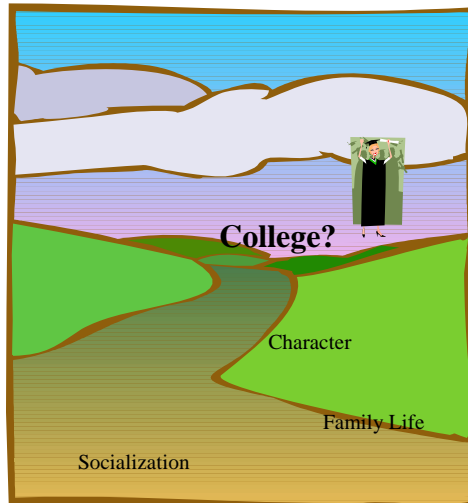


# Pathways to College Admissions for Homeschoolers

Amy Schechter Vahid and Frank  
Vahid

## The Homeschooling Path – Leads to College?



## California University System

- **Public** (state subsidized):  
 “Master Plan” (1960)
  - Univ. of California (UC) – admission “guaranteed” to top 12.5%
    - Primary research instit., only Ph.D. granting instit.
    - 10 campuses
  - California State Univ. (CSU) – top 33%
    - 23 campuses
  - Community colleges – any student capable of benefiting
    - 108 campuses
    - UC and CSU -- reserved positions and priority for upper-division transfer (more later)

**UCs**

- UC Berkeley
- UC Davis
- UC Irvine
- UC Los Angeles
- UC Merced
- UC Riverside
- UC San Diego
- UC San Francisco
- UC Santa Barbara
- UC Santa Cruz

### CSUs

- California State University Bakersfield
- California State University Channel Islands
- California State University Chico
- California State University Dominguez Hills
- California State University East Bay
- California State University Fresno
- California State University Fullerton
- Humboldt State University
- California State University Long Beach
- California State University Los Angeles
- California Maritime Academy
- California State University Monterey Bay
- California State University Northridge
- California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
- California State University Sacramento
- California State University San Bernardino
- San Diego State University
- San Francisco State University
- San Jose State University
- California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo
- California State University San Marcos
- Sonoma State University
- California State University Stanislaus

## California University System

- **Private**
  - About 45 in California
    - e.g., Stanford, USC
  - Other famous privates:  
 Harvard, Princeton, Yale
- Public universities – state subsidies cut tuition/fees
  - UC – \$7,000/yr
  - CSU – \$3,000/yr
  - Comm. College – about \$20/unit → \$1,000/yr
  - Typical private -- \$35,000/yr

### Some Private CA Universities

- Azuza Pacific University
- Biola University
- Claremont College
- Harvey Mudd College
- Loma Linda University
- Loyola Marymount University
- Pepperdine University
- Stanford University
- University of San Diego
- University of Southern California

*“University” and “College” mostly synonymous*

### Stanford drops tuition for some students

Steve Rubenstein, Chronicle Staff Writer - Wednesday, February 20, 2008 - Palo Alto - Stanford University will... no longer charge tuition to students whose families earn less than \$100,000 a year.

In addition, the university will waive room and board fees for students whose families earn less than \$60,000 a year.

Similar “middle class” tuition reduction/waiver policies at Harvard (Dec 2007):

<http://www.hno.harvard.edu/gazette/2007/12.13/99-finaid.html>

## Admissions

- How get into good UC, CSU, or private university? (aka “4-year schools”)
- Two main options
  1. Freshman
  2. Transfer

## 1. Admission as a Freshman

- Private universities
  - Every school differs, read admissions web pages
    - e.g., Stanford: “No two applicants in our pool are the same, so we take great care to ensure we read your application within the context of your surroundings.”
  - Transcripts, diploma/CHSPE, SAT/ACT, essays, activities, portfolio
    - Will discuss further in context of more rigid requirements of UCs/CSUs

Several private colleges think so well of home-educated students that they have been actively recruiting them for several years (e.g., Boston University, Nyack College)

“The applications [from homeschoolers] I’ve come across are outstanding. Homeschoolers have a distinct advantage because of the individualized instruction they have received.” Dartmouth College admission officer

This individualized instruction, combined with homeschooled students' experience in studying and pursuing goals on their own, may be showing long-lasting effects

Admission officers at Stanford University think they are seeing an unusually high occurrence of a key ingredient, which they term “intellectual vitality,” in homeschool graduates (Foster, 2000). They link it to the practice of self-teaching prevalent in these young people, as a result of their homeschool environment.

