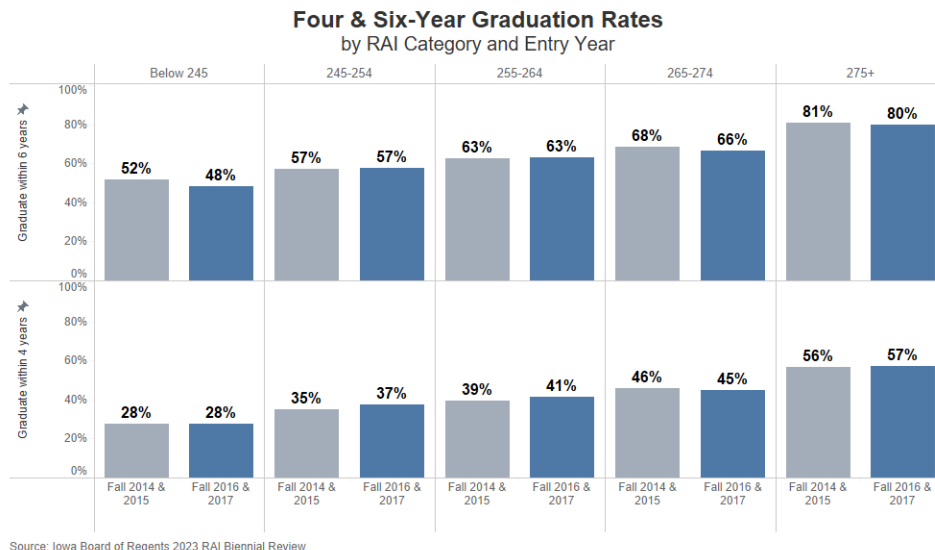
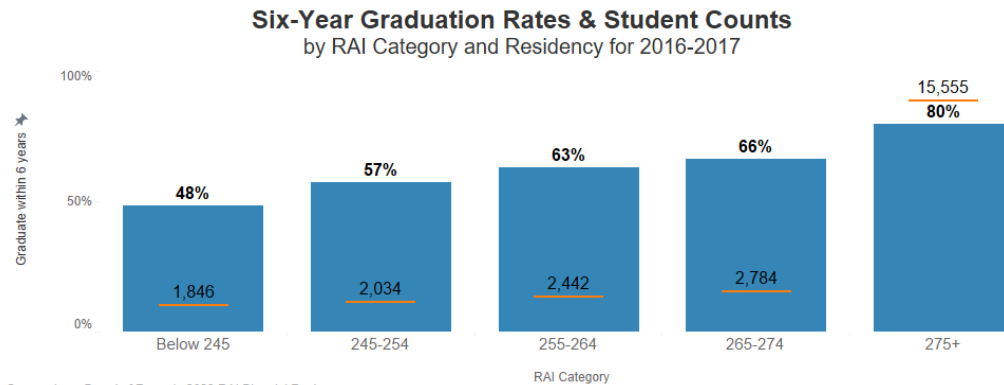


2023-24 REGENT ADMISSION INDEX BIENNIAL REVIEW

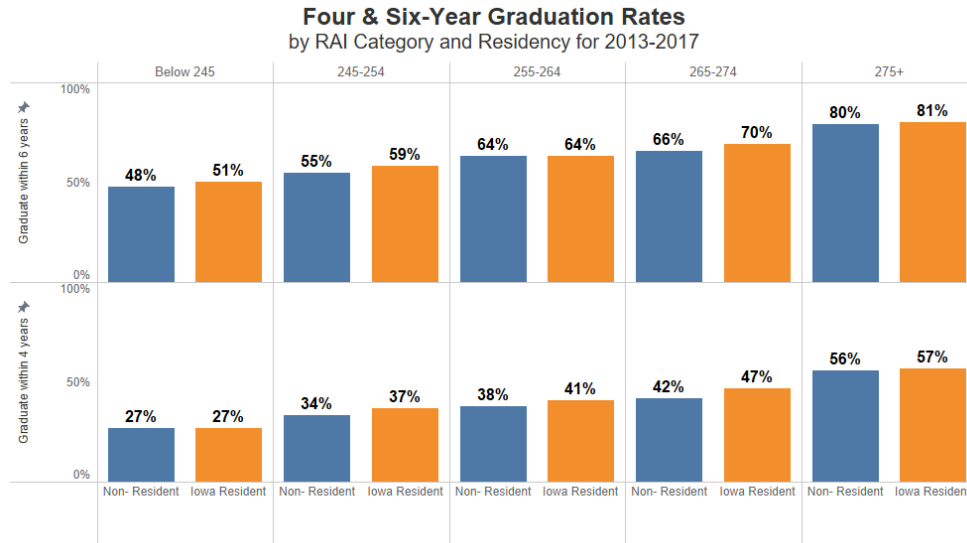
Actions Requested: Accept findings of the Admissions Study Team to maintain the current Regent Admission Index (RAI) threshold core for automatic admission at 245.

