State of the Academic Program
Agenda 26 January 2024

1. Registrar and Miller Academic Center
   - COL Niccole Gatliff – Registrar
   - LTC Allyson Pierce – Director, Miller Academic Center

2. Registration for Spring 2024 – Issues
   - Staffing
   - IT

3. United States Constitutional History
   - Course Syllabus (attachment)

4. Standardized Test
   - Committee Report (attachment)
   - Recommended Planning (attachments)

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE
LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA 24450-0304

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
Phone 540-464-7338

Date 22 September 2023

To: Colonel Stacy Vargas
Chair, Curriculum and Instruction Committee

Through: Brigadier General Robert Moreschi
Deputy Superintendent for Academics and Dean of the Faculty

From: Colonel M. Houston Johnson V
Head, Department of History

Re: Proposed Curricular Addition

Proposal Specification (1 sentence)

The Department of History wishes to add the course HI-300: United States Constitutional History as a regular catalogue course.

Description of Proposal

HI-300 examines the foundations and development of the United States Constitution. Cadets' exploration of American constitutional history will be based in extensive reading and analysis of primary sources, including but not limited to the Constitution, Amendments thereto, and Supreme Court decisions. The course is designed to prepare cadets to remain engaged citizens of the United States after they leave VMI, and will be suitable for cadets of *all* academic majors.

Explanation of significance of the proposal

HI-300 is central facet of the emerging Constitutional History Program. Slated to become part of the core curriculum in the coming years (timeline TBD), HI-300 has been taught since AY '20-'21 as a special topics course at the direction of the Dean of the Faculty. We seek formal approval for the course both to align with VMI policy—i.e. to stop teaching it as a special topics offering since history department faculty teach it every semester—and to prepare the course for consideration by the CCOC for inclusion in the core curriculum.

Supporting Documentation and details

1) Course syllabus—attached below.

2) Cumulative Assessment:
   a) Does the proposed course have a final exam worth between 30% and 50% of the course grade? **NO**

b) If the answer to 2a is "No," please describe the final assessment mechanism, explain the rationale for it, and confirm department head's support for this approach. (See *Academic Regulations*—Final Examinations

The final exam for HI-300 comprises 25% of the final course grade. That weighting reflects a desire to deploy a diversity of assessment mechanisms—including weekly reading response papers, two take-home essays, a midterm, and participation grades—with the goal of keeping cadets consistently engaged with course material. That goal is particularly important in a course designed to be taught to cadets from all majors, many of whom will likely have little familiarity with course content and the types of assigned readings.

3) Course catalogue description (new or modified course)
   a) Include the credit designation in the format lecture hours—lab hours—credit hours such as (3-0-3) or (3-3-4).

HI 300: United States Constitutional History
Instructor: Various (Program Director and Course Coordinator-to-be LTC Mark Boonshoft (3-0-3)
Catalogue Description: An intensive study of the origins and development of the United States Constitution, from its early-modern origins to the present. An emphasis is placed on reading and analyzing primary documents related to constitutional history, including but not limited to Supreme Court decisions. Thematic focuses will include the American founding, civil rights, and the obligations of citizen-soldiers, among others.

4) Resource needs and implications (department and Institute)

None at present for departmental needs. Significant—3-4 additional tenure-track lines—to staff the program for rollout to the entire corps of cadets. The Department of History has been in conversation with the Dean of the Faculty on this issue; the timing and specifics of resource allocations are TBD pending CCOC review of the core curriculum and the CCOC's, Ac Board's, and Dean's recommendations regarding the timing of the inclusion of HI-300 therein.

5) Impact on other departments

Beginning with the class of 2027, both the History and International Studies Departments require their majors to take HI-300 as part of the major curriculum. As such, the History Department will need to deploy sufficient HI-300 sections to meet both departments' needs. Beyond History and IS, HI-300 creates a new history elective opportunity—as the course has no prerequisites it can be taken by any cadet. In the long run, significant once the course becomes part of the core curriculum.

6) Impact on department/faculty/cadets if proposal not approved

Significant. Formal approval of HI-300 represents an important step toward including the course in the core curriculum. The Department of History has hired two faculty members to teach the course and both the History and International Studies Departments require HI-300 as part of their respective major curriculums for the class of 2027 and beyond.

Specify foundation for proposed change(s) [external review, assessment data, etc.]

Largely enumerated above. HI-300 is the centerpiece of the emerging Constitutional History Program; the Dean of the Faculty tasked the Department of History with developing and deploying the course in

preparation for its inclusion in the core curriculum.

Implementation timeline, including the academic class(es) affected

The course has been offered as a special topics course since AY ’20-’21. Beginning with the class of 2027, the course is required for HI and IS majors. The timeline for inclusion in the core curriculum is TBD as described above.

If proposal is expected to affect program level outcomes, describe assessment methodology

TBD—falls under the purview of the CCOC.

HI 300: United States Constitutional History
Fall 2023

Instructor: LTC Mark Boonshoft
Course Meeting: HI-300-01 MWF, 0900 – 0950; Scott Shipp 365
HI-300-02 MWF, 1000 – 1050; Scott Shipp 365
Office: 327 Scott Shipp Hall
Office Hours: W, 1100-1150, 1300 – 13500; R, 1400-1515; F, 1300-1550; and by appointment
Office Phone: (540) 464-7447
Email: boonshoftmd@vmi.edu

Course Overview

Course Description: This course examines the foundations and development of the United States Constitution. It does so in a hands-on way: Cadets' exploration of American constitutional history will be based in extensive reading and analysis of primary sources, including but not limited to Supreme Court decisions. In that way, cadets will not simply learn American constitutional history; they will also gain the skills necessary to remain engaged citizens of the United States well after they leave VMI. This course is therefore designed to be both suitable and valuable for cadets of *all* academic majors.

Course Objectives: By the conclusion of this course, cadets will have gained the ability to:

- Convey a strong understanding of the foundations and development of American constitutional democracy through the present.
- Critically read and analyze primary sources in constitutional history, including Supreme Court decisions.
- Relate their understanding of American constitutional development to present-day constitutional issues.
- Explain the constitutional obligations of citizens and citizen-soldiers.

Required Readings:
Online Readings: All readings will be posted as links or pdf files to the course website.
When a Supreme Court of the United States [SCOTUS] case is listed as reading, always read the *entire* case, including all opinions, unless otherwise noted on Canvas. Sometimes, I will only assign a single opinion, and sometimes just the syllabus of the case. We will go over what these terms mean before you must read any cases. SCOTUS cases will always be listed in their official citation format, i.e. *Boonshoft* vs. *Boonshoft*, U.S. 1776 (2022).
*In lectures, I will provide relevant historical context for class readings and discussions. If at any point you find that you need an additional refresher on any basic American history beyond what I offer in lecture, I recommend that you consult the ***FREE*** online textbook, *American Yawp* at https://www.americanyawp.com/

Grades and Assignments

Grading Scale:
A: 90 – 100
B: 80 – 89
C: 70 – 79
D: 60 – 69
F: 59 and below

A Note on the "A" Grade: An "A" is a grade meant to recognize outstanding work. It will only be earned *through serious engagement with course content and exceptional display of understanding of course material both verbally and in writing.*

Exams and Assignments:	Citizenship Test	1%
	Reading Response Assignments	25%
	Participation	9%
	Ratification Essay	10%
	Analytical Response Essay	15%
	Midterm Exam	15%
	Final Exam	25%

Citizenship Test: Cadets will take a version of the "American Civics Test"—the test which all applicants for U.S. citizenship must pass with a score of 6/10 to be naturalized as citizens. The point of administering this test at the start of HI 300 is to take an inventory of cadets' existing knowledge. It is **NOT** meant to punish cadets who come to the course with limited knowledge of American civic history. Cadets may retake the test until they achieve a passing score.

Exams: There will be both a midterm and a final exam. Both exams may consist of short answer and/or essay questions and will require cadets to show mastery of course readings, discussions, and lectures.

Ratification Essay: Cadets will submit an essay of 800-1,000 words about the debates over the ratification of the U.S. Constitution. The instructor will circulate a full assignment description well in advance of the due date.

Analytical Response Paper: In the penultimate week of the semester, cadets will submit a ~1,200-word response essay on a constitutional issue of present importance. This assignment asks cadets to analyze and contextualize the constitutional issue in light of material covered in the course. The instructor will circulate a full assignment description well in advance of the due date.

Reading Response Assignments: Cadets will submit frequent (one or two per week) reading responses. These will correspond to assigned readings and must be submitted before the start of class on the day the associated reading is due. Most reading responses will require cadets to summarize, synthesize, and analyze the day's readings. The assignments will also prove useful when studying for exams. Specific instructions for each reading response assignment will be posted to Canvas at least one week prior to the due date. All reading responses will be one-page, single-spaced, in Times New Roman, 12-point font.

Participation: Merely attending class is not enough to receive a passing attendance/participation grade. Most class sessions will involve discussions of shared readings. Cadets are expected to contribute to every class discussion. The reading response assignments are designed to help cadets prepare to do so. Participation does not have to be limited to formal class discussions. I expect cadets to actively demonstrate their engagement with course material by asking questions and offering ideas and commentary on issues as they are raised, including during lecture. This may also be done by communicating with the instructor during office hours or via email. Class discussions will often involve potentially controversial subjects over which reasonable people may disagree. Remember, your fellow cadets are your colleagues. Treat each other with respect, especially when you disagree. I will not tolerate uncivil speech or conduct of any sort.

