Dean Shaw on admission

Far too often, students and parents focus on a low acceptance rate as the sole measure of a strong college, when in reality, attrition and graduation rates should receive equal attention. These numbers help us understand a university’s ability to guide and support its students through an engaging, fulfilling, and successful college journey. Moreover, new research on the importance of a student’s interpersonal fit with a university offers strong support for a holistic approach to college counseling and the admission review.

I am intrigued by findings released in a 2017 report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. In Supporting Students’ College Success: The Role of Assessment of Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Competencies, researchers determined that students have a greater ability to succeed in college if they “are encouraged to develop a sense of belonging, a growth mindset, and salient personal goals and values.”

A team comprised of specialists in the fields of education, psychology, and information sciences evaluated existing research to determine whether or not a range of intrapersonal and interpersonal competencies contributed to success in undergraduate education. They also studied whether or not these competencies could be enhanced through intervention on the part of colleges and universities. It turns out, college interventions targeting a student’s sense of belonging “showed the most consistent impacts on college performance.” (The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine)

It turns out, college interventions targeting a student’s sense of belonging “showed the most consistent impacts on college performance.”

This finding reinforces what we instinctively know—human beings thrive in environments where they experience a sense of belonging and acceptance. When we, as admission officers and college counselors, encourage students to consider the overall environment of a college, we help guide them toward institutions that will be great matches for them as people and as students.

The key question for this holistic approach, especially when students are limited by their ability to travel to college campuses, becomes: “How do we inspire students to explore their sense of belonging to a future place or community?”

We can begin by asking questions—taking students aside and asking what they may be worried about as they approach leaving home and going to college. Seniors tend to focus on the exciting aspects of going to college—meeting new people, getting to choose their own classes, and having no curfews or fewer rules to follow. As professionals, we know there is much more to consider when eighteen year-olds are moving away from their families and support networks for the first time, often hundreds, if not thousands of miles away, to live on their own for four years.

The key question for this holistic approach, especially when students are limited by their ability to travel to college campuses, becomes: “How do we inspire students to explore their sense of belonging to a future place or community?”

College at times will be challenging: getting sick away from home or living with someone you are not related to without a parent to help negotiate the conflicts. By asking questions, we encourage students to seek out the services and support their prospective universities can offer and to research how a college will help them feel at ease. As a result, students may be inspired to research the housing options available on different campuses and which community centers or places of worship will be available to them. They will begin to consider college not just as a place for an education, but also as a community that can help them grow and thrive.

-Rick Shaw
The Stanford Journey—Into, Through, and Beyond

Stanford University is committed to providing an innovative liberal arts education to all of our students. The ways we support our students run across three broad themes: Access, Affordability, and Success.

Access

Application Platforms
Stanford remains a committed member of the Coalition for Access, Affordability, and Success and will continue to accept the Coalition Application in addition to the Common Application. There is no preference for one application over another. We recommend that students use the platform that best suits their needs.

International Students and the Travel Ban
We welcome applications from students across the globe. For the university’s position regarding international access and support, please see: immigration.stanford.edu.

For further details about our international community, please explore Stanford’s Bechtel International Center at: bechtel.stanford.edu.

DACA and Undocumented Students
Stanford assesses undocumented and DACA students under the same need-blind admission policy it uses for U.S. citizens and permanent residents. For more resources supporting undocumented students at Stanford, please see: undocumented.stanford.edu.

Travel Grants
Admitted students who have applied for financial aid and meet eligibility requirements qualify for travel grants to visit campus for Admit Weekend programming. For more information, please email travelgrant@stanford.edu.

Affordability

Fee Waivers
To prevent cost from being a barrier in the application process, we accept multiple fee waiver forms, including those provided by NACAC and the College Board. Counselors may provide direct verification on the Common Application or email fee waiver verification to credentials@stanford.edu.

Financial Aid
Stanford meets full demonstrated need for all admitted students who applied for financial aid. Loans are not included in our financial aid packages. Seventy-nine percent of the class of 2016 graduated debt free. Please see the back page for an overview of our financial aid policies.

Student Success

Support Services on Campus
Stanford broadly supports the growth and well-being of its community members even before their first day of class. From academic resources to physical and emotional health, campus resources include, but are not limited to:

The Leland Scholars Program (LSP) and the Stanford Science and Engineering Academy (SSEA) are summer bridge programs for incoming freshmen from underresourced backgrounds facilitating their transition to college.

The Office of Undergraduate Advising and Research (UAR) plays a critical role in students’ transition to campus, leading New Student Orientation, matching Pre-Major Advisors, providing ongoing academic guidance, and acting as a launchpad to research and fellowship opportunities.

Community Centers and the Office of Religious Life offer opportunities for cultural, social, and religious engagement regardless of background. Each center provides unique opportunities for academic enrichment and leadership, while linking students to broader communities both on and off campus.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) and Vaden Health Center provide the physical and mental support to assist students through their undergraduate careers. Services range from individual therapy to supporting emotional resilience programming.

The Office of Accessible Education (OAE) assists students needing learning or housing accommodations at Stanford.
**Arts Portfolio submissions**

admission.stanford.edu/apply/freshmen/arts

Applicants with extraordinary talent in the areas of art practice, dance, music, and theater are invited to submit an optional Arts Portfolio. Arts Portfolio materials will be reviewed at the discretion of the Office of Undergraduate Admission and the fine arts faculty.

Students must submit their application and Arts Portfolio by the earlier deadlines below. Test scores, transcripts, school reports, and letters of recommendation may arrive by the usual deadlines. For 2017–18, Arts Portfolio applicants must use the Common Application in order to ensure access to SlideRoom.

**Arts Portfolio Filing Deadlines**

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<td>Regular Decision</td>
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<td>March 15</td>
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**Financial aid update**

financialaid.stanford.edu

For students entering college in 2018-2019, Stanford will continue to require the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the CSS Profile. Both should be completed with 2016 (instead of 2017) calendar-year data. Stanford requires copies of the 2016 federal income tax returns. The FAFSA and CSS Profile will be available beginning in October 2017.

The Net Price Calculator on our financial aid website can help provide an early estimate of eligibility for need-based financial aid as a Stanford undergraduate.

**Financial Aid Priority Filing Deadlines**

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<tr>
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**Subscribe to the Counselor Update**

Email counselorinfo@stanford.edu to request the periodic Counselor Update e-newsletter.

**Standardized testing**

Stanford requires just one exam: either the SAT with Essay or the ACT with Writing.

- For the SAT, we will focus on the highest individual Evidence-Based Reading and Writing, Math, and Essay scores from all test sittings. For SAT exams taken prior to March 2016, we will focus on the highest Critical Reading, Math, and Writing scores.

- For the ACT, we will review all subscores and focus on the highest Composite and Writing scores.