



SAT and ACT Trends in Higher Education

Prepared for Bright Future University

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SAT and ACT trends in higher education

- According to Inside Higher Ed, starting in 2021, the University of California system has become test-optional
- Prior to COVID-19 pandemic, 1,040 higher ed institutions were optional and were around 1,700 during the fall 2021 semester



Bright Future University's research questions

- Are the SAT/ACT tests still relevant among the U.S population?
- Should BFU follow the trend and become a test optional school to provide easier access to higher education for underserved communities
 - What proportion of the U.S. test-takers take the SAT/ACT?
 - What is the relationship between SAT scores and:
 - First year, full-time student retention
 - Completion rates for full-time, first_time students at 4-yr institutions
 - Net revenues per FTE equivalent student



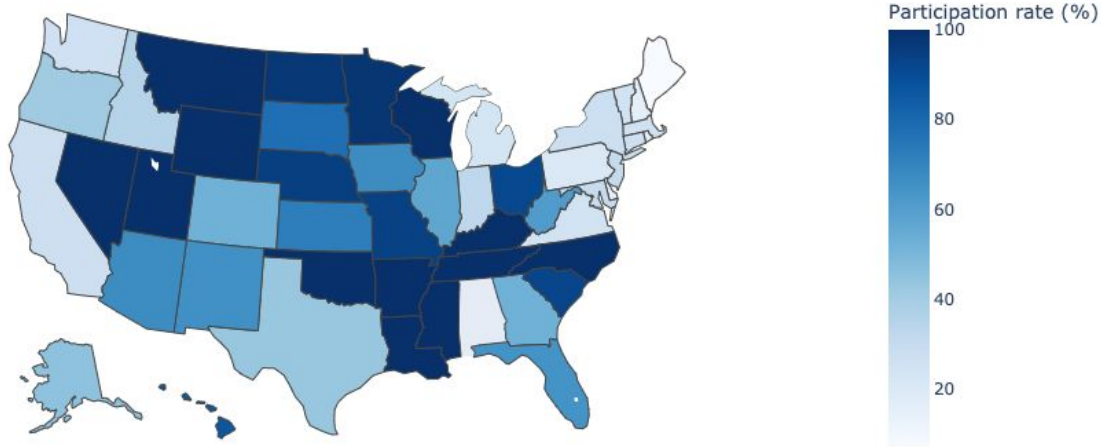
Data Sources

- College Board:
 - Aggregate averages of test participation rates and test scores by state
- College Scorecard:
 - Institutional characteristics data for institutions that award at least a bachelor's degree



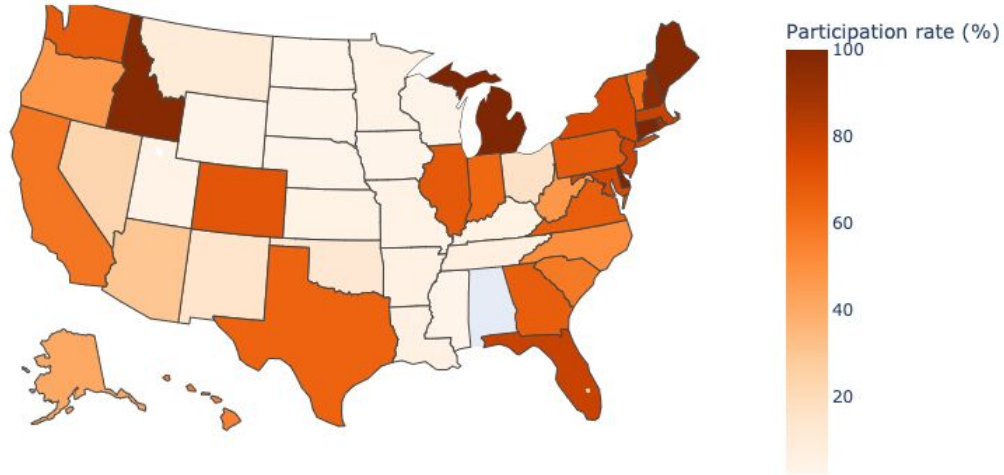
Are the SAT/ACT still relevant?

