

### **1. Why did Southwestern make submitting test scores optional?**

Southwestern has always engaged in a holistic review of applicants, and the test-optional path allows us to consider your strengths that may be demonstrated in areas other than your ACT or SAT score. We believe that your high school record, in particular your grades in challenging core subjects, is the most important academic component in the review for admission.

### **2. How will SU evaluate students who do not submit test scores?**

As with all applications, Southwestern takes a holistic approach to application review. The University considers a student's transcript, academic rigor, essay, conversational interview, academic recommendation, activities, and leadership as it seeks to enroll students with the greatest potential for success at SU. When a student does not submit a test score, a greater emphasis is placed on that student's academic performance, and the conversational interview is highly encouraged.

### **3. How do I indicate that I wish to apply without test scores?**

Students will indicate their test-optional intent at the time of their application. Each application platform (Common Application & Apply Texas) contains a question that specifically asks if students wish their SAT and/or ACT scores to be considered as a factor in their admission and merit scholarships. Students who do not wish to submit test scores and pursue this test-optional path for admission will reply "no" to this question.

### **4. How do I know if I should apply under the test-optional plan?**

There are many reasons why students may choose this approach, including not being satisfied with one's test scores or simply not being a believer in the philosophy of standardized test scores. Southwestern is deeply committed to a thorough and holistic application review process, and as such, we respect students' choices with regard to the submission of test scores. Our admission and merit scholarship process will NOT penalize you for not submitting a standardized test and choosing the test-optional path.

Here are a few scenarios to consider that may help guide you in your decision:

Student A: My test scores are above average, but I didn't do as well on the SAT/ACT as I personally would have liked. → We recommend that this student submit their test scores.

Student B: Standardized testing has been a weakness of mine throughout my high school career. My grades and curriculum are rigorous and competitive, but my SAT/ACT scores aren't as strong as I would have liked. → We recommend that this student not submit a test score and choose the test-optional path.

### **5. What is required in lieu of test scores?**

Test-optional candidates are highly encouraged to complete a conversational interview, which can be considered in addition to the other elements of a student's application. While not required, the interview can add tremendous depth to a student's application, as well as creates an opportunity for them to know Southwestern better.

### **6. At what point should an interview be scheduled?**

Once you have submitted your application, essay, and transcript, you may schedule your interview. NOTE: International applicants may need to submit additional documents before the interview can be scheduled.

### **7. How can an interview be scheduled?**

Interviews can be done either in person or virtually. For virtual interviews, you can browse our schedule at: <https://admission.southwestern.edu/portal/virtualinterviews> and choose the day and time that work best with your schedule. For in-person interviews on campus, you would register for a daily campus visit at <https://admission.southwestern.edu/portal/dailyvisits> and request an interview on the registration form. We also offer off-campus interviews in several locations around Texas. Go to <https://admission.southwestern.edu/portal/offcampusinterviews> for a full listing of opportunities. Lastly, you can always contact your assigned admission counselor or call our office at 1-800-252-3166 to request an interview.

### **8. Is there a test score needed for competitive scholarships?**

No. Students who wish to be considered for competitive scholarships are free to choose the test-optional path if they wish.

### **9. Are there any students who cannot apply test-optional?**

No. All first-year candidates may apply under the test-optional process. International students who do not speak English as a first language and who have studied in a school where English is not the primary language of instruction are highly encouraged to submit results from the TOEFL and/or IELTS.

### **10. What is the testing profile of the first-year class at Southwestern?**

The middle 50% of the first-year students in the Class of 2025 scored between 1180 and 1350 (EBRW+M) on the SAT and between 24-31 on the ACT.

**11. What if my test scores are sent by the test agency, or are included on my transcripts?**

If your scores are sent to us from the testing agency or are included on your high school transcript, you can still apply with the test-optional path, as long as you indicate that preference on your application. If you apply under the test-optional plan, your test scores will not be taken into consideration as part of the admission or merit scholarship review.

**12. Can transfer students apply under the test-optional plan?**

Test scores are not required for transfer applicants.

*Updated August 2025*