

New study finds university health schools' use of holistic admissions has positive impact

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A new national study finds that health professions schools report an overall positive impact from the use of holistic review – a university admissions process that assesses an applicant's unique experiences alongside traditional measures of academic achievement such as grades and test scores. The report, *Holistic Admission in the Health Professions*, released today is the first large-scale study to examine the prevalence and effectiveness of holistic review across multiple health disciplines at universities nationwide.

The national survey coordinated by Urban Universities for HEALTH – a collaboration between the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities (USU) and the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), with funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) – finds the majority of schools report an increase in the diversity of their incoming classes and no change to measures of academic quality, [student academic performance](#), or student retention. Nearly 40 percent of schools reported that the average GPA of the incoming class actually increased, while 50 percent reported that it remained unchanged.

To read the full report go to:

<http://urbanuniversitiesforhealth.org/knowledge-base/publications>

"Our study shows that holistic review is a very promising admissions practice that not only increased access for diverse students but also

admitted students who excelled academically and have the right qualities to be successful in the workforce," said Dr. Greer Glazer, Dean of the College of Nursing at the University of Cincinnati, who led the study.

Many colleges and universities use a holistic admission process to select students. The practice has become more popular in health fields such as medicine, because it enables schools to evaluate a broader range of criteria important for student success, and to select individuals with the background and skills needed to meet the demands of a transforming health care environment.

"Until now we just didn't know the extent to which this admissions practice was being used for students pursuing careers in all of the health professions," said Dr. Darrell Kirch, President of The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). "Now we see there has been a bigger shift than we thought in the number of schools using this practice and we have evidence of the positive impact it's having on academic success, diversity, and other outcomes—such as students' engagement with the community."

"What we found is that universities can expand access to higher education for disadvantaged students while maintaining or improving academic standards," said Peter McPherson, President of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU). "This is exciting news for us, because our universities are looking for ways to help [students](#) from all backgrounds succeed, and we hope that our health profession schools in particular will use this evidence to recruit and train a [health](#) workforce that meets community and employer needs."

Provided by Burness Communications

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