

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans, GRAB Members, Chairs, Graduate Advisors

FROM: Philip Cohen, Dean, Graduate School

RE: GRE/GMAT Waiver for Students from Feeder Institutions

DATE: April 5, 2005

cc: Dana Dunn, Vice President and Provost; Office of Graduate Studies Staff

Several Colleges and Schools are in the process of developing agreements with other institutions in the seven-state region to funnel outstanding undergraduates into some of our degree programs. The details of these arrangements vary with the nature of the participating programs, however all are guided by the intent to make these agreements win-win propositions for all participants. Reduced to their simplest terms, these agreements will provide UTA an influx of excellent graduate students and offer our partners an outlet for students who have professional or academic interests that cannot be served by their home campuses. However, the possibility that these agreements may help lay the foundation for collaborative research and educational projects should not be underestimated.

In order to encourage highly qualified students to attend UTA, the Graduate Assembly in its 31 March, 2005 meeting approved a proposal enabling programs to waive the GRE or GMAT requirement for students from institutions with which they have partnered. This proposal is merely enabling, and programs that do not wish to waive standardized test requirements are free to continue to require them. The following elements comprise the details of the proposal, which is effective immediately. Please notify your graduate faculty of this opportunity.

Waiver of GRE or GMAT for Students from Feeder Institutions

A. Eligible Population

1. UTA programs may elect or decline to allow GRE or GMAT waivers for students finishing degrees at institutions with whom UTA has formal arrangements and understandings for offering graduate education to select undergraduate students in selected programs.

2. Graduates from programs in institutions with which UTA Colleges or Schools have developed formal articulation agreements may be considered for waiver of the GRE or GMAT. Students who have completed their undergraduate degrees within the past 3 years (as measured from the start of the semester in which admission is desired) from a program that is a normal undergraduate feeder program for the degree to be sought. Contingent (provisional) admission can be offered under this procedure for students in their final year of undergraduate studies, with the contingency removed upon the satisfactory completion and award of the undergraduate degree.

3. The student's undergraduate GPA must equal or exceed 3.0 in each of two calculations (1) in the last 60 hours of study (2) in all undergraduate coursework completed. The Graduate School will calculate the student's GPA in the last 60 hours of undergraduate study in accordance with state law and existing policies. The overall GPA calculation is provided on the student's official transcript. Programs may set the GPA requirements above 3.0, but must apply their chosen standards to all applicants included under an articulation agreement in a consistent manner.

4. An applicant's record must be assessed for evidence strengths relevant to success in a unit's graduate program. Performance on criteria normally used in admission decisions should be considered. These criteria may include letters of reference from faculty, interviews, achievement in specific courses, independent studies, research, and other activities that speak to an applicant's potential for success. Strengths justifying a waiver must be noted on the admission worksheet. Meeting the minimum GPA requirement shall not be sole determinant of whether a waiver is granted.

B. Other Requirements

The student must comply with all other requirements for admission to the Graduate School, i.e., must submit an application, pay application evaluation fees, and provide required transcripts from other institutions to the Graduate School.

C. Procedures

1. Upon review of the application and the academic record of the student, the Graduate Studies Committee/Admission Committee/Graduate Advisor may approve or disapprove the waiver of the requirement of a GRE or GMAT score.
2. The Graduate Advisor of the appropriate program will advise the Dean of the Graduate School that the Committee has waived the GRE or GMAT score by writing “[GRE/GMAT] score waived by the [insert program name] Graduate Studies Committee” on the student’s Graduate Admissions Worksheet.
3. The comment section on the worksheet should note the specific strengths demonstrated by the applicant that support waiver of the GRE or GMAT.
4. Programs may encounter instances in which an undergraduate from a participating school meets the minimum GPA requirement for a waiver, but does not have a record of achievement that justifies waving the GRE or GMAT. In such cases programs should require submission of GRE or GMAT scores (and defer or admit the applicant provisionally) or deny the application. An explanation of the basis of such decisions must be provided in the comment section on the work sheet.

D. Implementation

1. This proposal is intended to empower all departments to offer GRE or GMAT waivers of highly qualified graduates from feeder institutions. Programs must adopt consistent policies for review and evaluation of applicants and document their decision process in each applicant’s file.
2. Once a policy on waivers is adopted, it must be applied to applicants from all relevant schools uniformly.
3. A program’s policy may be changed by formal vote of the Committee on Graduate Studies. However any such change must be undertaken in consultation with partnering colleges or universities if the policy on waiver is part of the agreement or understanding among the institutions.
4. Any policy or change in policy must be documented.

E. Review

The Graduate Assembly stated its intention to review the waiver of the requirement for a GRE or GMAT three years after initiation. Therefore, graduate programs should assemble a careful record of those granted and denied waivers so that preparation for the review is straightforward and unproblematic.