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## Benchmarks for Transition: Do St. Louis High Schools Promote Graduates That Can Make the Transition to Higher Education?

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

BENCHMARKS FOR TRANSITION: DO ST. LOUIS HIGH SCHOOLS PROMOTE  
GRADUATES THAT CAN MAKE THE TRANSITION TO HIGHER EDUCATION?

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS

PROGRAM IN CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY STUDIES

BY  
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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

AUGUST 2011

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## ABSTRACT

Are St. Louis area high schools designed to create graduates that are prepared to enter schools of higher education, or are their graduation requirements structured such that graduates even qualify for entrance to higher education institutions? This study is geared towards answering this question and will do so by comparing two lines of inquiry. First this study will analyze four sets of three randomly picked area high schools (three sets designated by per capita income and one set of private catholic schools). Information will be gathered concerning graduation requirements and how many Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate courses are available. The second line of inquiry will focus on schools of higher education and their requirements/expectations for prospective students. Three sets of four schools of higher education will be evaluated; four in-state public universities, four local private universities and four local community colleges. The information gathered from these schools will focus on academic requirements and extracurricular requirements. Once data is collected from both secondary schools and schools of higher education, these two images of high school graduates will be compared to find out if they are in balance, or at odds with one another.

## **Statement of Problem**

In his 2011 State of the Union address, President Obama (2011) pointed out that the state of education in the United States is unacceptable and there needs to be a focused effort on improving education in all aspects across the country. One of the areas that he specifically mentioned was getting students from high schools and into colleges and universities.

Think about it. Over the next 10 years, nearly half of all new jobs will require education that goes beyond a high school education. And yet, as many as a quarter of our students aren't even finishing high school. The quality of our math and science education lags behind many other nations. America has fallen to ninth in the proportion of young people with a college degree. And so the question is whether all of us -- as citizens, and as parents -- are willing to do what's necessary to give every child a chance to succeed. (Obama, 2011)

This thesis is dedicated to that idea and will focus on the transition of students from high schools to higher education. Specifically it will attempt to ascertain if St. Louis area high schools' policies and practices are at a standard that translates to the standards set by local universities and community college admissions requirements.

The process of transition will be brought into question, as well, in an attempt to see how these high schools and schools of higher education are cooperating to get students from high school and into higher education. President Obama continues, "When a child walks into a classroom, it should be a place of high expectations and high performance. But too many schools don't meet this test...Of course, the education race doesn't end with a high school diploma. To compete, higher education must be within the

reach of every American” (Obama, 2011). The goal for President Obama is simple: he wants the US to have the most college graduates in the world, and for that goal to be completed the standards of both high schools and higher education must match up and eventually rise together.

With the recent wave of standards for accountability set up in public education, brought on by policy in No Child Left Behind (NCLB), some have argued that “the standards movement has had some success in bringing about more challenging high school curriculum and higher level graduation requirements,” (Bailey, Hughes and Karp, 2002). The question of Bailey, Hughes and Karp’s research focuses on dual enrollment and the ways in which it may help prepare students for the transition from secondary to postsecondary education. They conclude that dual enrollment programs can be a good way to help prepare students for the transition to higher education, as well as raising academic standards in the high school, increasing lines of communication with colleges and high schools, and creating more standardized assessment strategies. With that said, these programs have the potential to do all that and more as long as they are utilized properly, and that is why dual enrollment programs will also be looked at as a criterion in this research.

On the topic of alignment discussed above, the National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE) (1982) felt that “...American colleges and universities are doing a fine job and are not facing any problems relevant to the concerns of the commission other than poorly prepared high school students.” This statement seems to give postsecondary institutions a pass on responsibility in helping to create better-prepared students. The language used by the NCEE compartmentalizes responsibility,



and in a way pardons the postsecondary institutions for not helping high schools, which creates a situation where all failures in education can be blamed on secondary schools. One of the articles presented to the NCEE, which is mentioned in greater detail below, discusses how the secondary and postsecondary levels of education must work together to create better students (Sjogren, 1982), while the NCEE seems to be stating that secondary schools are at fault and it's only their problem to solve.

Although it seems more likely that both secondary and postsecondary schools have to work and communicate with one another to be effective, certain positions within secondary schools have a greater responsibility in this area. As Smith and Zhang (2009) point out, it seems that high school guidance counselors can play an important role in helping students transition from secondary to postsecondary education. Although the focus of their research was student perceptions, the fact remains that high school guidance counselors are one of the main pipelines of information for students about postsecondary institutions as well as financial aid and other areas of information necessary to help students in their transition. These counselors are also communication hubs for postsecondary schools to communicate with high schools. The more connections the high school college admissions advisor can make with postsecondary institutions, the more information they can provide to their respective students. On the opposite side, college recruiters are the hubs for postsecondary schools to communicate with high schools. But before these connections can be inspected, a baseline understanding of current student preparedness for postsecondary education is needed.

## **Review of Literature**

As for literature focusing on the transition from secondary education to higher education, the focus in recent years has been on three distinct groups: minority students, students with disabilities and first generation college students. Unfortunately, these research foci are quite limited and very specified, and as such these research papers do not focus on the bigger problem of the transition in general. These areas are quite important, but from the research found it seems that the general picture of transition has been neglected. With that said, there are a few documents that deal specifically with the transition in general. However, these documents seem to have been a precursor to *A Nation At Risk* (1983) and they focus on the NCEE and its visit to Chicago in 1982, and as such are dated, although they are still quite useful.

