Currently, UW admits over 100 freshmen who, for one reason or another, do not meet our admission standards. Although it might appear from the designation that admission is contingent on these students meeting various conditions, in fact we place no conditions upon them beyond those conditions applied to students with assured admission.

A primary reason for admission standards is to inform students who do not meet standards that they are much less likely to succeed in college. As you can see from the accompanying table, there is a major difference in the performance of those students with assured admission and those receiving admission with conditions. This table traces the success rates of the fall 1999 freshman class. At the end of four years 67 percent of those who had received assured admission either graduated or were still in school. The comparable figure for the conditionally admitted students was 32 percent. Note the difference between those who graduated in four years—31 percent vs. 5 percent for the conditionals.

The committee discussed a number of options. First, it was suggested that we simply eliminate the conditionally admit category which would again move us very close to an open admission University. The committee deemed this an unacceptable option for two reasons. Such a move would send the message to high school students that UW was reducing standards, a message that is contrary to the national push for higher academic standards. Second, it eliminates the warning to the conditional admits that chances of success are slim. Several on the committee expressed the view that it was “false” advertising to admit students to the University with such small chances of success.

Second, it was suggested that we impose and enforce conditions. The committee agrees with this option and recommends the following: Students who fall into the conditionally admitted category would be **required** to enroll in a Synergy like program during the summer. Conditionally admitted students would not be allowed to enroll for the fall semester if the summer Synergy program is not completed successfully. Synergy

requires students to enroll in three linked classes, English 1010, an I-course and Political Science 1000. The I-course should include significant instruction on study skills. The Synergy project has been piloted twice and results are encouraging. Advantages of this approach are as follows:

1. Would provide weak students with the skills necessary to meet the standards of the regular school year. Would meet our moral obligation to provide students who now have little chance of success with a program that would give them a much greater probability of academic success.
2. Would allow students to complete three required courses prior to the beginning of the fall semester, therefore providing them with a substantial head start.
3. Would self-select those students with weak academic records but with strong motivation to succeed.
4. Would allow students to determine whether they are suited for college without incurring the costs for the regular school year. Nine hours in the summer is cheaper in terms of both tuition and living expenses than a full-load tuition and a longer semester in the fall.
5. Given current summer school funding practices, summer Synergy would self-finance. Offering Synergy during the regular school year would require additional funding. Summer would not.
6. Conditionally admitted students who are unwilling or unable to devote the summer to this program would still have the option of attending a community college for one or more semesters to develop and demonstrate their readiness for college-level work, and then transferring to UW.
7. By focusing on a summer plan, UW can develop an overall program that is intentional—that includes elements of class time, and out-of-class support.

The committee also suggests that those students who fall within the “Low GPA and Test” category not be permitted to enroll. Their chances of success are negligible.

In the longer term, consideration might also be given to raising the GPA cutoff for conditional admit. Currently, Wyoming applicants with a high school GPA below 2.75 are designated as conditional; raising that to, say, 2.8, would add a few more students to the summer Synergy program. If the program as recommended above proves academically successful and financially self-sustaining, then an incremental expansion by gradually raising the GPA cutoff could be valuable.

UW Freshmen Admissions Categories Fall 1999

Admission Category	N	Average ACT		Average SAT		Avg H.S. GPA	1 st Sem GPA	%	% Retained in Spring	% Retained in Fall	% Retained 2 yrs later	% Retained 3 yrs later	Status 4 Years Later	% Graduated
		Avg	N	Avg	N								% Retained	
Assured Admission	1,104	24.0	1,019	1121	302	3.56	2.94	12%	93%	79%	70%	69%	36%	31%
Admission w/Conditions	121	19.6	91	973	31	2.68	2.18	46%	77%	50%	50%	31%	27%	5%
Adult Reentry	1	--	0	--	0	2.22	2.14	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
GED**	10	26.6	5	1230	1	--	3.02	40%	60%	40%	50%	40%	50%	0%
Low GPA	37	22.2	24	1073	13	2.46	1.92	57%	79%	54%	54%	35%	25%	8%
Low Test	17	17.2	14	858	5	2.86	2.38	41%	77%	41%	29%	24%	29%	0%
Low GPA & Test	33	17.5	23	861	7	2.54	1.90	57%	72%	34%	20%	12%	16%	0%
Total	1,225	23.6	1,110	1,107	333	3.48	2.88	15%	92%	76%	68%	64%	35%	29%

1. Subcategories do not add to the total since students may have multiple conditions or no condition for admission.

Note:

2. Special Talent awards are not loaded into the system.

* Includes only UNDC majors.

**GED Recipients may include home schoolers.

OIA:SMK:DW

8-Mar-04