Late Work: The bulk of take-home written work consists of the frequent reading response assignments. These are designed to prepare cadets for that day's class work and discussion; accepting them late would defeat much of their purpose and therefore I will not accept them late. Other written work must be submitted (in paper or electronically; format will be indicated by the instructor) before the beginning of class on the assigned due date. Late papers will be docked 10 points per day including weekends.

Make-Up Policy: If a cadet has a conflict with an exam time or assignment due date, it is their responsibility to

contact the professor at least one week in advance to schedule an alternative time to complete the assignment. If the conflict arises within a week of the assignment due date, you must notify me immediately, but still before the assigned date, to schedule an alternative time to complete the assignment. Per Institute policy, cadets may not miss exams for guard duty.

Course Policies

Covid Protocols: Per Institute policy, faculty may, at their discretion, require cadets to wear masks in the classroom.

Attendance: Cadets are expected to be familiar with the Institute's attendance policies, available in the Academic Regulations section of Regulations for the Virginia Military Institute. Cadets may find this document on the Dean's website at https://www.vmi.edu/media/content-assets/documents/institute-regulations/Academic-Regulations-Jan-2021.pdf. Per Institute policy, cadets who miss 30% of the class meetings are not able to pass the course. No categories of absences (academic, athletic, guard, 3.0 cuts, etc.) will be exempt from that percentage.

Device Policy: Cadets must bring a laptop or tablet to class to access course readings and notes. Devices may not be used for anything other than course-related tasks. Cell phones are prohibited.

Canvas: This course is mostly paperless. All readings will be posted to Canvas and all assignments, except for exams, will be submitted via Canvas.

Communications: I will use email and/or Canvas to communicate throughout the semester. Checking your email and Canvas regularly is essential for success in this course. Failing to check your email or Canvas is not an excuse for missing instructions or deadlines. Ignorance is not bliss! I will hold myself to a similar standard and will respond to messages within 24 hours. If you don't hear back from me within that timeframe, please send a reminder. Cadets should always feel free to email or stop by my office with questions or concerns about the course.

Academic Integrity: Cadets are expected to have read and understood the Institute's Work for Grade policies and procedures. Those policies are attached to this syllabus and are available in the Academic Regulations section of Regulation for the Virginia Military Institute. Cadets may find this document on the Dean's website at https://www.vmi.edu/media/content-assets/documents/institute-regulations/Academic-Regulations-Jan-2021.pdf. Additional Work for Grade information is contained in the History Department Statement Concerning VMI's Policies Regarding Work for Grade, also attached to this syllabus.

Disability: VMI abides by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 which mandate reasonable accommodations are provided for all Cadets with documented disabilities. If you have a registered disability and may require some type of instructional and/or examination accommodations, please contact me early in the semester so that I can provide or facilitate provision of accommodations you may need. If you have not already done so, you will need to register with the Office of Disabilities Services, the designated office on Post to provide services for Cadets with disabilities. The office is affiliated with the Miller Academic Center. Contact the office at 464-7661 for further assistance.

Statement On Diversity: The Virginia Military Institute supports an inclusive learning environment where human diversity is recognized, respected, valued, and seen as a source of strength. Our academic courses are enriched when cadets of all backgrounds and experiences engage in the open sharing of ideas, beliefs, and perspectives. All cadets are expected to help foster this inclusive learning environment. Questions regarding

discrimination prohibited by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, or other federal law, may be referred to the VMI Inspector General and Title IX Coordinator: 303 Letcher Ave, 540-464-7072.

Note: Late enrollment in the course does not exempt cadets from these policies.

Course Schedule

****Readings should be completed by the start of class on the day they are listed. Readings and assignments are subject to change at the instructor's discretion.****

Week	Date	Topic	Reading/Assignments Due
PART 1: CONSTITUTIONAL ORIGINS			
1		**What is A Constitution?**	
	Wed., Aug. 30:	Introduction	
	Fri., Sep. 1:	What Is a Constitution?	*Read:* Barbara Clark Smith, "Revolutionary Consent"; English Bill of Rights; Massachusetts Charter of 1691 *Review*: U.S. Constitution
2		**Revolution to Republic**	
	Mon., Sep. 4:	Governing a People in Revolution	*Read*: *Read*: Continental Articles of Association, 1774 May 15, 1776 Resolution of Continental Congress Montesquieu https://oll.libertyfund.org/title/montesquieu-complete-works-vol-1-the-spirit-of-laws#lf0171-01_label_351 Pennsylvania Constitution of 1776 Virginia Constitution of 1776 Massachusetts Constitution of 1780
	Wed., Sep. 6:	**NO CLASSES**	
	Fri., Sep. 8:	Critical Period	*Read*: Articles of Confederation
3		**Creating the U.S. Constitution**	
	Mon., Sep. 11:	Constitutional Convention	*Read*: Madison, Vices of the Political System Virginia Plan New Jersey Plan
	Wed., Sep. 13:	Slavery and the Constitution	*Read*: Waldstreicher, *Slavery's Constitution*, ch. 2 U.S. Constitution. Article I, Article IV
	Fri., Sep. 15:	Ratification	*Read*: U.S. Constitution Articles V and VII; and Original (12 Amendments) Bill of Rights
4		**Constitution Day and Ratification**	
	Mon., Sep. 18:	Constitution Day	***Cadets are also required to attend a dinner (1800) and Lecture (1945) in the CLE***
	Wed., Sep. 20:	**NO CLASS**	***Comp time for Constitution Day***
	Fri., Sep. 22:	Ratification Debates: Power and Slavery	*Read*: Federalist 10; Brutus II OR Federalist 54; Hugh Hughes, Countryman 1; and Patrick Henry speech in Virginia Convention, June 24, 1788
5		**Ratification Contd.**	
	Mon., Sep. 25:	Ratification Debates over Legislature	**House:** Federalist 55 and 57 **Senate**: Federalist 62 and 63 **Anti-Fed Critiques**: Brutus III and IV
	Wed., Sep. 27:	Ratification Debates over Executive	*Read*: *U.S. Constitution Article II* Federalist 68 and 70 Cato IV Luther Martin, "Genuine Information IX"

	Fri., Sep. 29:	Origins of the Judiciary	*Read*: U.S. Constitution Article III; *Skim*: Judiciary Act of 1789
6		**Fights over Federalism through the Civil War**	
	Mon., Oct. 2:	Implementing the Constitution: Federal Power to 1803	***DUE*: Ratification Essay** *Read:* 11th Amendment
	Wed., Oct. 4:	The Rise of the Supreme Court	*Read:* 12th Amendment*; Marbury v. Madison; McCullough v. Maryland*
	Fri., Oct. 6:	The Civil War as Citizenship Revolution	*Read*: Lincoln-Douglas Debates; Fitzhugh, "Slavery as Positive Good"; *Dred Scott v. Sanford; 13th 14th and 15th Amendments*
7		**Midterm and Post-Civil War**	
	Mon., Oct. 9:	Workshop: How to Read Court Cases	*Read*: Kerr, "How to Read a Legal Opinion"
	Wed., Oct. 11:	**MIDTERM**	
	Fri., Oct. 13:	Reconstruction Thwarted	MS Black Code 1865; *The Slaughter-House Cases*, 83 U.S. 36 (1873); *The Civil Rights Cases*, 109 U.S. 3 (1883); *Plessy v. Ferguson,* 163 U.S. 537 (1896); *Lochner v. New York*, 198 U.S. 45 (1905)
		PART 2: RIGHTS	
8		**New Deal Constitutionalism**	
	Mon., Oct. 16:	Laissez-Faire Constitution?	*Read*; *Lochner v. New York*, 198 U.S. 45 (1905);
	Wed., Oct. 18:	New Deal Challenged …	*Read*: *Schecter Poultry Corp. v. U.S.* (1935); *Morehead v. New York ex. rel. Tipaldo (1935*
	Fri., Oct. 20:	And Affirmed	*Read*: *West Coast Hotel v. Parrish* (1937); *NLRB v. Jones & Laughlin Steep Corp.* (1938)
9		**Field Trip Week**	
9	Mon., Oct. 23:	**NO CLASS**	***Comp time for Wednesday***
	Wed., Oct. 25:	**RVA!**	***Field trip to oral arguments at 4th Circuit Court of Appeals***
	Fri., Oct. 27:	Debrief from RVA	
10		**Civil Rights**	
	Mon., Oct. 30:	Civil Rights Movement	*Read*: *Buck v. Bell*, 274 U.S. 200 (1927); AND A Phillip Randolph and Franklin Roosevelt on Racial Discrimination in the Defense Industry (1941); President's Commission on Civil Rights; Southern Manifesto 1956; Barry Goldwater speech 1964, "Extremism in Defense of liberty"
	Wed., Nov. 1:	*Brown v. Board*	*Read*: *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954) & *Brown II*
	Fri., Nov. 3:	Civil Rights since 1954: Schools as Case Study	*Read*: *Milliken v. Bradley*, 418 U.S. 71 (1974);*Griffin v. Prince Edward County* 377 U.S. 218 (1964); *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1,* 551 U.S. 70 (2007)
11		**Voting Rights**	
	Mon., Nov. 6:	Voting Rights Advocacy	*Read*: Virginia Petition for Right to Vote 1829; Appeal of 40 Thousand Citizens; Carrie Chapman Catt, Address to Congress on Woman's Suffrage; Malcolm X, Ballot or the Bullet
	Wed., Nov. 8:	Voting Rights Legislation	*Read*: 15th, 19th, 24th, and 26th Amendments; Voting Rights Act
	Thurs. Nov. 9:	Voting Rights Cases	*Read: Reynolds v. Sims*, 377 U.S. 533 (1964); *Baker v. Carr*, 369 U.S. 186 (1962); *Shelby County v. Holder*, 570 U.S. 529 (2013); *Rucho v. Common Cause*, No. 18-422, 588 (2019); *Allen v. Milligan,* 599 U. S.

