

# **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

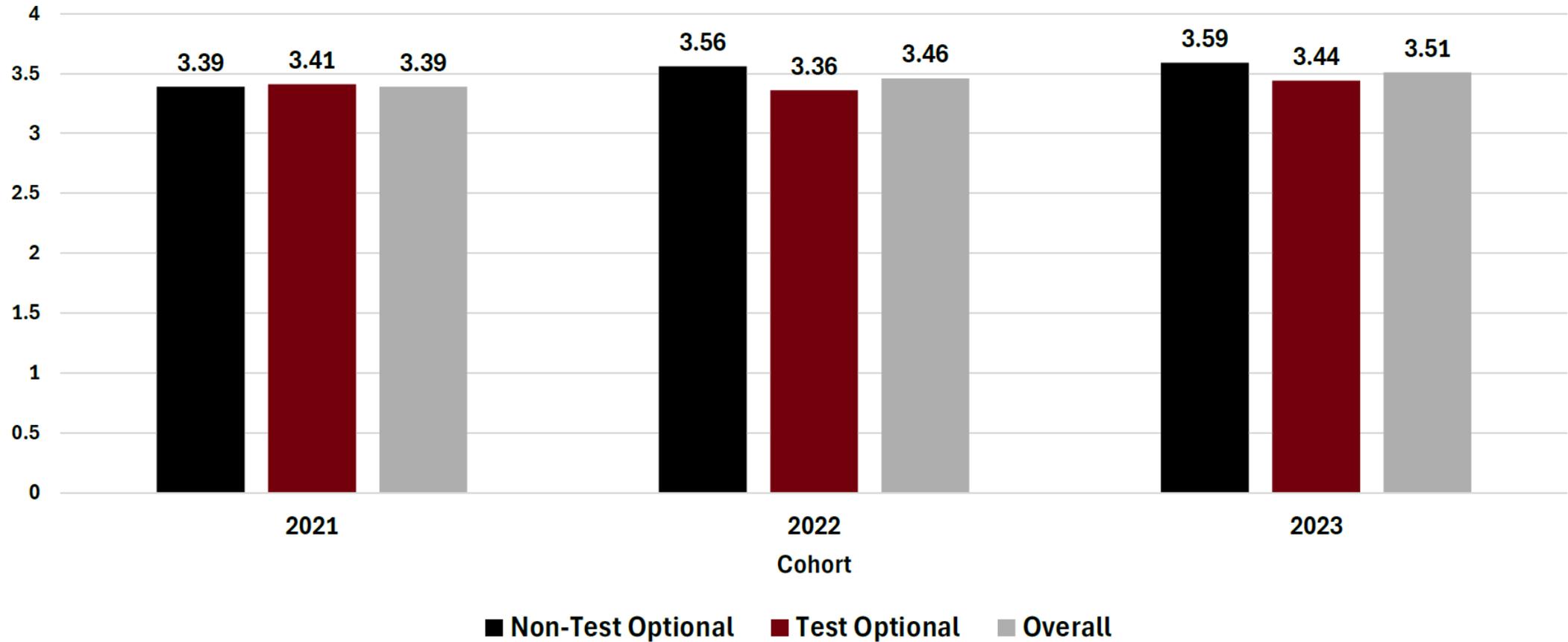
University of Kansas  
University of Maryland-College Park  
University of Miami  
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor  
University of Minnesota-Twin Cities  
University of Missouri-Columbia  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
University of Notre Dame  
University of Oregon  
University of Pennsylvania  
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
<b>Freshman Class</b>	<b>6,167</b>	<b>6,574</b>	<b>7,316</b>	<b>7,272</b>
% Test Optional	32%	47%	50%	55%
<b>SC Residents</b>	<b>3,108</b>	<b>3,356</b>	<b>3,887</b>	<b>3,807</b>
% Test Optional	31%	46%	46%	52%
<b>Non-Residents</b>	<b>3,060</b>	<b>3,218</b>	<b>3,429</b>	<b>3,465</b>
% Test Optional	34%	48%	55%	58%

