



III-4.00 - POLICY ON UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS

(Approved by the Board of Regents, January 11, 1990; Amended October 4, 1996; Amended October 5, 2001; Amended June 17, 2011; Amended October 20, 2017; Amended June 17, 2022)

Admission to the constituent institutions of the University System of Maryland (USM) shall be determined without unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity and expression, age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, genetic information, veteran’s status, or other legally protected characteristic. The undergraduate student population of USM institutions should draw from all areas of the State and reflect the diversity of the State's population. This Policy sets forth the minimum criteria for admission to a USM institution. Each institution shall publish its own decision criteria, which may be more rigorous than the minimum criteria and must be consistent with State and federal laws.

I. ADMISSION OF FIRST YEAR INCOMING STUDENTS

A. Minimum Qualifications for Regular Admission

1. High school diploma or its equivalent (See exception in paragraph B.)

2. Grade point average

A high school grade point average equivalent to a C or better is required for admission of full-time and part-time first year incoming students who have graduated from high school within three years of intended enrollment.

3. Test score

USM institutions may require students to submit a score on a nationally standardized examination such as the SAT or ACT, or they may make the examination optional. Policies regarding SAT and ACT requirements will vary among institutions. Students must follow the admission requirements of the institution to which they are applying.

4. Minimum core content proficiency requirements

In addition to the above stated requirements, high school seniors or graduates must demonstrate their readiness for college-level work by achievement at the appropriate level of competencies in the core content associated with the array of courses that follows:

Subject	Year Courses
English	4

Subject	Year Courses
<p>Biological and Physical Sciences</p> <p>The courses completed must be in at least two different subject areas. Two of the three courses must include a laboratory experience. For students interested in Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM) related careers (such as medicine, engineering, the sciences, veterinary medicine, physical therapy, etc.), four years of science are recommended in three different science areas, with three laboratory experiences.</p>	3
<p>Social Science/History</p>	3
<p>Mathematics</p> <p>The courses completed must include Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II. Students who complete Algebra II prior to their final year must complete the four-year mathematics requirement by taking a course or courses that utilize non-trivial algebra.¹</p>	4
<p>Language other than English or in some instances, Advanced Technology Education electives.</p> <p>The two language courses must be in the same language (American Sign Language is among the languages accepted). Advanced Technology Education electives are acceptable in lieu of language courses at some institutions. Students should consult the admissions office of the institution they are seeking to attend to determine if Advanced Technology Education electives are accepted in fulfillment of this requirement.</p>	2

5. Other criteria

Each institution shall publish other criteria for admission that may include (a) rigor of the high school curriculum as demonstrated by advanced level coursework, (b) academic electives, (c) performance on high school assessments, (d) trends in performance, (e) citizenship and leadership, (f) special talents, and (g) personal circumstances.

¹ Nontrivial algebra means that the level of mathematical concepts and problems used in the course are at least as sophisticated as those that relate to problems appearing in the Achieve ADP Algebra II test. Examples of courses meeting this requirement include Algebra II, Trigonometry, Pre-calculus, Calculus and successor courses, Statistics, and College Algebra. An important feature of any such course is that it utilizes algebra in a substantive way, so the student does not lose the algebraic and numerical skills achieved in earlier courses.

B. Early Admission

Early admission may be granted to a high school student who has demonstrated superior scholarship, as evidenced by the student's academic record or performance on standardized entrance examinations. The expectation is that the student will earn a high school diploma or equivalent. Each institution that offers early admission shall publish its procedures.

C. Admission of Students from Non-accredited/Non-approved High Schools

First year incoming applicants for admission who are graduates of non-accredited/non-approved high schools will be reviewed individually, with consideration given to factors such as scores on nationally standardized tests, high school course content, performance in high school academic courses, the performance of previous students with similar academic preparation, and other appropriate criteria as developed by each institution.