			___, (2023)
	Fri., Nov. 10:	**NO CLASSES**	
12		**Religion**	
	Mon., Nov. 13:	Toleration and Disestablishment	*Read*: 1st Amendment; 1688 Act of Toleration Virginia Statute for Religious freedom
	Wed., Nov. 15:	Religion in Changing U.S.	*Read*: Pat Buchanan culture War Speech; *Engel v. Vitale*, 370 U.S. 421 (1962); *Lemon v. Kurtzman*, 403 U.S. 602 (1971); *Town of Greece v. Galloway*, 572 U.S. 565 (2013); *Carson v. Makin*, 596 U.S. ___ (2022); *Kennedy v. Bremerton School District*, 597 U.S. ___ (2022); *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc*., 573 U.S. 682 (2014); *303 Creative LLC v. Elenis*, 600 U.S. ___, (2023)
	Fri., Nov. 17:	**NO CLASSES**	***Comp time for RVA trip part 2***
13	Mon., Nov. 20:	**THANKSGIVING**	
	Wed., Nov. 22:	**FURLOUGH**	
	Fri., Nov. 24:	**NO CLASS**	
PART 3: POWERS			
14		**Gender and Privacy**	
	Mon., Nov. 27:	Women's Rights Movement	*Read*: Declaration of Sentiments, 1848; Equal Rights Amendment; Elsie Hill and Florence Kelley Debate the Equal Rights Amendment (1922); NOW Statement of Purpose; Schlafly, Fraud of ERA
	Wed., Nov. 29:	Contraception and Marriage	*Read*: *Griswold v. Connecticut*, 381 U.S. 479 (1965) *Loving v. Virginia*, 388 U.S. 1 (1967) *Obergefell v. Hodges*, #14-556, 576 U.S. _(2015) *Lawrence v. Texas*, 539 U.S. 558 (2003)
	Fri., Dec. 1:	Abortion	*Read*: *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113 (1973) *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, No. 19-1392, 597 (2022)
15		**Executive Powers and Limits**	
	Mon., Dec. 4:	Executive Power Asserted in Wartime	*Read*: Lincoln Proclamation Suspending Habeas Corpus *Ex Parte Milligan*, 71 U.S. 2 (1866); *Korematsu v. United States*, 323 U.S. 214 (1944); *Abrams v. United States*, 250 U.S. 616 (1919); *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld*, 542 U.S. 507 (2004); 3rd amendment
	Wed., Dec. 6:	Holding the Executive Accountable	20th, 22nd, 23rd, and 25th Amendments; *U.S. v Nixon;* Articles of Impeachment of Presidents Johnson, Nixon, Clinton, and Trump x2
	Fri., Dec. 8:	Executive Powers Before the Court	*Read*: Chevron U.S.A., Inc. v. Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc., 467 U.S. 837 (1984); *West Virginia v. Environmental Protection Agency*, 597 U.S. ___ (2022)
16		**VMI and the Obligations of Citizen Soldiers**	
	Mon., Dec. 11:		**TBD???**
	Wed., Dec. 13:	Bringing it All Back Home	*Read*: *United States v. Virginia*, 518 U.S. 515 (1996)

INSTITUTE WORK FOR GRADE POLICY

Development of the spirit as well as the skills of academic inquiry is central to the mission of VMI's Academic Program. As a community of scholars, posing questions and seeking answers, we invariably consult and build upon the ideas, discoveries, and products of others who have wrestled with related issues and problems before us. We are obligated ethically and in many instances legally to acknowledge the sources of all borrowed material that we use in our own work. This is the case whether we find that material in conventional resources, such as the library or cyberspace, or discover it in other places like conversations with our peers.

Academic integrity requires the full and proper documentation of any material that is not original with us. It is therefore a matter of honor. To misrepresent someone else's words, ideas, images, data, or other intellectual property as one's own is stealing, lying, and cheating all at once.

Because the offense of improper or incomplete documentation is so serious, and the consequences so potentially grave, the following policies regarding work for grade have been adopted as a guide to cadets and faculty in upholding the Honor Code under which all VMI cadets live:

1) Cadets' responsibilities

"**Work for grade**" is defined as any work presented to an instructor for a formal grade or undertaken in satisfaction of a requirement for successful completion of a course or degree requirement. All work submitted for grade is considered the cadet's own work. "**Cadet's own work**" means that he or she has composed the work from his or her general accumulation of knowledge and skill except as clearly and fully documented and that it has been composed especially for the current assignment. No work previously submitted in any course at VMI or elsewhere will be resubmitted or reformatted for submission in a current course without the specific approval of the instructor.

In all work for grade, failure to distinguish between the cadet's own work and ideas and the work and ideas of others is known as **plagiarism**. Proper documentation clearly and fully identifies the sources of all borrowed ideas, quotations, or other assistance. The cadet is referred to the VMI-authorized handbook for rules concerning quotations, paraphrases, and documentation.

In all written work for grade, the cadet must include the words "**HELP RECEIVED**" conspicuously on the document, and he or she must then do one of two things: (1) state "none," meaning that no help was received except as documented in the work; or (2) explain in detail the nature of the help received. In oral work for grade, the cadet must make the same declaration before beginning the presentation. Admission of help received may result in a lower grade but will not result in prosecution for an honor violation.

Cadets are prohibited from discussing the contents of a quiz/exam until it is returned to them or final course grades are posted. This enjoinder does not imply that any inadvertent expression or behavior that might indicate one's feeling about the test should be considered a breach of honor. The real issue is whether cadets received information, not available to everyone else in the class, which would give them an unfair advantage. If a cadet inadvertently gives or receives information, the incident must be reported to the professor and the Honor Court.

Each cadet bears the responsibility for familiarizing himself or herself thoroughly with the policies stated in this section, with any supplementary statement regarding work for grade expressed by the academic department in which he or she is taking a course, and with any special conditions provided in writing by the professor for a given assignment. If there is any doubt or uncertainty about the correct interpretation of a policy, the cadet should consult the instructor of the course. There should be no confusion, however, on the basic principle that it

is never acceptable to submit someone else's work, written or otherwise, formally graded or not, as one's own.

The violation by a cadet of any of these policies will, if he or she is found guilty by the Honor Court, result in his or her being dismissed from VMI. Neither ignorance nor professed confusion about the correct interpretation of these policies is an excuse.

History Departmental Statement Concerning VMI's Policies Regarding Work for Grade

The Department of History's policies regarding work for grade apply to three types of written work.
1. In the case of written quizzes, tests, or examinations, cadets are to do their own work without help from any other source.
2. In the case of written book reviews or reading reports, cadets are supposed to have read every page indicated and must write the report without assistance.
3. In the case of research papers, such as those required in HI 460 or other research projects in other courses, the research and writing must be done by the cadet alone under conditions specified by the instructor.

When employing a word processor in the preparation of written work for grade, a cadet is allowed the use of computing aids including translators, spelling, style, and grammar checkers, but must acknowledge the use of these aids in the help received statement submitted with the written work. Cadets may not submit work for grade containing material that has been composed by artificial intelligence. Cadets may not use AI-assisted technologies in editing work for grade—editing includes making such changes as the addition, deletion, or reordering of words, sentences, phrases and/or paragraphs.

When undertaking work for grade for history courses, Cadets may seek tutoring assistance from recognized Institute sources such as the Writing Center, Academic Center and tutors authorized by the Institute. This assistance may include critical comments. Such comments are defined in the Institute's Work for Grade Policy as "general advice on such matters as organization, thesis development, support for assertions, and patterns of errors. It does not include proofreading or editing." The cadet must acknowledge the use of this assistance in the help received statement submitted with the written work.

If specifically directed by the instructor of a history course, cadets may avail themselves of peer collaboration on written work. Similar to tutoring assistance, peer collaboration may involve the provision of critical comments. Such comments are defined in the Institute's Work for Grade Policy as "general advice on such matters as organization, thesis development, support for assertions, and patterns of errors. It does not include proofreading or editing." The cadet must acknowledge the use of peer collaboration in the help received statement submitted with the written work.

Unlike critical comments, proofreading and editing are expressly forbidden by the Institute's Work for Grade Policy, to wit: "Proofreading means correcting errors (e.g., in spelling, grammar, punctuation). It is the last step taken by the writer in the editing process. In addition to the corrections made in proofreading, editing includes making such changes as the addition, deletion, or reordering of paragraphs, sentences, phrases, or words. A cadet may not have his or her work proofread or edited by someone other than the instructor." Instructors in the Department of History who wish to employ proofreading and editing as pedagogical tools may be granted exceptions to this rule only if they have received written permission from the department head for a particular assignment.

