

UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS TEST OPTIONAL UPDATE

Meeting of the University Faculty Senate

May 7, 2025



OUR TEST-OPTIONAL PROCESS

- Applicants choose a Testing Plan at time of application
- Undergraduate Admissions utilizes a statistically-validated admissions index that predicts first year academic success
- In addition to overall HS GPA, the admissions index incorporates high school grades in key academic subjects that have been shown to be the best predictors of first year performance at USC (English, Math, Science)



TEST OPTIONAL SEC INSTITUTIONS

- Auburn University
- Louisiana State University
- Mississippi State University
- Texas A & M University
- University of Alabama
- University of Arkansas
- University of Kentucky
- University of Mississippi
- University of Missouri
- University of Oklahoma
- University of South Carolina
- Vanderbilt University

Source: *Fairtest.org* (December 2024)



UNIVERSITY OF
South Carolina

TEST OPTIONAL AAU INSTITUTIONS

Arizona State University at the Tempe Campus
Boston University
Brandeis University
Carnegie Mellon University
Case Western Reserve University
Columbia University in the City of New York
Cornell University
Dartmouth College
Duke University
Emory University
George Washington University
Indiana University Bloomington
Michigan State University
New York University
Northwestern University
Ohio State University-Main Campus
Pennsylvania State University - Main Campus
Princeton University
Rice University

Rutgers University-New Brunswick
Stony Brook University
Texas A&M University
Tufts University
Tulane University of Louisiana
University at Buffalo
University of Arizona
University of California-Berkeley
University of California-Davis
University of California-Irvine
University of California-Los Angeles
University of California-Riverside
University of California-San Diego
University of California-Santa Barbara
University of California-Santa Cruz
University of Chicago
University of Colorado Boulder
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
University of Iowa

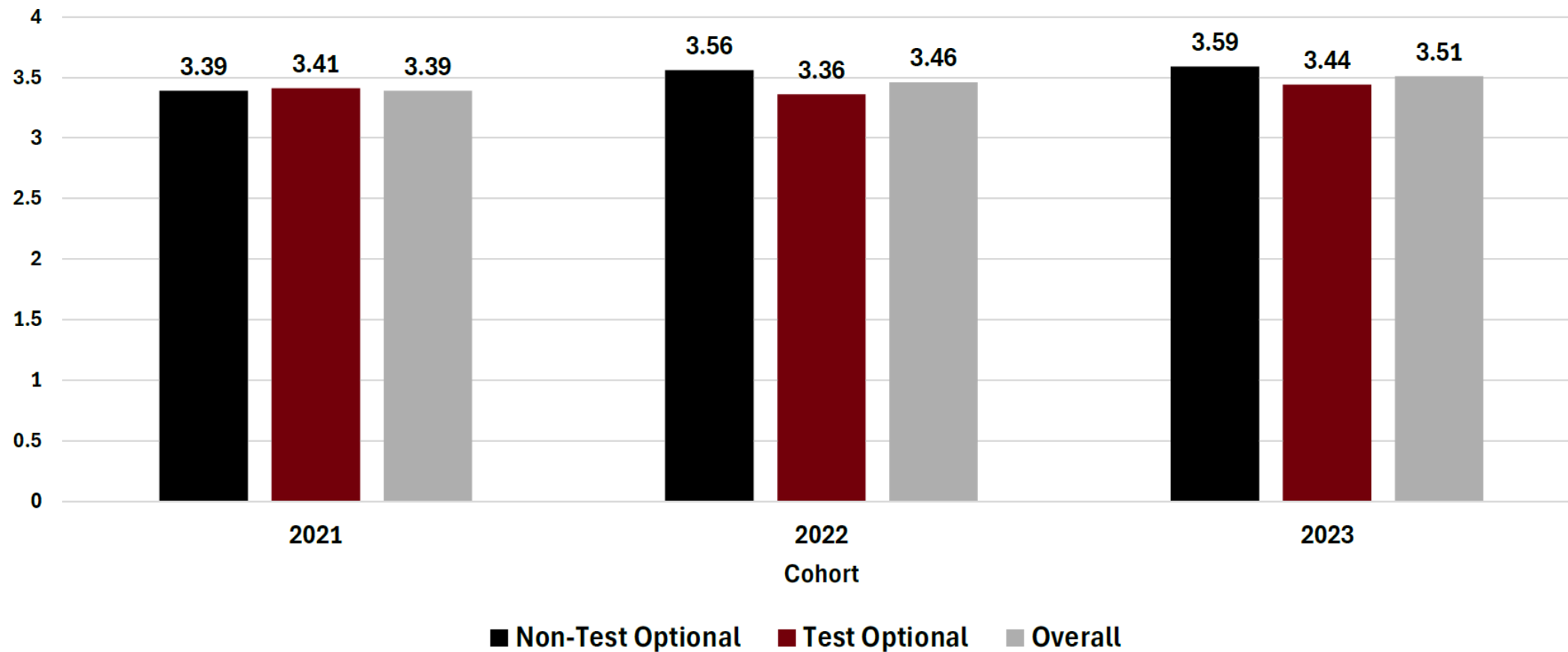
University of Kansas
University of Maryland-College Park
University of Miami
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
University of Minnesota-Twin Cities
University of Missouri-Columbia
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
University of Notre Dame
University of Oregon
University of Pennsylvania
University of Pittsburgh-Pittsburgh Campus
University of Rochester
University of Southern California
University of Utah
University of Virginia-Main Campus
University of Washington-Seattle Campus
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Vanderbilt University
Washington University in St. Louis

