

An Archaic Standard

-Dan Rosenberg

Everyone is a different type of learner. No two students are the same, and every student comprehends and understands material in his own unique way. It is impossible to judge the intelligence of every student on the same scale. It is like comparing the athleticism of a tennis player and a basketball player; both have unique skills that help in their respective sports, but might not transfer over to other sports. That is the basic problem with our system of standardized testing. There is just no way to fairly grade every student on the same scale, because every student is so different. Should someone be admitted to college because they handle a testing situation better than someone else? If we are really committed to preparing students for the real world, then that is not the way to go. A 2400 on the SAT, while very impressive, is not even close to a full measure of academic aptitude.

There is no art section, or music section, or even a science section on the SAT. Is a test that my parents took decades ago still even relevant to a modern student? With all of our progressive learning styles, and advanced technologies, how can we still be dependent upon a test that has a similar format as the one from the 1970s?

The simple answer is that colleges still insist on elevating the SAT, as a beacon of academic performance. While volunteering, sports, and other extra-curricular activities are still important, as is having a variety of classes, universities and institutes of higher education across the country still place so much significance on standardized tests. And I think it needs to change. I took the SAT. I've taken subject tests in sciences, languages, and history subjects, and I just don't think they do an adequate job of evaluating students. Make no mistake; I don't think we should eliminate the standardized test from the college process. However, it's time for an update.

First of all, with all of the modern technologies at our disposal, there is no excuse for not administering digital tests. Not only would it expedite the grading process, but it would allow for more frequent testing dates as well. Second, with the increased importance schools are placing upon the arts, how is there still not even an SAT subject test related to art? In order to make sure students are becoming not only skilled at math, but also well rounded in life, we need to find a way to evaluate artistic skills along with scientific and logical skills. The SAT is important. Important, yet flawed. And it's time for us as an academic community to find a way to fix it.