

Graduate and Professional Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday 2 February 2023

Nagle 113; [Zoom Link](#)

Meeting ID: XXX XXX XXXX

Passcode: GPCXXXX

ATTENDEES

In-Person

Fuhui Tong, Chair

Maria Escobar-Lemmon (Government and Public Service)

Mark C. Gleason, Administrative Assistant

Online

Mary Bryk (Agriculture and Life Sciences), Katie Reed (Architecture), Adam Seipp (Arts and Sciences), Dwight Garey (Business), Reginald Taylor (Dentistry), Beverly Irby (Education and Human Development), Hank Walker (Engineering), Antonietta Quigg (Galveston), Charlotte Ku (Law), Matthew Sorenson (Nursing), Kourtney Starrett (Performance, Visualization, and Fine Arts), Tamika Gilreath (Public Health), Bill Murphy (Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences), Luz Herrera (Faculty Senate), Yaswant Devarakonda (Graduate and Professional Student Government)

Trent Smith (Graduate and Professional School), Terra Bissett (Curricular Services), Angel Carrizales (Curricular Services), Alicia Dorsey (Provost) Stephanie Graves (University Libraries)

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. **New Standardized Test Score Requirement Request Guidance – *Attachments 1-2***

- [Tong] Introduction
 - First review of standardized test score requirement requests received in August 2022
 - GPC discussed providing new guidance and template for how request memoranda should be prepared and submitted for review
 - Draft of new guidance developed by Mark C. Gleason for consideration, to be voted on in March 2023 meeting ahead of resubmission deadline of 31 March 2023
 - Example also provided by Department Teaching, Learning, and Culture for “practice” review under new guidance
- Discussion
 - [Walker] Rubric with possible score combinations
 - [Tong] Requests should indicate a consistent evaluation standard

- [Walker] PHD selection committees are often more flexible in their evaluation standards
 - [Irby] Detailed rubric should not be necessary
 - [Bryk] Question of whether transparency regarding approval of standardized test score requirements provides benefit to students
 - [Reed] Question of whether these memoranda will be available to students
 - [Tong] As long as the GPC agrees that information is sufficient and the process is transparent and equally applied to all applicants
 - [Walker/Tong] Role of program rankings with external evaluators can be one of several factors
 - [Seipp] Guidance needs to provide language explaining potential reasons for the GPC denying a request
 - [Devarakonda] Might be related to how scores will be used
 - [Walker] If memo does not include the basic requirements that would be reason for denial, or vagueness in explanation of justification or use of scores
 - [Reed/Bryk] GPC should avoid trying to over-evaluate whether the use of standardized test scores is fair in a given program's context as the department is expert in the needs of its programs
 - [Seipp] Should include brief statement regarding review and approval/denial process
 - [Gleason] Section on grounds for denial will be added in the next draft
 - [Escobar-Lemmon/Ku] Should incorporate language from original university suspension of standardized test score requirement approved in February 2022
 - [Tong] Elements raised during discussion (above) will be removed, language from original policy will be included, and second draft will be circulated ahead of March 2023 meeting where GPC will vote for approval or further revisions
- 2. Notification of GRE Requirement Removal (Electrical and Comp. Engineering) – *Attachment 3***
- Department will no longer require applicants to submit GRE scores in their application process as of Summer/Fall 2023
 - Affected programs:
 - MS-CEEN
 - MS-CEEN (Distance)
 - PHD-CEEN
 - MS-ELEN
 - MS-ELEN (Distance)
 - PHD-ELEN
 - **Notification Received**

3. Graduate and Professional Council Standard Operating Procedures Review and Revision – *Attachment 4*

- [Tong] Introduction
 - Standard Operating Procedures for the Graduate and Professional Council may be in need of review and updating
 - Graduate Policies and Standard Committee has not been in operation since Summer 2022
- Discussion
 - Policies and Standards Committee
 - [Gleason] previous membership included Mary Bryk, Charlotte Ku, and Katie Reed; formerly chaired by Jeff Hatala
 - [Tong] SOP requires three to five members, so minimum is met
 - Beverly Irby volunteered to serve on committee
 - No chair selected
 - [Tong] request that Policies and Standards Committee conduct initial review and evaluate possible areas in need of revision
- Policies and Standards Committee will present findings of initial review in next GPC meeting

