

The time has come to end the perpetuation of systemic inequity through institutional practices that appear facially neutral, but which have a disparate impact by race and class. Ending the use of standardized tests at all levels of admissions is one of the ways we can do so.

Because I agree with the USC's Professor Teresa Hernandez I stand Resolved: **Resolved: In the United States, colleges and universities ought not consider standardized tests in undergraduate admissions decisions.**

The affirmative will defend the value is **Knowledge**. Teachers should have the freedom to give students a wellrounded education and not just be slaves to an arbitrary and unfair test.

The Criterion in this debate should be **Fairness**. For only if we create a world with fair, equal opportunities for all to succeed, will we be able to achieve true freedom to learn.

Contention 1. Standardized Exams Don't Work

A.) Not Every Students is a Good Test Taker

Seattle Post Intelligence 2018,

A test-taker's psychological development and attributes can also influence the SAT scores. Cognitive development factors such as long-term memory, ability to integrate new information with prior knowledge, and an awareness of the value of learning and knowledge together with social or personality factors such as self-efficacy, motivation to achieve, and ability to maintain academic focus are some of the psychological factors that positively impact SAT performance.  
<https://education.seattlepi.com/factors-influencing-sat-scores-2589.html>

B) Standardized Tests Are Not Accurate

Sonoma State Star, February 1, 2017,

Standardized tests are not a legitimate way of testing student's knowledge or the educational quality at a school. Some students may excel in test taking, while other students lack those qualities, making standardized tests an unreliable measure of students' intelligence. Tests such as the SAT and ACT are required for most college admissions, forcing students to take them. But do they accurately show a student's educational potential or abilities? The answer is no. According to The National Center for Fair and Open Testing, standardized testing isn't a helpful evaluation tool because such tests don't measure the ability to think deeply or creatively. Along with a narrow spectrum of questions, most standardized tests are timed. Many students don't work well under pressure or when they're racing a clock. This added stress could also contribute to lower score outcomes, again not producing a true, valid measure of intelligence.

<http://www.sonomastatestar.com/opinion/2017/2/2/standardized-testing-outdated-and-inaccurate>

### C. Standardized Tests Don't Predict Student Success

Sara Ring, Edutopia Institute 2008,

"We know the problems with assessment tests all too well: They encourage rote memorization of facts, employ outdated metrics, and compel educators to teach to the test rather than risk penalization should scores fall. Most alarmingly, although they focus on basic literacy and numeracy, these tests fail to appraise many of the skills critical for students in the twenty-first century, including creative thinking and problem solving across disciplines, teamwork, and technological literacy."

#### Contention II: Better Alternatives Exist

##### A. Test Optional Schools are Growing

US News October 2018

Admissions offices at about 40 additional colleges and universities are mulling the test-optional policy, Shaeffer says, including small, private schools as well as large public institutions. The higher education community is waiting with bated breath for the University of California system to wrap its evaluation of whether to go test-optional. Many view the system's decision as directing the fate of college entrance exams, since the schools have had an outsized influence on the tests in the past.

"Getting the UC system to adopt the SAT as a requirement was the key to making it a national test in the first place," Schaeffer says. "Were the UCs to eliminate the requirement, make it optional, that would be a very significant body blow. It's the biggest state just by raw numbers, and it's the premier public system."

<https://www.usnews.com/news/the-report/articles/2018-10-26/the-new-opt-out-movement-colleges-make-entrance-exams-optional>

##### B. Alternatives Are More Accurate and Fairer

Huffington Post, May 22, 2018,

A new study from the National Association for College Admission Counseling provides evidence that test-optional policies — a variety of policies that allow students not to submit scores on standardized tests like the SAT or GRE during the admissions process — can help colleges improve their diversity without sacrificing academic quality.

The study found that schools that do not require the SAT/ACT saw an increased enrollment of underrepresented students of color relative to comparable institutions that require a test score and that admitted students who did not submit scores were just as likely to graduate as admitted students who did. The report also found that high school grade point average (GPA) was a better predictor of success in college GPA than test scores for non-submitters.

[https://www.huffpost.com/entry/abolish-standardized-testing-for-college-admissions\\_n\\_5b045869e4b003dc7e470ee3](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/abolish-standardized-testing-for-college-admissions_n_5b045869e4b003dc7e470ee3)

### III. Standardized Tests Are Unfair

#### A. Standardized Tests Are Racist

African American Policy Forum, 2019

Standardized testing has been recognized and criticized for being part of the picture of structural racism for some time. Standardized testing specifically refers to uniform measures of knowledge, learning or intellect. Because standardized tests generally measure information and skills that people acquire through schooling, they will often reflect differences caused by educational discrimination. In other words, people who do not receive good quality education do not generally perform as well on standardized tests. However, standardized tests are used as measures of individual effort, intelligence and future performance rather than as evidence of educational inequality. As a consequence they help prevent students of color, especially though not only those with fewer economic resources, from getting access to higher education and sometimes from being finishing secondary education  
<http://aapf.org/standardized-testing>

#### B. Standardized Tests Are Gender Biased

Forbes Magazine, July 1, 2016

Over the last several decades, men have consistently scored over 30 points higher than women on the math SAT. In 2015, for example, women averaged a score of 496 while men's average score was 527. Unfortunately, SAT scores not only impact university admission offers, but also influence women's self-perceptions of their own math ability. And that's not all. SAT scores turn up again in post-college job interviews and can influence major life choices including career decisions and college majors.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/kimelsesser/2016/07/01/is-the-college-board-making-the-sat-more->

difficult-for-women/#46ea2985f35d

## Extension Evidence

African American Students that fail the tests will be set behind for the rest of their lives.

CLAUDE M. STEELE, *The Nation*, April 15, 2004

Black students face a particularly daunting set of identity contingencies in school--from having teachers with less training to being treated with low expectations to stereotype threat. This makes the experience of school different for them than for some other groups, even when they are in the same classroom, with the same teacher and with the same pictures on the wall. As a cause of lower black test scores, these contingencies are bad enough. But the ability paradigm expands their effect. Treating their lower scores as if they were caused by low ability rather than by these contingencies, this paradigm puts African-American students on a track that insures they will not get the education they need to rise to the level of the other students. It seals the test-score gap in place.