

Title: SAT Retaking and Inequality in College Enrollment

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Abstract: We explore why only half of college entrance exam-takers retake such exams and how retaking impacts college enrollment. Among 14 million SAT-takers, retaking rises with initial scores and socioeconomic advantage. Scoring below multiples of 100 increases retaking, implying students have round number target scores. Regression discontinuity evidence shows retaking improves admission-relevant SAT scores by 77 points (0.26 sd) and by 127 points (0.43 sd) for lower-scoring students. For lower-scoring, minority, and low income students, retaking increases four-year college enrollment by 15-22 percentage points and shifts enrollment toward colleges with higher graduation rates. Such students likely retake less than they should.