

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS AGENDA ITEMS
September 2024

ACT ON KU REQUEST TO CHANGE QUALIFIED ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Background

In September of 2019, the Board approved changes to Qualified Admission criteria, removing the pre-college curriculum requirement and the option of ranking in the top one-third of the class, and adding the option for guaranteed admission with differential cumulative high school GPA depending on the Regents institution. KU still required a test score for all pathways. During the COVID-19 pandemic, KU exercised the option to refer certain applicants to a committee for holistic review (K.A.R. 88-29b-5 and 88-29b-7) with the shutdown of standardized testing sites.

For Summer 2022 admission, the Board approved changes to KU's freshmen guaranteed admission criteria to require a 21+ ACT with a minimum 2.0 high school GPA, or a minimum 3.25 high school GPA. Holistic review remains available for applicants not meeting minimum criteria.

Since this time KU has closely monitored the retention and progression outcomes of students. Freshmen admitted under the 2.0 high school GPA and 21+ ACT pathway, despite intentional student success initiatives, do not retain at the same level as their peers. However, KU has found that students admitted under holistic review with a 3.0-3.24 high school GPA regardless of test score have positive retention outcomes, as do students admitted with a minimum 3.25 high school GPA. Finally, KU also needs flexibility to shape incoming cohorts of freshmen due to instructional and housing constraints, so it is requesting an application deadline for guaranteed admission of February 1st, regardless of high school GPA or test score.

Proposed Requirements

Currently, KU offers two guaranteed admission options for freshmen:

- 3) 21+ ACT and a minimum 2.0 high school GPA or
- 4) minimum 3.25 high school GPA¹ regardless of test score.

Both options also require that a student achieve at least a 2.0 GPA on any transferable college course work taken while in high school.

KU proposes the following changes for guaranteed admission options for freshmen, effective for Fall 2026 applicants:

- 1) 24+ ACT and a minimum 2.5 high school GPA or
- 2) minimum 3.0 high school GPA² regardless of test score.
- 3) Must submit an application by February 1st.

The requirement of a 2.0 GPA on transferable college courses taken while in high school work remains.

Additional Rationale

- Most institutions in the Midwest with high or very-high research activity utilize a 3.0 minimum GPA for admission.
- Expanding the GPA-based admission pathway to students with a cumulative high school GPA of 3.0-3.241 provides increased access for qualified high school students.
- GPA-based admission and merit scholarships have contributed to considerable enrollment growth at KU. Studies at KU and nationally continue to demonstrate that high school GPA is a far better predictor of college outcomes than standardized test score.
- Students that do not meet qualified admission will still go through a holistic committee review. These processes have been refined to identify students that are more likely to have positive retention and graduation outcomes.

² Accredited high schools only