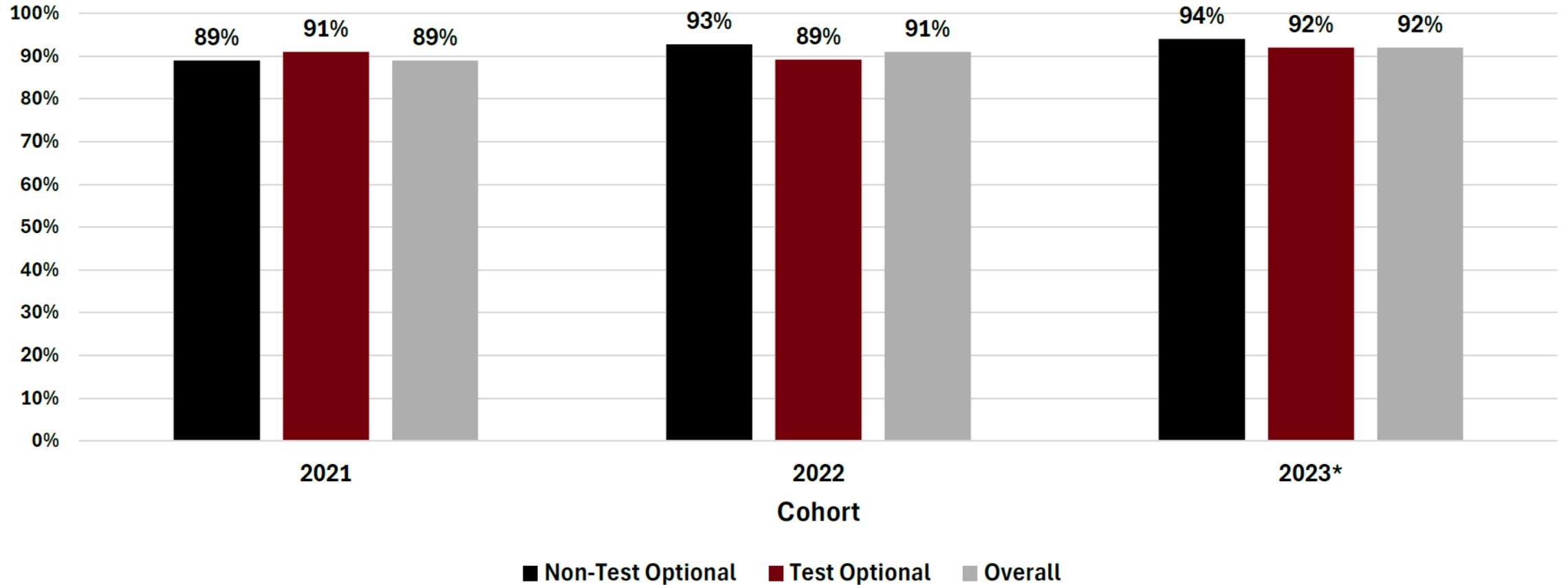


# AVERAGE FIRST-YEAR GPA



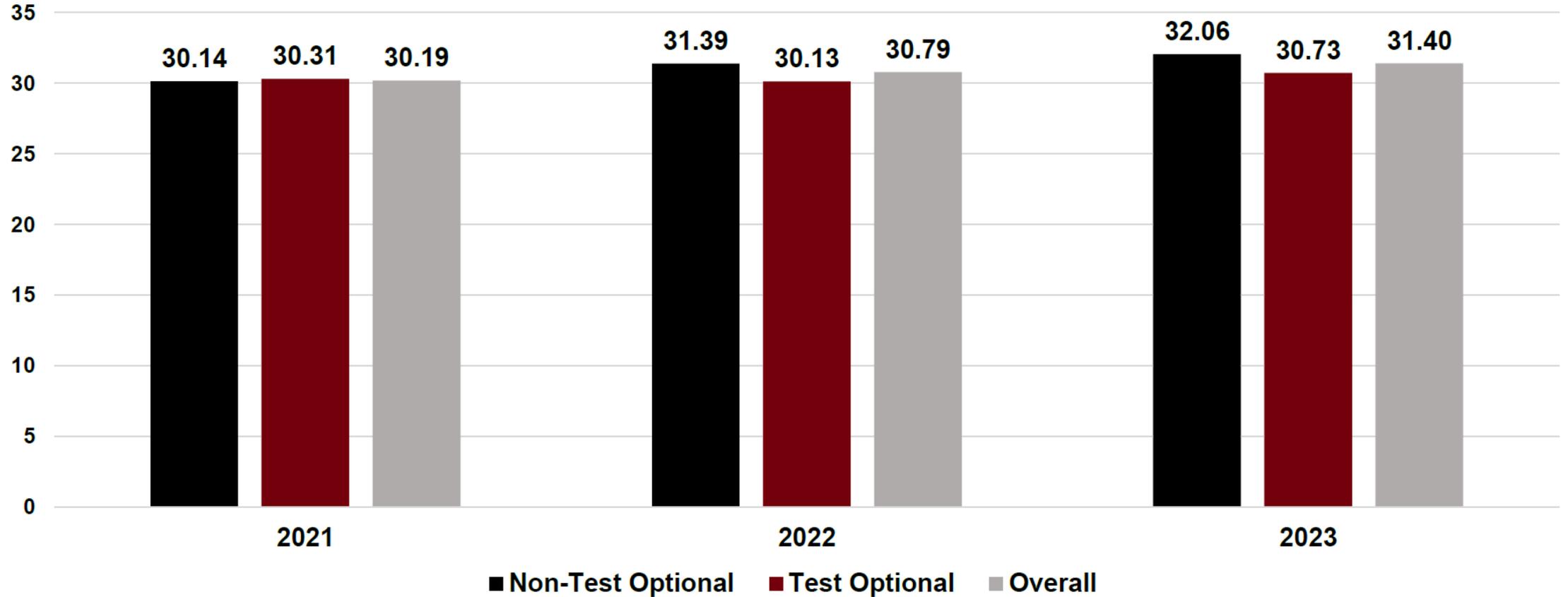
Source: Enrollment Data Analytics

# 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