## Admission as a Freshman – UC

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/>

Score	Rd	Math	Wr
800	99	99	99+
780	99	99	99
760	99	98	99
740	98	97	98
720	96	96	97
700	95	93	96
680	93	91	94
660	90	88	92
640	87	83	89
620	83	79	85
600	79	74	81
580	74	68	76
560	68	63	71
540	62	56	64
520	55	50	58
500	48	43	51

- Two evaluation stages
  - Eligibility – in top 12.5%?
    - If so, "guaranteed" admission into some UC campus (not necessarily one of your choices, though)
    - And campuses "allowed" to consider your application for admissions
  - Admissions – each campus (e.g., Berkeley, LA, Irvine) individually reviews applications
- Eligibility
  - Finish high school (from accredited institution) or equivalency
    - Equiv.: CHSPE (Calif. High School Proficiency Exam) or GED
  - GPA in required "A-G" courses
    - 7 "A-G" subject areas include English, Math, History, Foreign Language, Science, Arts, Elective
    - Courses must be taken from *approved list* at accredited high school
      - *or UC-transferable community college courses*
      - *While in high school, can take CC courses and still count as high-school courses (plus college courses)*
  - SAT Reasoning Test (or ACT) and two SAT Subject Tests
    - SAT Reasoning: Critical reading, math, and writing sections
    - Each test scored 200-800
    - Note: Very high SAT scores (about 700 average/test) – automatically eligible
      - *Not uncommon for homeschoolers*

Average SAT score (reading, math, writing) is about 500.

For homeschoolers – about 550

Subject test avgs vary, and are higher

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<http://www.homeschoolingpath.com>

## A-G Courses

### Required "A-G" Courses

- A – History/Social Science – 2 years required
- B – English – 4 years required
- C – Mathematics – 3 years required, 4 years recommended
- D – Laboratory Science – 2 years required, 3 years recommended  
biology, chemistry and physics.
- E – Language Other than English – 2 years required, 3 years recommended
- F – Visual and Performing Arts (VPA) – 1 year required
- G – College-Preparatory Electives – 1 year required  
visual and performing arts (non-introductory level courses), history, social science, English, advanced mathematics, laboratory science and language other than English

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<http://www.homeschoolingpath.com>

## Admission as a Freshman -- UC

- Admission
  - “Comprehensive review” of application
  - Allowed comprehensive review criteria
    - **GPA in A-G courses**
    - **SAT/ACT scores**
    - **Additional courses**
    - **Honors/AP courses**
    - **ELC (top 4% of own high school)**
    - Planned senior year
    - **Quality wrt educational opportunities**
    - Outstanding performance in particular subject
    - Special academic projects
    - Recent improvement
    - Special talents – unusual promise
    - **Special projects – effort, determination**
    - Accomplishment despite disadvantaged
    - Location (geographic diversity)
  - Each school has own weighting
    - Check admissions pages (try search for “comprehensive review criteria”)

AP/honors grade bump (extra grade points) → GPAs commonly above 4.0.

“Arms race” ensues, leading to stress and sacrificing personal/family life, with little academic benefit...

