

**Report on Measures Used in Decision Making for
Incoming Freshmen for Admissions and
Placement**

**FINAL REPORT
FOR
HOUSE BILL 1246
GENERAL ASSEMBLY of NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION LAWS 2001-312**

**Submitted to
Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee**

By

**Board of Governors
The University of North Carolina**

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Executive Summary

House Bill 1246 from the 2001 session of the NC General Assembly directed the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina (UNC), in cooperation with the State Board of Education, and the State Board of Community Colleges to study the measures used in decision making for incoming freshmen for admission, placement, and advanced placement. The required study was then conducted by a Study Committee established by UNC President Molly Broad, NC Community College System President Martin Lancaster, and State Superintendent Michael Ward. The committee membership is provided in Attachment 2.

Data on end-of-course (EOC) exams were collected from the Department of Public Instruction and data on university admissions, course placement, and advanced placement were collected from the sixteen UNC campuses. A number of statistical studies were conducted to evaluate the data collected. Additionally, qualitative input on the use of EOC exams and standardized test scores for admission, placement, and advance placement was received from UNC Directors of Admission, Secondary School Counselors, and Community College Transfer Counselors.

Summary of Findings

Findings revealed that each UNC campus has taken great care to develop the admissions requirements and processes appropriate to that institution's mission and level of admissions selectivity. All sixteen campuses consider a student's overall high school record as the most important admissions factor with other factors, including standardized test scores, carrying less weight than long term achievement in college preparatory courses in high school. Further, each campus has faculty from the appropriate discipline

involved in the decisions for the academic placement of students and the advanced placement of accelerated students. Neither high school end-of-course tests nor other high school based measures are sufficient at this time to replace campus based instruments or policies used for placement and /or advanced placement.

As a result of this study, The HB 1246 Study Committee concluded the following:

- admissions decisions are a complex process and involve the use of multiple variables in assessing a student's probability for success;
- each of the UNC campuses have demonstrated responsible management in the decision making process and annually review their criteria for admission;
- the admissions offices take great care to insure that the criteria and level of selectivity for admission is consistent with the mission of the campus;
- the high school GPA provides the single greatest predictive value for success in college and the end of course (EOC) test results have been appropriately factored into the GPA; and
- although the GPA is the single best predictor of success in college, the use of the SAT/ACT with the GPA enhances the overall prediction of college success.

Given the above points, the Study Committee recommends that the campuses continue current practices including the use of multiple factors in making admissions, placement and advanced placement decisions. In addition, the Study Committee recommends that a follow-up study be conducted after campuses have had experience with the New SAT, which will be first administered in March 2005 to see what, if any, impact the test enhancements have had on predictive validity in the admissions decision making process. Finally, the UNC Office of the President should direct the campuses to regularly review their admissions, placement and advanced placement policies and practices to insure these policies are dynamic to reflect changes in testing and assessment of prospective students.