

# TEST-OPTIONAL ADMISSION AT PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

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## Timeline and Comparative Data

Classes of 2006 – 2010  
&  
Classes of 2011 – 2015

For Further Reference: Harvard Education Review, Winter 2007  
*Test Optional Admission at a Liberal Arts College: A Founding Mission Affirmed*  
Brian J. Shanley, O.P., Ph.D.

Illinois ACAC, May 2012  
Christopher Lydon,  
VP, Enrollment Management & Marketing  
Stonehill College  
clydon@stonehill.edu

# Providence College Test-Optional Decision Timeline

- May 2005 – Incoming president, Rev. Brian Shanley, attends Admission Staff Retreat
- July 2005 – The College announces a reduction in the number of merit scholarships in order to increase the quality of need-based financial assistance
- Summer/Fall 2005 – Literature review and institutional survey of test-optional policies (including Bates College 20-year study)
- February 2006 – Presentation to Faculty Senate with preliminary research
  - Faculty Senate votes to endorse the test-optional admission policy

# Providence College Test-Optional Decision Timeline

- June 2006 – Academic Affairs and Institutional Research complete a study of the predictive value of various academic data elements:
  - “The strongest single predictor of first-term GPA, first-year GPA, retention and graduation was high school GPA.”
  - “There is a clear distinction between using standardized test scores to inform admission decisions and using standardized test scores to inform decisions made with respect to campus academic supports, programs, and services.”
  - “If the College chooses to adopt a ‘test score optional’ position, it is strongly recommended that students be *required* to submit test scores (if they have taken standardized tests) once they have returned an enrollment deposit.”
- July 2006 – Providence College announces a four-year pilot program (later amended to five years) to become test-optional in the review for admission.

## Outcome Measurements

“We will first ask,

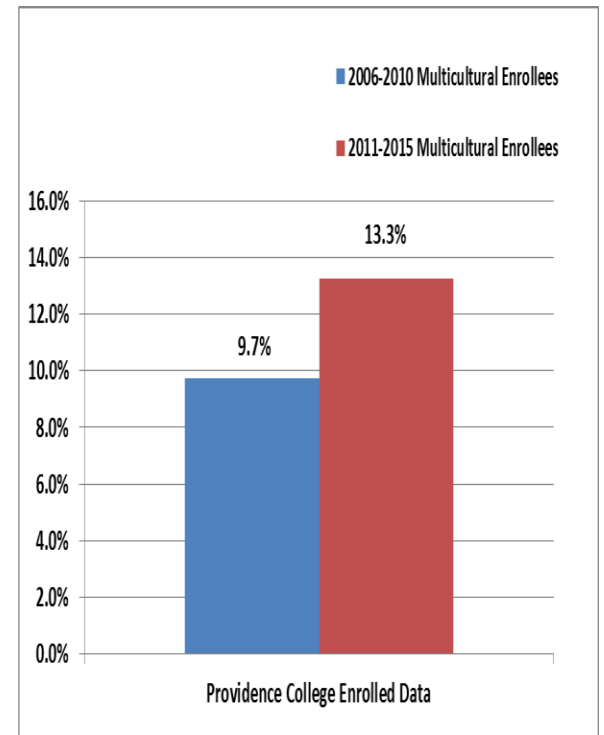
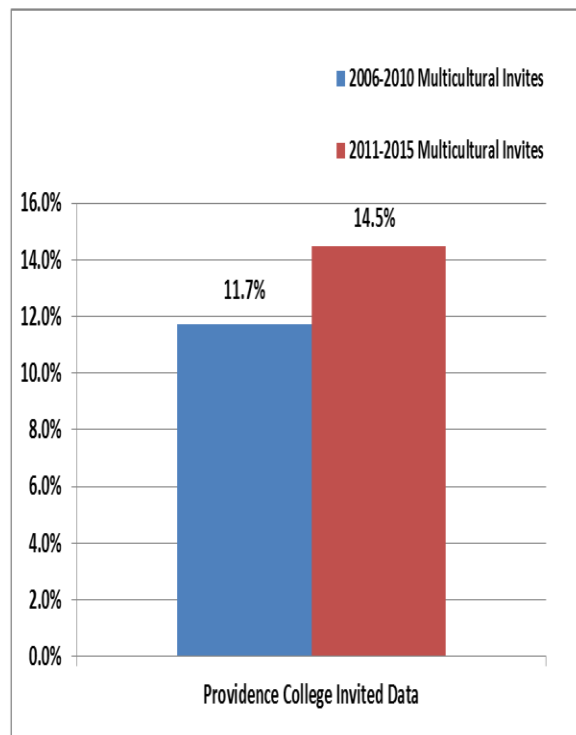
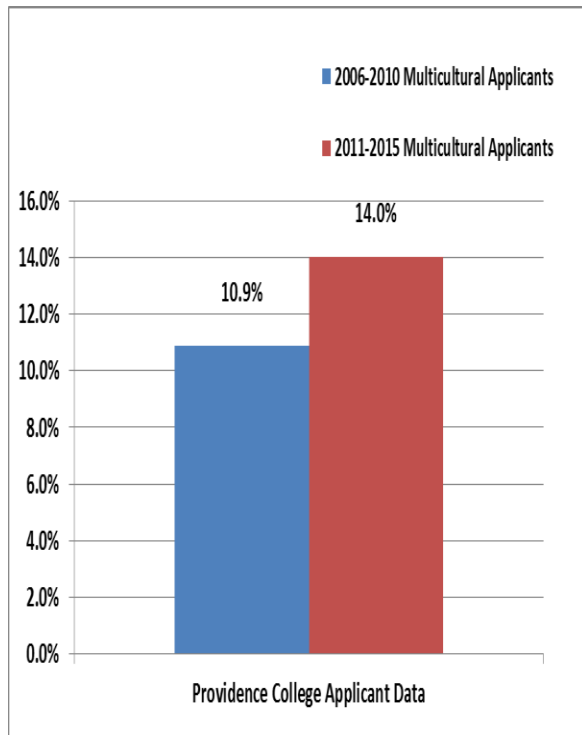
Has Providence College achieved increased enrollments from students from multicultural and/or socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds?