D. Admission of Students with Non-U.S. Records

Students who have completed part or all of their secondary and/or post-secondary education in a non-U.S. educational system may be admitted using the guidelines of the following educational associations:

- (1) Association of International Educators (NAFSA)
- (2) American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)
- (3) National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC)

Each USM institution will establish procedures to ensure consistency in admission practices for its applicants with academic records from non-U.S. institutions.

E. Admission of Home-Schooled Students

All home-schooled students must demonstrate compliance with state and local education regulations. Demonstration of the competencies outlined in the USM requirements for admission may be combined with scores on a nationally standardized examination such as ACT or SAT to satisfy the minimum qualifications for admission. For Maryland students, the home instruction program must comply with COMAR 13A.10.01.01.

F. Admission of Students with Proficiency-Based Standards, Standardized Examinations, or Equivalency Diplomas

Students who have graduated from regionally accredited secondary institutions with proficiency-based standards will be considered individually. Each secondary institution with proficiency-based standards will be asked to provide documentation of the student's achievement in secondary school.

Admission may be granted to students who have been awarded a high school equivalency diploma by passing a standardized evaluation, such as the General Educational Development (GED) test or the External Diploma Program (EDP). Each USM institution will establish procedures to ensure consistency in admission practices for its applicants presenting external evaluations.

- G. Admission of Students Who Have Been Out of School More Than Three Years Students who have earned a high school diploma (or equivalent) with a minimum GPA equivalent to a C or better, but who are more than three years beyond high school enrollment, may be admitted without meeting the usual criteria for admission if the institution determines that the applicant has the potential for successful college work. This determination may be made by evaluation of successful work experiences, by portfolio assessment, and/or by placement testing.
- H. Special Program Requirements
With the approval of the president, an institution may establish additional requirements for admission to specified academic programs.
- I. Admission to Two Institutions
USM institutions that have established joint degree or cooperative programs with other institutions will outline procedures to permit students to be admitted simultaneously to two institutions to earn the targeted degree(s).
- J. Exceptions
Each institution may admit, to a maximum of 15 percent of its entering first year incoming class, students who do not meet the minimum qualifications outlined in Section I.A of this Policy but who show potential for success in postsecondary education. Each institution shall develop written guidelines, in accordance with this Policy, concerning individual admission.

For those instances in which applicants have not completed all of the required courses for admission, each institution shall establish a method of assessment by which a student can demonstrate competence equivalent to having passed a required high school course to qualify for admission.

II. ADMISSION OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES WITH ADVANCED STANDING

This section applies to students who have earned college-level semester hours of credit through standardized testing, concurrent/dual enrollment programs, or early or middle college (programs in which students earn the associate degree concurrently with the high school diploma).

Each institution shall develop an admission policy that ensures:

- A. reasonable consideration is given to the successful completion of college-level coursework prior to high school graduation, and that this achievement is recognized as a demonstration of students' likelihood for continued success in university-level study; and
- B. students who have earned college-level coursework at Maryland public institutions of higher education while concurrently enrolled in high school are evaluated in accordance with Section III of this Policy and COMAR 13B.06.01.02-1 including, but not limited to, the admission of students with 60 or more earned college credits and at least a 2.0 grade point average.

III. ADMISSION OF TRANSFER STUDENTS

This section applies to students who have earned at least twelve or more semester hours of credit that are applicable for credit at the receiving institution. Each institution shall publish its own decision criteria that may be more rigorous than the System-wide minima stated below.

A. Minimum Requirements

- (1) All transfer students must have a cumulative GPA of at least a 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, for all attempted college-level work.
- (2) Students who have completed 29 or fewer credits are also required to meet minimum qualifications as set forth in Section I.
- (3) Students transferring from institutions that are not regionally accredited shall demonstrate proficiencies comparable with Sections III.A.1 and 2.