CONSENT AGENDA (Approved)

1. Course Changes

[IMED 843: Cardiology Outpatient](#)

[IMED 857: Hematology and Medical Oncology – Outpatient](#)

[IMED 869: Hematology](#)

[IMED 989: Special Topics in...](#)

[MFCM 989: Special Topics in...](#)

[MHUM 989: Special Topics in...](#)

[MPED 989: Special Topics in...](#)

[MPSY 806: Outpatient Psychiatry](#)

[MPSY 989: Special Topics in...](#)

[OBGY 989: Special Topics In...](#)

[SURG 814: Cardiothoracic Surgery](#)

[SURG 989: Special Topics in...](#)

2. New Courses

[ANES 810: Pediatric Anesthesiology](#)

[MEID 713: Transition to Clerkship](#)

[MEID 824: Lifestyle Medicine and Behavior](#)

[MPSY 803: Advanced Child and Adolescent Psychiatry](#)

[MPSY 815: Neuropsychiatry](#)

[NEXT 800: Neurology Clerkship](#)

[OBGY 822: Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology](#)

[SURG 889: Surgical Innovation](#)

[VTMI 638: Biomedical Virology](#)

3. Miscellaneous Request

[CLMN - Change to Grading for Professional Medicine](#)

COURSE AND PROGRAM AGENDA

1. New Courses

[MHUM 824: Mental Wellness in Times of Crisis](#) (Tabled)

2. New Programs

[MS-SCAN: Master of Science in Supply Chain and Analytics](#) (Approved)

Attachment 1

Standardized Test Score Requirement Request Memorandum Guidance

[DRAFT]

During the Academic Year 2021-2022, Texas A&M University permanently eliminated the standardized test requirement for graduate admissions beginning with the recruiting cycle AY 2022-2023 (Fall 2023 and Spring 2023 admissions). In ending the requirement, the university allowed individual programs to require official scores on a standardized test upon request with approval by the Graduate and Professional Council (GPC).

When this process was approved, the GPC provided guidance regarding the format of memoranda which departments were expected to submit in requesting a continuation to require standardized test scores be provided by applicants to a given program. The GPC asked that these memoranda provide a justification and discussion of why the department needs to require standardized test scores and how those scores would be used in the evaluation process.

Between August and November 2022, in reviewing a number of requests, the GPC came to the conclusion that the requests were insufficient and that more information should be requested. During such discussions, several colleges and schools also noted that departments found it difficult to determine the level of specificity expected in writing these requests. As a result, it was determined that additional guidance should be provided to assist departments in their preparation of request memoranda.

Justification

During the reviews referenced above, the majority of GPC members accepted that most of the memoranda received during the Fall 2022 meetings provided sufficient justifications for their requests. These justification statements included several common factors. Most noted that the standardized test scores accepted by the department had served as an accurate predictor of student outcomes. Others explained that the GRE/GMAT/etc. provided prospective students from lesser-known or lower-ranking universities – especially international applicants – with an opportunity to further demonstrate their qualifications. Other metrics in the evaluation process may overlook qualified students who would be at a disadvantage if the application did *not* include standardized testing scores. Further, depending on the type of program, standardized exams may help the department quantify a student's writing, analytical, or other skills as may be needed for success.

Several departments also indicated that their programs either should or must require scores based on the current academic landscape. It may be common practice among peer institutions to require the GRE/GMAT/etc. Additionally, national institutions which rank university programs may drop a program's ranking if it does not require standardized test scores. For others, *not* requiring scores automatically places the program into a lower category of perceived quality and reputation.