Key Findings: Every two years an inter-institutional Admissions Study Team completes an analysis of the RAI to assess the effectiveness of the automatic admission thresholds in relation to successful student outcomes, access, and other priorities.

An examination of the impact of RAI scores on different undergraduate outcome metrics (earned grades, retention, and graduation rates) supports maintaining the current automatic admission cut point of 245. The graph below shows four- and six-year graduation rates by RAI index score categories. The bars in blue show the most recent two entry cohorts of graduates since the last RAI review (Fall 2016 and Fall 2017). The bars in gray show the prior two entry cohorts of Fall 2014 and Fall 2015 for comparison. Both four- and six-year graduation rates are comparable across cohorts.

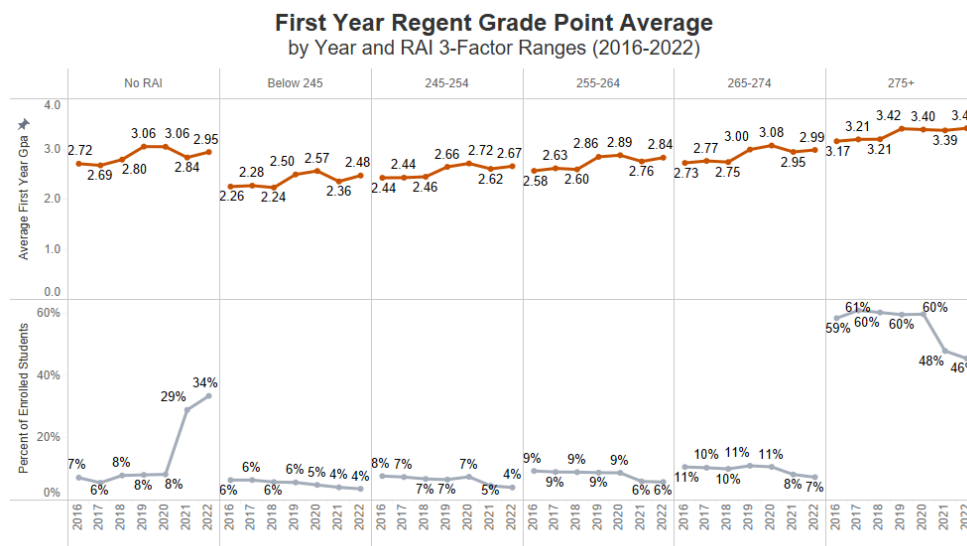


While the RAI is used for the automatic admission of Iowa residents to Regent universities, the RAI is often used to automatically admit non-residents. As illustrated in the graph below, the four- and six-year graduation rates for Iowa residents (orange bars) are very similar to non-residents (blue bars) among students with similar RAI scores.



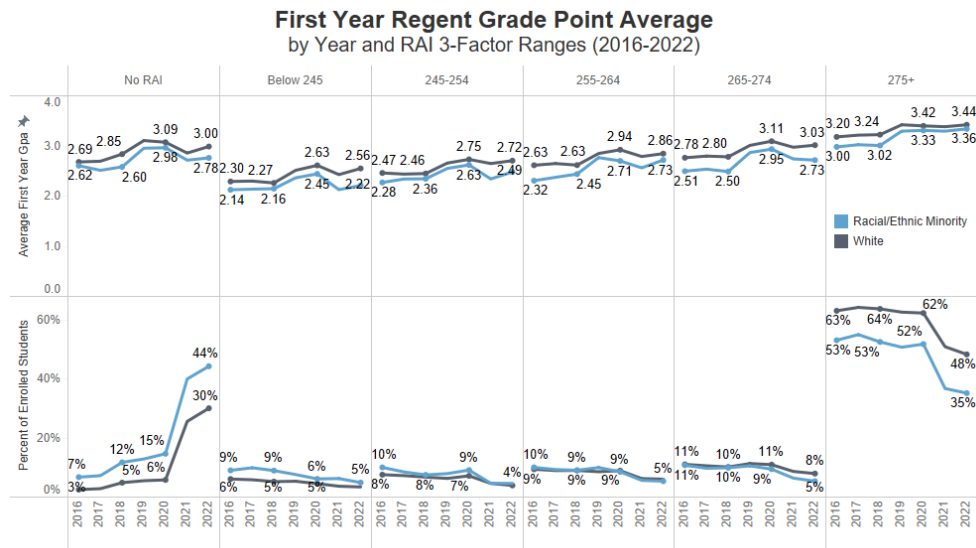
Source: Iowa Board of Regents 2023 RAI Biennial Review

