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### UNH FACULTY SENATE MOTION #XXII-M13 On memo to admissions office on test optional admissions policy

Faculty Senate

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UNH FACULTY SENATE  
MOTION #XXII-M13

*On memo to admissions office on test optional admissions policy*

1. Presenter: Shelley Mulligan, Academic Affairs Committee chair

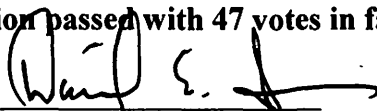
2. Dates of Faculty Senate discussion: 4/16/2018, 4/30/2018

**3. Rationale:** To demonstrate Faculty Senate support for sending a memo crafted by the Academic Affairs Committee to the Office of Admissions regarding the development of a proposal for UNH to move to a “test optional” admissions policy for undergraduate admissions at UNH

**4. Motion:** The Faculty Senate supports sending the attached memo from the Academic Affairs Committee to the Office of Admissions regarding the development of a proposal for UNH to move to a “test optional” admissions policy for undergraduate admissions at UNH. The intent of the memo is to provide guidance for the development of a proposal that addresses faculty concerns and questions about making this policy change.

**5. Senate action:** The motion passed with 47 votes in favor, 9 votes opposed, and 5 abstentions.

6. Senate chair's signature:



Forwarded to the following on May 16, 2018

President Mark Huddleston

Wayne Jones, Interim Provost

P.T. Vasudevan, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

Rob McGann, Director of Admissions

Victoria Dutcher, VP for Enrollment Management

All deans

All department chairs

MEMO: To Office of Admissions

Subject: Developing a proposal to move to a “test optional” admissions policy for undergraduate admissions at UNH

From: The Faculty Senate

The Office of Admissions has informed the faculty of their intentions to develop to a proposal for consideration of moving to a test optional admissions policy – i.e., no longer requiring applicants to submit standardized test scores (e.g., SAT/ACT) as part of their application materials. (communicated via presentations by Victoria Dutcher & Rob McGann in Faculty Senate Meeting, 1/29/2018 and by Rob McGann to the Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, 2/19/2018). The primary stated reason for proposing this change was that it is a possible effective strategy for increasing the quantity and diversity of the applicant pool. Further arguments provided to support this change include:

- SAT/ACT scores provide little additional predictive information regarding likelihood of students’ first-year success beyond high school GPA. Admission decision are primarily driven by HS transcripts (i.e., grades, course difficulty, etc.), and by placing the high school transcript in context (e.g., by using characteristics of HS, curricula).
- Standardized testing may include bias that misrepresents the abilities of social and class groups marginalized or underrepresented at UNH or in American society. Thus, requiring SATs may be embedding this bias in UNH Admissions Policy.

The Academic Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate have lead efforts to solicit questions and/or concerns regarding this issue from the faculty. Based on preliminary discussions of the issue, the Faculty Senate encourages the Office of Admissions to address the following questions as part of any proposal that they develop for recommending that UNH move to a test optional policy:

- 1..State clear goals of the policy change, with supporting evidence that the policy change will accomplish such goals
- 2.If, as suggested, the reduction of bias in admissions policy is a goal of this change it underscores the importance of a large effort to increase equity. How does this policy change fit into that larger effort?
- 3.Include a plan for tracking whether goals are being met. For example, over the course of several years, has the “test optional” admissions policy resulted in a larger and more diverse applicant pool?
- 4.How is the policy change likely to contribute to UNH’s mission as a land-grant public institution serving the changing communities and demographics of the State?
- 5.To what extent is the policy change aligned with the renewed UNH Strategic Plan, which includes “strengthen[ing] and diversify[ing] enrollment” as a key focus?
- 6.Enrolling students entails a responsibility to those students’ retention and success. We urge the Admissions Office to take up this responsibility in the proposal by making clear how the needs and interests of a more diverse applicant pool, if enrolled, will be served by UNH.
- 7.As UNH expands its recruitment efforts to new markets, how will HS GPA be used to compare applicants in cases where contextual information such as familiarity with curricula and course difficulty has not yet been developed?
- 8.How will applicants who choose to send in test scores be fairly evaluated against those who do not submit test scores, especially in high-demand competitive programs where many more qualified students apply than can be enrolled due to space limitations?
- 9.How will merit-based scholarships be fairly evaluated without the use of test scores?
10. To what specific purposes will test scores be used when applicants choose submit them?