Use of Test Scores

In addition to the justification, the GPC also asks that request memoranda provide information regarding how departments intend to use standardized test scores in the evaluation of applicants. This may include – but is not limited to – weighting of scores in relation to other application items, expectations for certain students as a counter-balance to other factors (lower GPAs, school rankings, writing samples, etc.), and so forth. It is also recommended that – if possible – how the scores will be considered in relation to these or other application materials.

These memoranda might also include a discussion of the departments experience in requiring standardized test scores in their application and admissions process (if scores have been required before). This may include number of applicants, how the standardized test scores were applied in, results, and any other observations.

Standardized Test Scores Request Memorandum Format Example

College/School of XXXX

Department of XXXX

To: Dr. Fuhui Tong
Interim Associate Provost and Dean
Graduate and Professional School

Through: [Name]
Graduate Operations Committee Dean
College of XXXX

From: [Name]
[Title (Department Head, Graduate Program Coordinator, etc.)]
Department of XXXX

Date: XX Month 20XX

Subject: Request to Require the Use of Standardized Test Scores for XXXX Programs

The Department of XXXX currently offers a [degree(s)] in [program name], [on-campus and/or distance]. We are requesting to require the GRE for new applicants as a critical and uniform criterion for comparing applicants to the following graduate programs:

[Please list all applicable degree types, program names, modes of delivery, thesis/non-thesis options that standardized test scores will be required for]

Program Summary

These programs attract individuals from across the state, the country, and the world. Our incoming graduate class consists of applicants with diverse backgrounds Applications for all programs open each March and close on 1 August to allow for a thorough faculty review process in advance of any admission decisions. This past recruitment cycle, we received over 1,000 completed applications across all six graduate programs, and offered approximately 50 admissions following a thorough review process. This translates to a 5% acceptance rate, which puts us among the most competitive XXXX graduate programs nationwide. As each candidate brings unique experiences and perspectives to the program.

Justification

Requiring the GRE for applicants to our program(s) will enable us to better compare applicants who graduated from an array of universities, colleges, or programs, both domestically and internationally; however, it will not be the only factor considered in our review process. Our admissions committees make decisions based upon each unique applicant as reflected in their *curricula vitae*, personal statement, school ranking and program quality, overall grade point average, quality of recommendation letters, and relevant career experiences. Applications to the PhD programs can be quite dense, and their contents can vary greatly. GRE scores will serve as a valuable, assistive part in our admissions decisions. They will allow our evaluation committees to compare applicants using a common standard. It will also serve as a counter-balance to subjective analyses of personal statements and recommendation letters which can be subject to biases from both the applicant and the reviewer.

Process for the Use of Scores

GRE scores will not be weighted higher than any other recommended application component, but it is a useful factor. According to our evaluation rubrics, the GRE scores account for 3 out of 45 total points that an applicant can receive.

The GRE writing score, for example, provides us with a consistent standard to assess writing fluency, which we believe is critical to success in the XXXX programs. We have developed minimum recommendations for scores, and our rubric lists various acceptable score combinations (verbal, quantitative, and writing) which is noted by the reviewer. However, for anyone who falls below the recommended scores, we also examine their writing samples and reevaluate their GRE scores in that light. These are also balanced with other factors such as years of experience, the quality of essays, and recommendation letters.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you have any questions, please let us know and we will be happy to provide additional information.

Sincerely,

Attachment 2

November 14, 2022

TO: Dr. Fuhui Tong
Interim Associate Provost and Dean
Graduate and Professional School

THROUGH: Dr. Michael de Miranda
Dean
School of Education and Human Development

THROUGH: Dr. Beverly Irby
Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
School of Education and Human Development

FROM: Dr. Claire Katz
Interim Department Head
Department of Teaching, Learning and Culture

RE: Request to Require the GRE Score for the Online Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction Program