One of the papers presented at the NCEE visit to Chicago in 1982, focuses specifically on the role of college admissions in the transition from secondary education to higher education. In this paper, Sjogren (1982), who was the director of admissions for the University of Michigan, gives a history of the admissions process and then breaks down four eras of college admissions from 1957-1981. After discussing the transition the United States experienced with education beginning with Sputnik, continuing through the baby boom and the civil rights movement, and ending with a stable period of enrollment, he turns to discuss the future of admissions to higher education.

The major factor in achieving better results in transition that Sjogren focuses on is that, "...leaders from the college and high school sectors will need to work out mutually conceived strategies. Faculties from both educational levels must work together to

ensure students an orderly and educationally sound transition from high school to college” (Sjogren, 26). It is clear from his remarks that Sjogren believes that strong lines of communication between high schools and colleges must exist if the state of education in the United States is to improve. And one necessary element for positive communication between these levels of education is a shared set of expectations and requirements for transitioning students.

One recent research study was done in regards to the transition from secondary to post-secondary education. Focusing on the assessment side of education, Brown and Conley (2007) look at the alignment between state high school assessments and criteria for success in entry-level courses at select universities. They conclude that although state high school assessments align with entry level knowledge and skills in basic areas such as mathematic computation and English, they have a vast disconnect when focusing on research skills, critical thinking, statistics and trigonometry.

These areas that are “seriously underrepresented or nonexistent in state tests,” are crucial in being prepared to enter higher education. Therefore, using only ACT/ SAT as standards for high school success and entrance to higher education would be a mistake, as Brown and Conley point out. Diane Ravitch (2010) also backs this idea up by saying, “Higher test scores may or may not be a reliable indicator of better education. The overemphasis on test scores to the exclusion of other important goals of education may actually undermine the love of learning and the desire to acquire knowledge, both necessary ingredients of intrinsic motivation.” Therefore, although high stakes tests do help to understand student preparedness, they will be only one criterion that is looked at in this research.

Of the recent documents on the transition between secondary and post secondary education, one stands out as a general overview for how to help students' transition. The National High School Center issued a brief titled *Preparing High School Students for Successful Transitions to Postsecondary Education and Employment* (Bangser, 2008). In this brief, Bangser outlines a general guideline on how to help students' transition. He talks about financial aid programs, TRIO programs and what can be done for students with disabilities. However, his brief seems to take no notice of policies that are in place within schools and instead it seems that he is proposing a recipe for success that should be followed. It seems that this issue brief is just that, and unfortunately lacks the depth of analysis necessary to back up its assumptions. Although, it does offer a good template on what to look for in schools for this study and was therefore quite valuable.

### **Research Question**

- Are St. Louis area high schools designed to create graduates that are prepared to enter higher education institutions?

For the purpose of this study, the higher education institutions considered are those that are immediately accessible to the St. Louis area high schools (i.e., the universities in the St. Louis area, and the three largest public universities in Missouri). The study will also probe an important secondary question: are the high school's graduation requirements (i.e., curricula, GPA, extra-curricular activities) structured such that students even qualify for entrance to an institution of higher education, and at what rate do students graduate and attend schools of higher education after graduating from these particular high schools? These secondary questions are vital to understanding the

transition between secondary and higher education, and they will create an initial foundation to help create solutions for students to succeed in the transition from high school to schools of higher education. They will also help answer whether St. Louis area secondary schools are designed to create graduates that will be prepared and able to enter surrounding colleges and universities. In the end, this research is aimed at finding out if St. Louis high schools are failing to prepare students for college, or if their design/mission is simply not compatible to creating college ready graduates.

### **Research Methods**

The research within this thesis will be comprised of two separate lines of questioning. First, it is necessary to understand what St. Louis area high schools are attempting to promote in their students. Second, it is necessary to know what the selected schools of higher education expect from their prospective students. The research will ultimately compare the results from both lines of inquiry to determine if the students produced by the high schools are on par with the expectations and requirements of the schools of higher education.

The sheer number of high schools in the St. Louis area (over 100 high schools) makes sampling an important aspect of this research. For that reason, the high schools will be broken down into four sampling groups: per capita incomes of \$16,108 to \$22,000, per capita incomes of \$22,001 to \$30,000, per capita incomes of \$30,001 to \$59,821, and private Catholic high schools. These per capita divisions were provided by the National Center for Education Demographics (<http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sdds/ed/index.asp?st=MO>). The first task will be to identify

which of these categories each of the St. Louis area high schools fit, and then randomly select three schools from each of these categories. Once selected, a set of specific information will be gathered from each high school.

- State diploma requirements
- School specific diploma requirements
- How many and what kind of extracurricular activities are offered
- How many AP and/or IB classes are offered
- Percentage of students graduating
- Percentage of students entering 2 or 4 year post secondary schools

These pieces of information will help to create a benchmark for understanding how well these schools are preparing their students for entrance into a school of higher education. These criteria will be catalogued by school and charted next to the schools in each sample set. This chart will act as a visual set of benchmarks for proposed high school graduates from each school. (Profiles for individual high schools can be found in Appendix A)

The second line of inquiry will focus on schools of higher education's admissions standards and what expectations they have for prospective students. Twelve Missouri schools of higher education will be examined: four public universities (University of Missouri-Columbia, Missouri State University, Truman University and University of Missouri-St. Louis), four private universities (Washington University, Saint Louis University, Webster University and Maryville University) and two community colleges (St. Charles Community College and St. Louis Community College). These schools of higher education have been selected due to size, type and proximity to the St. Louis Area.