ACT average participation rate between 2017 and 2019

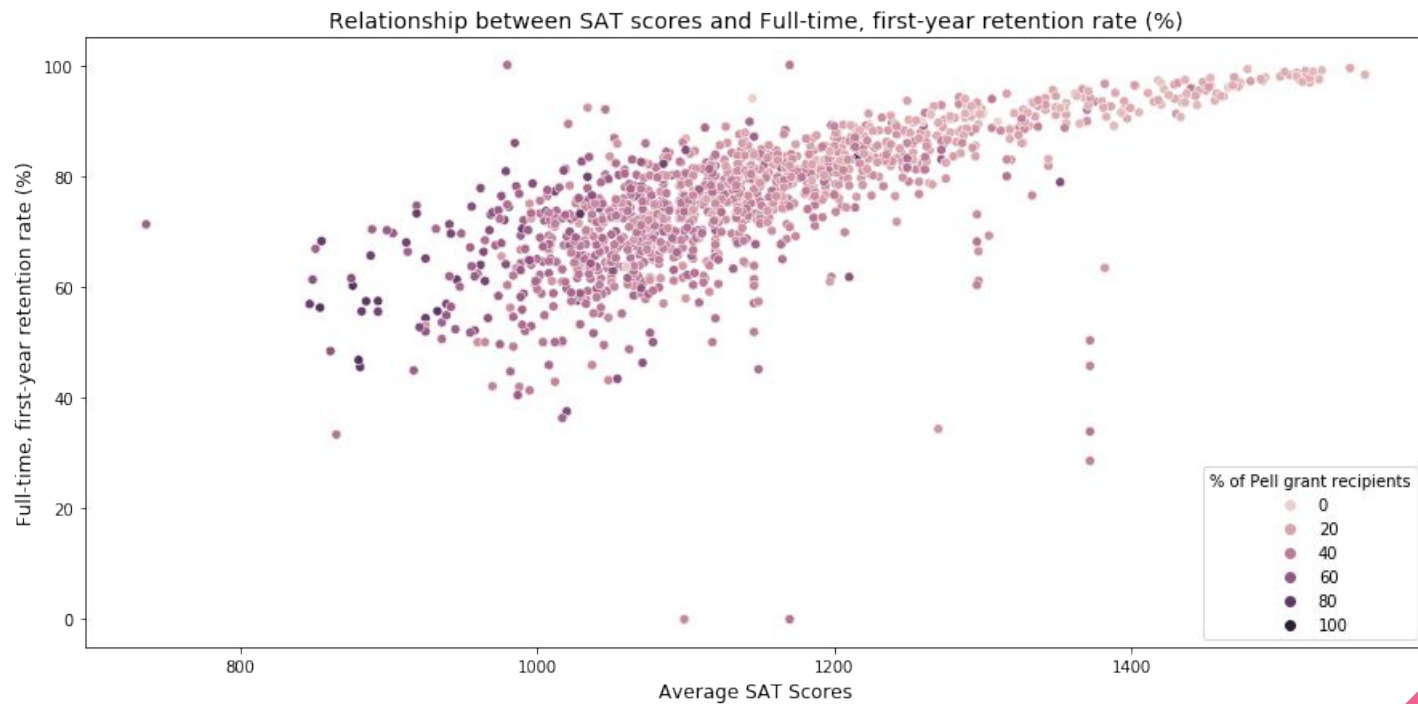


Are the SAT/ACT still relevant?

