

2019—2020
Special Graduate Faculty Meeting
Minutes

Thursday, September 12, 2019
1:55 p.m., Weimer 3032

A special meeting of the CJC Graduate Faculty was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Associate Dean Kelleher. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the GRE requirement for admission to the Master's program.

Prior to the GRE discussion, Kelleher reminded everyone that the GSMCA picnic is Sunday, September 15th from 2:00 to 4:30 at Lake Wauburg.

Kelleher and Treise met recently with R. Paul Duncan, Senior Associate Dean of the Graduate School. Duncan explained that the Graduate Council has proposed a change to the GRE policy. "Specifically, graduate degree-granting academic units, with the concurrence of the College(s) in which they reside, will determine and promulgate their admission requirements regarding GRE, GMAT, or other standardized test scores, for Master's programs, effective with the application and admission processes for students who will begin Master's degree programs on or after July 1, 2020. "

The Graduate Council also stated that "the Graduate School will continue to expect that programs requiring the submission of GRE scores will use those scores as part of a holistic assessment of applicants, will avoid the use of minimum scores, rigid cut points, or other devices that may give undue weight to this single element in their admission decisions."

Kelleher told the faculty that a ballot will be sent out to all graduate faculty members asking just one question, "Should the College of Journalism and Communications require the GRE as part of its admissions process for the MAMC degree? Yes or No." The vote will begin at 3:00 p.m. 9/12/19 and will close at 5:00 p.m. Monday, 9/16/19.

Discussion followed—

- If we continue to require the GRE, we should publicize the scores as "strongly preferred," not a hard cut off point.
- The 3.0 GPA is a requirement (can be petitioned to the Graduate School if less) and is just part of the application packet.
- It was asked if the GRE can be waived for students who have taken the LSAT. Some faculty thought we could substitute. We will check with Sarah Johnson, our Admissions Officer. (**NOTE:** 9-13-19—Sarah said the LSAT cannot take the place of the GRE. The LSAT is a professional exam and the GRE is for graduate studies.)
- A faculty member explained that international students benefit from taking the GRE, it helps prepare them for graduate studies.
- Some faculty members feel the GRE exam keeps some students, especially minorities and poor people, from applying to graduate school because they either cannot afford to take the exam, or they cannot take the prep classes to prepare.
- It was mentioned that sometimes other exams, like the TOEFL, can be a better predictor in a graduate program with writing.

- All programs, within the same degree must have the same requirement—for instance, our distance program and on-campus program must have the same policy.
- A lot of data says the GRE is predictive—a low score is indicative of low performance.
- Ferguson, PR Graduate Coordinator and evaluator of PR applications, said the more information there is to evaluate the student, the better the decisions made. When asked if there is a good alternative to the GRE, she replied, “not really.” She mentioned that recommendation letters are always very favorable and aren’t a good indication of success in the program. Anyone could have written the writing samples so even that isn’t predictive.
- The GRE and TOEFL measure different things so while the TOEFL is valuable, it’s only part of the students’ knowledge.
- Walsh-Childers, International Comm Graduate Coordinator and evaluator of IC applications, said when a student is admitted, it is basically being said (unspoken) that after evaluating the application, we believe they will do well in the program, based on test scores, etc.
- If we remove the GRE requirement, an alternative will be needed so the decisions are based on more than writing samples, GPA, and letters of recommendation.
- Goodman, former Advertising Graduate Coordinator and evaluator of ADV applications, mentioned that the letter of recommendation form used to rank percentages of ability is more useful than the actual letters.
- It was said that the GRE helps prepare students for what to expect from a graduate program.

The meeting closed with a reminder that the vote will begin at 3:00 p.m. and end Monday at 5:00 p.m.