To create an understanding of what these twelve schools are expecting in their prospective students, certain information must be gathered:

- What course prerequisites are required
- What GPA is required
- What extracurricular activities are required

This information will generate a baseline for understanding what is expected of students as well as what types of students these schools of higher education are seeking. Similarly to the high school sample sets, these criteria gathered from the schools of higher education will be catalogued and charted in relation to the other schools within their respective sample set and overall. (Profiles for each school of higher education can be found in Appendix B)

Once both charts of criteria are compiled, they will be compared across education levels. Those criteria that have direct correlations, such as GPA requirements for high school graduation and admission to a school of higher education, will be directly analyzed to see if the benchmarks set by high schools are meeting benchmarks set by their higher education counterparts. For the criterion that does not have a direct correlation from secondary education to higher education, the analysis will be focused on that particular education level only.

### **Data Analysis**

While gathering data it, became apparent that each of the public high schools offered almost the same requirements for graduation. Table 1 shows the Missouri

graduation requirements set forth by the Missouri Board of Education (Tables found at

<http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/sia/gradndex.htm>).

Table 1. MO State Diploma Requirements

<b>Graduation Requirements Personal Finance/ Elective</b>		<b>Personal Finance/ Social Studies</b>		<b>Personal Finance/ Practical Arts</b>	
<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Units of Credit</b>	<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Units of Credit</b>	<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Units of Credit</b>
Communication Arts	4.0	Communication Arts	4.0	Communication Arts	4.0
Social Studies	3.0	<b>Social Studies* (Personal Finance .5)</b>	<b>3.0</b>	Social Studies	3.0
Mathematics	3.0	Mathematics	3.0	Mathematics	3.0
Science	3.0	Science	3.0	Science	3.0
Fine Arts	1.0	Fine Arts	1.0	Fine Arts	1.0
Practical Arts	1.0	Practical Arts	1.0	<b>Practical Arts* (Personal Finance .5)</b>	<b>1.0</b>
Physical Education	1.0	Physical Education	1.0	Physical Education	1.0
Health Education	.5	Health Education	.5	Health Education	.5
<b>Personal Finance</b>	<b>.5</b>	<b>Electives</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>Electives</b>	<b>7.5</b>
<b>Electives</b>		7.0			
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>24.0</b>

All of the selected high schools meet these requirements for graduation except for the private Catholic schools. The private Catholic schools do not include the personal finance half credit, but otherwise they exceed the minimum requirements and move toward the College Preparatory Studies Certificate (CPSC) requirements. All of the public high schools mention the CPSC curriculum in their handbooks or curriculum guides (See Table 2 below for CPSC curriculum requirements). Visitation Academy is the only high school in this study that goes beyond CPSC curriculum requirements; in fact, Visitation is the only high school that uses CPSC as a minimum. More specifics with curriculum for the schools will be discussed below.



Table 2. CPCSC Requirements

<i>Subject</i>	<b>College Preparatory Studies Certificate</b>	<b>State Minimum Requirements</b>
Communication Arts	4	4
Mathematics	4	3
Science	3	3
Social Studies	3	3
Fine Arts	1	1
Practical Arts	1	1
Personal Finance	.5	.5
Health	.5	.5
Physical Education	1	1
Electives *	7	7
<b>Minimum Units Required</b>	25	24

Much of the information gathered about the state's requirements and the public high schools' graduation and transition to higher education rates were found through the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) website, <http://dese.mo.gov>. These rates for Visitation Academy (Visitation) were found on the school's website, and St. Louis Priory School's (Priory) rates were provided by the guidance department at Priory. Unfortunately, this information was unavailable for Christian Brothers College High School (CBC). Save for a link to the state graduation guidebook and a list of sports teams, it has been difficult to find information on Roosevelt High School, as well.

#### Analysis of High Schools

Beginning with the private Catholic schools, there are some striking differences in curriculum and policy from the public schools that were studied. First, these schools do

not require a personal finance course, which falls short of Missouri's minimum requirements for a public high school diploma. However, aside from this one exception, the private catholic schools have a higher minimum curriculum set for their students that is closely aligned with the CPSC curriculum. Visitation requires the most credits of any of the high schools studied at 28. These three schools require a course in computer science and a minimum of two years of a single foreign language. Priory expects its graduates to take nine credits worth of foreign language, four years of Latin and five years of either French, Spanish or Mandarin (they also offer two years of Greek to replace AP history courses for students who wish to opt out). Out of the entire curriculum studied, Priory, by far, offers the most rigorous, with senior year schedules consisting of entirely AP level courses. However, Priory's curriculum is based on six years, 7<sup>th</sup> thru 12<sup>th</sup> grades. Another requirement for graduation at Priory is that students must participate in at least one team sport or act in the school play each year.

On top of having higher curriculum standards than the public schools, Visitation and Priory also boast a 100% graduation and transition rate, with all of their graduates attending a four-year university. All three of the schools offer AP courses, and CBC and Visitation offer dual enrollment courses as well. All three schools offer a large number of clubs and team sports. In fact, CBC was honored by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch as the Large-School Sports Program of the Year in 2010 (Lyons, 2010). In the 2009-2010 year, CBC won the state soccer and baseball championships, came in second for hockey and singles tennis, and their basketball program lost in the state semifinals.

