Competition Intensifies for Undergrad Places

Competition for undergraduate places continues to heat up, with a record 20,000 students applying for fewer than 1,500 slots at Columbia College and the Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS)—a 9 percent increase over last year's figures.

Both the College, with around 17,000 applicants, and SEAS, with close to 3,000 applicants, achieved record numbers—with increases of 8 percent and almost 15 percent respectively.

These new benchmarks cap off a decade of strong growth for the College and SEAS, during which applications rose by 66 percent.

"The phenomenal surge of interest in attending these two Columbia undergraduate institutions above all speaks to the strength of our faculty and our academic offerings, the talent and diversity of our student body, and our overall reputation and tradition of excellence," said University president Lee C. Bollinger in a recent letter to the Columbia community.

He added that the continuing surge also owes "much to the unique character and global prominence of the City of New York," an integral part of Columbia's identity: "The City is our extended campus, the field in which our students, faculty and nearly 110,000 alumni work, and our link to the larger world."

Bollinger wrote.

The director of undergraduate admissions, Jessika Marinnacco, stressed that the applicant pool for each of these schools has grown much stronger not only in sheer numbers of students applying, but in the quality of the applicants.

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