Historical Context

The College Board has a long history of collaborating with practitioners on best practices, legal guidelines, new and innovative approaches, and developing data-centric resources.

Brief review of key activities over the last three decades

- The Admissions Practices Series & Selective Admissions Series (1990-94)
  - A Taxonomy of Admissions Decision Making (1999)
- The Access & Diversity Collaborative (2004-)
  - Supreme Court Briefs (Fisher I, Fisher II) focused college deference in holistic review
  - Publications on best practices, playbooks and “course syllabi”
- Future Admissions Tools and Models Project (2015-)
  - Practitioner Conferences and Agenda Setting (2015)
  - Data Gathering, Research, Tool Development (2016)
  - Operational Pilots (2017)
Future Admissions Tools and Models Project

"Help us identify a student's personal qualities that contribute to success and help us to meet our mission"
- Leadership
- Persistence
- Community Involvement

"Help us better assess and incorporate course rigor and GPA"
- High School GPA
- Course Pattern
- Standardized Tests
- Peer Achievement and Class Rank

"Help us ensure we are designing and implementing our process fairly and consistently, and that we are leveraging new technology and techniques to improve efficiency"
- Targeting depth & intensity of individualized review
- Evaluating outcomes and efficacy
- Improving efficiency through technology

"Help us identify new ways to measure and evaluate context"
- Adversity
- Opportunity
- Family & Neighborhood Environment
- SES/Resources
Guiding Framework for Decision Process

A Two Step Process

**Validate Admissibility**
Assess likelihood of an applicant succeeding academically

**Sort and Select**
Consider individual context, personal qualities, and institutional priorities

### Ability to Succeed
- How do colleges determine who is likely to be academically successful on their campus?
- What information is most relevant and most persuasive?
- Among a student's set of students' all of whom are likely to succeed, how do colleges determine who will get the opportunity to enroll?

### Ability to Benefit
- How can colleges identify students who have unrealized potential?
- What external obstacles impede student's educational progress?
- Should students with greater advantage be held to a higher standard?

### Ability to Contribute
- What personal qualities do colleges value (e.g., leadership, perseverance, ownership/locus-of-control)?
- What is the relationship near-term (classroom) and long-term societal contribution.
- How are personal qualities evaluated during the admission decision?
“We think about what a student has accomplished within the context of the opportunities and challenges he or she has faced”
University of Washington

• **Background:**
  - Statewide ban passed in 1998 on the consideration of race and ethnicity in admission
  - Enrollment works closely with faculty to determine admission policy and formulate approaches to maintain a diverse class

• **Importance of Context:**
  - Context is particularly relevant in assessment of academic rigor. Applicant coursework is assessed relative to the academic opportunities available in their school(s)
  - Allows UW to uphold and promote the value of rigor in general, but especially in high schools with modest academic opportunities.
Our approach

Data-Driven Measures

- Neighborhood Environment
  - Crime Intensity
  - Housing Values
  - Rent as a % of Income

- High School Environment
  - Income
  - % Vacant
  - College Enroll. Risk
  - Curricular Rigor
  - % F/R Lunch
  - AP Opportunity

Research-Based Practices

- Conduct new research to guide best practice use of context information within the admissions process and workflow

- Collaboration with Mike Bastedo (Univ of Michigan)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>2016</th>
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Dashboard Overview

1. HS Demographics and Opportunity
   - Enter Student ID
   - Name: [Name]
   - HS Code: [Code]
   - High School: [School]
   - State: [State]
   - Gender: [Gender]
   - Race: [Race]
   - SATV: [Score]
   - SATM: [Score]
   - SATW: [Score]
   - SAT1600: [Score]

   Central High School
   - Typical Senior Class Size: [Size]
   - Number of Unique AP Tests Administered: [Number]
   - Percent of Graduates Taking 1 or More AP: [Percent]
   - HS SAT Percentiles:
     - 25th: [Percent]
     - 50th: [Percent]
     - 75th: [Percent]
   - % of Students in Schools with 2-6 AP: [Percent]
   - Average AP Score: [Score]