In addition to examining graduation rates, the study group also looked at students' grade point average (GPA) in their first year enrolled at a Regent university. Looking at first-year GPA over time, students with similar RAI scores earn similar grades in college. The lines in orange show GPA trends over time by RAI score ranges. The lines in gray show the percentage of the entering class admitted within those RAI score ranges. One trend of note is the increase in the percentage of entering classes who were enrolled with no RAI. This is due to the option for students entering in Fall 2021 and Fall 2022 to apply without standardized test scores.



Source: Iowa Board of Regents 2023 RAI Biennial Review

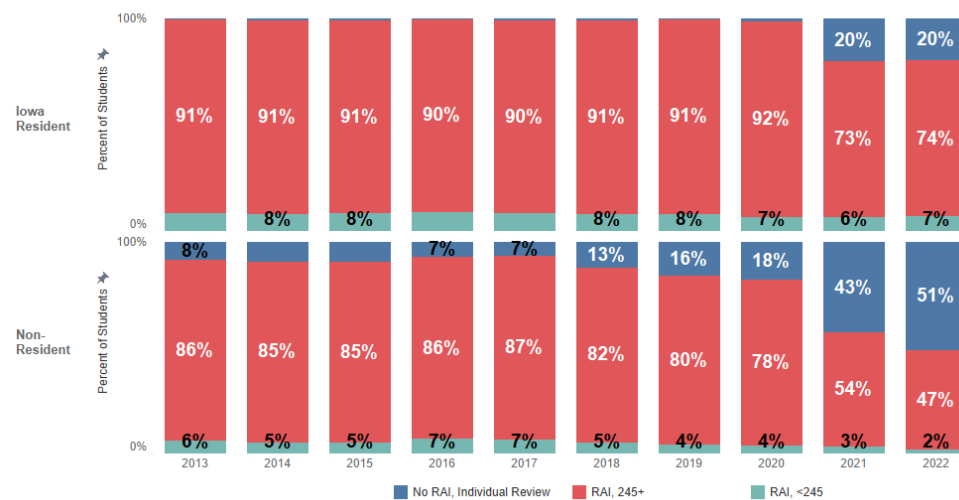
The graph below is similar to the one above except trends in first-year GPA are split by race/ethnicity. The lines in blue show students who identify as a racial/ethnic minority, while lines in gray show students who identify as White.



Source: Iowa Board of Regents 2023 RAI Biennial Review

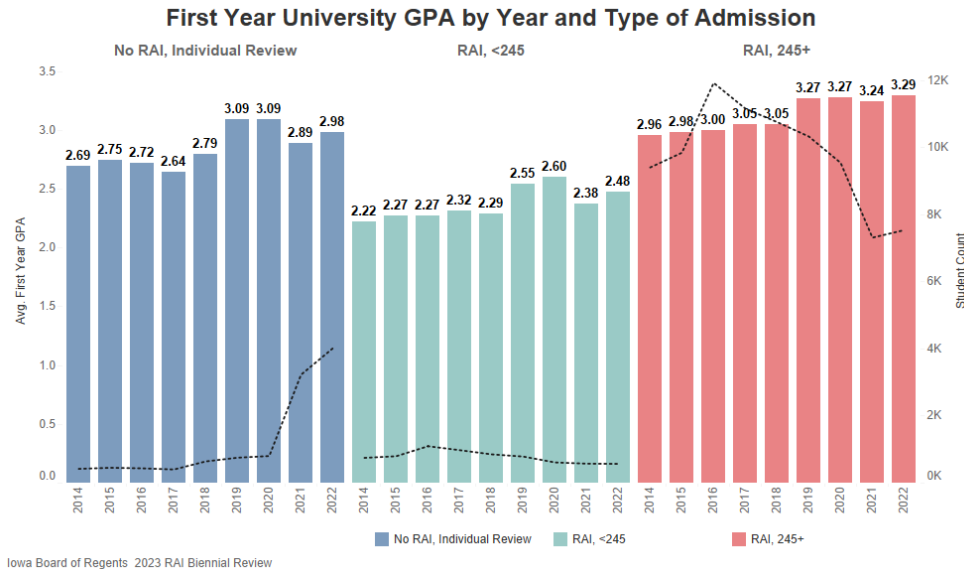
The addition of a test-optional pathway for admission starting in Fall 2021 has changed how students are admitted to the Regent universities. The RAI remains the only pathway for automatic admission, but a student may choose to not submit standardized test scores and undergo an individual review for admission. Twenty percent of enrolled Iowa residents chose the test-optional pathway. Test-optional has been more popular with non-resident students, with 51 percent of enrolled non-residents choosing that pathway for Fall 2022.

