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## Reality Check: College Acceptance Rates, Fall 2014

Here are the acceptance rates for the Class of 2018 (freshman starting fall 2014). Except where noted, the rates are overall acceptance rates, including both early admissions programs and regular decision applicants.

I use a variety of sources in compiling this list, including news reports, college announcements, and conversations with admissions officials. When the data comes from published news sources or announcements on the college's website, you may click on the college's name for additional information on fall 2014 acceptances (note: links are live as of March-April 2014). These articles will often include details about the admissions profile of admitted students. If you don't see a link, the data comes directly from admissions officers. For comparison purposes, you can find acceptance rates for fall 2013 [here](#).

What do these numbers mean? Simple. The most important colleges on a student's list are foundational "safe bets" where a student has an excellent choice of admission. Any college that accepts less than 25% of students is **never** a safety school for anyone, no matter how superb a student's GPA and test scores may be. Luckily, there are more than 2,400 excellent colleges and universities in the U.S. and most have more realistic acceptance rates. Some of these great schools are included on this list. You may also want to read [What Are Colleges Looking For?](#) and [How To Build A Realistic College List](#) for additional advice on building a realistic college list.

### Competitive Colleges: Acceptance rate over 50%

[DePauw University](#) (IN), 56%

[University of California Merced](#) (CA), overall admissions rate: 64%; California residents: 65.9%; out of state: 48.3%; international: 37.9%

[University of California Riverside](#) (CA), overall admissions rate: 56.7%; California residents: 57%; out of state: 62.5%; international: 50.6%

[University of California Santa Cruz](#) (CA), overall admissions rate: 56.9%; California residents: 53.6%; out of state: 85%; international: 68.8%

### Very Competitive Colleges: Acceptance rate 36 - 50%

[College of Holy Cross](#) (MA), 43% (approx.)

[Dickinson College](#) (PA), 48.1%

[North Carolina State University](#) (NC), 50%

[Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute](#) (NY), 37%

[Skidmore College](#) (NY), 37%

Smith College (MA), 40%

[University of California Davis](#) (CA), overall admissions rate: 40.6%; California residents: 44.5%; out of state: 56.6%; international: 45.6%

[University of California Irvine](#) (CA), overall admissions rate: 35.4%; California residents: 33%; out of state: 50.4%; international: 40.7%

[Whitman College](#) (WA), 39.9%

### Highly Competitive Colleges: Acceptance rate 26 - 35%

[Boston College](#) (MA), 34%

[Boston University](#) (MA), 34%

Colgate University (NY), 26%

[College of William and Mary](#) (VA), 32%

Georgia Tech (GA), 32%

Grinnell College (IA), 27%

Macalester College (MN), 33%

University of California San Diego (CA), overall admissions rate: 33.4%; California residents: 30.2%; out of state: 43.2%; international: 39.7%

University of California Santa Barbara (CA), overall admissions rate: 36.1%; California residents: 36.9%; out of state: 38%; international: 30.7%

University of Florida (FL), 34%

University of Virginia (VA), 28.9%

Wake Forest University (NC), 34%

### **Extremely Competitive Colleges: Acceptance rate 16 - 25%**

Bowdoin College (ME), 15%

Carleton College (MN), 23%

Davidson College (NC), 21%

Georgetown University (DC), 16.6%

Kenyon College (OH), 24.6%

Middlebury College (VT), 17.3%

Swarthmore College (PA), 17%

Tufts University (MA), 17%

University of California Berkeley (CA), Overall admit rate: 17.3%; California residents: 18.8%; out-of-state: 19.4%; international: 9.9%

University of California Los Angeles (CA), Overall admit rate: 18.2%; California residents: 16.3%; out of state: 26%; international: 17%

University of Southern California (CA), 17.9%

University of Notre Dame (IN), 21%

Vassar College (NY), 23%

Washington and Lee University (VA), 18%

Wesleyan University (CT), 23%

Williams College (MA), 18%

### **Most Competitive: Acceptance rate 5 to 15%**

**Note:** The colleges and universities highlighted in **red** *rejected* 90% or more of applicants in the regular decision round. All of these colleges in this category should be considered "extreme reaches" for even the most talented students.

Amherst College (MA), 13%

**Brown University (RI)**, 8.6%

**Columbia University (NY)**, 6.94%

Cooper Union (NY), 14.4%

Cornell University (NY), 14%

Dartmouth College (NH), 11.5%

[Duke University](#) (NC), 10.7%

[Harvard College](#) (MA), 5.9%

[Harvey Mudd College](#) (CA), 13%

[Johns Hopkins University](#) (MD), 13.7% regular decision, 33% early decision

[Massachusetts Institute of Technology](#) (MA), 7.7%

[Northwestern University](#) (IL), 12.9%

[Pomona College](#) (CA), 12.16%

[Princeton University](#) (NJ), 7.28%

[University of Chicago](#) (IL), 8%

[University of Pennsylvania](#) (PA), 9.9%

[Stanford University](#) (CA), 5.07%

[Yale University](#) (CT), 6.26%

**Sources:** College and university press releases, websites, and publications, published news articles, interviews with admissions representatives

**Colleges admissions and enrollment management representatives:** If you would like to add your institution's Class of 2017 acceptance rate statistics to this list, or wish to make an update to data, please [email me](#).

**About Carolyn Z. Lawrence:** Carolyn Z. Lawrence is a nationally-recognized educational consultant who assists students from around the world with college planning. She is available for media interviews on college admissions trends, the college application process, and college financial aid. [Contact Carolyn](#)

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