In all cases, individual course assignments that deviate from the departmental work for grade policies must be approved by the department head in advance and must be explained to cadets in writing.

Cadets should consult the History Department web site, "Guidelines for Referencing Papers" for a fuller discussion of how to conduct written work in History.

Any non-written work for grade, such as oral reports, must be undertaken under specific conditions established by the

instructor and will conform to the same spirit of the rules as pertain to written work.

If you have any doubts as to the application of these rules to any of your work for grade in History courses, consult your instructor.

Do not leave anything to chance.

Department of History Additional Statement on Plagiarism

"PLAGIARIZE: TO STEAL OR PURLOIN AND PASS OFF AS ONE'S OWN IDEAS, WORDS, WRITINGS, ETC. OF ANOTHER." Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary.

Plagiarism is dishonorable. It involves using the words, information, insights, or ideas of another without crediting that person through proper citation. Since authorship is ownership, using the intellectual property of others without credit is theft. Passing off another person's work as your own is lying. You can avoid plagiarism by fully and openly crediting all sources used.

Anytime you use someone else's words in your paper, those words (phrases, sentences, paragraphs) should be rendered in quotation marks, and cited by a footnote. If you decide to use someone else's words in any form, you must use quotations in order to show that you are borrowing the same.

Parallelism

Parallelism means paraphrasing material but keeping a source's argumentation and paragraph structure. This is not acceptable. Not only words and phrases and sentences require footnotes. If you borrow someone else's ideas, you must also acknowledge the fact by a footnote. Even if you cite another person's ideas in your own words you must indicate this with a footnote or it constitutes plagiarism.

Give credit where credit is due. You wouldn't want people to steal your property - - don't steal theirs. You will have to use other people's discoveries and concepts to write your paper, but build on them creatively. Do not compromise your honor by failing to acknowledge clearly where your work ends and that of someone else begins.

Footnotes. Your Safety Net and First Line of Defense.

Footnoting and providing citations is not an admission that you don't know enough to write a term paper on your own. No scholar is so knowledgeable that he or she can write a research paper without consulting other scholars' research; all scholars rely on the work previously done by others. Instead, citations are proof that you have consulted the relevant literature and, therefore, know what you're talking about. Footnotes are ammunition, not admissions. Footnotes are your first line of defense against a plagiarism charge.

Footnoting is an indispensable part of a term paper in any history course. Footnotes function as signposts to provenance, as indicators of the research that undergirds the paper. Readers want to know, "where did you get that statement?" "how do you know?" "is this your own idea?" The footnote helps answer these questions. The footnote should clearly show where you, the researcher and writer, got the information and data and ideas that form the substance of the paper (the book itself, the letter itself, etc.) Sources, either primary or secondary, that you have not personally consulted and used must not be cited because the rule is cite only what you have directly and personally used. Do not pad your bibliography with citations you haven't seen yourself.

Summary

Provide proper citation for everything taken from others. These include interpretations, ideas, wording, insights, factual discoveries, charts, tables, or appendices that are not your own. Citations must clearly and explicitly guide the reader to the sources used, whether published, unpublished, or electronic. Cite a source each time you borrow from it. A single citation, concluding or followed by extended borrowing, is inadequate and misleading.
Indicate all use of another's words, even if they constitute only part of a sentence, with quotation marks and specific citation. Citations may be footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical references.
Paraphrase properly. Paraphrasing is a vehicle for conveying or explaining ideas borrowed from a source, and requires a citation to the original source. It captures the source's meaning and tone in your own words and sentence structure. In a paraphrase, the words are yours but the ideas are not. It cannot be used to create the impression of originality.
Facts widely available in reference books, newspapers, magazines, etc., are common knowledge and need no citation. Facts that are not common knowledge but are derived from the work of another must be cited. Interpretations and theories provide an author's assessment of a set of facts and commonly embody that author's opinion. The interpretations and theories of another must be cited in footnote, endnote, or parenthetical reference.
Always err on the side of caution. When in doubt, CITE IT.

The History Department of VMI subscribes to the American Historical Association's current "Statement on Plagiarism and Related Misuses of the Work of Other Authors" in Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct.

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE

LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA 24450-0304

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED MATHEMATICS
Phone 540-464-7335
Fax 540-464-7214
Virginia Relay/TDD dial 711

To: BG Robert Moreschi, Dean of Faculty
From: COL Troy Siemers, Department Head for Applied Mathematics and Chair of the Test Optional Committee

2 November 2023

BG Moreschi,

The Test Optional Committee met to consider the policy regarding the SAT and/or ACT as part of the admission process. VMI has been acting under a temporary policy that was created at the start of COVID of "test optional". Based on our discussion below, we recommend that the current test optional policy, slightly modified below for clarity, be continued until we have more data to make a definitive decision. The VMI's admissions team engages in a robust process of screening mission-appropriate candidates using other metrics. The extent to which this process will yield high performing graduates of the Institute will take time to accumulate.

Additionally, in accordance with the Regulations of the Institute, Part 1, we recommend that this committee be reconstituted with a broader scope to examine all academic requirements necessary for admission.

Sincerely,
Troy Siemers

Current Policy to include emphasis on need for scores in scholarship consideration:

The VMI application is Test Optional, meaning candidates do not have to submit either an SAT or ACT score. Submitted test scores are considered if they help the applicant. They are not considered if they hurt the applicant's chances of being admitted.
However, VMI does require either the SAT or ACT if the candidate wishes to be considered for merit or ROTC scholarships.
Candidates who do submit a score should use the SAT code 5858 and/or ACT code 4418.

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Admissions Screening of Applications

VMI's Office of Admission conducts a mission-aligned holistic review of every applicant. This review ensures a fair and comprehensive assessment of the "whole student" rather than disproportionately focusing on any one factor to determine admissibility and the ability of applicants to successfully complete the Institute's unique educational experience. Although heavy weight (65%) is placed on academic performance (e.g., high school GPA, academic GPA, academic course strength), the holistic review considers other criteria such as personal experiences, attributes, leadership experience, physical fitness and athleticism, civic engagement, extracurricular involvement, and level of connection and interest in VMI.

This holistic approach allows VMI to identify, recruit, and matriculate top-talent in support of the organization's overall mission of producing educated and honorable citizen-leaders.

As noted in the policy, SAT and ACT scores may be submitted and will be considered if they help the applicant. They are required for scholarship considerations.

High School GPA vs Standardized Tests

- Nationally there is a strong, consistent relationship between HSGPA and college graduation.
- HSGPA is a stronger predictor of performance for first-time college students.
- When comparing test-optional vs test-required colleges, students graduate at rates equivalent to, or slightly higher than students who submit test score(s).
- Since HSGPA measures a wider variety of skill, it can serve as a strong, stand-alone predictor of college readiness.

Policies of other schools

Presently, all fifteen 4-year public colleges in Virginia are test-optional. The overwhelming majority of 4-year private colleges are also test optional. Some schools have made the plan permanent, and some have said that they will review their policy at a later data (UVA and VA Tech will review in 2025). Nationally, more than 80% of higher education schools are test optional.

The US Air Force and US Military Academy's require the SAT or ACT, but they are in the small minority. The Naval and Coast Guard Academies, along with the Citadel, Norwich, Texas A&M, North Georgia, and VA Tech are all test optional.

As of January 2023, standardized test scores are not required for all NCAA full time athletes.

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Supporting data

We can collect many data sets to see how the SAT/ACT tests correlate with success at VMI and the reconstituted committee should work with Smith Hall to find appropriate data.

But, as an example for VMI, we present data for the classes of 2017 to 2021 – a cohort of 4 years where all but 1 cadet have graduated – and compare SAT and ACT scores against graduation rates. In this cohort, there were a total 2007 Total Matriculants.

Note: 443 cadets in this cohort did not take the SAT and 321of them graduated (72.4%).
For those who took the ACT or SAT:

