Knowledge is Key: Unlocking Selective Admissions



Overview of Workshop

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



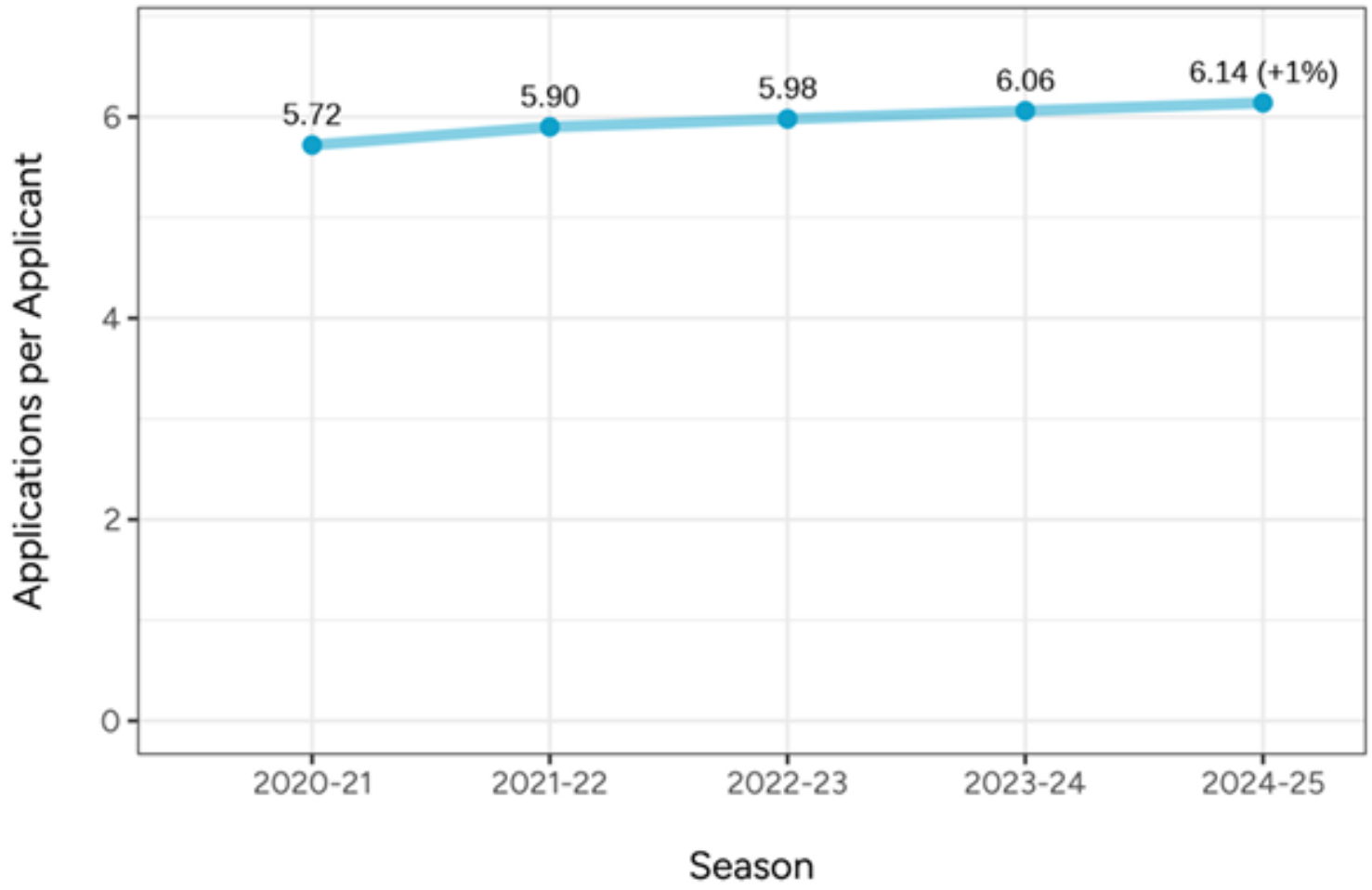
What is Selective or Highly Selective?

