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May 2, 2024

Vicki L. Hewitt, Ed.D.  
University Senate  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
335 George Street, Suite 1250  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Dear Dr. Hewitt,

I am writing in response to the University Senate's report and recommendations on Charge S-2203: Examining the Efficacy of the GRE. I appreciate the Senate's examination of this timely issue and its recommendations regarding the various ways that we as an institution might consider the role of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) in admissions decisions.

At my request, University Academic Affairs convened the graduate deans to review and provide a response to your recommendations, and the summary of that response appears below.

***Recommendation: Graduate school deans shall advise graduate program directors on the strengths and weaknesses of the GRE, as well as on the strengths of holistic review, before the end of the Spring 2023 semester and on an annual basis thereafter.***

The Graduate School–**Camden** has been convening regular discussions with Graduate Program Directors (for master's and doctoral programs) around holistic review in admissions since 2019. Master's programs that require the GRE typically value a holistic review over GRE prioritization and include a comprehensive review of the entire application. One PhD program requires the GRE and others are GRE optional, but in all cases holistic application review is conducted.

Since June 2021, the Graduate School–**Newark** has partnered with ETS – the creators of the GRE – to deliver a series of workshops and training opportunities to faculty and deans at Rutgers–Newark. These workshops have focused on holistic review, enrollment management, student success, GRE exam elements, TOEFL exam elements, and more.

**RBHS** does not require the GRE for any of its graduate programs.

At **Rutgers–New Brunswick**, the School of Graduate Studies’ policy is that the GRE is waived as follows:

- For Rutgers University undergraduates who have at least a 3.2 GPA in their major AND are applying for a master’s degree in the same field (whether as part of an accelerated bachelor’s/master’s, 4 + 1 or 3 + 2 program or not) AND are applying within two years of completing their bachelor’s degree.
- For applicants who already have a master’s degree in the same (or closely related) field from a university that uses English as its primary language of instruction AND have at least a 3.2 GPA (or equivalent) for their master’s.
- For applicants to terminal master’s programs who have at least five years of relevant work experience AND have an undergraduate degree from a university that uses English as its primary language of instruction OR have an advanced degree from the US (such as a PhD, MD, or MBA)

***Recommendation: Graduate admission committees need to decide on whether to require, eliminate, or maintain the GRE as optional for the admissions process for the incoming class of 2024-2025 AY.***

In **Camden**, the only graduate programs that require the GRE in Camden are Data Science, Computer Science, and Computational and Integrative Biology. In the CCIB program, the GRE can be waived if the applicant has a math/physics undergraduate degree. The other graduate programs in Camden have eliminated the requirement to submit a GRE score, or it is optional and part of a holistic review for admission. Even in instances where the GRE is required, applications receive a comprehensive review. For example, in Computer Science and Data Science these factors are considered: undergraduate school/program attended, GPA, specific grades obtained in courses determined to be foundational, letters of reference, personal statement, and TOEFL/IETLS (international). Letters of recommendation are weighed heavily when they include distinguishing qualities of the applicant, especially when there is corroboration with the transcript and personal statements. All the PhD programs include interviews in the admissions review process, as do many of the master’s programs.

Each year since 2020, the various graduate programs under the aegis of the Graduate School–**Newark** have decided whether to require, eliminate, or make optional the GRE. These decisions are made at the program level, typically among all grad faculty.

The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) in **New Brunswick** does not require scores on the GRE, although individual programs may. The SGS Executive Council approved the *Policy for Requesting GRE Waivers* in September 2017 and the SGS Graduate Faculty approved the Policy in December 2017. The purpose was to “develop a more transparent, consistent policy and set of criteria for programs that detail which categories of applicants they may request a waiver of GRE scores for during the admissions process.”

**RBHS** does not require the GRE for any of its graduate programs.

***Programs that decide to use the GRE must explicitly define how and why the GRE is used, which candidates will be asked to take the GRE, and must make this information readily available to all candidates. Moreover, this needs to be part of a holistic review process.***

Graduate school and individual program web sites specify whether the GRE is required, or not required, and how the holistic review process is enacted.

**RBHS** does not require the GRE for any of its graduate programs.

***Recommendation: If a program chooses to use the GRE, the University should provide financial support, such as free or low-cost GRE preparation materials, to address financial inequities and reduce barriers.***

The graduate deans agree that if a program chooses to use the GRE, we should provide information to applicants regarding free or low-cost GRE preparations materials, to address financial inequities and reduce barriers for undergraduate students. This support would help level the playing field and ensure that all students, regardless of their financial background, have an equal opportunity to succeed. The staff of University Academic Affairs will work during summer 2024 to compile a resource list of such materials and provide it to the graduate deans for addition to prospective student web sites.

In partnership with ETS, the Graduate School–**Newark** provides free GRE preparation materials as well as a limited number of test registration vouchers to students in its pipeline programs. The team at the Graduate School–**Newark** is sharing this information with colleagues across the institution for potential implementation on other campuses.

***Recommendation: In consultation with the Office of Institutional Research and Academic Planning (OIRAP), each graduate program shall develop reporting systems on graduate student outcomes.***

The Career Center in **Camden** collects outcome data on all graduates, including graduate students. Individual programs also collect these data, which inform program decisions moving forward.

All PhD programs collect information on student employment and provide this information in the aggregate on program webpages. Some programs also include data on the number of degree completions, time to degree completion, and work status post-graduation on the program website. Several programs conduct surveys to track post-graduation employment outcomes or doctoral program admissions.

There is a survey that all graduating students at Rutgers–**New Brunswick** need to complete regarding student outcomes. The Graduate School–**Newark** has not yet developed reporting systems on graduate student outcomes but will work with the Office of Institutional Research and Decision Support regarding options in this area.

Each SHP program in **RBHS** has a process for collecting information on graduate student outcomes and reports on those outcomes as mandated by accrediting bodies.

Once again, I thank the University Senate and the members of its ad hoc committee for these recommendations in a vital area of our mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Holloway". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jonathan" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Holloway".

Jonathan Holloway

c: Prabhas Moghe, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs