

**CONTEXT MATTERS
IN HOLISTIC
ADMISSIONS AT
PUBLIC
INSTITUTIONS**

Presenters



Bryan Jue

**University of California,
Irvine**

Senior Director, Outreach



Kris Tesoro

**University of Michigan,
Ann Arbor**

**Regional Recruitment
Coordinator**

Agenda

Holistic Admission

Campus Approaches

Panel Discussion

Answer Your Questions

Understanding Holistic Review

“Individualized holistic review is a cornerstone of admissions among institutions with varying levels of selectivity. Despite the remarkable variability among institution types—with respect to mission, setting, and more—key points of effective practice continue to guide the field.”

– Understanding Holistic Review in Higher Education Admissions, College Board & Education Counsel, Arthur Coleman and Jamie Keith

Understanding Holistic Review in Higher Education Admissions

Guiding Principles and Model Illustrations

Arthur L. Coleman
Jamie Lewis Keith

University of California System

Holistic Review

- CA Prop 209 passed in 1996 and prohibits the consideration of an applicant's race and/or gender in individual admission decisions
- Comprehensive review was created in response to the shift in population applying and enrolling
- UC Application nine campuses and one set of requirements
 - No interviews, no recommendations, transcripts, *portfolios or research papers
- 13 Factors (removal of testing): These criteria include both quantitative and qualitative, academic and personal accomplishment
- Purpose of Personal Insight Questions (350)
- Additional comments: Academic and Personal (550)

University of Michigan

Holistic Review

- Individualized, holistic review process created in 2003 following *Grutter v. Bollinger* and *Gratz v. Bollinger* SCOTUS rulings
- Proposal 2 (Michigan 06-2) passed in 2006, prohibiting the consideration of race, color, sex, or religion in college admissions at publicly funded institutions
- Apply directly to one of ten U-M schools/colleges
- Secondary School Academic Performance
 - Grades, curriculum, test scores (if provided)
- Counselor and Teacher Recommendation
- Essays: Personal Statement, two supplemental (100-300/550 words)
- Awards/honors, involvement, leadership, service



Panel Discussion

Contextualizing Environment: Academic and Lived Experiences

Role of Majors

Resource Guide: Questions to Ask

Contextualizing Academic Factors

How does the application capture this information and how does this contribute to holistic admission?

Qualitative vs Quantitative

Role of School Profile

Curriculum, GPA & Test Scores

Out of State vs. In State



Contextualizing Lived Experiences

How can students shared their lived experiences? What kind of support helps with the contextualization within your application process?

Essays & Personal Insight Questions

Supplemental Questions

Recommendations

Beyond the Activities



Impact of Major Selection

Does major play a role in the Admissions or Selection process?

If students get to indicate more than one major on the application how does that impact the application?

What are the nuances with talent based majors?

Do all majors receive the same consideration?



Resource Guide: Questions to Ask Schools

What criteria does your school look at for Admissions?

How does your school support students beyond the classroom?

Does major play a role in the admissions process?

How do financial aid and scholarship opportunities vary for in-state vs out-of-state?

How much impact do extra-curricular activities, awards, programs and contextual information play into the review?



Questions?

Bryan Jue

University of California, Irvine

bjue@uci.edu

Kris Tesoro

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

ktesoro@umich.edu

Resources:

[UC Comprehensive Review](#)

[UC Quick Reference 2025](#)

[University of Michigan First-Year Selection Process](#)

[Understanding Holistic Review in Higher Education Admissions](#)