B. Maryland Public Institutions of Higher Education

- (1) Students who have completed an associate's degree or who have completed 60 or more semester hours of credit with a minimum GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale or its equivalent from public institutions of higher education in Maryland may not be denied direct transfer to a USM institution, except in cases where the number of applicants exceeds the number who can be accommodated or where admission to programs require higher performance standards. Admission decisions in those cases shall be based on criteria that provide fair and equal treatment for native and transfer students in accordance with COMAR 13B.06.01.02-1.
- (2) Students applying to transfer from public institutions of higher education in Maryland who have not completed an associate's degree or who have completed fewer than 60 semester hours of credit shall be considered qualified to be admitted regardless of the number of credit hours earned if the student satisfied the admission criteria of the USM institution as a high school senior and attained at least a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale or its equivalent. In cases where the number of applicants exceeds the number who can be accommodated, or where admission to programs requires higher performance standards, admissions decisions shall be based on criteria that provide fair and equal treatment for native and transfer students in accordance with COMAR 13B.06.01.02-1.

C. Admission to Two Institutions

To facilitate the enrollment of transfer students and to enhance relationships with community colleges, USM institutions are strongly encouraged to establish agreements with community colleges to provide for dual admission of students who first matriculate at the community college. The agreements shall stipulate requirements for eligibility, conditions for maintaining good academic standing, curricular requirements, and credit/grade transfer acceptance.

D. Providing Transfer Information

Each USM institution shall participate in the system-wide computerized information system to assist prospective transfer students. In cooperation with Maryland community colleges, programs shall be developed that represent the lower division course work required for completion of a baccalaureate degree at that institution. Information about such recommended

transfer programs, updated on a regular basis, shall be available to potential transfer students to serve as a basis for advisement and student planning. Students will be encouraged to seek advisement on a regular basis.

E. Exceptions

At the discretion of the receiving institution, transfer students with special circumstances may be admitted on the basis of criteria other than prior academic performance. Up to 15 percent of the institution's entering transfer cohort may comprise such exceptions.

IV. ADMISSION OF SECOND BACCALAUREATE STUDENTS

Each institution shall publish procedures for admission of students seeking a second baccalaureate degree.

V. ADMISSION OF NON-DEGREE STUDENTS

A. Minimum Requirements

Procedures for admitting non-degree students shall be established by each institution. Criteria for changing from non-degree to degree status must be equivalent to or exceed the minimum requirements set forth in Sections III.A.1 and 2 for students transferring between Maryland public institutions.

B. Concurrent Enrollment

Concurrent enrollment may be granted to a high school student who has demonstrated superior scholarship, as evidenced by the student's academic record or performance on standardized entrance examinations. Each institution may allow such students to enroll in its undergraduate classes concurrently with their enrollment in high school.

VI. ADMISSION OF OUT-OF-STATE STUDENTS TO UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

Each institution may establish, for out-of-state students, standards that are higher than the undergraduate admission standards for in-state students. If a choice must be made between applicants of roughly comparable ability and promise, preference will be given to the Maryland resident.

Excluding University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC) students and all students enrolled exclusively in distance education programs, the number of out-of-state undergraduate students in any institution shall not exceed 30 percent of its total undergraduate student body.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION

A. Publication of Standards

The USM shall publish the content, competencies, achievement levels, and skills required for success in college. Each institution shall publish its admission standards in its catalog, including on its institutional website, and shall submit them to the USM Office for information.

B. Maintenance of Records

Each USM institution shall maintain in each enrolled student's record evidence that minimum criteria for admission have been met. In those instances when a student has been admitted under exceptions to existing institutional policies, the institution shall retain an explanation of those exceptions and a record of the student's academic success in collegiate credit-bearing courses. The record shall contain a note as to the specific requirements for which the exception was made, for example, minimum GPA, lack of standardized test scores, or demonstration of competency in the required courses.

C. Application Fee

Each USM constituent institution in the University System of Maryland may assess a non-refundable admission application fee for each applicant unless the fee is waived in accordance with institutional policy.