...Do they have a similar retention rate, and are they on track to graduate at the same rate?

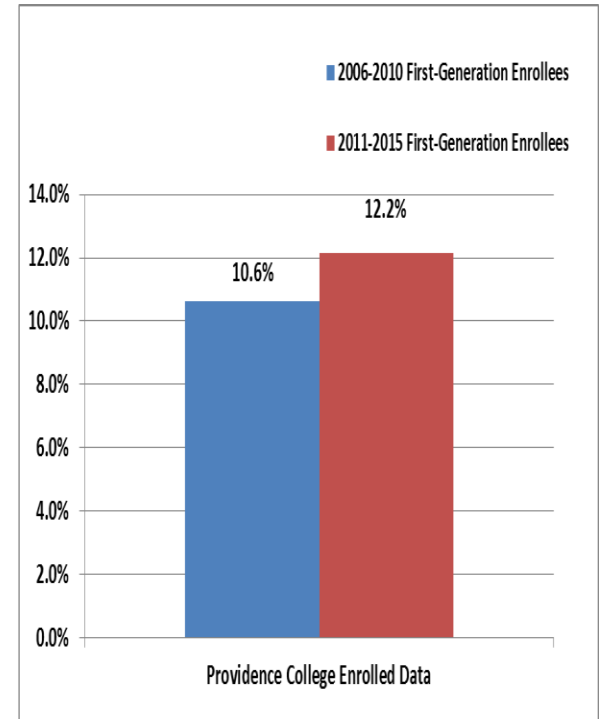
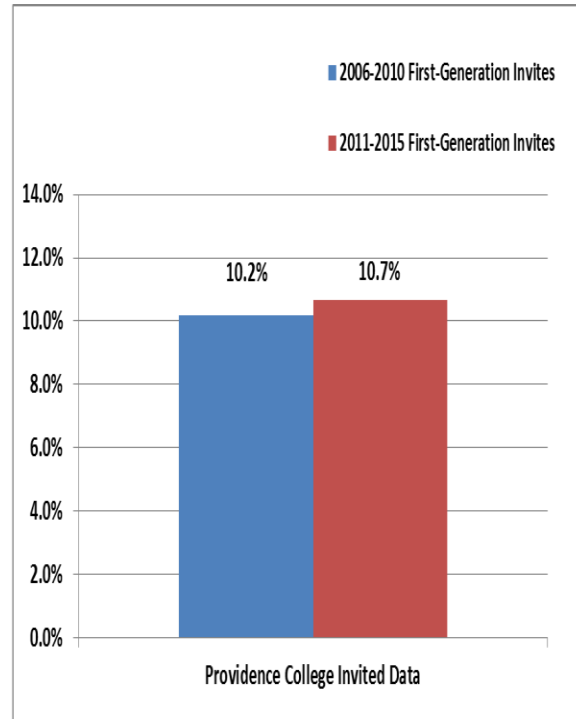
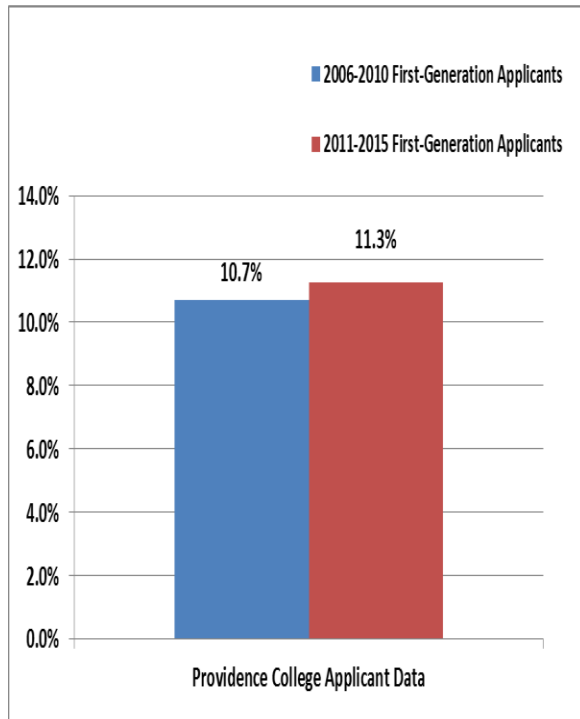
Success in enrolling a more diverse student body is only a real victory if classroom performance and student retention are consistent for all students.”

