

Getting into UC campus of choice gets tougher

By Matt Krupnick
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Despite a record number of admissions, University of California applicants had a tougher time getting into their campuses of choice this year, according to numbers the university released Monday.

The number of applications is growing faster than the number of openings at UC's most sought-after schools.

Acceptance rates declined at nearly every campus. Just over 22 percent of applicants were admitted to UC-Berkeley and UCLA this year, down from 24.7 percent at Berkeley and 23.6 percent at UCLA last year.

At UC-Santa Cruz, the acceptance rate was 74.3 percent, down from 82.8 percent last year.

About 60,000 Californians were admitted as freshmen, 10,000 more than were admitted three years ago. Just over three-quarters of the approximately 80,000 applicants were granted a spot at one of the nine undergraduate campuses.

The university managed to accept all qualified applicants despite proposed budget cuts, said Susan Wilbur, UC's undergraduate admissions director. But that guarantee may not be sustainable unless the university receives more state money, she said.

"We're in a very challenging environment," Wilbur said, "but we did our very best to ensure the access to high-quality education that our students have come to expect."

Mercury News staff writer Lisa M. Krieger contributed to this report.