History of the Online Ed.D. and Programmatic Context

The Department of Teaching, Learning, and Culture is home to an Online Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction (Ed.D.). The Ed.D. program attracts individuals from both across the state and across the country currently contextualized in K-12 education looking to move into upper-level administrative roles. Applicants come from a diverse array of experiences, both past and present. While many are lifelong educators, some entered education as a second career, having educational backgrounds and experience in such subjects as hard sciences, English, dance, and history. Beyond their initial preparation, there are experiential differences amongst candidates in terms of their current context. Applicants and enrolled students occupy a variety of positions including classroom teacher, school administrator, vice superintendent, educational consultant, and curriculum content designer. As each candidate brings a unique background and perspective to the program, which is a strength as our ultimate aim is to develop interdisciplinary, thoughtful leaders, the GRE score in totality is a critical evaluation criterion that we are able to consistently apply to each application during the first phase of our two-step admission process (Step 1: Holistic review paired with rubric scoring by faculty admissions committee, Step 2: Candidate video submission to assess programmatic alignment).

Justification and Implementation of Scores

The Online Ed.D. program in the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Culture has successfully graduated 109 individuals, with 83 currently active students. The Ed.D. employs a cohort model, with cohorts limited to 12-18 students to ensure success. Applications for the program open each March and close on August 1 to allow for a thorough, dual-step faculty review process prior to admissions decisions being made. During the Spring 2023 application cycle, thirty-six applicants submitted a complete application. Twenty-four moved on to round 2 of the application process, with eighteen offers of admission made. As this is a doctoral program, application packages are voluminous by nature, and considering the breadth and depth of applicants' experiences, vary greatly in nature. The GRE allows the faculty review committee to have a point of commonality amongst all applicants, an item to be considered a control. While the GRE score is not weighted higher than any other recommended application component (minimum 5 years teaching experience, evidence of leadership in K-12

settings, quality of essays and recommendation letters), it is a useful factor. Although we require writing samples as part of the admission process, we do not have a way to verify their authenticity or originality. We use rubrics to rate all of these factors. Out of a possible 75 points that a student could receive on the rubric the GRE scores account for 5 points. On our rubric we list a number of score combinations and the reviewer selects the score combination (verbal, quant, and writing) that best reflects the applicant's scores. Thus, the entire examine is reflected in the review process

Articulated Process for Using the Scores

The GRE writing score provides us with a uniform assessment of writing fluency, which is critical to success in our program. We also have minimum recommended GRE scores (145 verbal, 140 quant and 3.5 on the writing). If anyone falls below the recommended scores, we make a note and then use the writing samples provided as additional information in conjunction with a number of other factors including years of teaching experience (we require a minimum of 5 years, evidence of leadership in K-12 settings, and the quality of the essays and recommendation letters. As the nature of the Ed.D. program is to develop and graduate practitioners ready to lead change from within a K-12 education context, applicants' writing scores have been used as indicator of preparedness and overall success within and beyond their time spent in the program.

Additional Rationale

When tapping into our institutional knowledge, there have been no major limitations or barriers to those interested in applying accessing the GRE. This indicates that the GRE is not a limiting factor or exclusionary item. Additionally, when looking at the requirements of an Ed.D. application at peer institutions, the GRE is a required item.


Thank you for your consideration. Please reach out should you have any questions.


Attachment 3

January 4, 2023

MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Fuhui Tong
Interim Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate and Professional School

THROUGH: Dr. Duncan M Walker 
Associate Dean for Graduate Programs

FROM: Dr. Jiang Hu
Co-Director of ECE Graduate Programs


SUBJECT: Request to Remove the GRE Requirement for Graduate ECEN Programs

The Graduate Studies Committee in ECEN has decided that effective immediately, GRE scores are highly recommended but not required for admission to the following programs:

Ph.D. Computer Engineering (CEEN)
M.S. Computer Engineering (CEEN)
M.S. Computer Engineering (CEEN) - Distance Education

Ph.D. Electrical Engineering (ELEN)
M.S. Electrical Engineering (ELEN)
M.S. Electrical Engineering (ELEN) - Distance Education

The GRE requirement should be removed from Summer 2023, Fall 2023, and all future admission cycles.