Brian J. Shanley, O.P., Ph.D.  
President

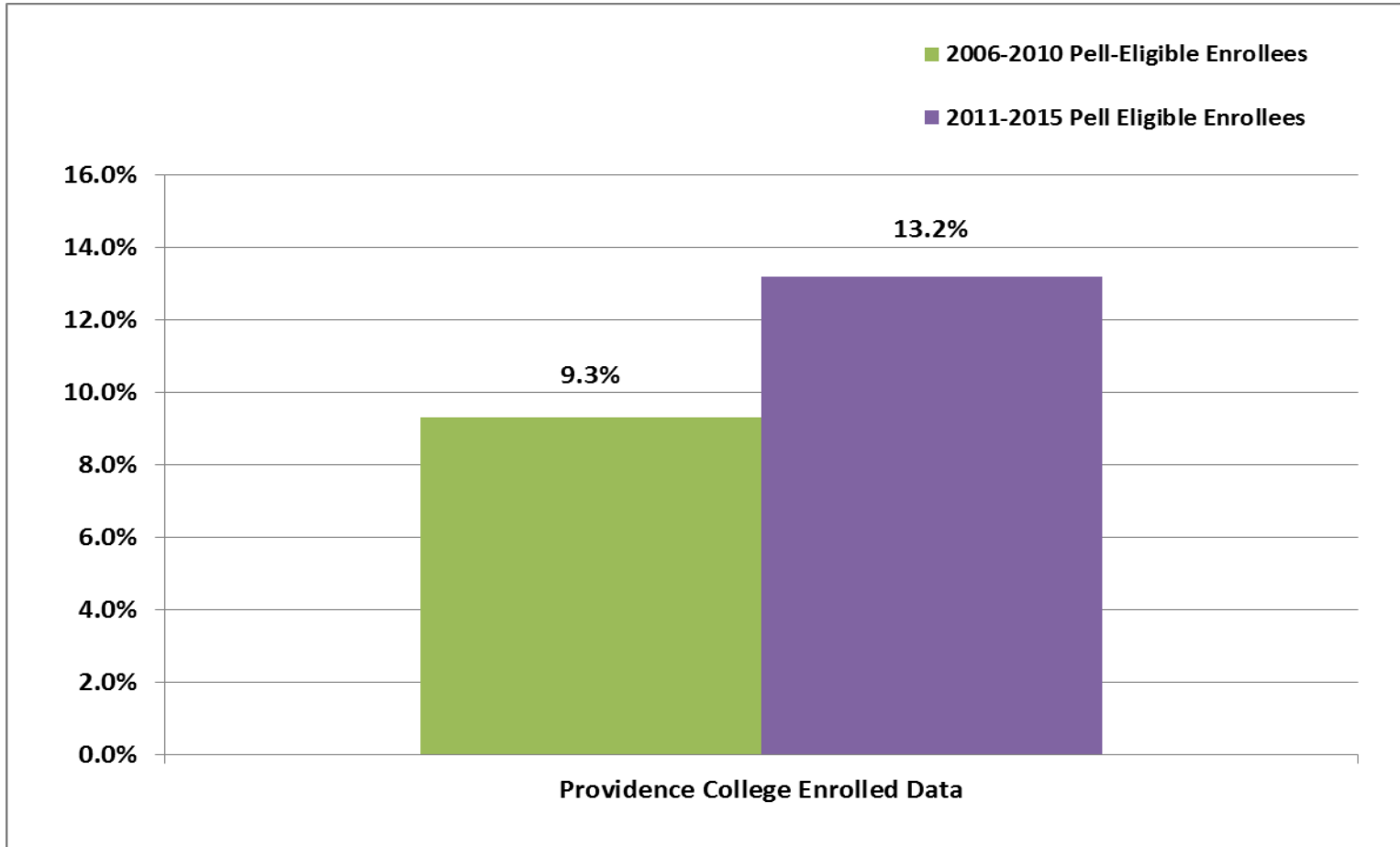
# Freshman Multicultural Enrollment Before and After Test-Optional Implementation



