



For Immediate Release: April 2, 2020

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Statement on the University of California's Changes to Admissions Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic

We applaud University of California (UC) President Janet Napolitano, the Regents and faculty leaders for their [decision to ease admissions requirements](#) for 2021 applicants. Their rapid response will ensure both admitted and prospective students have the opportunity to attend the UC despite the disruption to education this pandemic has caused.

The COVID-19 crisis has exposed and exacerbated underlying inequities in our K-12 educational systems. Many students are struggling with accessing basic technology and internet service to engage in online learning. First-generation students are unable to access the high-touch counseling and guidance they need to navigate their college admissions decisions if they are seniors or the college application process if they are juniors. More and more students are dealing with the stress and realities of job loss and illness in their families and may be realizing that their financial aid offers are no longer sufficient. Learning from home may pose a number of new challenges that have a negative impact on grades, jeopardizing grade point averages. Without intervention, these challenges could impact a student's decision to enroll this fall or—for juniors in high school—to apply to the UC. UC's bold move to ease admission requirements, however, will ensure all students have their rightful spot at the state's premier research institution.

"The UC's ability to pivot from business as usual to a more equitable admissions process that serves admitted and future students who could be left behind during this crisis is exemplary for the nation and can be a model for future changes to admissions policy. From extending deadlines, easing grade requirements, to making the SAT and ACT optional, the UC is boldly stepping up to say it can and will change rapidly to ensure its doors of opportunity remain open," said Michele Siqueiros, president of the Campaign for College Opportunity.

While the leadership of the UC has been exemplary, there is a need for a more coordinated response from our public and private higher education systems statewide and nationally. All colleges and universities should be extending the deadline for students to accept admission offers to at least June 1st, redesigning financial aid packages for admitted students if their financial situations have changed, easing grade requirements, making the SAT and ACT optional and postponing graduation ceremonies for the Class of 2020.

"As the first one in my family to go to college, one of the greatest days of my life was when I walked across the graduation stage and received my college diploma. After years of hard work, our graduating seniors deserve the opportunity to walk across that stage with their families and friends cheering them on. Let's honor the achievements of the Class of 2020 by postponing

graduation ceremonies rather than cancelling or making them virtual. They deserve it and we will all need an opportunity to celebrate once this pandemic is over,” concluded Siqueiros.

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About Campaign for College Opportunity:

The Campaign for College Opportunity is a California non-profit bipartisan policy and research organization focused on a single mission: to ensure all Californians have an equal opportunity to attend and succeed in college in order to build a vibrant workforce, economy and democracy. For more information, visit www.CollegeCampaign.org/ [Facebook.com/CollegeCampaign](https://www.facebook.com/CollegeCampaign) or follow [@CollegeOpp](https://twitter.com/CollegeOpp).