

Are tests like sat and act effective?

Business



Any high school student can relate the worry and stress of preparing for the SAT or ACT test as a way to gain entrance to college. There are lots of ways to study for these exams and get the highest score possible.

But, perhaps a better question is whether or not these tests are actually an effective means of letting colleges and universities know whether a student is a good choice for that institution or not. A new study conducted by a former dean of Bates College, William Hiss, followed the graduation rates of students who submitted their test results when compared to those who didn't. His findings indicate that there is very little difference between the two groups. There was actually a graduation rate difference of less than 1%. What many high school students don't realize is that there are many universities across the United States that are test optional. The trend is continuing to grow and that opens up brand new opportunities to incoming college students everywhere.

Hiss says that a more important number to consider is GPA. Grade point average does a much better job of letting colleges and universities see a student's dedication, intelligence level, self-discipline and educational curiosity than do scores on one test. The study goes on to say that getting a high score on the SAT or ACT doesn't necessarily indicate the potential for college success. On the other hand, students with good grades and mediocre test scores are just as able to do well in college as those who score high on these tests. The SAT was actually developed as a way for low income people to gain notice by Ivy League colleges as far back as the 1930s.

As the years went by, standardized testing became the norm, rather than the exception. Hiss says that by eliminating the testing portion of the college entrance process, the playing field is leveled for all types of students from all walks of life. The truth is that a higher education is vitally important in most career fields. By forgoing an education because of a low SAT or ACT score, there are many people out there who aren't able to take advantage of job opportunities that could be great for them and the company they choose to work for. A college degree is so important, but low test scores are interfering with many high school student's ability to create the life they want.

Debate about the process of getting into college continues, but this small study shows a clear advantage, both for colleges and high schools students, when it comes to being able to get into a university and work toward a degree. Many government officials are working toward making going to college a more attainable goal for people from all walks of life. Now that many institutes of higher learning are moving toward a test optional track, there are more high school students who are exploring the option of going to college, rather than being stuck trying to find a job due to low SAT or ACT scores. In short, test scores are not the only predictor of whether a student could be successful in college. As more universities begin to recognize this, it gives additional students a leg up and the chance to go after their dream career and chase the American dream without letting testing ability get in the way of that success. For now, most colleges still require a high SAT or ACT score to get in, but others are allowing other important factors to come into play.

For students who want new opportunities to get a degree, a test optional college may be the right choice.