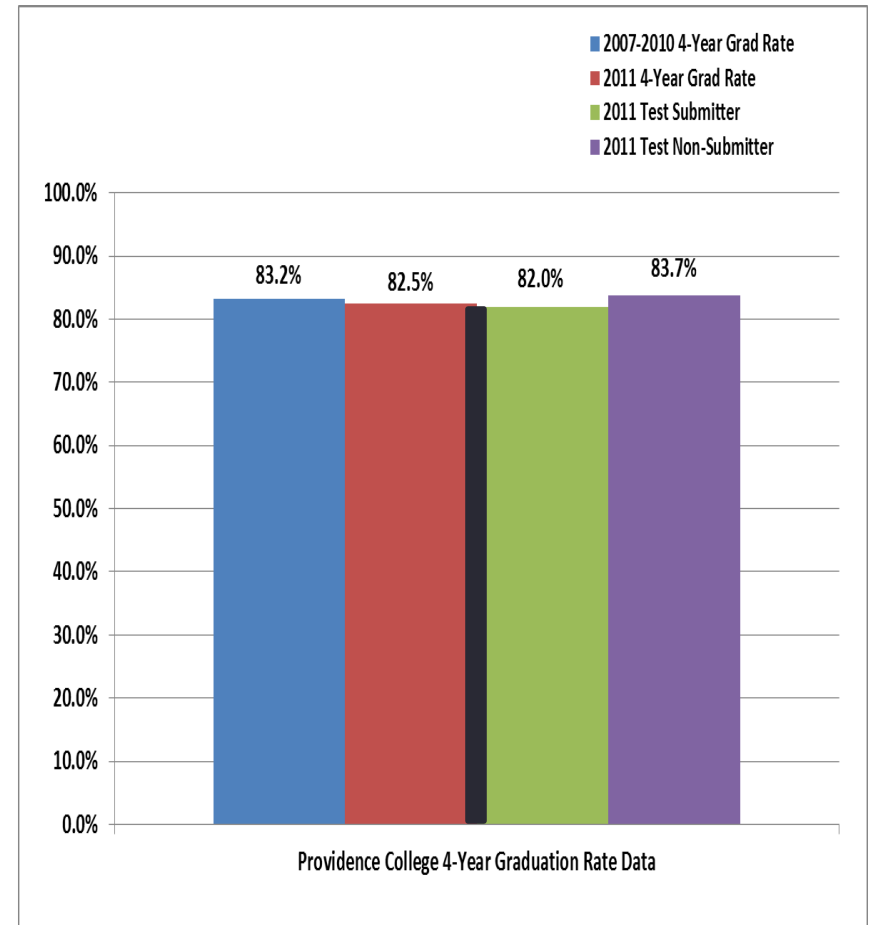
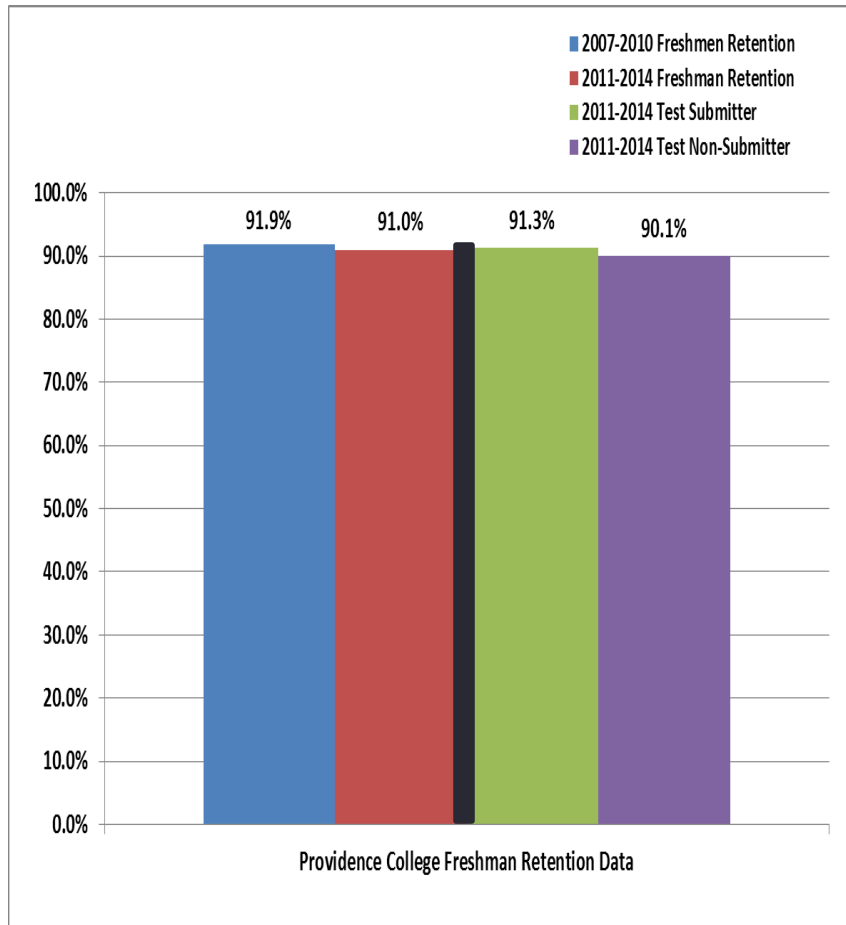
## Freshman First-Generation Enrollment Before and After Test-Optional Implementation