Graduate and Professional Council (GPC) Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

Purpose: The Graduate and Professional Council shall review all curricular requests pertaining to graduate and professional academic programs, shall be responsible for the quality and development of graduate instruction and programs, and shall advise the Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate and Professional School on all graduate and professional program matters.

The Council shall communicate in writing, through its Administrative Assistant, its recommendations to the Faculty Senate, by way of the Executive Committee.

Meetings: The Council will meet on the first Thursday of each month.

1. Membership shall consist of the following individuals:

- One (1) representative from each college and off-campus academic unit who shall be selected by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee after consultation with the college deans and caucuses (chairs of the college committees for graduate instruction shall be considered for appointment)
- Two (2) representatives of the Graduate Faculty who shall be selected by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee
- Two (2) graduate students who shall be selected by the Graduate and Professional Student Government
- Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate and Professional School (Ex-Officio)

All faculty members serving on the Council shall be members of the Graduate Faculty.

All of the above members except the Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate and Professional School shall be voting members. In the absence of the appointed member, a substitute may vote on behalf of that unit.

A representative from the Graduate and Professional School and one representative of the University Library Council shall serve as non-voting members. In addition, a representative from Curricular Services shall serve and provide advice as a non-voting member.

The two representatives of the Graduate Faculty shall serve three-year terms. Those serving on a committee as a result of their Texas A&M University position shall continue to serve as long as they are in that position. Student members shall serve one-year terms.

A representative from the Graduate and Professional School shall serve as the Administrative Assistant but not have voting privileges.

To ensure continuity, the Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate and Professional School shall serve as the Chair of the Council.

2. The Council shall have the authority to create standing and ad hoc committees as necessary to carry out its duties and responsibilities. Standing committees will include a master's and doctorate curricular review committee, a first professional doctorate curricular review committee, and a graduate policies and standards committee. Ad hoc committees will be created as needed. The election of these committee chairs and committee members should take place during the September meeting for an effective date of September 15. Chairs of the committees will serve a three-year term with no limit on the number of consecutive terms. Members of the committees will serve a two-year term with no limit on the number of consecutive terms. In the event of a vacancy of a committee chair or a committee member during the academic year, the Council shall nominate and ratify a replacement to fill the unexpired term. Standing committee guidelines are outlined in items A through C below.

- A. Master's and Doctorate Curricular Review Committee
 - 1. Composed 6-8 members who are members of the Council.
 - 2. Performs review of course and program proposals and changes for master's, doctorate, and graduate certificate curricula and provides input to the full Council.
 - 3. The committee chair in consultation with the Council Chair will determine division of duties and review metrics.
 - 4. The committee chair may request assistance of ad hoc members as needed.

- B. First Professional Doctorate Curricular Review Committee
 - 1. Composed of 5 members, one representative from each first professional doctorate program (DDS, DVM, JD, MD, PharmD).
 - 2. The GOC Dean of the college administering each first professional doctorate program will name a faculty member or administrator to represent their program on the committee.
 - 3. Performs review of course and program proposals and changes for all first professional doctorate curricula and provides input to the full Council.
 - 4. The committee chair in consultation with Council Chair determines division of duties and review metrics.

- C. Graduate and Professional Policies and Standards Committee
 - 1. Composed of 3-5 members who are members of the Council.
 - 2. Addresses issues of policy and standards and suggestions from graduate directors, faculty, and the Graduate School related to university admissions, English language proficiency, rules, degree program requirements, student welfare and support, as well as other relevant graduate and professional education concerns.
 - 3. Brings items for discussion with recommendations (where applicable) to the Council for further discussion and actions.
 - 4. Coordinates with the Graduate Operations Committee (GOC) as needed.
 - 5. As necessary, assists master's and doctorate curricular review committee with program reviews.
 - 6. The committee chair in consultation with the Council Chair determines frequency of meetings of committee, as needed.