The next group of schools to be analyzed will be the highest per-capita schools, Kirkwood High School (KHS), Ladue Horton Walker High School (Ladue) and

Rockwood Summit High School (Summit). Of these schools, Ladue is the only one that requires more than the state minimum courses at 25. Out of the three groups of public schools, this group boasts the best graduation (95.8% avg.) and transition (88.6% avg.) rates with Ladue topping both at 97.7% and 94.7%, respectively. Ladue is also by far the district with the highest per-capita income in the St. Louis area. All three schools have AP programs, but it is unclear if they also offer dual enrollment courses from local colleges and universities. All three boast a large variety of clubs and sports for students to participate in.

The middle group of schools, consisting of Affton High School (Affton), Maplewood-Richmond Heights High School (MRH) and Valley Park High School (VP), all require the state minimum required credits and curriculum except for Affton and VP, which require a half credit, one semester course in speech. They have an average graduation rate of 92.2% and an average transition rate of 66.7%. These schools are also smaller than the higher and lower per-capita counterparts, which results in fewer sports and clubs offered to students. All three of the schools offer AP and dual enrollment programs from local colleges and universities.

The third group of public schools, McCluer North High School (MNHS), Ritenour High School (Ritenour) and Roosevelt High School (Roosevelt), are from the lowest per-capita income districts. Roosevelt is the only high school in this study that is located within the St. Louis city limits and also has the lowest per-capita income of any of the districts in the St. Louis area. Although MNHS and Ritenour offer a large number of clubs and sports, Roosevelt has the lowest number of sports opportunities of any of the schools in this study, and no information on school clubs or organizations could be found.

While the average graduation rate (73.9%) and the average transition rate (55.3%) are considerably lower than the other groups of schools, that average is brought down drastically by Roosevelt, which has graduation and transition rates that are strikingly lower than the other two schools in this group.

MNHS boasts rates that are comparable to those in the middle group, and Ritenour's graduation rate is similarly higher than Roosevelt. The biggest difference in these schools lies in MNHS's transition rate (80.2%), which stands at 30% higher than Ritenour and nearly 45% higher than Roosevelt. A possible reason for this is a program offered on weekends for students and parents of MNHS on how to gain admission to higher education. Another possible factor could be lower numbers of first generation college students, but further investigation is required to make any conclusions regarding this drastically higher rate of transition.

In general, information for Roosevelt was hard to come by. The school website had little to no information, save the sports teams and graduation photos, and contact with the school was difficult. MNHS and Ritenour, however, both offer AP and dual enrollment programs from local colleges and universities, and have a large number of sports, clubs and organizations for students to participate in. Although Roosevelt and MNHS require the state minimum requirements for graduation, Ritenour requires 26 credits, which include half credits in speech and computer science, plus one extra elective. Ritenour also offers courses in radio broadcasting, being the only high school studied to have its own radio station.

After analyzing each group from within, this study turned toward analyzing them as a whole. The private schools have the highest rates for graduation and transition, and

are certainly preparing students to enter higher education. By requiring foreign language, they are a big step ahead of the public schools, which make foreign language an elective. It is also apparent that higher per-capita income districts boast higher graduation rates and higher transition rates. What this trend can be attributed to is unknown and further research would be required. There is also a striking difference between county schools and Roosevelt and further research could be devoted towards city schools versus county schools to help identify the reasons behind these major drops in graduation and transition rates.

#### Analysis of Schools of Higher Education

The first fact that can be seen by the information that is gathered in this study regarding the schools of higher education is that all high schools produce graduates that can enter St. Louis Community College (STLCC) and St. Charles Community College (STCCC). These two schools only require a high school diploma or GED Diploma. So for the initial objective of this study, it can be said that all St. Louis area high schools in this study produce graduates capable of entering a school of higher education. But with that said, further investigation should be made to inquire as to the capability of these students to enter four-year universities in the surrounding area.

The four private universities in this study, Washington University in St. Louis (Wash U), St. Louis University (SLU), Webster University (Webster) and Maryville University (Maryville), can be somewhat split into three groups: Highly selective (Wash U and SLU), selective (Webster) and less selective (Maryville). Wash U, SLU and Webster do not offer specific GPA, ACT/SAT or class rank requirements, but they do have required courses that should be taken in high school. Maryville on the other hand

does have a minimum GPA of 2.5 and a minimum ACT of 20 as well as a list of high school courses that are less than Missouri's required courses. Wash U and SLU course requirements fall in line with the CPSC curriculum guidelines, while Webster falls in line with Missouri's state requirements. The highly selective schools also suggest that extracurricular activities and the highly selective and selective schools agree that essays play an important role in the admissions process.

Although the public universities have specific criteria to gain admission, University of Missouri – Columbia (MU) and University of Missouri – St. Louis (UMSL) have higher criteria than Truman State University (Truman) and Missouri State University (MSU) when it comes to granting admission. MU and UMSL require the CPSC curriculum and higher ACT/SAT scores. While Truman recommends the CPSC curriculum, it is not required. Truman also has a different scale by which it admits students, combining class rank and the national percentile for a student's ACT/SAT score, allowing students with a combined score of 140 to be admitted. MU, UMSL and MSU, however, have similar sliding scales by which to admit students focusing on class rank or GPA and ACT/SAT scores.

