

# Knowledge is Key: Unlocking Selective Admissions



# Overview of Workshop

- What is selective admissions?
- Factors in admissions
- Making your application stand out
- Questions



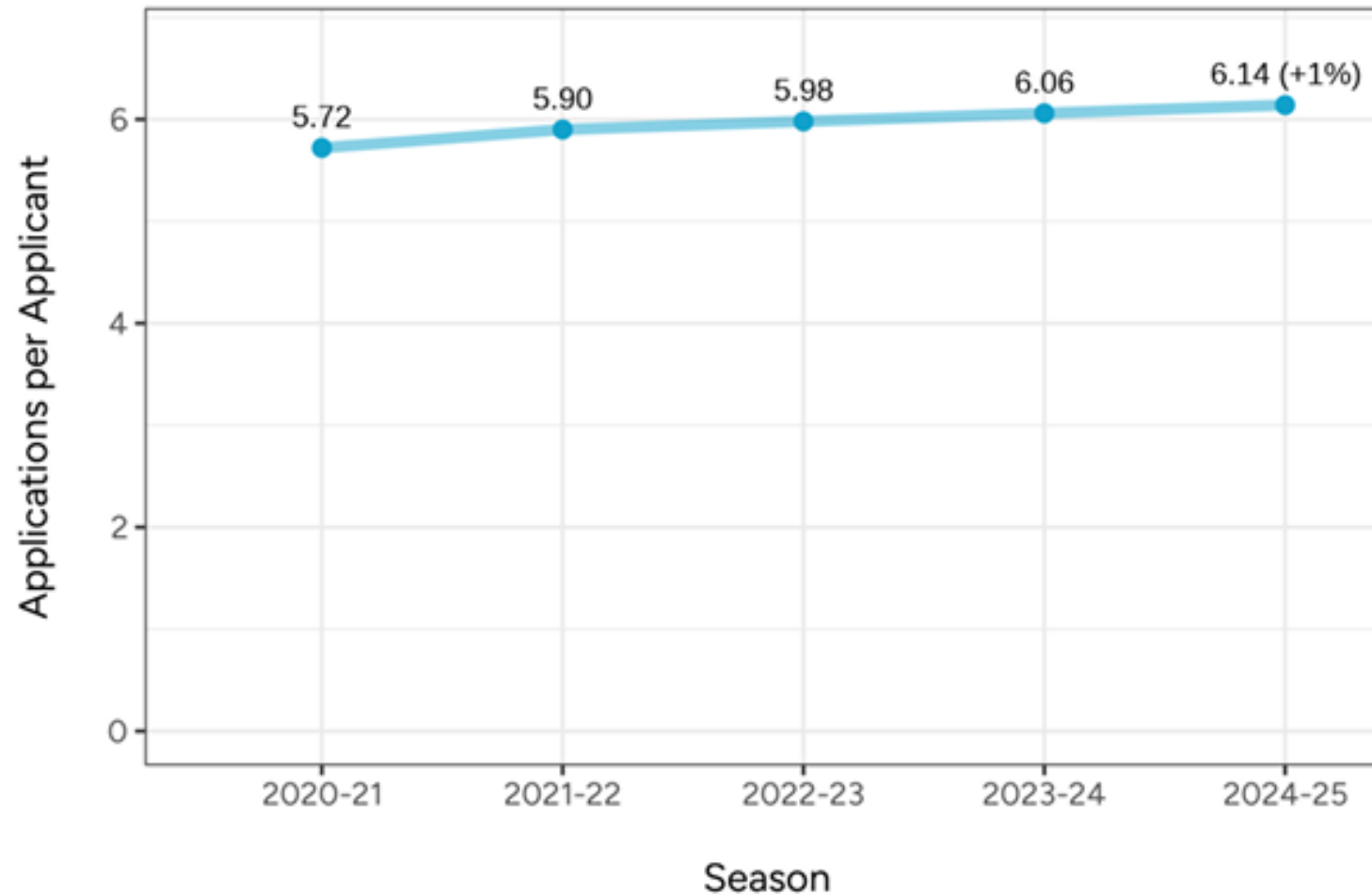
# What is Selective or Highly Selective?

- High demand for a limited number of spaces
- Educational experience dependent on enrollment size
- Colleges and universities that typically admit fewer than 30% of their applicants
- Of the roughly 3,500 accredited colleges in the US, only about 50 of them are considered highly selective