TEST-OPTIONAL PERCENT OF COHORT

	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024
Freshman Class	6,167	6,574	7,316	7,272
% Test Optional	32%	47%	50%	55%
SC Residents	3,108	3,356	3,887	3,807
% Test Optional	31%	46%	46%	52%
Non-Residents	3,060	3,218	3,429	3,465
% Test Optional	34%	48%	55%	58%

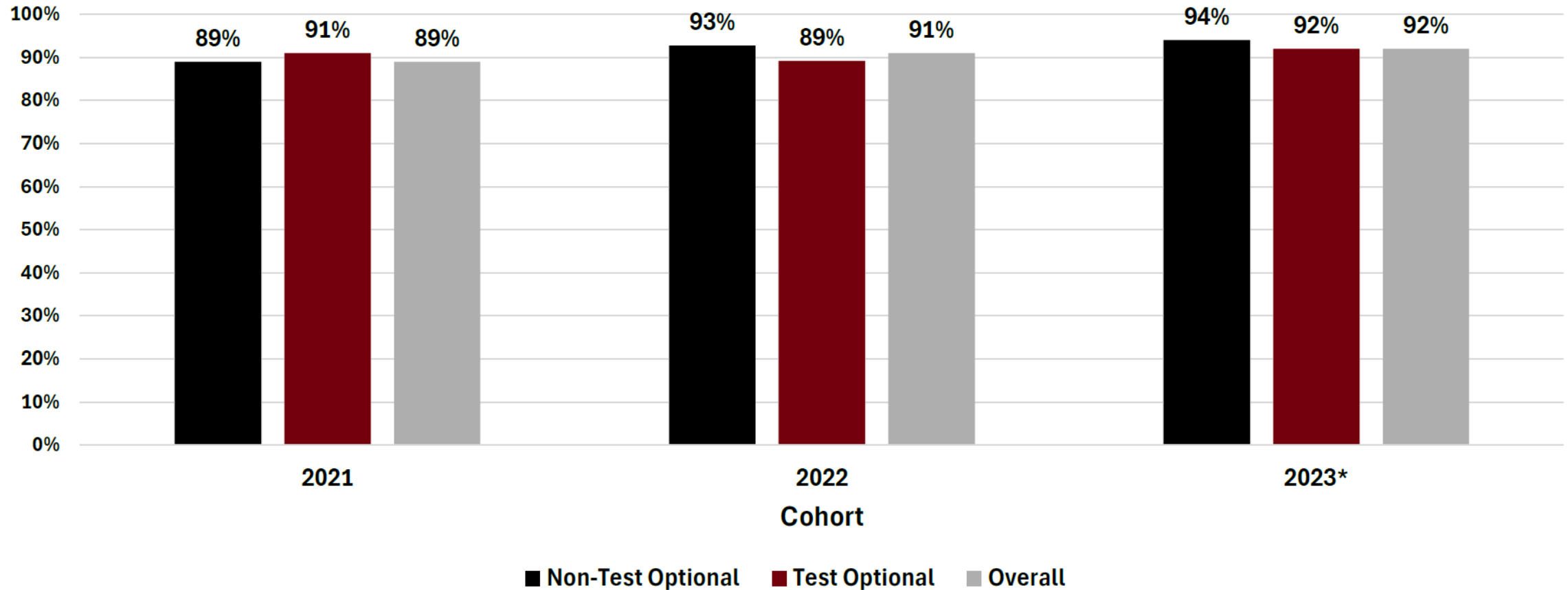


AVERAGE FIRST-YEAR GPA



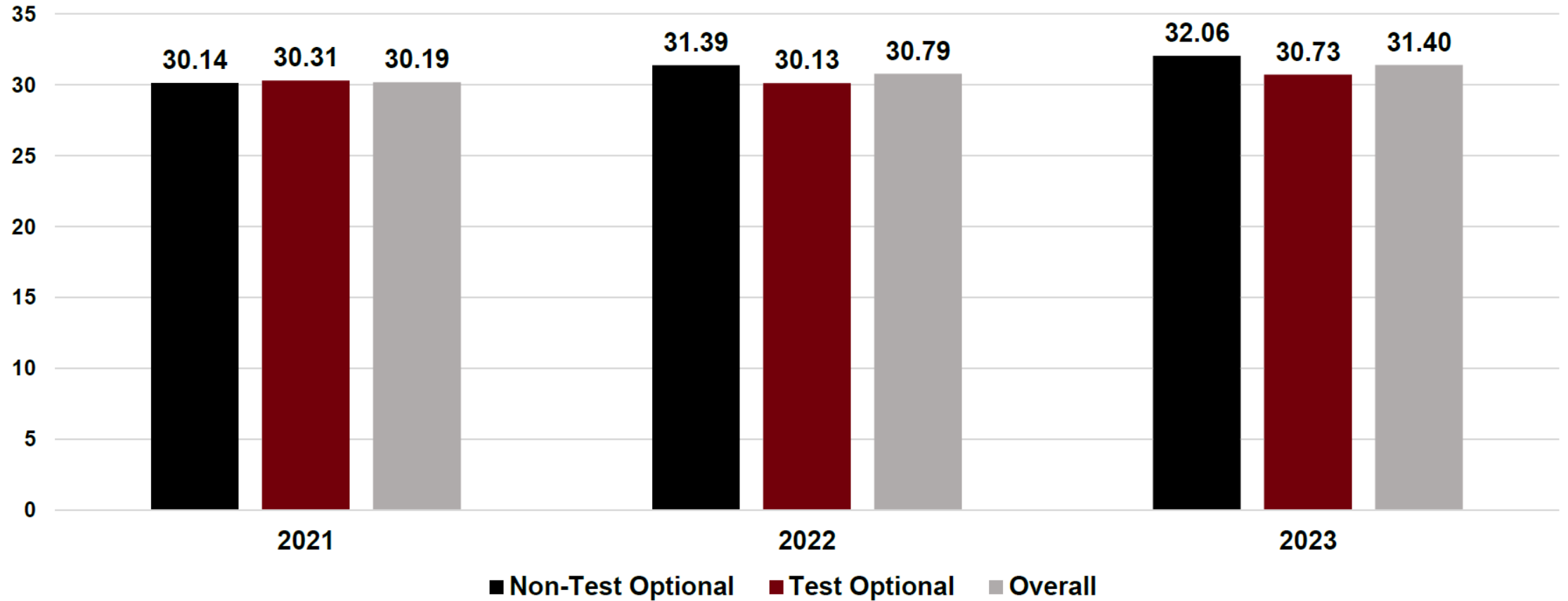
Source: Enrollment Data Analytics

FIRST-TO-SECOND YEAR RETENTION RATE



Source: Enrollment Data Analytics; *2023 preliminary as of 12/2024

FIRST-YEAR CREDIT HOURS EARNED



Source: Enrollment Data Analytics

KEY POINTS

- Vast majority of selective 4-year schools are test optional, including almost all the SEC, AAU, and R1 institutions
- USC developed and uses an admission index that is more predictive of first year success than prior indices that included test scores
- Students admitted test optional perform as well as those admitted with test scores
- USC's test optional students outperform almost all selective institutions participating in the College Board's Admissions Research Collaborative on first year GPA, hours earned, and first year retention