When comparing these universities, Wash U and SLU stand on top in selectivity, followed closely by MU and UMSL. Webster and Truman seem to be similarly selective with MSU and Maryville being the least selective of the universities studied. Some of these universities are also ranked in the U.S. and worldwide: Wash U, SLU, MU and UMSL are ranked by US News Best Universities Rankings (<http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges/rankings/national-universities>), and Wash U and MU are ranked in the QS World Rankings ([www.topuniversities.com](http://www.topuniversities.com)). Lastly, it is

important to note that all of these universities except for Maryville, require at least two years of a single foreign language as a prerequisite for admission.

## **Conclusions**

As stated before all St. Louis area high schools in this study prepare students for community college and after reviewing the local and surrounding universities, it seems that they all prepare students for Maryville as well. The only major issue found for the St. Louis area public high schools, when discussing the other universities, seems to be foreign languages. Even with the CPSC curriculum, no public school in this study requires students to take a foreign language, while the vast majority of the universities require two or more years to gain entrance.

This fact seems at odds with the current trend towards globalization in the age of the Internet and the knowledge economy. However, foreign languages are offered at all the high schools, so as long as the student takes part in those courses they can certainly be admitted to the public and private universities. The top two public and private schools require high school curriculum that is in line with the CPSC curriculum, so again, as long as the student takes those courses as electives they can gain entrance to all of the surrounding universities. As far as the scope of this study, it seems that through state required curriculum and the CPSC curriculum, which is promoted by the state board of education, the St. Louis area high schools are, in fact, preparing students to enter the surrounding schools of higher education, as long as the student takes a foreign language as an elective. At this point, this study seems to suggest that the state may want to revise

the required curriculum to include foreign language as a staple part of the required curriculum for high school students.

Overall, this study suggests that there should be more investigation into how high school students are choosing their electives, and what type of guidance is available to them when charting their respective paths to higher education. Another area of potential research would be to analyze the specific lines of communication between area high schools and the surrounding colleges and universities to find out how and when information is passed from higher education institutions to high school students. And lastly, it also suggests that there is a need for a better understanding of what mechanisms are in place to help those students make the transition from secondary education to higher education, and how to potentially transplant different mechanisms from one high school to another.



APPENDIX A  
HIGH SCHOOL PROFILES

Christian Brothers College High School (CBC)

1850 De La Salle Drive  
 St. Louis, MO 63141  
 (314) 985-6100  
[www.cbchs.org](http://www.cbchs.org)

Graduation course requirements:

English	4
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Practical Arts	1
Fine Arts	1
Physical Education	1
Computer Science	1
Foreign Language	2
Religion	4
Electives	3
Total credits	25

Graduation Rate: Unknown  
 Transition Rate: Unknown

AP/IB/Dual Enrollment: AP, UMSL credit, SLU credit

Sports: Football, Soccer, Cross Country, Basketball, Swimming/Diving, Hockey, Rugby, Racquetball, Wrestling, Baseball, Track and Field, Lacrosse, Golf, Tennis, Inline Hockey, Volleyball

Clubs: Unknown

St. Louis Priory School

500 South Mason Rd.  
 St. Louis, MO 63141  
 (314) 434-3690  
[www.stlprioryschool.org](http://www.stlprioryschool.org)

Graduation course requirements:

English	6
Mathematics	5, but all 2010 graduates took 6
Science	5
Social Studies	5
Fine Arts	4
Physical Education	1/3
Computer Science	2
Foreign Language	9
Religion	6
Team Sports	5
Senior Thesis	

Total credits 50+  
 Based on 6 years of curriculum on a trimester system

Graduation Rate: 100%  
 Transition Rate: 100%

AP/IB/Dual Enrollment: AP, all senior classes are AP

Sports: Football, Soccer, Cross Country, Basketball, Rugby, Wrestling, Baseball, Track and Field, Golf, and Tennis

Clubs: Chess, Band, Drama, Student Council, Yearbook, Newspaper, Art, Human Rights, Scholars, TREND, Earth, Choir, Math, Debate, Model UN

Visitation Academy of St. Louis  
 3020 N. Ballas Rd.  
 St. Louis, MO 63131  
 (314) 625-9100  
[www.visitationacademy.org](http://www.visitationacademy.org)

Graduation course requirements:

English	4
Mathematics	4
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Fine Arts	2
Physical Education	2
Computer Science	.5
Foreign Language	2
Religion	4
Electives	3.5

Total credits	28
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Graduation Rate:	100%
------------------	------

Transition Rate:	100%
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AP/IB/Dual Enrollment: AP, SLU credit

Sports: Soccer, Softball, Basketball, Cross Country, Track and Field, Field Hockey, Lacrosse, Swimming/Diving, Tennis, Volleyball, Golf, Racquetball

Clubs: Drama, National Honor Society, Student Council, Literary Magazine, Yearbook, Newspaper, Book Clubs, Art, Human Rights, Scholars, TREND, Earth, Young Republicans, Young Democrats, Choir, Youth in Government, Math, International Club

Kirkwood High School  
 801 W. Essex  
 Kirkwood, MO 63122  
 (314) 213-6110  
[www.kirkwoodschoools.org/khs/](http://www.kirkwoodschoools.org/khs/)

Per-Capita Income 1999: \$34,759

Graduation course requirements:

English	4
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Practical Arts	1
Fine Arts	1
Physical Education	1
Health	.5
Personal Finance	.5
Electives	7

Total credits 24

Graduation Rate: 97.1%

Transition Rate: 83%

AP/IB/Dual Enrollment: AP

Sports: Football B, Soccer B/G, Cross Country B/G, Basketball B/G, Swimming/Diving B/G, Wrestling, Baseball, Track and Field B/G, Golf B/G, Tennis B/G, Volleyball B/G, Water polo B, Softball, Lacrosse G, Field Hockey, Cheerleading, Poms/Dance