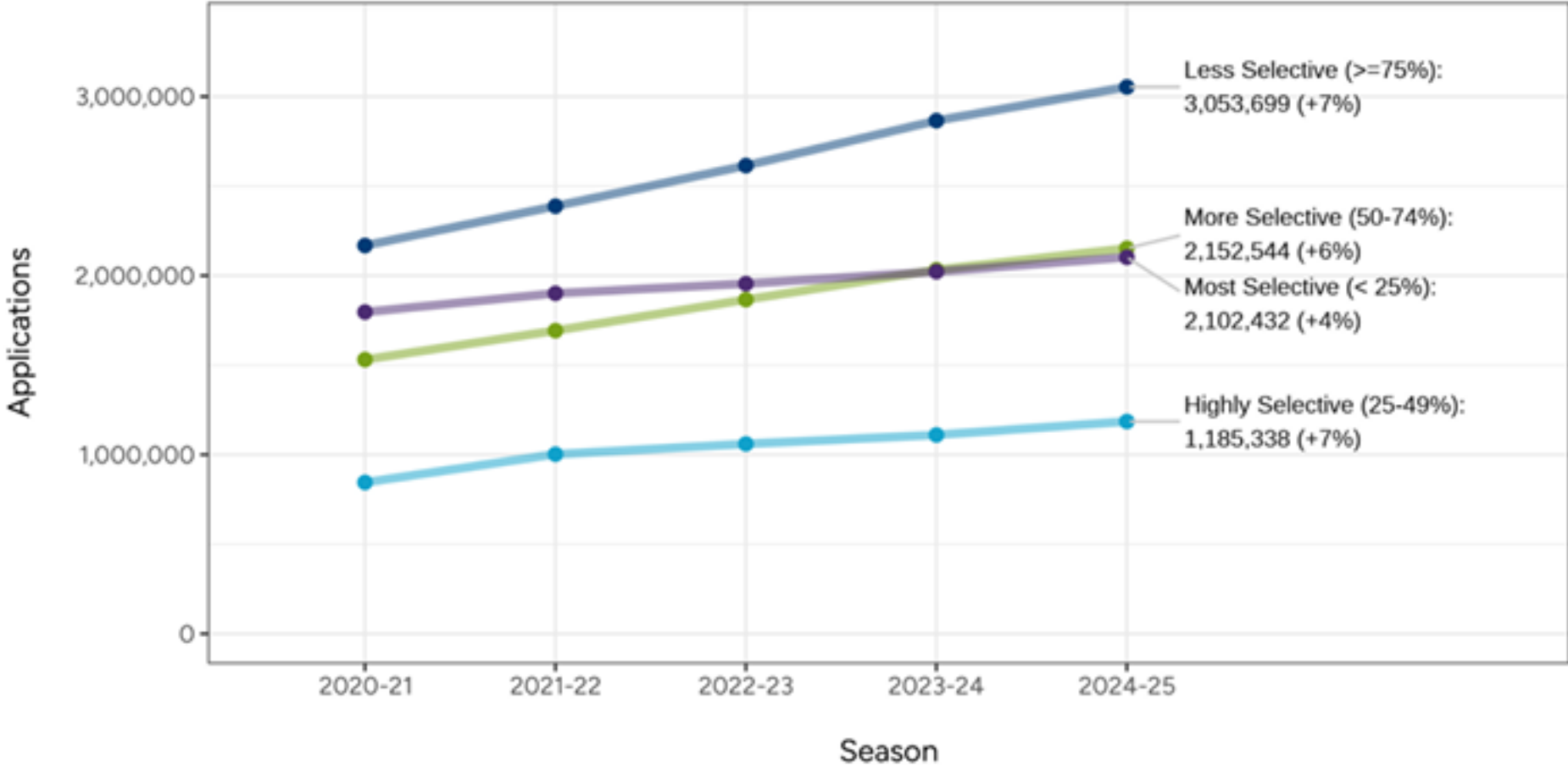
# “You’re Applying to How Many Colleges?”