Trends in How Iowa Public University Students are Admitted by Residency Status

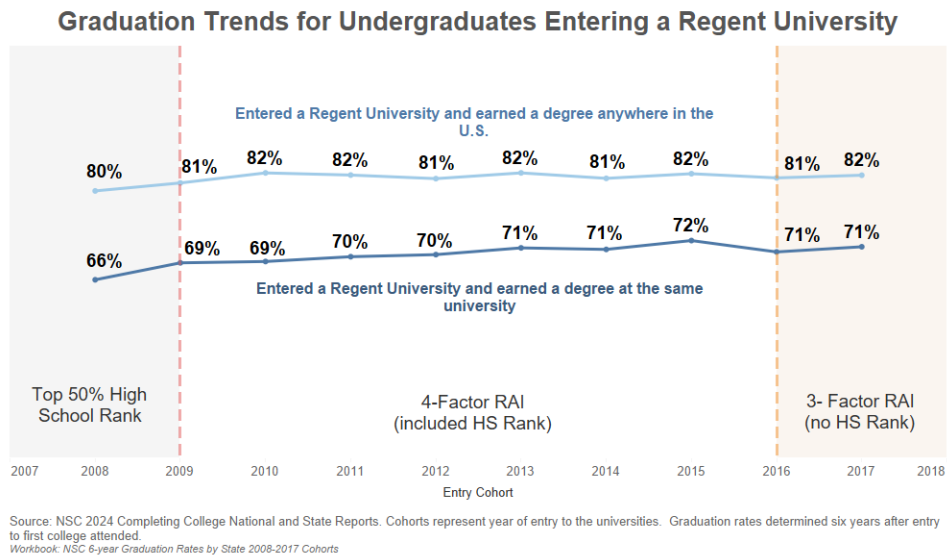


Source: Iowa Board of Regents 2023

While the RAI Biennial Review is tasked with examining the efficacy of the RAI and the current threshold for automatic admission, the study group conducted some limited analysis of students accepted under the test-optional pathway. With only two test-optional entry cohorts available at the time of the analysis, first-year university GPA was examined. Despite a rapid increase in the number of students enrolled using the test-optional pathway (i.e., “No RAI, Individual Review”), there was not a decrease in first-year GPA for those students. In fact, first-year GPA for test-optional students was similar to historical trends for students admitted automatically using the RAI.



Final notes on the RAI: Despite changes in automatic admission over the past decade, graduation rates have remained consistent. As Iowa’s graduation rate for students at 4-year public universities has led the nation during this time, the RAI continues to be a sound predictor of success in college.



The Future of the RAI: One area for future research is the impact of weighted high school GPAs on the RAI. Weighted grades are typically provided for advanced or college-level coursework. This, by itself, is not problematic because it encourages students to take more rigorous classes. However, as more classes are considered for weighting, the gap between unweighted GPAs and weighted GPAs can sometimes become extreme.

Furthermore, methods for weighting grades can vary greatly between high schools and by state to state. Currently, the RAI formula allows for students to submit either weighted or unweighted grades, but no GPA above a 4.0 is factored into the index. For example, a student with a 4.5 weighted GPA would be adjusted to a 4.0 GPA before being used to calculate an RAI score.

The next RAI Biennial Review will begin in Fall 2025 and report to the Board in Spring 2026.