



UNC CHARLOTTE

The Graduate School
The University of North Carolina at Charlotte
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The Graduate School
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DRAFT MEMORANDUM

TO: Graduate Council Members
FROM: Dr. Tom Reynolds, Associate Vice Provost and Graduate Dean
Ms. Johnna Watson, Associate Dean
DATE: November 2, 2017
RE: Test Score Optional

Graduate Program Directors and committee members are encouraged to holistically review applications for admission using a myriad of factors, including but not limited to:

- Undergraduate/graduate major and institution(s)
- GPA
- Recommendations/Reference Letters
- Statement of purpose
- Relevant professional work experience
- Research experience and interest
- Standardized test scores
- Alignment of applicant interest to faculty expertise/availability.

To encourage prospective students to consider UNC Charlotte for graduate study and provide GPDs more autonomy over program requirements, I respectfully request that the Council consider waiving the standardized test requirement for applicants to master's and doctoral programs, essentially making UNC Charlotte "test optional" unless a particular program of study elects to require official test scores of all applicants.

Currently, many Graduate Schools waive the standardized test requirement for applicants with demonstrated academic achievement and/or substantial professional or military experience. Currently, more than 35 of UNC Charlotte's graduate degree programs waive the test requirement for specific populations, including Early Entry applicants, UNC Charlotte alumni, individuals with significant professional or executive level experience in business, industry or education, and prospective students with academic success at the master's or doctoral levels.



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The existing policy on standardized test exceptions is:

- A prospective student who has already earned a master's degree will not be required to retake a standardized test if the applicant can demonstrate that he or she completed the test in the past.
- A prospective student who has taken the GRE, GMAT, MCAT, or MAT but has not earned a Ph.D., M.D. or J.D. from a US institution or a master's degree must submit official test scores that are less than five years old. If the student has not taken the test within five years, he or she must re-take the test.

The new policy could be:

- A prospective student who has already earned a master's or doctoral degree will not be required to submit standardized test scores for any program.
- Graduate Programs may elect to waive the standardized test requirement for *all* applicants, in which case prospective applicants will not be required to submit standardized test scores.
- Graduate Programs may submit criteria via Curriculum to establish program-specific waiver policy for prospective applicants, and the Graduate Admissions staff will vet applicants against the criteria and remove the test requirement as appropriate.
- A prospective student who applies to a program that *does* require a standardized test score or that has waiver criteria for which he or she is not eligible may be considered for a waiver of the requirement if (a) the GPD recommends a waiver for the applicant to the College Associate Dean, and (b) the College Associate Dean recommends the waiver to the Graduate School Associate Dean. In these cases, the Graduate Admissions staff will place a flag on the applicant record to indicate the test was waived. Regularly throughout the year, the Graduate School Associate Dean will pull aggregate data by program to assess if waivers are disproportionately being provided to specific populations. In those cases, programs will work with the Graduate School to both evaluate and address the issue.

The University considers all applicants without regard to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, age, or religion. The intent is to offer admission to those applicants whose credentials indicate a strong likelihood of success in their selected curricula. Meeting the minimum admission requirements as set forth by the graduate faculty does not guarantee admission to a graduate program, and the University reserves the right to restrict enrollments when necessary because of budgetary or other constraints.