




AMIGA HOLISTIC REVIEW

Rubrics



What is Holistic Review?

- Holistic Review, or “whole-file review,” is the process by which programs consider a full range of characteristics, including “non-cognitive”* and personal attributes, when reviewing applications for admission.
- There is a growing body of scholarly work suggesting that such qualities may be just as important as traditional measures such as grades and standardized test scores in determining a candidate’s future success (ETS, 2011; Griffin, Muñiz, & Espinoza, 2012; Kyllonen, 2005; Schwartz, Stowe, & Sendall, 2011; Sedlacek, 2004).”
- * Kent, J.D. and McCarthy, M.T. (2016). Holistic Review in Graduate Admissions: A Report from the Council of Graduate Schools. Washington, DC: Council of Graduate Schools.

Why is Holistic Review better?

- Promotes diversity in graduate populations
- Responds to historical and structural inequities in relation to graduate admissions
- Considers applicants' entire files, rather than ignoring some information requested in application or solely privileging cognitive attributes
- Promotes efficiency of review through the use of a common evaluation process for all applicants [rubrics]
- Promotes equality of review through the use of a common evaluation process for all applicants [rubrics]

Considering Non-Cognitive Attributes

- Positive self-concept
- Realistic self-appraisal
- Understands and knows the system
- Preference for long range goals
- Availability of strong support in personal networks and in the department
- Successful leadership experience
- Demonstrated community service
- [See *7 Principles of Holistic/Broad Based Admissions*, www.aacrao.org, 11/8/19]

Achieving Diversity In a Proposition 209 Environment

- November 1996: Amended the state constitution to prohibit state institutions from considering race, sex, or ethnicity in public education.
- You can legally use:
 - *First generation to earn a bachelor's degree*
 - *"Distance traveled"*
 - *Commitment to or experience working with historically underrepresented communities*
 - *Contribution to historically underrepresented communities or groups in research*
 - *Experience working with historically underrepresented communities*
- Admissions committees will be best protected legally if **admissions policy is defined**; ad hoc policy is hard to defend legally

Rubrics: Sample Framework

English Department Graduate Admissions Template

	Low (1-3)	Medium (4-7)	High (8-10)	Score
Research Experience	Limited research experience. No articulation of research topic/s.	Limited research experience in academic year or summer research program. Articulation of general research topics.	Extensive, multiple research experience in academic year or summer programs. Articulation of a well-developed, relevant research project or topic.	
Alignment with Program	General fit, or no faculty with research interests or only identifies non-affiliated faculty.	1 faculty member with similar research interests. Can consider whether candidate has reached out to the faculty member, but this is not mandatory.	2 or more faculty members with similar research interests. Can consider whether candidate has reached out to faculty members, but this is not mandatory.	
Academic Preparation	Cs or better in core or major courses and required courses.	B or better in core or major courses and required courses.	A- or better in core or major courses and required courses.	
Contributions to Diversity	No record of academic service to advance equitable access to higher education for women, racial minorities and other domestic groups in the U.S. in fields where they are underrepresented or little to no interest in research that addresses issues such as race, gender, diversity and inclusion.	A limited record of academic service to advance equitable access to higher education for women, racial minorities, and other domestic groups in the U.S. in fields where they are underrepresented or interest in research that addresses issues such as race, gender, diversity and inclusion.	A sustained record of academic service to advance equitable access to higher education for women, racial minorities, and other domestic groups in the U.S. in fields where they are underrepresented or evidence of research that addresses issues such as race, gender, diversity and inclusion.	
Non-Cognitive Attributes: realistic self-appraisal and long-range goals	No mention or vague explanation of long range goals.	Mention of long range goals as evidenced for plans to pursue doctoral degree, but little detail of professional or academic goals following graduate degree.	Preference for long range goals as evidenced by plans for not only pursuing doctoral degree, but mention of specific professional or academic goals during graduate degree. Mention of professional or academic goals following graduate degree a plus.	

