

## Test Optional Really Does Mean Test Optional

### From Tufts' Inside Admissions Blogs - JT Duck, Dean of Admissions

September 2020

---

In March, [we announced](#) that we would be going test-optional for the next three admissions cycles.

From our recent conversations with counselors, students, and family members, we've learned that there is some confusion about how institutions are practicing 'SAT and ACT test-optional' application review this year. As a result, there seems to be some mania about registering for the SAT or ACT. Students and parents are enduring countless registration attempts and disappointing cancellations, and sometimes driving or flying to different states, all in pursuit of the opportunity to take one of these tests. Please stop.

I can confirm that at Tufts University, test-optional REALLY does mean test-optional. Applicants are NOT advantaged for submitting test scores. The weight of our application review rests on the rigor of your curriculum, your performance in demanding classes, your curiosity and intellectual engagement, your community engagement, your ability to communicate ideas through your essays, your motivations and passions as demonstrated in your essays and activities, and your likelihood to contribute to this particular community. The focus you are putting on standardized testing in the midst of a global pandemic is likely detracting from your ability to create a competitive application in all of those other MUCH more important ways. Scores mean far less than students think they do.

Use your application to tell us who you are, what you've done, what drives you, and what you might bring to Tufts. That is what matters to us.

We look forward to hearing your voice in your application.