- 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



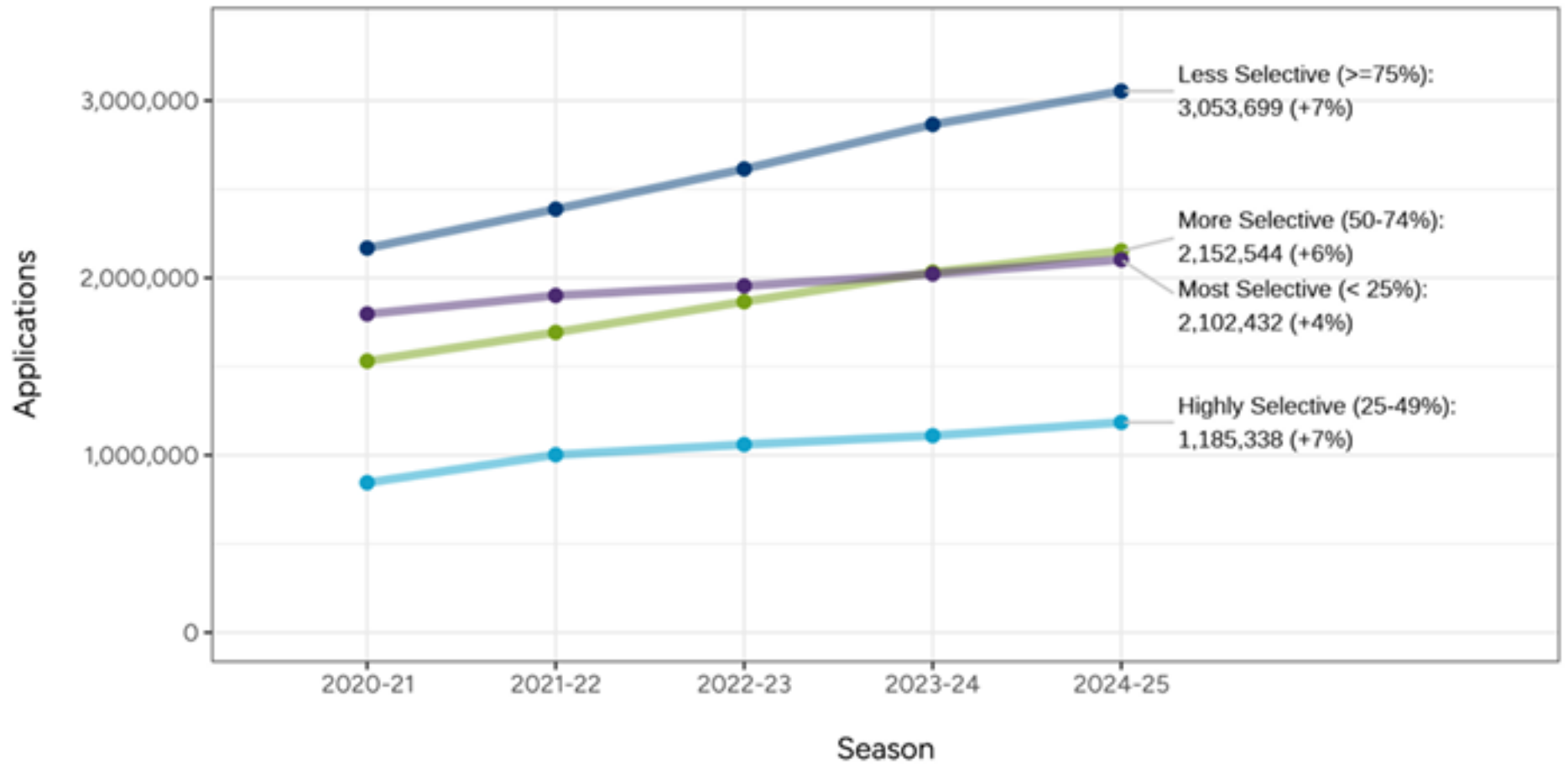
“You’re Applying to How Many Colleges?”