Figure 4. Growth in first-year applications per applicant since 2020–21

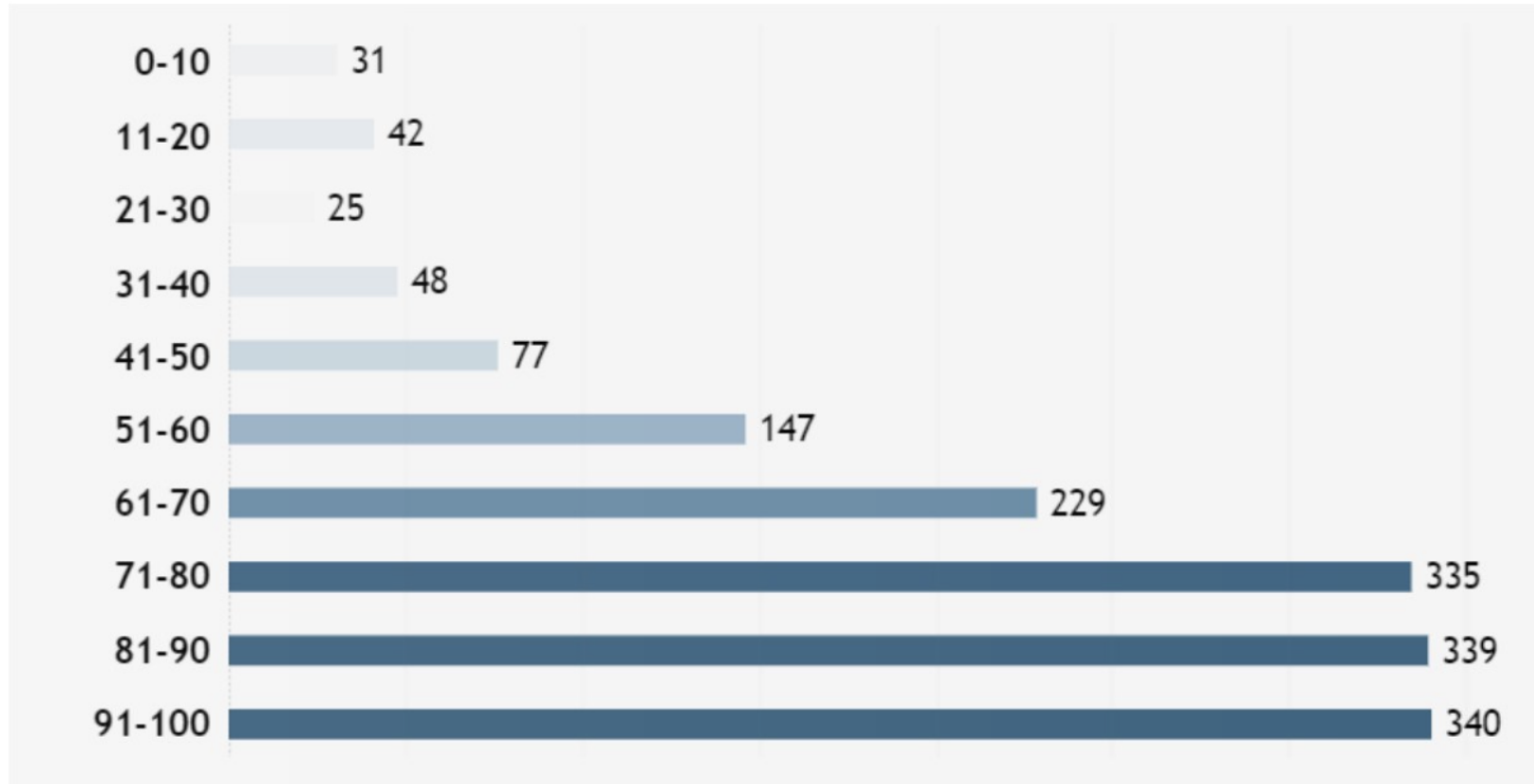


# There are more applications overall, but where are they going?

Figure 22. Growth in applications by member selectivity bracket since 2020–21



# Number of Colleges By Acceptance Rate Ranges



Total Number of Colleges by Acceptance Rate Ranges

# Overview of Admission

## Most Selective Colleges Look For:

- Intelligence
- Motivation/Passion
- Achievement
- Character
- Ability to contribute outside the classroom

## Diversity Enhances the Education Experience:

- Geographic diversity
- Socioeconomic balance
- Ties to institution
- Typically, no minimums or quotas

# Factors in Admission

- Academic credentials (in context), recommendations, essay(s), scores, and participation in school and community life
- There are several ways to measure potential success, and each student is evaluated on their individual accomplishments
- Contact admissions staff to discuss special circumstances



# Factors in Admission

Curriculum (3 ½ years)	Course selection/Rigor	Grade-point average	Class rank	Test scores	Essay(s)
Counselor & Teacher recommendations	Other letters of reference	Extracurricular activities	Community involvement/Service	Employment	Leadership
Fit with Institutional Priorities/Budget	Athletic or musical talent	Geographic underrepresentation	Socioeconomic balance	First generation	Alumni/Legacy
English language ability	Grit/Resilience	Admissions Interview	Values, ethics, & character	Demonstrated interest	Meeting application deadlines

# Make Your Application Stand Out

- Prepare yourself to the best of your ability for the rigors of college academics
- Answer every question on the application
- Craft supplemental essay responses thoughtfully and authentically
- Highlight how you are making an impact or difference now



# Make Your Application Stand Out

- What are you saying about yourself in your personal statement?
- Demonstrated Interest/Understanding



# Interviewing



- Check the interview policy for each college
- Interview provides additional insight
- Be yourself!
- Prepare some questions

# Early Decision

- Designed for students who have done thorough research and visits, and determined by November 1 that 'College X' is their first-choice institution
- **Advantages:**
  - Priority in evaluation and response
  - Freed from the anxiety of waiting to hear back
- **Disadvantages:**
  - Cannot change your mind after admission
  - Will never know if you would have been admitted elsewhere
- ED typically due by Nov. 1 and notified by Dec. 15\*
- Many selective institutions may offer an Early Action plan

# Merit Scholarships and Financial Aid



Schools may offer merit scholarships, need-based aid, or both



Merit typically fixed throughout college career



Need-based aid must be re-applied for each year



Research each institution's merit and need-based aid policies



**SIGN UP FOR**  
**VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS**



# QUESTIONS?

**CONTACT THE ADMISSIONS OFFICE:**  
[admit@admissions.rochester.edu](mailto:admit@admissions.rochester.edu)

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