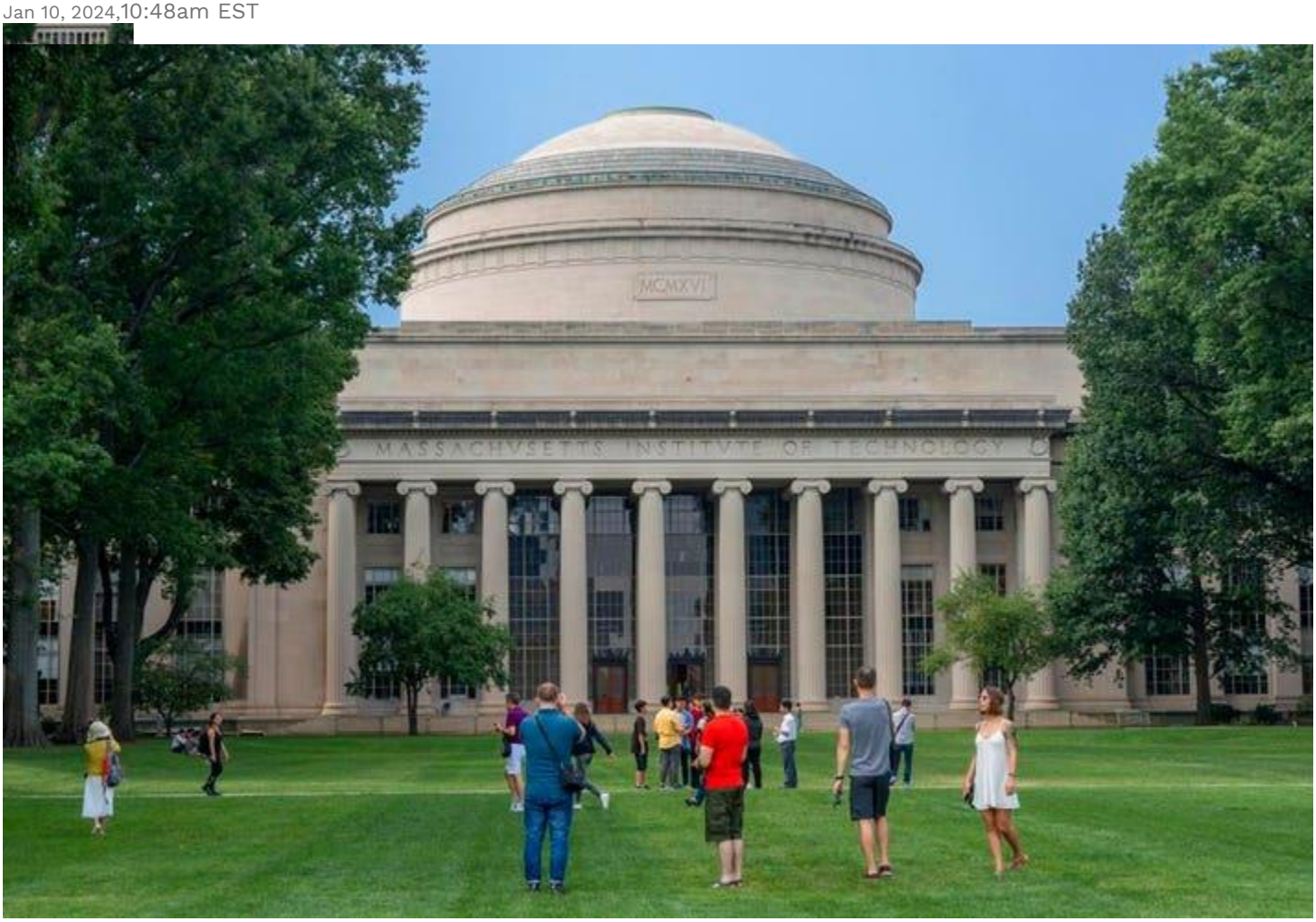
SAT Range	Total	Num Graduated	% Graduated
<800	2	2	100%
800-849	6	2	33%
850-899	10	6	60%
900-949	39	25	64%
950-999	83	55	66%
1000-1049	149	104	70%
1050-1099	205	160	78%
1100-1149	263	208	79%
1150-1199	251	202	80%
1200-1249	230	180	78%
1250-1299	147	116	79%
1300-1349	90	72	80%
1350-1399	54	43	80%
1400+	34	26	76%
Total	1563	1201	77%

ACT Range	Number	Number Graduated	% Graduated
13 to 15	3	2	67%
16 to 18	16	9	56%
19 to 21	108	72	67%
22 to 24	275	211	77%
25 to 28	270	208	77%
29 to 32	202	156	77%
33+	28	21	75%
Total	902	679	75%

The SAT Debate Shows We Need To Rethink High School GPA

Derek Newton
Contributor
I write about education, edtech and higher education.

Jan 10, 2024,10:48am EST



David Leonhardt at the *New York Times* recently wrote an exceptionally important piece about the SAT, highlighting why it's been foolish and shortsighted for colleges and universities to remove the standardized test from the admissions process. Over the past handful of years, many schools have made the assessment optional, or disallowed it entirely, over bias and inequity concerns.

Among those that have moved away from the SAT is the University of California system, home to some of the best, best known, and most respected schools in the country. In 2020, the Cal system banned consideration of test scores outright, a move that I dryly described at the time as "a bad decision."

Which it was and is.

What makes the Leonhardt offering so important is not just that it supports my contention about the value of SAT scores in admissions. In addition, the NYT kicks the legs out from under a key admissions premise that we've been told and taken as gospel for a long, long time – that high school grades are a good indicator of college success. It's not that grades and GPA don't correlate to success in higher education, it's that, according to Leonhardt's reporting, standardized test scores predict college success better than grades.

That's a big deal.

I've long written and argued that pre-college GPA measures the wrong thing –- obedience and rote adherence to organizational structure. That our primary and secondary schools were, and still are, designed to press out millions of factory workers for an industrial age. They reward showing up on time, grinding out the work regardless, and not causing trouble. Not only are those measurables not suited to the modern economy and workforce, they are not suited to college success.

Nonetheless, researchers and college admissions leaders spent literally generations prioritizing the 4.0 and telling us that getting good grades mapped as neatly as possible onto the college experience.

I can't speculate as to whether the dynamics have changed or whether it was never really true that high school grade point average was a good predictor of post-secondary success. But my strong guess is that it was never really true. Or at least that it has not been true since the 1980s.

The reason so many people thought that grades were the leading indicator of college success may be because applicants with good grades were the only ones picked. This led to two outcomes. One, that there were never enough college students without good grades in comparable settings to make a fair comparison. And two, that students without the 4.0 or the 3.95 simply stopped applying to top schools, reinforcing the problem *and* incorrect conclusion.

Either way, we should know better now.

Leonhardt sources his conclusions and says succinctly, "Research has increasingly shown that standardized test scores contain real information, helping to predict college grades, chances of graduation and post-college success. Test scores are more reliable than high school grades."

He wrote also that, "Researchers who have studied the issue say that test scores can be particularly helpful in identifying lower-income students and underrepresented minorities who will thrive. These students do not score as high on average as students from affluent communities or white and Asian students. But a solid score for a student from a less privileged background is often a sign of enormous potential."

It's this last point that moved me to oppose pulling standardized test scores from the admissions mosaic. Students who for whatever reason lacked the spotless grades, still deserved a way to show schools that they could achieve, that they could prosper in college and beyond – that failure to post a 4.0 did not mean they were a failure. As I wrote in 2020, "Denying students an

opportunity to show their ability in a way other than grades will shut students out. Not maybe, definitely."

And while it's perfectly reasonable and responsible to question the accuracy or even potential bias of a high stakes standardized test, a test still shows *something* about an applicant. It never made sense that institutions of learning and enlightenment would affirmatively close their eyes to it. It still makes no sense. Especially now.

The new reporting should open the eyes of admissions departments and add to the calls for a serious discussion as to whether the non-academic lessons we're delivering in high school track to college, or anywhere. My money is on they don't, and that they haven't for a long time.

Follow me on Twitter or LinkedIn.

Derek Newton

The New York Times | https://www.nytimes.com/2024/01/07/briefing/the-misguided-war-on-the-sat.html

The Misguided War on the SAT

Colleges have fled standardized tests, on the theory that they hurt diversity. That's not what the research shows.

By David Leonhardt
David Leonhardt has been reporting on opportunity in higher education for more than two decades.

Jan. 7, 2024

After the Covid pandemic made it difficult for high school students to take the SAT and ACT, dozens of selective colleges dropped their requirement that applicants do so. Colleges described the move as temporary, but nearly all have since stuck to a test-optional policy. It reflects a backlash against standardized tests that began long before the pandemic, and many people have hailed the change as a victory for equity in higher education.

Now, though, a growing number of experts and university administrators wonder whether the switch has been a mistake. Research has increasingly shown that standardized test scores contain real information, helping to predict college grades, chances of graduation and post-college success. Test scores are more reliable than high school grades, partly because of grade inflation in recent years.

Without test scores, admissions officers sometimes have a hard time distinguishing between applicants who are likely to do well at elite colleges and those who are likely to struggle. Researchers who have studied the issue say that test scores can be particularly helpful in identifying lower-income students and

underrepresented minorities who will thrive. These students do not score as high on average as students from affluent communities or white and Asian students. But a solid score for a student from a less privileged background is often a sign of enormous potential.

“Standardized test scores are a much better predictor of academic success than high school grades,” Christina Paxson, the president of Brown University, recently wrote. Stuart Schmill — the dean of admissions at M.I.T., one of the few schools to have reinstated its test requirement — told me, “Just getting straight A’s is not enough information for us to know whether the students are going to succeed or not.”

An academic study released last summer by the group Opportunity Insights, covering the so-called Ivy Plus colleges (the eight in the Ivy League, along with Duke, M.I.T., Stanford and the University of Chicago), showed little relationship between high school grade point average and success in college. The researchers found a strong relationship between test scores and later success.

Likewise, a faculty committee at the University of California system — led by Dr. Henry Sánchez, a pathologist, and Eddie Comeaux, a professor of education — concluded in 2020 that test scores were better than high school grades at predicting student success in the system’s nine colleges, where more than 230,000 undergraduates are enrolled. The relative advantage of test scores has grown over time, the committee found.

“Test scores have vastly more predictive power than is commonly understood in the popular debate,” said John Friedman, an economics professor at Brown and one of the authors of the Ivy Plus admissions study.

With the Supreme Court’s restriction of affirmative action last year, emotions around college admissions are running high. The debate over standardized testing has become caught up in deeper questions about inequality in America and what purpose, ultimately, the nation’s universities should serve.