Rubrics: Revising

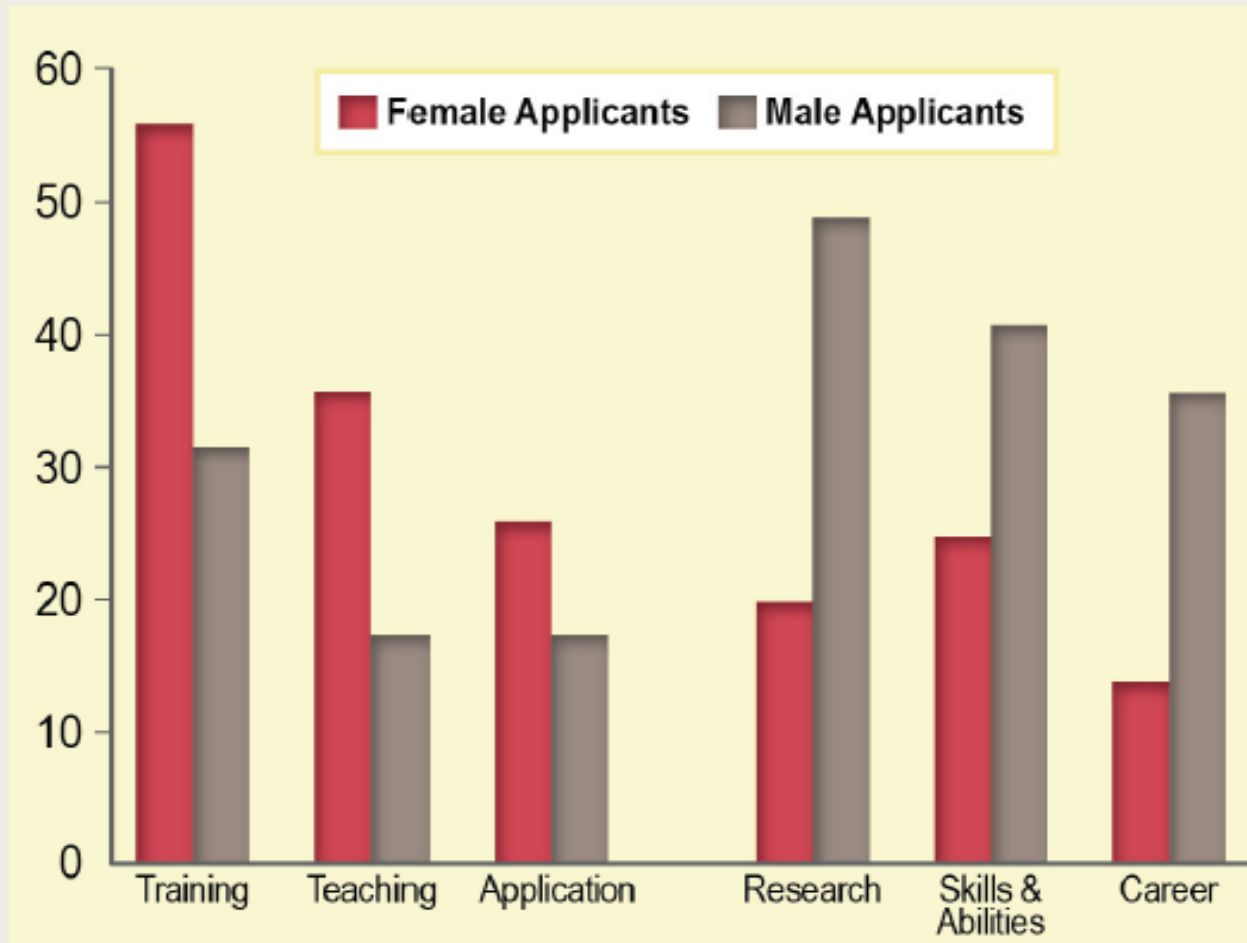
- What are the traits/characteristics that you are seeking in graduate students?
- What attributes have you found to be essential in predicting graduate student success?

Unconscious/Implicit Bias

- Because such bias is **unconscious** and **structural**, one's personal intention **does not matter**. We all harbor unconscious/implicit biases.
- Unconscious/implicit bias may show up during the admissions cycle in relation to:
 - *Lesser-known schools*
 - *Lesser-known recommenders*
 - *Known minority-serving institutions*
 - *Women or students of color applicants in “hard” sciences*
 - *Level of research experience (considering undergraduate institutions)*

Biases in Letters of Recommendation*

• Frequency of LOR Topics by gender



• Letters written about women were:

- Shorter
- More likely to lack basic features, such as how author knew the applicant
- Lacked concrete references about the applicant's record
- Lacked evaluative comments about the applicant's traits or accomplishments
- Less likely to be aligned with research record and ability

*Trix & Psenka (2003)