SAT average participation rate between 2017 and 2019

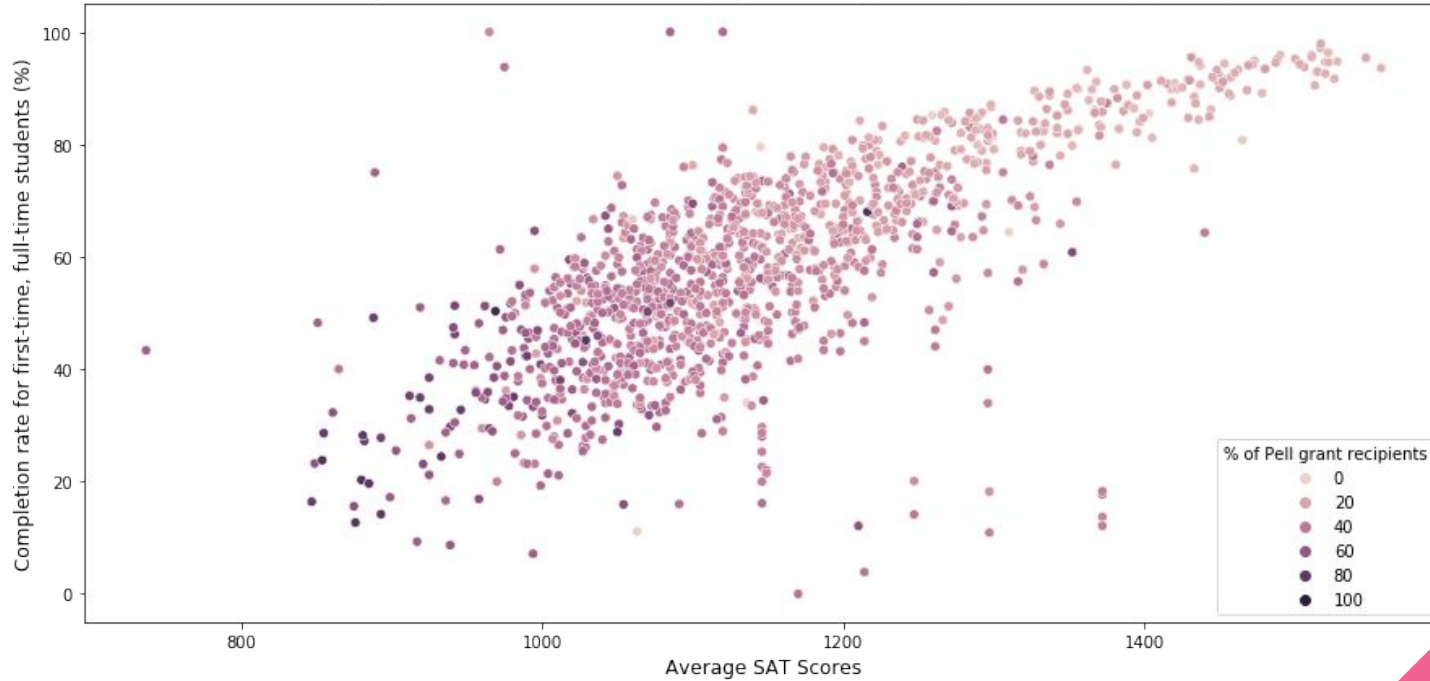


SAT and first-year retention



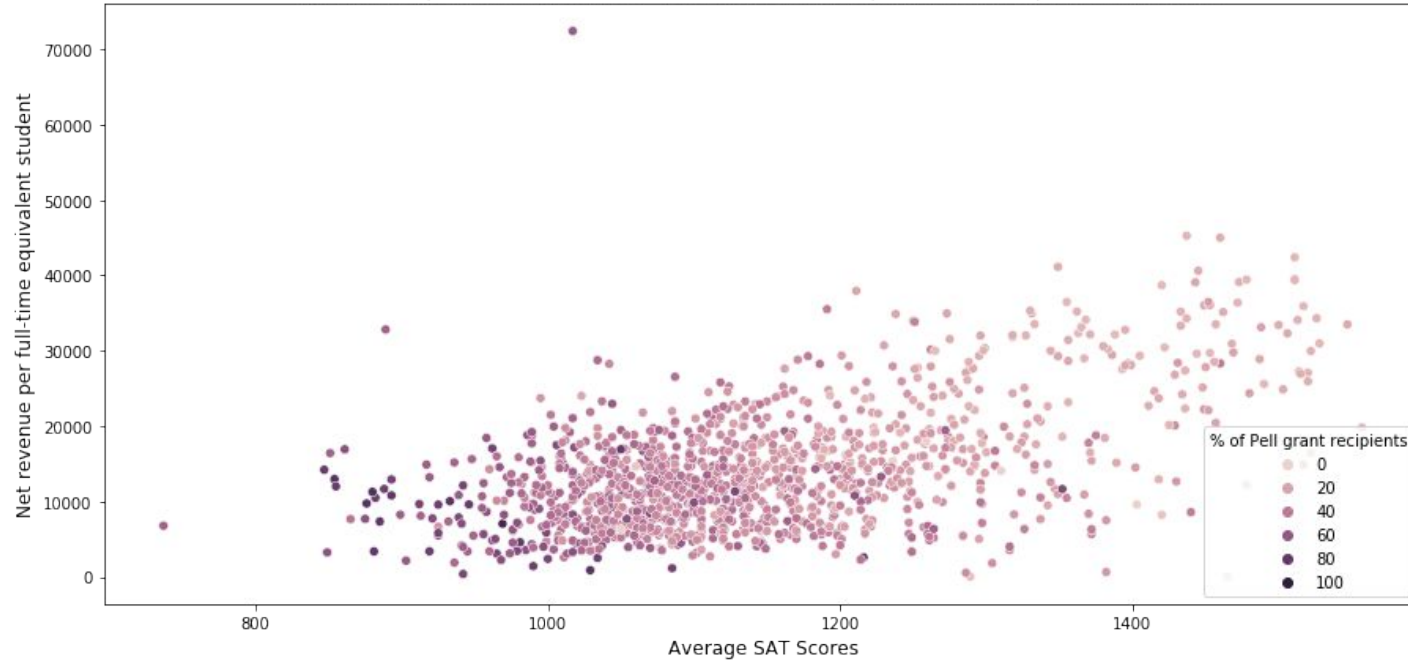
SAT and completion rates

Relationship between SAT scores and Completion rate for first-time, full-time students (%)

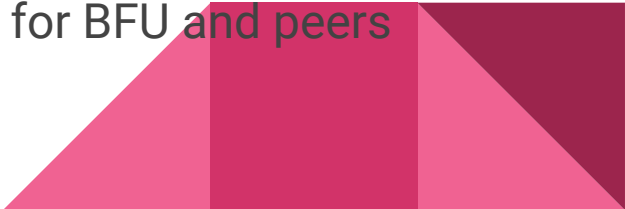


SAT and net revenues per student

Relationship between SAT scores and Net revenue per full-time equivalent student



Conclusions and recommendations

- The SAT and ACT are still very popular academic aptitude tests in the U.S. population
 - There is a direct and strong correlation between SAT scores and important student outcomes.
 - However, BFU should consider additional criteria in admissions decisions to create more opportunities for youth with higher levels of financial need to earn a higher education degree
 - BFU should lead and create a community of practice with like-minded regional organizations to share experiences on this issue
 - Further study is needed to conduct this analysis only for BFU and peers
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Acknowledgements

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