Clubs: Anime, Band, Drama, Choir, National Honor Society, Student Council, SADD, Gay Straight Alliance, Literary Magazine, Yearbook, Newspaper, Book Clubs, Earth Clubs, Young Republicans, Young Democrats, Youth in Government, International Clubs, Math, Debate, Astronomy, DECA, FBLA

Ladue Horton Watkins High School  
 1201 S. Warson Rd.  
 St. Louis, MO 63124  
 (314) 993-6447  
[www.ladue.k12.mo.us/lhwhs/](http://www.ladue.k12.mo.us/lhwhs/)

Per-Capita Income 1999: \$59,821

Graduation course requirements:

English	4
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Practical Arts	1
Fine Arts	1
Physical Education	1
Health	.5
Personal Finance	.5
Electives	8

Total credits 25

Graduation Rate: 97.7%

Transition Rate: 94.7%

AP/IB/Dual Enrollment: AP

Sports: Football, Soccer B/G, Cross Country B/G, Basketball B/G, Swimming/Diving B/G, Wrestling, Baseball, Track and Field B/G, Lacrosse B, Golf B, Tennis B/G, Volleyball G, Water polo, Softball, Field Hockey

Clubs: Anime, Chess, Band, Drama, Choir, National Honor Society, Student Council, Gay Straight Alliance, Literary Magazine, Yearbook, Newspaper, Art, Human Rights, Scholars, Earth club, Young Republicans, Young Democrats, Young Moderates, Youth in Government International clubs, Math, Debate, Model UN, DECA

Rockwood Summit High School  
 1780 Hawkins Rd.  
 Fenton, MO 63026  
 (636) 891-6800  
[www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/rsummit/Pages/default.asp](http://www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/rsummit/Pages/default.asp)

Per-Capita Income 1999: \$38,493

Graduation course requirements:

English	4
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Practical Arts	1
Fine Arts	1
Physical Education	1
Health	.5
Personal Finance	.5
Electives	7

Total credits 24

Graduation Rate: 92.6%

Transition Rate: 88%

AP/IB/Dual Enrollment: AP

Sports: Football, Soccer B/G, Cross Country B/G, Basketball B/G, Swimming/Diving B/G, Hockey, Wrestling, Baseball, Track and Field B/G, Lacrosse B/G, Golf B/G, Tennis B/G, Inline Hockey, Volleyball B/G, Water polo, Softball, Field Hockey, Cheerleading, Poms/Dance

Clubs: Band, Drama, Choir, National Honor Society, Student Council, SADD, Yearbook, Art, Scholars, TREND, Earth club, FBLA

Affton High School  
 8309 Mackenzie Rd.  
 St. Louis, MO 63123  
 (314) 638-6330  
[www.affton.k12.mo.us/ahs/](http://www.affton.k12.mo.us/ahs/)

Per-Capita Income 1999: \$23,797

Graduation course requirements:

English	4
Speech	.5
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Practical Arts	.5
Fine Arts	.5
Physical Education	1
Health	.5
Personal Finance	.5
Electives	7.5

Total credits 24

Graduation Rate: 87.3%

Transition Rate: 64%

AP/IB/Dual Enrollment: AP, SLU credit, Dual Enrollment STLCC

Sports: Football, Soccer B/G, Cross Country B/G, Basketball B/G, Swimming/Diving B/G, Wrestling, Baseball, Track and Field B/G, Golf B, Volleyball B/G, Softball, Cheerleading, Poms/Dance

Clubs: Chess, Band, Drama, National Honor Society, Student Council, Gay Straight Alliance, Yearbook, TREND, DECA



Maplewood Richmond Heights High School (MRHHS)  
 7539 Manchester Rd.  
 Maplewood, MO 63143  
 (314) 644-4401  
[www.mrhhsd.org/pages/schools/mrhhigh.shtml](http://www.mrhhsd.org/pages/schools/mrhhigh.shtml)

Per-Capita Income 1999: \$25,524

Graduation course requirements:

English	4
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3.5
Practical Arts	1.5*
Fine Arts	1.5*
Physical Education	1.5
Health	.5
Personal Finance	.5
Electives	5

Total credits 24

\*A total of 3 credits are required in Arts at least 1 fine arts and 1 practical arts

Graduation Rate: 91.1%

Transition Rate: 70%

AP/IB/Dual Enrollment: AP, UMSL Credit, Dual Enrollment UMSL, MO Baptist College and STLCC

Sports: Football, Soccer B/G, Basketball B/G, Wrestling, Baseball, Track and Field B/G, Volleyball G, Cheerleading

Clubs: Band, Choir, Drama, National Honor Society, Student Council, Gay Straight Alliance, Yearbook, Newspaper, Earth club

Valley Park High School  
 1 Main St.  
 Valley Park, MO 63088  
 (636) 923-3500  
[www.vp.k12.mo.us/hs/index.html](http://www.vp.k12.mo.us/hs/index.html)

Per-Capita Income 1999: \$22,540

Graduation course requirements:

English	4
Speech	.5
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Practical Arts	1
Fine Arts	1
Physical Education	1
Health	.5
Personal Finance	.5
Electives	6.5