But the data suggests that testing critics have drawn the wrong battle lines. If test scores are used as one factor among others — and if colleges give applicants credit for having overcome adversity — the SAT and ACT can help create diverse classes of highly talented students. Restoring the tests might also help address a different frustration that many Americans have with the admissions process at elite universities: that it has become too opaque and unconnected to merit.

‘Picking Up Fundamentals’

Given the data, why haven’t colleges reinstated their test requirements?

For one thing, standardized tests are easy to dislike. They create stress for millions of teenagers. The tests seem to reduce the talent and potential of a human being to a single number. The SAT’s original name, the Scholastic Aptitude Test, implied a rigor that even its current defenders would not claim. Covid, in short, created an opportunity for American society to cast off a tradition that few people enjoyed.

But another part of the explanation involves politics. Standardized tests have become especially unpopular among political progressives, and university campuses are dominated by progressives.

Many consider the tests to be unfair because there are score gaps by race and class. Average scores for modest-income, Black and Hispanic students are lower than those for white, Asian and upper-income students. The tests’ critics worry that reinstating test requirements will reduce diversity. The Supreme Court’s affirmative action decision has heightened these concerns.

If selective colleges made admissions decisions based solely on test scores, racial and economic diversity would indeed plummet. Yet almost nobody in higher education favors using tests as the main factor for admissions. The question instead is whether the scores should be one of the criteria used to identify qualified students from every demographic group.

The SAT's history offers some complex perspective. As the test's critics sometimes point out, one designer of the original standardized tests in the early 20th century, Carl Brigham, also wrote a book promoting racist theories of intelligence (which he later disavowed). But a larger rationale for tests was connected to an expansion of opportunity. Administrators at Harvard, who pushed for the creation of the tests, saw them as a way to identify talented students from any background. The administrators believed that these students would go on to strengthen the country's elite institutions, which were dominated by a narrow group of white Protestants, as Nicholas Lemann explained in "The Big Test," his history of the SAT.

Today, perhaps the strongest argument in favor of the tests is that other parts of the admissions process have even larger racial and economic biases. Affluent students can participate in expensive activities, like music lessons and travel sports teams, that strengthen their applications. These same students often receive extensive editing on their essays from their well-educated parents. Many affluent students attend private schools where counselors polish each student's application.

The tests are not entirely objective, of course. Well-off students can pay for test prep classes and can pay to take the tests multiple times. Yet the evidence suggests that these advantages cause a very small part of the gaps.

Consider that other measures of learning — like the NAEP, a test that elementary and middle school students take nationwide — show similarly large racial and economic gaps. The federal government describes the NAEP as "the nation's report card," while education researchers consider it a rigorous measure of K-12 learning. And even though students do not take NAEP test prep classes, its demographic gaps look remarkably similar to those of the ACT and SAT.

This similarity “is another piece of evidence that the SAT is picking up fundamentals,” said Raj Chetty, a Harvard economics professor who conducted the recent Ivy Plus study with Friedman and David Deming. “It strengthens the argument that the disparities in SAT scores are a symptom, not a cause, of inequality in the U.S.,” Chetty said.

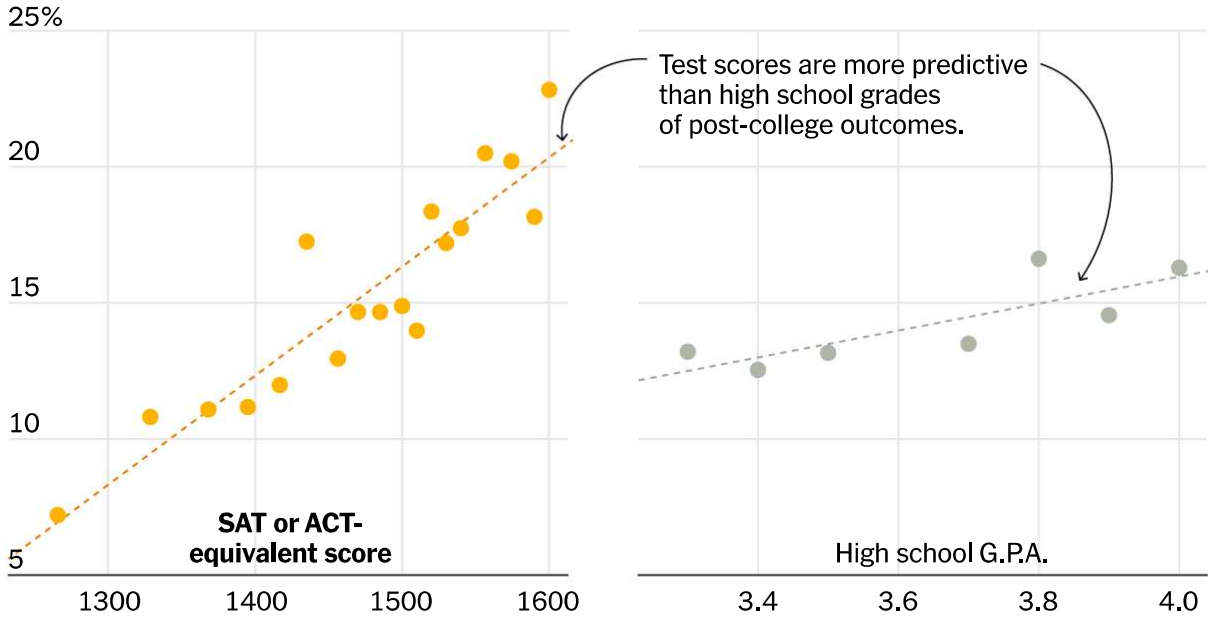
To put it another way, the existence of racial and economic gaps in SAT and ACT scores doesn’t prove that the tests are biased. After all, most measures of life in America — on income, life expectancy, homeownership and more — show gaps. No wonder: Our society suffers from huge inequities. The problem isn’t generally with the statistics, however. The relatively high Black poverty rate is not a sign that the statistic is biased. Nor would scrapping the statistic alleviate poverty.

A Fixed Benchmark

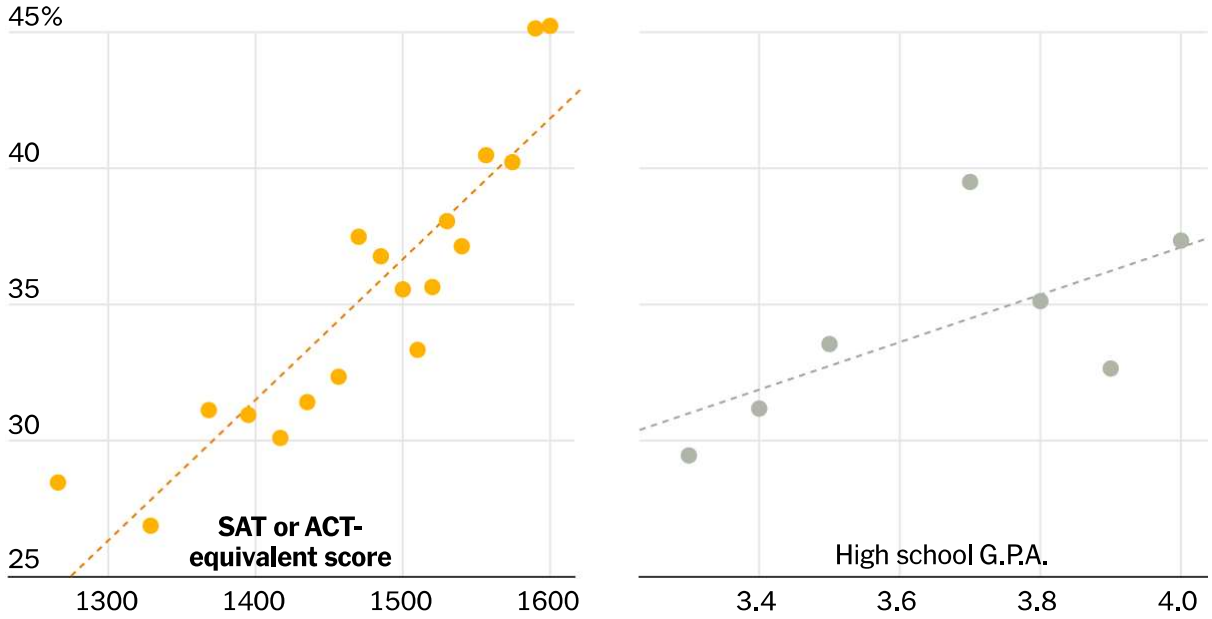
The data documenting the predictive power of standardized tests is extensive and growing. In the study of Ivy Plus colleges, Chetty, Deming and Friedman looked at several measures of college success, such as whether students did well enough to earn admission to a top graduate school or be hired by a desirable company. Standardized test scores were a good predictor. High school grades were much less so:

Test scores are strong predictors of student outcomes after college

Attending an elite graduate school



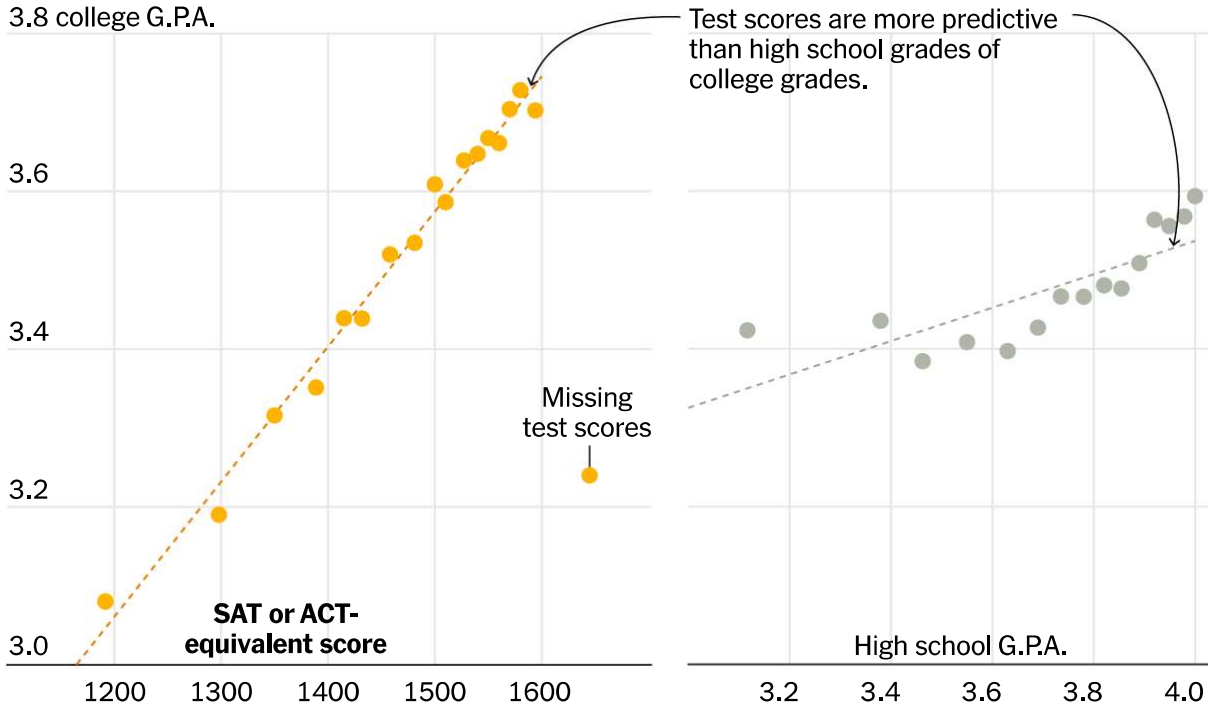
Working at a prestigious firm



Note: Data is for students who entered college from 2010 to 2015. • Source: Opportunity Insights and Chetty, Deming and Friedman (2023) • By Ashley Wu

Last week, three scholars — Bruce Sacerdote and Michele Tine of Dartmouth, along with Friedman — released additional research about some unnamed Ivy Plus colleges. It showed only a modest relationship between high school grades and college grades, partly because so many high school students now receive A's. The relationship between test scores and college grades, by contrast, was strong. Students who did not submit a test score tended to struggle as much as those who had lower scores:

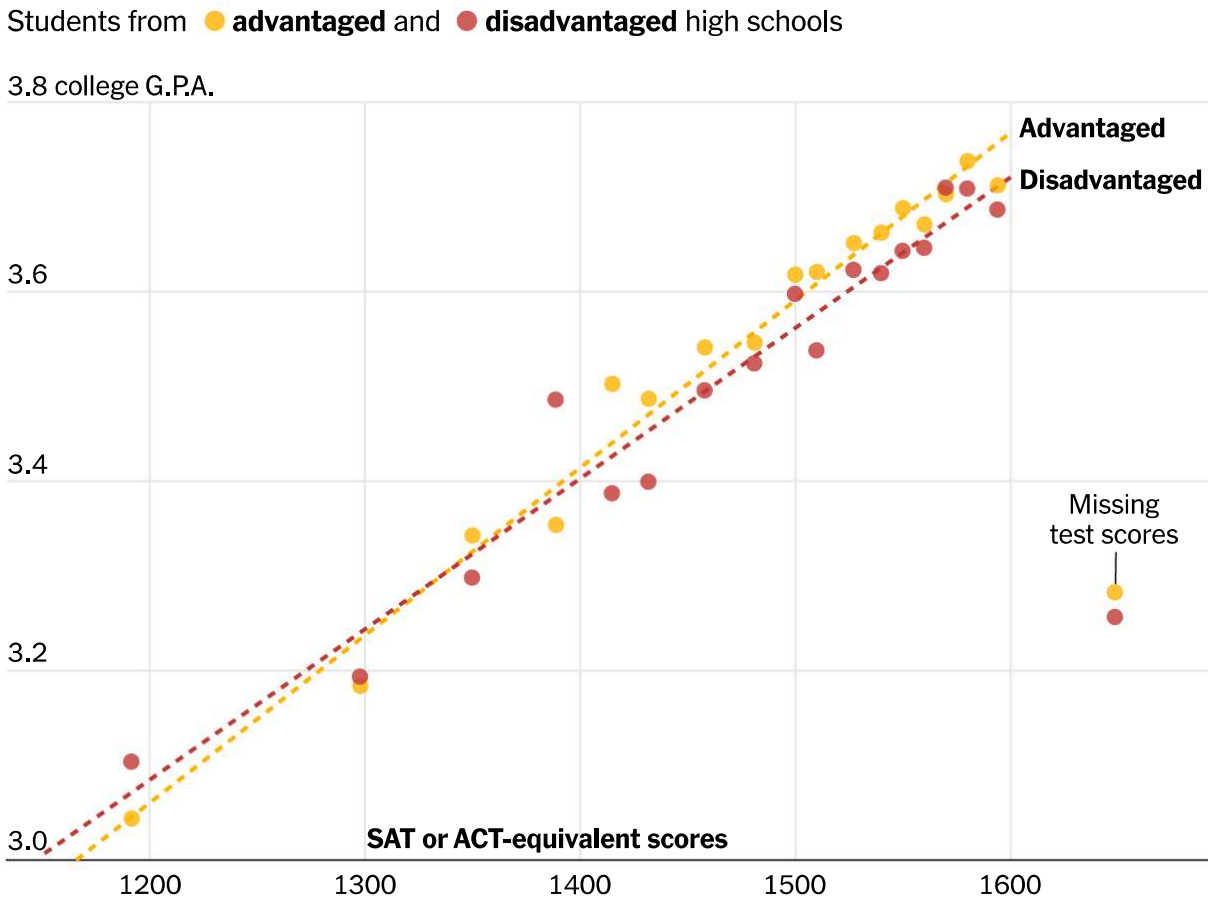
Test scores are strong predictors of college performance



Note: Data is for students who entered college from 2017 to 2022, excluding 2020. • Source: Opportunity Insights and Friedman, Sacerdote and Tine (2024) • By Ashley Wu

Some people have worried that SAT scores are merely a proxy for income or race, Sacerdote noted, but the data should alleviate this concern. Within every racial group, students with higher scores do better in college. The same is true among poor students and among richer students:

Test scores and college grades are strongly related, regardless of students' high school type



Notes: Data is for students who entered college from 2017 to 2022, excluding 2020. • Source: Opportunity Insights and Friedman, Sacerdote and Tine (2024) • By Ashley Wu

Amid all the subjectivity in the admissions process, the SAT and ACT — even with their flaws — offer meaningful information about an applicant's readiness to do high-level academic work. The tests create a fixed benchmark that can be more reliable than high school grades, teacher recommendations or extracurricular activities. "The SAT just tells you a lot about how well prepared students are for college," Sacerdote said.

When I have asked university administrators whether they were aware of the research showing the value of test scores, they have generally said they were. But several told me, not for quotation, that they feared the political reaction on their campuses and in the media if they reinstated tests. "It's not politically correct," Charles Deacon, the longtime admissions dean at Georgetown University, which does require test scores, has told the journalist Jeffrey Selingo.

In 2020, the University of California system went further than most colleges and announced — despite its own data showing the predictive value of tests — that it would no longer accept test scores even from applicants who wanted to submit them. In recent months, I made multiple requests to discuss the policy with university officials. They replied with an emailed statement saying that "U.C. remains committed to maintaining a fair admissions process that reviews every applicant in a comprehensive manner and endeavors to combat systemic inequities." University spokespeople declined to discuss the policy by telephone or to schedule an interview with an administrator.

It remains unclear whether other colleges will revisit their test-optional policies given the new data. As is, many teenagers say they are confused. They are uncertain about whether to take the tests and what scores are high enough to submit.

The View From M.I.T.

M.I.T. has become a case study in how to require standardized tests while prioritizing diversity, according to professors elsewhere who wish their own schools would follow its lead. During the pandemic, M.I.T. suspended its test requirement for two years. But after officials there studied the previous 15 years of admissions records, they found that students who had been accepted despite lower test scores were more likely to struggle or drop out.

Schmill, the admissions dean, emphasizes that the scores are not the main factor that the college now uses. Still, he and his colleagues find the scores useful in identifying promising applicants who come from less advantaged high schools and have scores high enough to suggest they would succeed at M.I.T.