<http://www.utdallas.edu/research/tsp/pdfpapers/newpaper1b.pdf>

USA Today, 2003: **More parents are hiring pros to coach kids for admission.** 2003 – 6% did. Cost: \$2,000 - \$30,000

Favorite UC admissions reference: “Quick Reference for Counselors” -- [www.universityofcalifornia.edu/educators/counselors/resources/materials/QR.pdf](http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/educators/counselors/resources/materials/QR.pdf)

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## UC Admission Rates

	Applications Received	Students Admitted	Percent Admitted	GPA	SAT*
UC Berkeley	48,418	10,388	21.5%	4.18	2034
UCLA	55,397	12,579	22.7%	4.34	2000
UCSD	47,364	19,022	40.2%	4.06	1940
UCSB	47,025	23,140	49.2%	4.03	1872
UC Davis	40,568	21,256	52.4%	3.94	1851
UC Irvine	39,247	19,214	49.0%	3.94	1834
UC Santa Cruz	25,746	19,138	74.3%	3.69	1760
UC Riverside	21,224	16,316	76.9%	3.59	1654
UC Merced	9,980	7,658	76.7%	3.51	1620

See [http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2006-11-02-collegerates\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2006-11-02-collegerates_x.htm) for nationwide admission rates

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## Admission as a Freshman -- CSU

<http://www.csumentor.edu/>

- Similar to UC – UC and CSU standardized in 2003
    - A-G courses same
  - Key differences
    - CSU – Less stringent GPA requirements (top 33%)
    - (Don't have to take SAT/ACT if GPA 3.0)
      - Still useful though for math/english placement
      - And for admission to more selective campuses and certain majors
  - Some CSUs have higher admission standards than other CSUs
    - Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Cal Poly Pomona, CSU Fullerton, CSU Long Beach, SD State
    - But also have local admission guarantees
      - Surrounding accredited high-schools and community colleges
    - Certain majors have higher standards than other majors at CSU
- |                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| Cal Poly SLO    | 16% |
| Cal Poly Pomona | 30% |
| CSU East Bay    | 46% |
| CSU Long Beach  | 49% |
| CSU Sacramento  | 52% |
| Cal State LA    | 56% |
| CSU Bakersfield | 59% |
| CSU San Bern.   | 62% |
| ...             |     |

## Admission as a Freshman – UCR's Homeschool Admissions Program

- Pilot program since 2005
- UCR is only UC/CSU with explicit homeschool admissions policy
- Finish high school – High School diploma or California High School Proficiency Exam or GED necessary
- Normal UC application including test scores, plus portfolio sent directly to UCR
  - Portfolio – Categorize learning into A-G subjects
    - Not necessarily all, but English/Math essential
    - Additional category is Life Experience

## So, How Prepare for Admission as a Freshman?

- Early – Note importance of **English** and **Math**
  - A-G courses – 4 yrs english, 3-4 yrs math; core SAT tests (reading, math, writing)
  - Stress throughout entire homeschooling process
- Note other A-G courses, strive to cover during high-school years
- Take at least some courses from recognized objective places
  - Approved A-G high school course, perhaps from charter school, or online (e.g., UC Irvine now offers AP courses online)
  - Other high school course (e.g., Brigham Young offers high-school courses online)
  - Community college course (outstanding option!)
  - University course (e.g., online calculus at SFState, or “extension” course at UC)
- Get involved in special projects/activities
- Build portfolio during high school years
  - Keep key work samples, stay organized
- Prepare for SAT, start early
  - Courses
    - e.g., <https://satonlinecourse.collegeboard.com/SR/loginAction.do> (\$70)
    - Many private companies, local high schools, online sources, books, ...
    - Free: <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/prepare/prepare.html>
  - Note: Can take test multiple times. Scores from single-sitting used (UC); CSU any sit.

## Getting UC Admission as a Freshman

- **Option 1** – Formally satisfy A-G requirements during high school
  - Home-education-based charter school (e.g., Eagle’s Peak)
  - Piece together *approved* courses from various sources
    - community colleges, online AP, other accredited schools, ...
- **Option 2** – Ace the SAT exam
  - Start preparing many years in advance
  - No need to finish high school, but well-rounded education helps
- **Option 3** – Request *admission by exception*
  - Generally not advertised, but UCs allowed 6%, CSUs 8%
  - Contact admissions office with request
  - Be aware that first-level employees may not be aware
    - Use the web to find higher-level staff
    - Always be extremely polite and professional
  - Math and English very important!