Total credits 24

Graduation Rate: 98.3%

Transition Rate: 66.1%

AP/IB/Dual Enrollment: AP and Dual enrollment MO Baptist

Sports: Soccer B/G, Cross Country B/G, Basketball B/G, Baseball, Golf B, Volleyball G, Softball, Cheerleading

Clubs: Band, Choir, Scholars, National Honor Society, FBLA, Chess, Bowling, Student Council, Renaissance, Yearbook, other publications, Drama, Earth Club, Mock Trial

McCluer North High School  
 705 Waterford Dr.  
 Florissant, MO 63033  
 (314) 506-9200  
[www.fergflor.org/mccluernorth/site/default.asp](http://www.fergflor.org/mccluernorth/site/default.asp)

Per-Capita Income 1999: \$19,066

Graduation course requirements:

English	4
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Practical Arts	1
Fine Arts	1
Physical Education	1
Health	.5
Personal Finance	.5
Electives	7
Total credits	24

Graduation Rate: 88.5%  
 Transition Rate: 80.2%

AP/IB/Dual Enrollment: AP

Handbook focuses mostly on discipline issues and what specific punishments are handed out, however they do have group meetings on how to get into higher education.

Sports: Football, Soccer B/G, Cross Country B/G, Basketball B/G, Swimming/Diving B/G, Wrestling, Baseball, Track and Field B/G, Golf B/G, Tennis B/G, Softball, Volleyball G, Cheerleading

Clubs: Anime, Chess, Choir, Band, Yearbook, Newspaper, Book Clubs, DECA, FBLA

Ritenour High School  
 9100 St. Charles Rock Rd.  
 St. Louis, MO 63114  
 (314) 493-6105  
[www.ritenour.k12.mo.us/rhs/](http://www.ritenour.k12.mo.us/rhs/)

Per-Capita Income 1999: \$18,041

Graduation course requirements:

English	4
Speech	.5
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Practical Arts	1
Fine Arts	1
Physical Education	1
Health	.5
Computer Science	.5
Personal Finance	.5
Electives	8
Total credits	26

Graduation Rate: 85.8%  
 Transition Rate: 50%

AP/IB/Dual Enrollment: Dual Enrollment SLU and UMSL, AP  
 Student handbook gives detailed steps towards building career objectives, as well as, giving a step-by-step guide to applying for higher education.

Sports: Football, Soccer B/G, Cross Country B/G, Basketball B/G, Swimming/Diving B/G, Wrestling, Baseball, Track and Field B/G, Golf B, Tennis B/G, Volleyball B/G, Softball, Cheerleading, Poms/Dance

Clubs: Anime, Chess, Band, Drama, Choir, National Honor Society, Student Council, Gay Straight Alliance, Literary Magazine, Yearbook, Book Club, Art, Debate, DECA, FBLA

Roosevelt High School  
 3230 Hartford St.  
 St. Louis, MO 63118  
 (314) 776-6040  
[slpshs.schoolwire.net/roosevelths/site/default.asp](http://slpshs.schoolwire.net/roosevelths/site/default.asp)

Per-Capita Income 1999: \$16,108

Graduation course requirements:

English	4
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Practical Arts	1
Fine Arts	1
Physical Education	1
Health	.5
Personal Finance	.5
Electives	7

Total credits 24

Graduation Rate: 47.3%

Transition Rate: 35.7%

AP/IB/Dual Enrollment: Unknown

Sports: Football, Soccer B, Basketball B, Wrestling, Baseball, Track and Field, Softball, Tennis B, Volleyball G

Clubs: Unknown

APPENDIX B  
COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PROFILES

Maryville University  
650 Maryville University Drive  
St. Louis, MO 63141  
(314) 529-9300  
[www.maryville.edu](http://www.maryville.edu)

Requirements for admission:

English	4
Mathematics	3
Science	2
Social Studies	2
Foreign Language	
Electives	3 from the above listed courses
Extracurricular	not specified
GPA	2.5
ACT	20

Maryville only requires 22 credits as opposed to 24.

Rankings:

US News: N/A    QS World Rankings: N/A

Saint Louis University  
DuBourg Hall 119  
1 Grand Blvd.  
St. Louis, MO 63103  
(314) 977-2500  
[www.slu.edu](http://www.slu.edu)

Requirements for admission:

English	4
Mathematics	4
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Foreign Language	2, but more is highly recommended
Extracurricular	Helpful in determining best candidates for acceptance
GPA	Not specified
ACT	Not specified
Class Rank	Not specified

Although GPA, ACT/SAT scores and class rank are important, no minimums are required. However, strong academic backgrounds are sought out.

Rankings:

US News: 86    QS World Rankings: N/A



Washington University  
Office of Admissions  
1 Brookings Drive  
St. Louis, MO 63130  
(314) 935-6000  
[www.wustl.edu](http://www.wustl.edu)

Requirements for admission:

English	4
Mathematics	4
Science	3-4
Social Studies	3-4
Foreign Language	2

Extracurricular                      helpful for sorting through volume of applicants

GPA    Not specified

ACT/SAT                                      Not Specified

Class Rank                                  Not Specified

Although GPA, ACT/SAT scores and class rank are not set at a minimum, Washington University in St. Louis suggests that students have a very strong academic background.

Rankings:

US News: 13    QS World Rankings: 75

Webster University  
470 E. Lockwood Ave.  
Webster Hall 140  
St. Louis, MO 63119  
(314) 246-7800  
[www.webster.edu](http://www.webster.edu)

Requirements for admission:

English	4
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Foreign Language	2
Fine Arts	1
Extracurricular	Not Specified
GPA	3.0
ACT/SAT	21/1500
Class Ranks	Not Specified

Although GPA and ACT/SAT scores are listed, Webster University only suggests that these are guidelines, not specific minimums.

