

Highlighting Changes in the New Admissions Policy

Current Policy and Practice	Under the New Provisions
Policy and practices are not distinguished	Practices will be distinguished from policy guidelines; these may be updated on an annual basis—such things as SAT/ACT scores
Current practice is to send letters to large numbers of prospective students informing them that they are “conditionally” admitted	New practices will focus on internal tracking of conditional admits, but will communicate admission as a regular admission—this is in line with other IU institutions
Students admitted as conditional are deficient in at least one of a wide variety of criteria, many of which are fairly minor	New guidelines will focus more on allowing the admissions staff to consider “borderline” cases on an individual basis
Pretty much an open admission policy	New policy will set the stage for transition to more selective admission standards, but allows for gradual implementation
Placement tests and admissions decisions are intertwined	Admission is determined by high school academic record and test scores, or college coursework for transfer students

Questions and Answers

Q: Why are the changes being proposed?

A: Under the current system, IU East has combined the admission and placement process. These proposed changes are designed to determine a student’s admission status as separate from determining their college coursework. The Office of Admissions will evaluate materials to determine entrance into the university. English and math faculty will play a larger role in evaluating the basic competencies of the students and determining standards and procedures to appropriately place students in their first semester courses. (Although the admissions staff will now play a less direct role in placement, we should not be admitting a large number of students who place into remedial courses (X050, M006, W001) which we no longer offer.)

Q: Are our admissions standards changing?

A: Yes and no. On the one hand, it seems prudent to place less emphasis on COMPASS test results and place more emphasis on a student’s overall high school academic performance. Looking at a student’s completion of a Core 40 curriculum may be a better predictor of later success in collegiate life. On the other hand, as IU East moves further towards four year undergraduate and graduate degree programs, our admissions standards need to become more stringent. This change cannot happen all at once. But

through the new processes, we are establishing standards that will be gradually increased over time. In fact, the average ACT and SAT scores for incoming freshman in Fall 2007 were higher than in 2006.

Q: Why are admissions practices being separated from the admissions policy?

A: We are moving to rely more on the expertise of our professional admissions staff. As we move toward state-of-the-art admissions and enrollment management practices, the method by which we communicate to our prospective students, the manner in which we process admitted students and the practicalities of how individual admission decisions are made will evolve over time. There must be flexibility to adjust these from year to year.

Q: If the new policy had been in place this Fall, would it have changed the number of students admitted?

A: No, not significantly. However, it would have substantially changed how we communicated with these prospective students. We appear to have lost a number of students for Fall 2007 when they were "Admitted" to Ball State, yet were only "Conditionally Admitted" to IU East. If the new policy had been in effect, we may have been able to increase our enrollment through more positive communications with students.

Q: How can we adopt an admissions policy without knowing exactly how placement processes will be handled?

A: Discussions with faculty are underway about revising our placement processes. It is anticipated that these changes will be forthcoming in the next several months. However, recruitment is currently underway for Fall 2008, and we need to communicate with prospective students, counselors and parents. The admissions office should be enabled to act in an efficient and effective manner.