

Holistic Admission Practices in the Health Professions

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What is Holistic Review?

A flexible, individualized way of assessing how an applicant will fare as a student and as a future professional and member of society.

Under holistic review admission committees consider a student's life experiences and personal qualities alongside traditional measures of academic achievement such as grades and standardized test scores.

Four Core Principles

1. Broad-based selection criteria linked to school mission and goals, and promote diversity as an essential element for excellence.
2. A balance of experiences, attributes, and academic metrics (EAM) are used, and applied equitably across the entire candidate pool. These selection criteria must be grounded in data and evidence supporting their use beyond grades and test scores.
3. Individualized consideration to how each applicant may contribute to the school and the profession.
4. Race/ethnicity may be considered when narrowly-tailored to the mission and as part of a broader mix of factors.

**adapted from AAMC materials*

Survey Process

- Completed by one person responsible for admission at each health profession school
- Primary degree programs in dentistry, medicine, pharmacy, public health and nursing
- Two-pronged approach to assessing use of holistic admission (self-reported and objective)

What is the evidence?

- 98% of survey participants reported that diversity of the incoming class *increased*.
- Average GPA of incoming class:
 - 38% increased
 - 52% unchanged
 - 10% decreased

What is the evidence?

- Graduation rate:
 - 16% increased
 - 80% unchanged
 - 4% decreased

This is for all health profession schools using holistic review (N=171) that are evaluating these outcomes.

What about other outcomes?

Outcome	Outcome tracked <u>AND</u> school is using holistic admission	Outcome tracked <u>AND</u> school is NOT using holistic admission
Student engagement with the community	64%	16%
Cooperation and teamwork among students	55%	10%
Student openness to ideas different from their own	50%	4%

Results are for all health profession schools (N=228)

Mission and Practices

- In states where it is permissible to consider race/ethnicity, only **33%** of schools are doing so.
- Use of holistic review strongly correlated with evaluation of race/ethnicity.

Barriers

- Lack of knowledge regarding holistic review
- Difficulty obtaining buy-in from leadership and administration
- Insufficient on-campus resources

Discussion Questions

- To what degree are admissions practices really aligned with the university's mission? What changes need to be made to increase alignment?
- How do we create a greater evidence base around our admission practices?
- Are there other admissions outcomes, besides incoming GPA, graduation rates, etc., that we should be evaluating – and if so, what are they?