Rankings:

US News: N/A    QS World Rankings: N/A

Missouri State University (MSU)  
901 S. National Ave.  
Carrington Hall 204  
Springfield, MO 65897  
(417) 836-5517  
[www.missouristate.edu](http://www.missouristate.edu)

Requirements for admission:

English	4
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Foreign Language	2
Fine Arts	1

Extracurricular                      not needed

GPA    scaled

ACT    scaled

Class Rank                                  scaled

At MSU, if a prospective student has met the above listed high school curriculum and has an ACT score of 24, a GPA of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale, or is in the top 25% of class they will be automatically admitted. For the students not meeting these criteria, aside from the course requirements, there is a scaled system combining GPA/Class Rank and ACT/SAT scores to admit students. On this scale there is no minimum for the ACT/SAT scores if the student has a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

Rankings:

US News: N/A    QS World Rankings: N/A

Truman State University  
 100 E. Normal  
 Kirksville, MO 63501  
 (660) 785-4114  
[www.truman.edu](http://www.truman.edu)

Requirements for admission:

English	4
Mathematics	3, but 4 is strongly recommended
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Foreign Language	2
Fine Arts	1

Extracurricular	helpful
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GPA	helpful
-----	---------

ACT	scaled
-----	--------

Class Ranks	scaled
-------------	--------

Admission to Truman State University is based on “guidelines for highly selective institutions from the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education,” ([admissions.truman.edu/apply/requirements.asp](http://admissions.truman.edu/apply/requirements.asp), 4/28/2011). This is a scale that is based of class rank and the national percentile for ACT/SAT scores. The combined score should be 140 or above.

Rankings:

US News: N/A    QS World Rankings: N/A

University of Missouri – Columbia (MU)  
230 Jesse Hall  
Columbia, MO 65211  
(573) 882-7786  
[www.missouri.edu](http://www.missouri.edu)

Requirements for admission:

English	4
Mathematics	4
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Foreign Language	2
Fine Arts	1

Extracurricular                      not needed

GPA    scaled

ACT    scaled

Class Rank                                  scaled

If the high school courses listed above are met in conjunction with a 24 or better on the ACT, students will be automatically admitted to MIZZOU. For students meeting the high school curriculum requirements but score under a 24 there is a set of guidelines that combine ACT/SAT scores and class rank or GPA that is used to determine admission

Rankings:

US News: 94    QS World Rankings: 401-450

University of Missouri – St. Louis (UMSL)  
 351 Millennium Student Center  
 1 University Blvd.  
 St. Louis, MO 63121  
 (314) 516-5451  
[www.umsl.edu](http://www.umsl.edu)

Requirements for admission:

English	4
Mathematics	4
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Foreign Language	2
Fine Arts	1

Extracurricular	not needed
-----------------	------------

GPA	scaled
-----	--------

ACT	scaled
-----	--------

Class rank	scaled
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If the high school courses listed above are met in conjunction with a 24 or better on the ACT, students will be automatically admitted to UMSL. For students meeting the high school curriculum requirements but score under a 24 there is a set of guidelines that combine ACT/SAT scores and class rank or GPA that is used to determine admission

Rankings:

US News: 200-250    QS World Rankings: N/A

St. Charles Community College  
4601 Mid Rivers Mall Drive  
Cottleville, MO 63376  
(636) 922-8000  
[www.stchas.edu](http://www.stchas.edu)

Requirements for admission:

Open Enrollment  
High school diploma or GED

Rankings:

US News: N/A    QS World Rankings: N/A

St. Louis Community College (4 Campuses)

Meramec Campus  
11333 Big Bend Rd.  
110 Clark Hall  
St. Louis, MO 63122  
(314) 984-7601

Forest Park Campus  
5600 Oakland Ave  
200 Student Center  
St. Louis, MO 63110  
(314) 644-9127

Florissant Valley Campus  
3400 Pershall Rd.  
Admin Bldg.  
St. Louis, MO 63155  
(314) 513-4244

Wildwood Campus  
Main Office  
2645 Generations Dr.  
Wildwood, MO 63040  
(636) 422-2000

[www.stlcc.edu](http://www.stlcc.edu)

Requirements for admission:

Open Enrollment  
High school transcripts or GED

Rankings:

US News: N/A    QS World Rankings: N/A



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## VITA

Kevin Harrman was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri. Before attending Loyola University Chicago he attended the University of Missouri-Columbia, where he received a Bachelor of Arts in History in 2000. In the summer of 2007 he moved to Xinxiang, Henan, China where he taught spoken English for one year at Xinxiang Number 1 High School.

While at Loyola Kevin was a member of the Comparative and International Education Graduate Student Association. He also attended the Comparative and International Education Society's national conference in early 2010.

Currently Kevin is seeking work dealing with high school students transitioning to higher education, either from the secondary or post secondary level. He lives in St. Louis, Missouri with his wife and son.

## THESIS APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Kevin G. Harrman has been read and approved by the following committee:

Noah Sobe, Ph.D., Director  
Professor of Cultural and Educational Policy Studies  
Loyola University Chicago

Robert Roemer, Ph.D.  
Professor of Cultural and Educational Policy Studies  
Loyola University Chicago

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the thesis is now given final approval by the committee with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Date

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Director's Signature

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