## Freshman Pell-Eligible Enrollment Before and After Test-Optional Implementation



## Freshman-Sophomore Retention and Four-Year Graduation Rate Before and After Test-Optional Implementation





# Test-optional applications a success at Providence College

*Providence Journal, April 3, 2012*

“Test optional ‘is no longer a pilot program,’ said the Rev. Brian J. Shanley, who began moving the college away from the standardized test requirement when he became president of Providence College in 2005.

The four-year experiment has achieved its goal of maintaining quality while helping PC reaffirm its founding mission to serve immigrant, first-generation, and minority students who otherwise would not have access to a college education, Father Shanley said.”

# TEST-OPTIONAL ADMISSION AT STONEHILL COLLEGE

Comparative Data

Classes of 2006 – 2011  
&  
Classes of 2012 – 2014

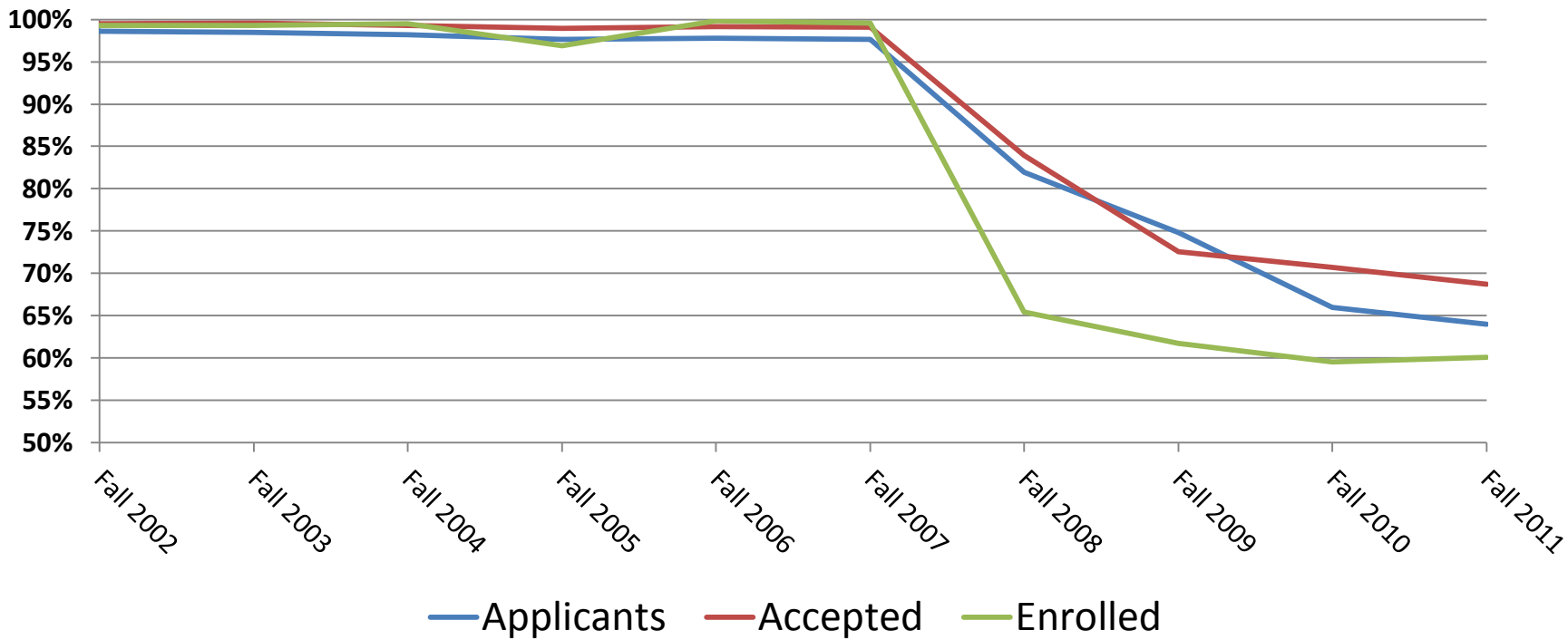
# Background Information

- Historically, high school GPA is the most significant predictor of first semester college GPA. Furthermore, the most significant predictor of graduation is first semester college GPA.
- SAT scores do positively impact first semester GPA albeit to a lesser extent than high school GPA.

# Students Submitting Test Scores

Test score submissions dropped precipitously in the first year of the test-optional initiative. They have been continuing to decline since then.

### Test Submitter Percentage Over Time



# Second Year Retention

Both student segments persist at similar rates.

| Second Year Retention Rate | Non Submitter | Test Score Submitter |
|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Fall 2002                  |               | 88%                  |
| Fall 2003                  |               | 88%                  |
| Fall 2004                  |               | 89%                  |
| Fall 2005                  |               | 84%                  |
| Fall 2006                  |               | 85%                  |
| Fall 2007                  |               | 89%                  |
| Fall 2008*                 | 87%           | 88%                  |
| Fall 2009*                 | 90%           | 92%                  |
| Fall 2010*                 | 87%           | 85%                  |

\*ttest reveals no statistical difference in freshman-sophomore retention within each cohort.

# Encouraging Underrepresented Student Groups to Apply and Enroll

ALANA percentage has gradually increased over time, but it is unclear to what extent test optional policies have contributed to this growth and how much of it is due to other underlying market trends.

**ALANA Percentage Over Time**