   Neighborhood Rankings
   - Undermatch Risk: [Risk]
   - Crime Risk: [Risk]
   - Family Stability: [Risk]
   - Educational Attainment: [Risk]
   - Housing Stability: [Risk]
   - Median family Income: [Income]
   - Overall NH Adversity: [Adversity]

   Scores Relative to Neighborhoods of Similar Adversity
   - Student’s SAT: [Score]
   - SAT 25% for NH Adversity: [Score]
   - SAT 50% for NH Adversity: [Score]
   - SAT 75% for NH Adversity: [Score]

   Scores Relative to High Schools of Similar Adversity
   - Student’s SAT: [Score]
   - SAT 25% for HS Adversity: [Score]
   - SAT 50% for HS Adversity: [Score]
   - SAT 75% for HS Adversity: [Score]

2. SAT Scores in Context
   - SATV: [Score]
   - SATM: [Score]
   - SATW: [Score]
   - SAT1600: [Score]

3. Neighborhood Rankings
   - Undermatch Risk: [Risk]
   - Crime Risk: [Risk]
   - Family Stability: [Risk]
   - Educational Attainment: [Risk]
   - Housing Stability: [Risk]
   - Median family Income: [Income]
   - Overall NH Adversity: [Adversity]

4. HS Rankings
   - Undermatch Risk: [Risk]
   - Family Stability: [Risk]
   - Educational Attainment: [Risk]
   - Housing Stability: [Risk]
   - Median family Income: [Income]
   - Overall HS Adversity: [Adversity]
Dashboard -- Scores in Context

Test Scores in Student’s High School

- Student’s SAT Comp: 1360
- High School 25%: 870
- High School 50%: 990
- High School 75%: 1120

Test Scores in Neighborhoods of Similar Adversity

- Student’s SAT: 1360
- SAT 25% for NH Adversity: 1027
- SAT 50% for NH Adversity: 1064
- SAT 75% for NH Adversity: 1141
- Freshman SAT of Enrolled College:

AP Opportunity in Student’s High School

- Number of Unique AP Tests Administered: 12
- Percent of Graduates Taking 1 or More AP: 14%
- Average Number of AP Tests Taken: 2.7
- Average AP Score: 2.1

High School

- Warren G Harding High School
- Trumbull County
- 1 Metro Unit

High School AP Opportunity

- Trumbull County AP Opportunity
Dashboard -- Neighborhood & HS Context

Neighborhood Context Rankings

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>College Enroll. Choice</td>
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<td>Crime Risk</td>
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<td>Family Characteristics</td>
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<td>Housing Stability</td>
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<td>Median family income</td>
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<td>Overall NH Adversity</td>
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High School Context Rankings

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<tr>
<td>Family Characteristics</td>
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<td>Median family income</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall HS Adversity</td>
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Admissions

• Experimental pilots at 2 institutions

• Admissions officers were asked to reread a set of applications from the 2016-17 admissions cycle, selected to be representative and, with a special focus on “on the bubble” applications. Decisions were analyze and users we surveyed on the value of the tool

• At the holistic admissions college, the tool resulted in an increase in the number of admitted students from more adverse contexts

• Participants gave the tool very strong ratings:
  • 90% agreed that the Environmental Dashboard made it easier to incorporate contextual information, and enabled them to make better decisions;
  • 85% said it was most useful for low-SES students

Scholarships

• Partnering with the Jack Kent Cooke foundation to analyze the applicability and value of context scores to scholarship identification and decision-making
Common Questions

- **Affirmative use by colleges.** Could admissions offices make decisions that would negatively impact students that have high levels of adversity?

- **Perceptions of Students and Parents.** Would students be troubled to know that institutions are evaluating them based on information they did not directly submit?

- **Outcomes.** How do students with higher levels of adversity fare once in college relative to their predicted performance?
Thank you!

- Phase II pilots with multiple institutions
  - Operational use
  - Phase 2 experiments
  - Focus groups

- Continued work with Jack Kent Cooke Foundation and other higher education organizations