Finish high school  
Take A-G courses  
Take tests

Take tests  
Ideally take most  
A-G courses

Finish high school  
Ideally take most  
A-G courses  
Take tests  
Submit extra info

*UCR’s program is  
well-defined  
instance of  
option 3* 14

## Trends – Easier Admission for Homeschoolers

- College's struggling with under-prepared freshmen
  - UC/CSU – 30%/50% freshmen need remedial English
    - In contrast, applicants to UC Riverside's homeschool admissions program have generally had astoundingly high English standardized exam scores
  - Low 4-year graduation rates (e.g., 60%)
- Colleges recognizing homeschoolers are well prepared
  - College learning occurs outside of class, unlike high schools
    - Requires good organization and self-discipline – familiar to homeschoolers
  - Studies show homeschoolers' intrinsic motivation increases with age
  - Homeschoolers' enjoyment of reading/writing helpful, score in top 25%
  - Studies showing homeschoolers adapt fine and do well in college
  - "The applications [from homeschoolers] I've come across are outstanding. Homeschoolers have a distinct advantage because of the individualized instruction they have received." Dartmouth College admission officer
  - Admission officers at Stanford University think they are seeing an unusually high occurrence of a key ingredient, which they term "intellectual vitality," in homeschool graduates (Foster, 2000). They link it to the practice of self-teaching prevalent in these young people, as a result of their homeschool environment.

## 2. Admission as a Transfer

<http://www.uctransfer.org/>  
<http://www.csumentor.edu/Planning/transfer/>

Stigma is gone!

- UC gives **priority admission** to California Community College transfer students
  - 8 of every 10 California Community College applicants are qualified and admitted
  - Nearly one third of all UC bachelor's degrees go to transfer students
  - Do just as well academically – On average, junior transfers graduate in 2.4 years at UC
- Typically complete 60 semester units before transferring to UC or CSU
  - Some admit with <60
  - Most don't admit those with >90
- Private schools vary
  - Stanford – VERY hard to transfer, 1-2% success (about 40 students)
  - USC – More welcoming, 12% success (about 1,000 students)
  - Claremont – Welcoming, but success ranges from 0%-30%/yr depending on availability

UC: 30,000 freshmen and 11,000 transfer admits / yr

CSU: about 47,000 freshmen and 32,000 transfer admits each year

### UC Undergraduate Enrollment Fall 2007

Campus	Overall	Transfer	Percentage*
Berkeley	24,636	5,231	21.2
Davis	23,604	4,455	18.9
Irvine	21,854	4,095	18.7
Los Angeles	25,928	7,831	30.2
Merced	1,750	272	15.5
Riverside	15,041	2,201	14.6
San Diego	22,048	4,998	22.7
Santa Barbara	18,429	3,388	18.4
Santa Cruz	14,403	2,215	15.4

\*% of undergraduates who entered as transfers

Great source of CA college data for ANY CA school  
<http://www.cpec.ca.gov/>



## Transfer Admit Rates

### UC Transfer Student Admission Rates, Fall 2007

–Berkeley	11,043	3,252	29%
–Los Angeles	13,464	5,333	40%
–Irvine	8,606	5,927	69%
–Santa Cruz	4,725	3,332	71%
–Santa Barbara	7,934	5,622	71%
–San Diego	8,844	6,303	71%
–Davis	7,437	5,417	73%
–Riverside	5,263	4,033	77%
–Merced	1,821	1,560	86%
<b>–Total</b>	<b>24,866</b>	<b>18,978</b>	<b>76%</b>

#### Compare to freshman admit rates

	Applications Received	Students Admitted	Percent Admitted	GPA	SAT*
UC Berkeley	48,418	10,388	21.5%	4.18	2034
UCLA	55,397	12,579	22.7%	4.34	2000
UCSD	47,364	19,022	40.2%	4.06	1940
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UC Riverside	21,224	16,316	76.9%	3.59	1654
UC Merced	9,980	7,658	76.7%	3.51	1620

