

UC Regents hear public comment on SAT, ACT debate, undocumented student concerns



The UC Board of Regents hears public comment at UC San Francisco. The board heard community members argue both for and against reinstating standardized testing for first-year undergraduate admissions at their July meeting. (Edward Ho/Daily Bruin)



By **Lauren Trautenberg**

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Faculty and students called on the UC Board of Regents to reinstate standardized testing requirements and support undocumented students at its July meeting.

The regents held public comment sessions both Tuesday and Wednesday during its bimonthly meeting at UC San Francisco.

Pradeep Sen, an electrical and computer engineering professor at UC Santa Barbara, said he believes the University should reinstate standardized testing requirements for undergraduate admissions. He added that his students started struggling with homework assignments in 2022 and 2023 – the same assignments he has used for the past 15 years.

[Related: [UC Academic Senate to decide on recommending SAT, ACT reinstatement by June 2027](#)]

The University paused its SAT and ACT requirements in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic and later stopped using SAT and ACT scores in first-year admissions.

“The answer is not to get rid of the one metric that ensures students have a proper foundation to succeed in college,” Sen said.

The UC Academic Senate will decide whether or not to reinstate standardized testing requirements by June 2027, the regents announced at its Tuesday meeting. The UC Board of Admissions and Relations, which advises the UC president on undergraduate admissions, rescinded its original timeline for considering whether the University should bring back the SAT and ACT on Friday.

The review comes after hundreds of faculty members across the UC signed a May [letter](#) urging the University to require SAT and ACT scores in first-year admissions. More than 2,300 faculty members have signed the letter as of July 2.

Non-STEM faculty also released a separate letter asking the University to consider the verbal reasoning portions of the SAT and ACT. The letter has garnered 900 signatures as of July 2.

[Related: [Hundreds of UC faculty call to reinstate SAT, ACT requirements for STEM applicants](#)]

Will Fithian, a UC Berkeley statistics professor, said he believes considering standardized test scores, alongside other metrics such as high school GPA, is the strongest way to evaluate applicants.

“Using both measures together, along with due consideration for applicants’ educational opportunities, paints a more complete picture of applicant preparedness than using either

measure alone can," he said.

David Kleinfeld, a UC San Diego professor of physics and neurobiology, said he believes his recent students' reading comprehension has also diminished.

Alexis Zaragoza, a former UC Student Regent, said she believes the University can help students succeed by providing additional resources, rather than asking more of them. For example, the California community college system prepares transfer students for four-year universities, despite its limited funds, she added.

"We cannot blame students for inefficient systems, for lack of support, for lack of cohesion between UC and public high schools," Zaragoza said.

Pamela Burdman, the executive director of education for equity policy institute Just Equations, said she opposed reinstating standardized testing requirements for first-year admissions. She added that she believes the UC can implement other solutions to address student readiness concerns, including by offering more classes such as UCLA's "Life Sciences 30A: Math for Life Scientists" series.

"Core to the University's mission is serving the broad diversity of California's population," Burdman said. "Returning to the use of a screening tool that disadvantages students by their backgrounds runs counter to that mission."

Some community members said they were also concerned about undocumented students' lack of employment opportunities at the UC.

Ricardo Miranda, the university affairs committee chair for the UC Student Association, condemned UCPD's use of security cameras and license plate readers from surveillance company Flock Safety, despite LAPD having ended their contracts with the company due to their usage violating students' privacy. He

added that he is concerned about undocumented students' privacy.

UCPD still used Flock Safety surveillance as of May, according to the [Daily Californian](#).

Senate Bill 34 prohibits police from sharing license plate recognition data with federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

A UC Office of the President spokesperson said in an emailed statement that the University is using the technology in line with laws related to data collection, storage, sharing and usage.

"The safety and privacy of the University of California community are top priorities," the spokesperson said in the statement.

Francisco Ornelas, a rising third-year political science and legal studies student at UC Santa Cruz, urged the regents to support Assembly Bill 713 – the Donahoe Higher Education Act. The act would provide students equal access to employment opportunities, regardless of their immigration status.

The California Assembly Higher Education Committee approved the Donahoe Higher Education Act, and it is pending review by the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Michelle Martinelli, an emergency medicine resident at the UCSF Helen Diller Medical Center at Parnassus Heights, called on the regents to address alleged staffing concerns at UCLA and UCSF hospitals.

[Related: [Protesting doctors, nurses allege dangerous overcrowding at UCLA hospital](#)]

"No one should have to have end-of-life discussions in the hallway," Martinelli said. "We see these situations play out in real life every single day. We call on UC to address this crisis in the ER through adequate staffing and space to care for our patients and our community."