3. Council Agenda items requiring vote include:

- New degree programs
- New certificate programs
- New courses
- Existing courses to be offered in a nontraditional format (See, TAMU Rule 11.03.99.M1, Definition of a Credit Hour)
- Dual degree
- Joint degree
- Combination programs (within TAMU or with another institution)
- Program closure (degree, minor, or certificate program)
- Degree or certificate name change
- Semester Credit Hour (SCH) change for degree or certificate programs
- Change to degree or certificate program requirements with or without a change in SCH
- Non-Editorial Change to existing courses, such as course description, title, prerequisites, level, SCH, contact hours (lecture/lab/other), course number, and prefix.
- Course deletion/inactivation
- Standardized Test Waiver Requests
- Administrative Changes
- Special Considerations

These items may be approved, not approved, approved with changes (friendly amendments), referred to an electronic vote (e-vote, see item 10) prior to the deadline to submit to Faculty Senate, or postponed to a certain time (tabled, see item 11). Each item must at least half (50 percent) of Council voting members in attendance to be approved.

4. The College representative or designee must be present to answer any questions regarding an agenda item. If a question arises and no representative is present, then the item will not be considered.

5. Letters of support from all academic programs affected by curricular changes shall be provided to the Council by the academic unit (department or college) bringing the item(s) forward.

6. Newly proposed courses in which undergraduate and graduate students meet together at the same time with the same instructor (“stacked courses”) must have an instructor of record that is a member of the Graduate Faculty, the head(s) of the department(s) in which the stacked courses are listed must approve the stacked course offering, and the syllabus must clearly indicate the additional work required for the graduate students.

7. Cross-listed courses require the submission of one course proposal to add the cross-listing. Cross-listed courses should be in compliance with information posted in the resource section of the Curricular Services webpage (<https://registrar.tamu.edu/Our-Services/Curricular-Services/CurricularProcesses/Course-Inventory-Approvals>).

8. Approval of research and problem-based credit hours (685 and 691 courses as well as 791 courses when used similarly to 691 courses) and exploratory new (special topics) courses (689) go through an abbreviated workflow and do not require Council approval.

9. The Council shall operate under these rules:

1. Twelve working days prior to meeting (e.g., Tuesday 2 weeks prior to a Thursday meeting) all agenda items are due to the GC Preparer approval role in CARS.
2. No later than Monday of the week before a meeting the curricula review committees and all voting and non-voting members will receive the agenda as a digital file easily searched and including all materials necessary to complete an informed review. The curricula review committees should enter comments in CARS by the Monday morning of the week of the meeting.
3. A consent agenda can be formed of the course proposals that receive no comments from the curricular review committees or Council members by the Monday of the week of the meeting.
4. Any agenda item may be challenged at the meeting by a motion from a Council Member.

10. The Chair may elect to hold an electronic vote (e-vote) meeting when agenda items are minimal and there are no pending deadlines. A special virtual meeting or an e-vote for a specific agenda item with an extremely tight deadline may also be used as deemed appropriate by the Chair and voted by the Council. E-votes by the Council are sent to the Administrative Assistant for compilation. The Chair is notified and the agenda item either passes or fails based on the e-votes received. Items that would be considered special consideration items may include a special virtual meeting with the e-vote.

11. The Council may vote to postpone voting on an agenda item (table the item) for various reasons (i.e., no representative present, support letters missing, corrections to form/syllabus, etc.). It is the responsibility of the academic unit to resubmit the postponed item for reconsideration with the updates as requested by the Council. Each Council member should liaison with appropriate academic units in their college to coordinate edits and resubmissions.

12. Submissions for consideration by the Council that are not complete or correct by stated Council standard will be returned, through CARS, by the Administrative Assistant, in consultation with the Chair. Proposals that are tabled pending friendly amendment will be rolled back to the academic unit if not resolved by the next Council meeting.

13. New course requests and course changes involving significant content modification or alteration in course credit hours must include syllabi that comply with current University minimum syllabus requirements (<https://faculty senate.tamu.edu/Quick-Links/Minimum-Syllabus-Requirements>).