## Admission as a Transfer

- Consider taking community college / AP/ online college / university extension courses during high-school years
  - Perhaps 1 course, then 2
  - Start with subjects you have strength in
  - CCs allow high-school students to enroll, but there are constraints. Courses count as college units.
  - VERY IMPORTANT – Pick good instructors
    - Use <http://www.ratemyprofessors.com> to see what students think of their college teachers
    - Use <http://www.pickaprof.com> to see official grade statistics for college teachers
- Can finish high-school and continue taking such courses until time to transfer
- Select courses based on transfer requirements of desired MAJOR(s) at desired schools(s)
  - Can get a bit tricky due to different requirements

Caution: if you finish high-school and then take CC courses, you may become ineligible for UC/CSU freshman admission

#### Benefits:

- Gradual transition
- More time at home
- Avoid AP/honors/SAT stress
- More mature when reach campus
- Can stay for masters for more on-campus life

## College Admissions –Transfer –Resources

- Some resources:
  - www.assist.org -- Allows you to look up universities, majors, etc. and see what classes are equivalent at other community colleges
  - IGETC -- **Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum** –
    - The transfer core curriculum which fulfills the lower division general education requirements of both the UC and the CSU for many (but not all) majors.
  - TAG -- The Transfer Admission Guarantee -- Guaranteed admission to California community college students who meet specific requirements. (UCLA, UCSF, and UCB not included)
    - receive early review of your academic record, early admission notification, and specific guidance on major preparation and general education coursework.

## Summary

- Admission as a freshman – Tough, but doable
  - UC/CSU: A-G satisfaction via external courses, high SAT/ACT scores, and/or exception (or UCR's program)
    - Other activities important too
  - Private: Similar approach, plus portfolio
    - Good news: Big schools reducing/eliminating tuition for middle class
  - If don't succeed, can still go transfer route
- Admission as a transfer
  - Very doable for UC/CSU, varies greatly for private
  - Nice gradual increase in outside coursework until ready to transfer
- Key resources
  - Obviously, the admissions pages of the universities (Google)
  - Also – Materials designed for **counselors**
    - <http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/educators/counselors/>
    - <http://www.calstate.edu/SAS/counselors.shtml>
    - Private universities also have special web pages for counselors (not quite as informative)
    - Handbooks for admissions guidelines for freshmen and transfers
      - Information is more detailed, less inviting – "just the facts"
    - Often better than speaking with university admissions people!

## Pathways to College Admissions for Homeschoolers

Amy Schechter Vahid and Frank Vahid are authors of the book *Homeschooling: A Path Rediscovered for Socialization, Education, and Family* ([www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com)). They have three children and have homeschooled since 1994. Amy has a California teacher credential and has worked as an Education Specialist, overseeing the work of homeschool students for a California charter school, specializing in college-bound high-school issues. Frank is a Professor of Computer Science and Engineering at the University of California, Riverside, and Associate Director of the CECS center at UC Irvine. He has received national attention for having architected the first major homeschool admissions program at any California university. Contact them at [amysbv@gmail.com](mailto:amysbv@gmail.com) and [vahid@cs.ucr.edu](mailto:vahid@cs.ucr.edu), or visit <http://homeschoolingpath.com>.

Pathways to College: Perhaps Easier than You Think

Amy Schechter Vahid and Frank Vahid

Friday 1:30

College is a worry looming on many homeschoolers' minds. This session describes various pathways into good colleges that homeschoolers have used with success. It provides tips for preparing for college admissions starting as early as the middle-school years. Discussed are various admissions rules of community colleges and universities, homeschool-favorable trends occurring within the UC system, UCR's homeschool admissions policy, and suggestions to maximize the chances of getting admitted to your college of choice, gleaned from Amy's extensive work overseeing college-bound homeschoolers as a credentialed teacher for a charter school, Frank's key roles as a professor on undergraduate admissions committees for the University of California system and for UCR, and extensive personal research for their own children.

