

The University of California's New Rules on Testing

The high school class of 2012, and subsequent classes, will be considered for admission to the University of California based on revised criteria. Eligibility in the local context will be expanded to encompass the top 9% of each California high school's rising senior class, which will guarantee most Northgate students in the top 10% of the class (at the end of six semesters) admission to the University, but not necessarily to an applicant's preferred campuses. A new index will determine if a student with a 3.0 or higher weighted GPA, but not identified as being in the top 9% of the class, will be guaranteed admission to the University of California. Visit www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/undergrad_adm/paths_to_adm/freshman2012/ to review the new index.

SAT Subject Tests will no longer be required, although they will be strongly recommended for students applying to certain majors. Students majoring in engineering and science programs throughout the UC system will want students to take Subject Tests in a science discipline and in mathematics (the Math 2 test, specifically).

Tenth graders enrolled in Honors Chemistry should consider taking the Chemistry Subject Test in June, and those enrolled in AP Biology, Honors Physics, and/or Pre-Calculus next year should consider taking the Biology or Physics and Math 2 Subject Tests in June, 2011. Register before the end of April at www.collegeboard.com. Any student can submit SAT Subject Test results to the University of California, however, and the scores will be utilized in much the same way as Advanced Placement exam results. Students not planning to take a given AP exam, should take the SAT Subject Test, to provide the University of California with evidence of their mastery of that subject, in lieu of AP results.

It is important to take the PSAT as a junior. Although a relatively small percentage of Northgate juniors will qualify for National Merit and College Board sponsored scholarship and recognition programs, the PSAT costs half as much as the SAT Reasoning Test, and provides a wealth of free diagnostic information and test preparation services. Plan on signing up for *My College Quick Start*, which provides access to an electronic version of the student's score report, answer explanations, and free, personalized SAT preparation. Juniors should focus on the PSAT in the fall, and hold off on taking the SAT until later in the school year. The highest scorers on the SAT Reasoning Test are students who have completed the most science and foreign language courses during high school (even though there are no questions pertaining to these subjects on the SAT Reasoning Test). Attempting to "get the testing piece over with" early in a student's high school career may prove to be counterproductive. The PSAT is always given on the third Saturday in October, and registration is through the high school Treasurers Office in late September/early October.

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