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

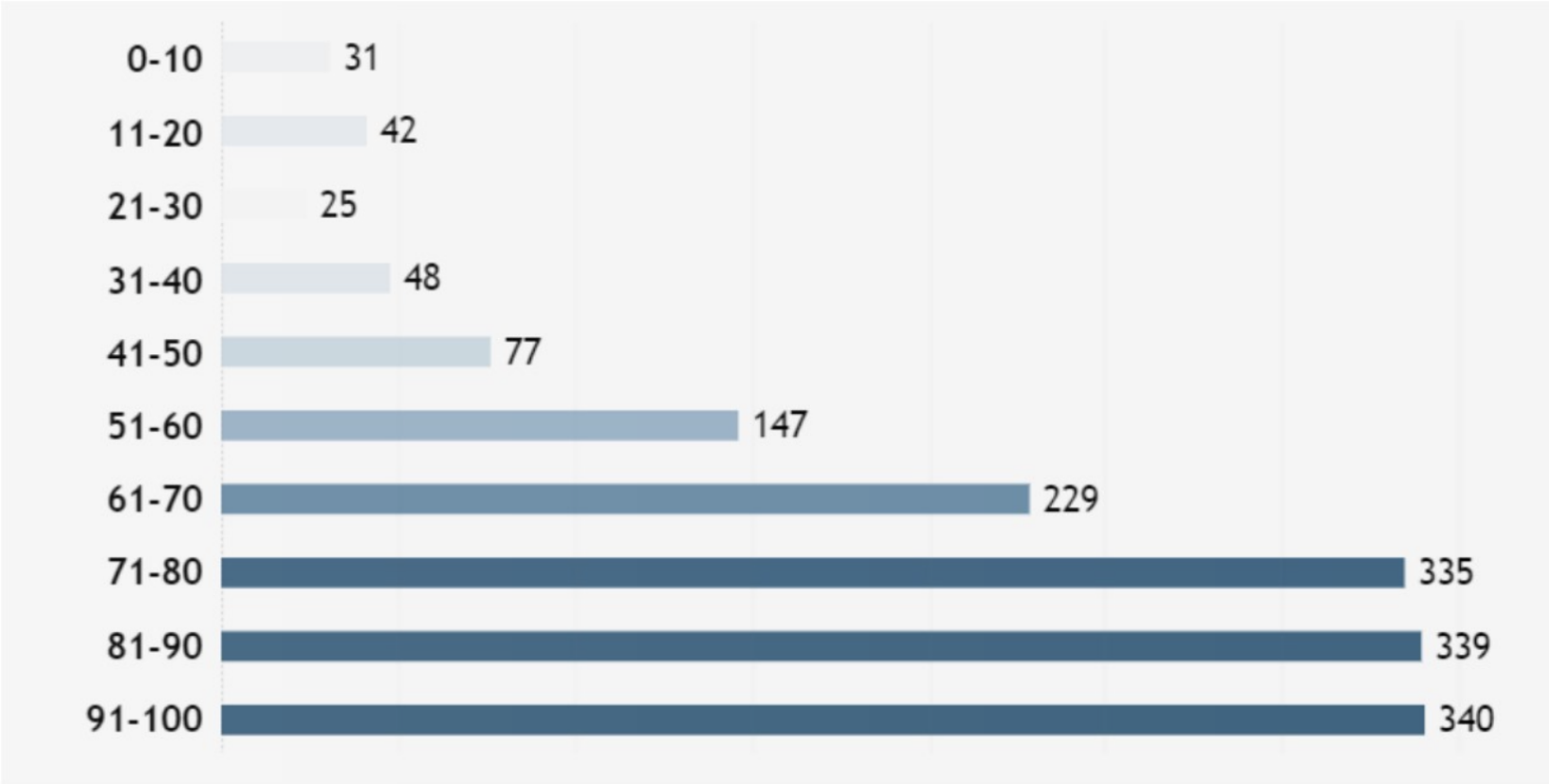


There are more applications overall, but where are they going?

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

University of Rochester



QUESTIONS?

CONTACT THE ADMISSIONS OFFICE:
admit@admissions.rochester.edu

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA:
@URAdmissions

GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR ADMISSIONS COUNSELOR:
https://admissions.rochester.edu/visit/contact-your-counselor