Without test scores, Schmill explained, admissions officers were left with two unappealing options. They would have to guess which students were likely to do well at M.I.T. — and almost certainly guess wrong sometimes, rejecting qualified applicants while admitting weaker ones. Or M.I.T. would need to reject more students from less advantaged high schools and admit more from the private schools and advantaged public schools that have a strong record of producing well-qualified students.

“Once we brought the test requirement back, we admitted the most diverse class that we ever had in our history,” Schmill told me. “Having test scores was helpful.” In M.I.T.’s current first-year class, 15 percent of students are Black, 16 percent are Hispanic, 38 percent are white, and 40 percent are Asian American. About 20 percent receive Pell Grants, the federal program for lower-income students. That share is higher than at many other elite schools.

“When you don’t have test scores, the students who suffer most are those with high grades at relatively unknown high schools, the kind that rarely send kids to the Ivy League,” Deming, a Harvard economist, said. “The SAT is their lifeline.”

Other colleges that still require the ACT or SAT tend to be somewhat removed from the intensely liberal culture of most elite campuses. Applicants to the United States Military Academy, at West Point, must take one of the tests. So must applicants to top public universities in Florida, Georgia and Tennessee. Gallaudet, the university in Washington, D.C., for people who are deaf or hard of hearing, also requires a test score.

A Question of Values

The strongest case against the tests comes from educational reformers who want to rethink elite higher education in fundamental ways. To them, the country’s top colleges should not be trying to identify the very best high school students; instead, these colleges should use their resources to educate a diverse mix of good students and, in the process, lift social mobility.

Comeaux — a professor of higher education at the University of California, Riverside, and co-chair of the state’s review of standardized tests — favors this approach. He agrees that the SAT and ACT predict later success. But he prefers a stripped-down admissions system in which colleges set minimum requirements, based largely on high school grades, and then admit students by lottery. “Having a lottery,” Comeaux said, “would make us radically rethink what it means to gain access and also to learn, rather than accepting the status quo.”

That’s not so different from what many colleges already do. The average acceptance rate nationwide is close to 70 percent. Even many selective colleges admit more than 25 percent of applicants, and high school grades can be sufficient for that purpose. “Test scores become relatively more important as the academic level of

students increases," Friedman, the Brown economist, said.

The SAT debate really comes down to dozens of elite colleges, like Harvard, M.I.T., Williams, Carleton, U.C.L.A. and the University of Michigan. The people who run these institutions agree that social mobility should be core to their mission, which is why they give applicants credit for having overcome adversity. But the colleges have another mission, as well: excellence.

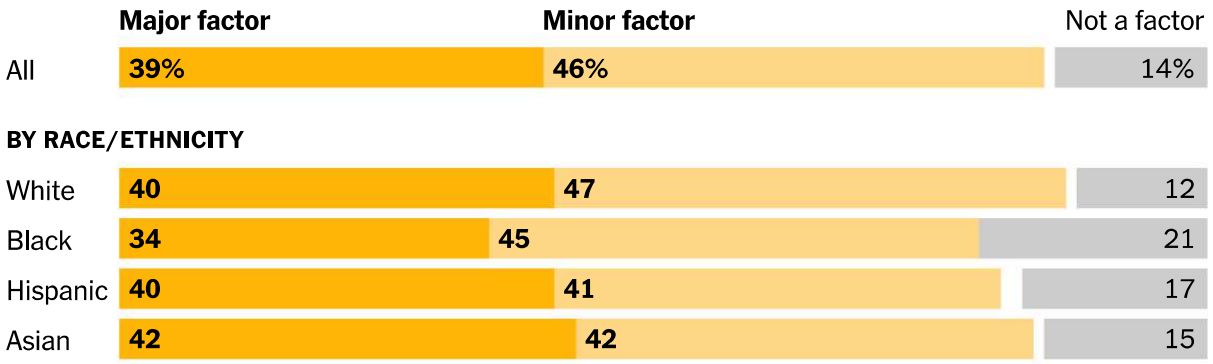
They want to identify and educate the students most likely to excel. These students, in turn, can produce cutting-edge scientific research that will cure diseases and accelerate the world's transition to clean energy. The students can found nonprofit groups and companies that benefit all of society.

Administrators at elite colleges have justified their decision to stop requiring test scores by claiming that the tests do not help them identify such promising students — a claim that is inconsistent with the evidence. The evidence instead suggests that standardized tests can contribute to both excellence and diversity so long as they are used as only one factor in admissions.

As it happens, most Americans support using standardized test scores in precisely this way. The Pew Research Center has asked Americans whether colleges should consider standardized tests when making admissions decisions. A large majority of people, across racial groups, support doing so:

Public opinion on standardized test scores in college admissions

U.S. adults who say test scores should be a factor in college admissions decisions



Note: People who did not answer are not shown. • Source: Pew Research Center survey in March 2022 • By Ashley Wu

In today's politically polarized country, however, the notion that standardized tests are worthless or counterproductive has become a tenet of liberalism. It has also become an example of how polarization can cause Americans to adopt positions that are not based on empirical evidence.

Conservatives do it on many issues, including the dangers of climate change, the effectiveness of Covid vaccines and the safety of abortion pills. But liberals sometimes try to wish away inconvenient facts, too. In recent years, Americans on the left have been reluctant to acknowledge that extended Covid school closures were a mistake, that policing can reduce crime and that drug legalization can damage public health.

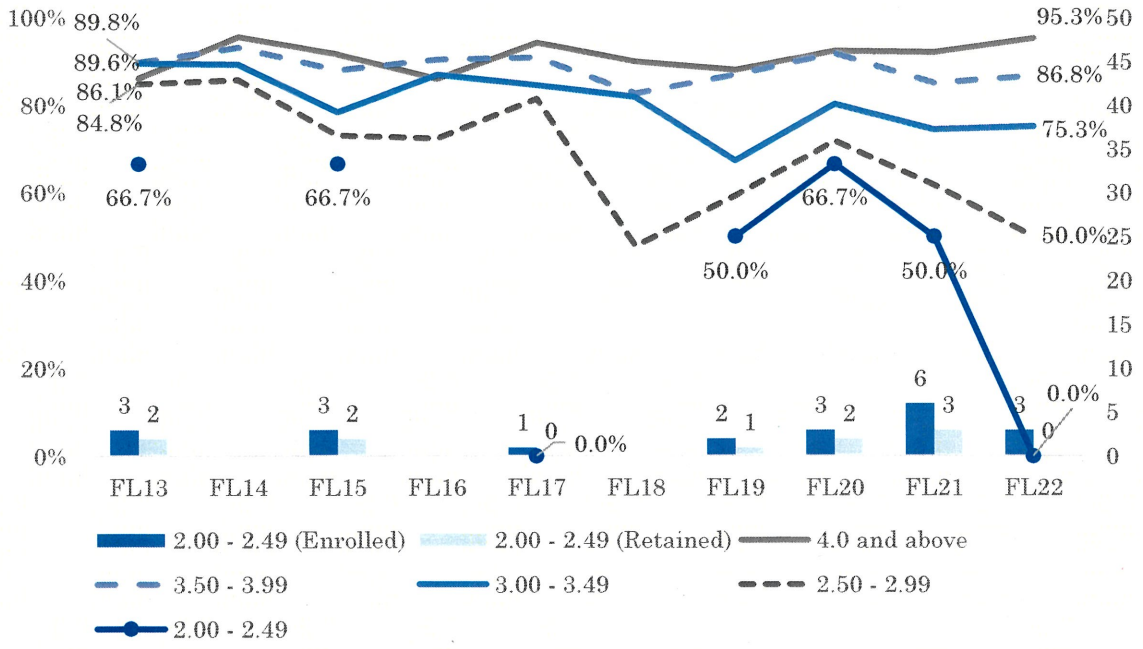
There is a common thread to these examples. Intuitively, the progressive position sounds as if it should reduce inequities. But data has suggested that some of these policies may do the opposite, harming vulnerable people.

In the case of standardized tests, those people are the lower-income, Black and Hispanic students who would have done well on the ACT or SAT but who never took the test because they didn't have to. Many colleges have effectively tried to protect these students from standardized tests. In the process, the colleges denied some of them an opportunity to change their lives — and change society — for the better.

David Leonhardt runs The Morning, The Times's flagship daily newsletter. Since joining The Times in 1999, he has been an economics columnist, opinion columnist, head of the Washington bureau and founding editor of the Upshot section, among other roles. More about David Leonhardt

A version of this article appears in print on , Section A, Page 1 of the New York edition with the headline: Colleges Fled SATs, Despite Their Utility

Retention by HSGPA



HS GPA Range	FL13	FL14	FL15	FL16	FL17	FL18	FL19	FL20	FL21	FL22
1. 4.0 and above	86.1%	95.5%	91.6%	86.0%	94.2%	89.9%	88.0%	92.4%	92.1%	95.3%
2. 3.50 - 3.99	89.8%	93.2%	88.0%	90.4%	90.9%	82.7%	87.0%	91.9%	85.1%	86.8%
3. 3.00 - 3.49	89.6%	89.3%	78.5%	87.0%	84.6%	81.9%	67.5%	80.4%	74.6%	75.3%
4. 2.50 - 2.99	84.8%	85.7%	73.1%	72.4%	81.5%	47.8%	59.3%	71.9%	61.8%	50.0%
5. 2.00 - 2.49	66.7%	-	66.7%	-	0.0%	-	50.0%	66.7%	50.0%	0.0%