

A blue-tinted image of a water tower with the text 'UC DAVIS' on its spherical tank. The tower is supported by a lattice structure. The background is a solid blue color.

UC DAVIS

WELCOME TO

Essentials of Holistic Review 2019

Workshop Leads

Graduate Studies

- Josephine Moreno PhD, Graduate Diversity Officer for HArCS, Soc Sci & Edu
- Devin L. Horton PhD, Graduate Diversity Officer, STEM
- John King PhD, Interim Assistant Dean & Director of Analysis and Policy
- Brian Gallagher, Director of Admissions and Academic Services

Participating Faculty

- Santiago Barreda , Assistant Professor of Linguistics
- John Harada, Executive Associate Dean of Academic Affairs in College of Biological Sciences and Professor of Plant Biology
- Ellen Hartigan -O'Connor, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Associate Professor of History
- Desirée Martín, Associate Professor of English
- John Slater, Chair of Spanish & Portuguese, Associate Professor of Spanish
- Zoe Drayson, Assistant Professor of Philosophy

Let's start with a discussion of graduate student attributes

With your neighbor identify attributes/characteristics of successful graduate students in your graduate program or group.

Let's start with a discussion of graduate student attributes

With your neighbor identify attributes/characteristics of unsuccessful graduate students in your graduate program or group.

With your neighbor think about your program/group's admission review process

What applicant information is the basis of your current admission review?

With your neighbor think about your program/group's admission review process

Does your current admissions review match successful graduate student attributes?

What is Holistic Review?

Holistic Review or “whole file” review is a process that considers a broad range of characteristics, including both quantitative and behavioral attributes, when reviewing applications for admission.

- **Benefit – A better method to conduct admissions process and admit students who will be successful in your program based on criteria for success**
- **Outcomes – Equitable and inclusive graduate admissions for all applicants. Admission of talented, competitive, diverse graduate students that may have been overlooked using previous review methods.**

Holistic Review Facts & Myths

Facts

- Holistic review provides a clear, consistent and efficient process for faculty to follow.
- Holistic review matches successful graduate attributes with selection criteria.
- Holistic review creates equitable and inclusive admissions processes.
- Holistic review often results in a more diverse cohort.

Holistic Review Facts & Myths

Myths

- Holistic review takes longer than traditional review methods.
- Holistic review lowers academic standards of admitted students.
- Holistic review includes race and ethnicity in admission consideration.
- Holistic review is less effective than traditional evaluative measures, such as GRE scores.

The GRE: What does it measure, and is that measurement reliable?

The GRE measures general skills: reading and text analysis, arithmetic and algebra, writing using supporting examples, etc.

Numerous studies of GRE validity, mostly focused on:

- Consistency (e.g. same student re-taking the test)
- Accuracy (for the skill being measured)

Very few studies address the most important attributes of successful graduate students, or direct measures of successful graduate student outcomes.

Using the GRE to simplify complex decisions about admitting an applicant or cohort is susceptible to several sources of bias

Interpretation of GRE scores require heuristics that Tversky and Kahneman say are “quite useful, but sometimes they lead to severe and systematic errors”:

- **Representativeness**
- **Availability**
- **Anchoring and Adjustment**

Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases

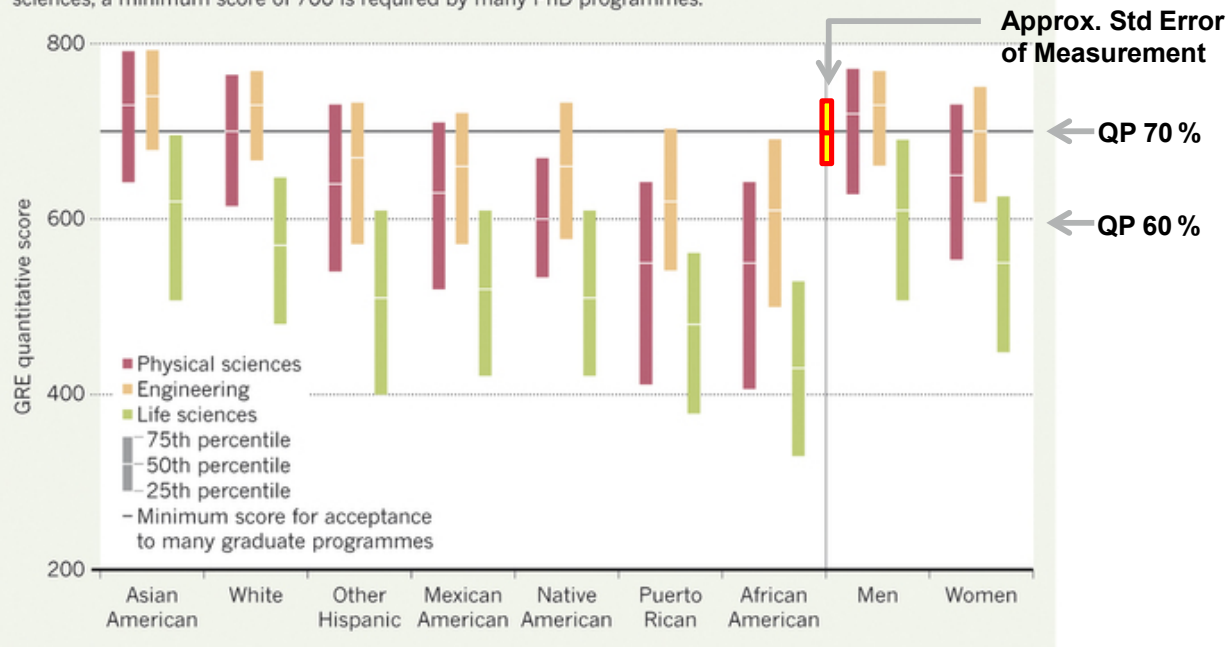
Biases in judgments reveal some heuristics of thinking under uncertainty.

Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman

High cut-off values reduce opportunities for applicants from diverse backgrounds.

THE GREAT DIVIDE

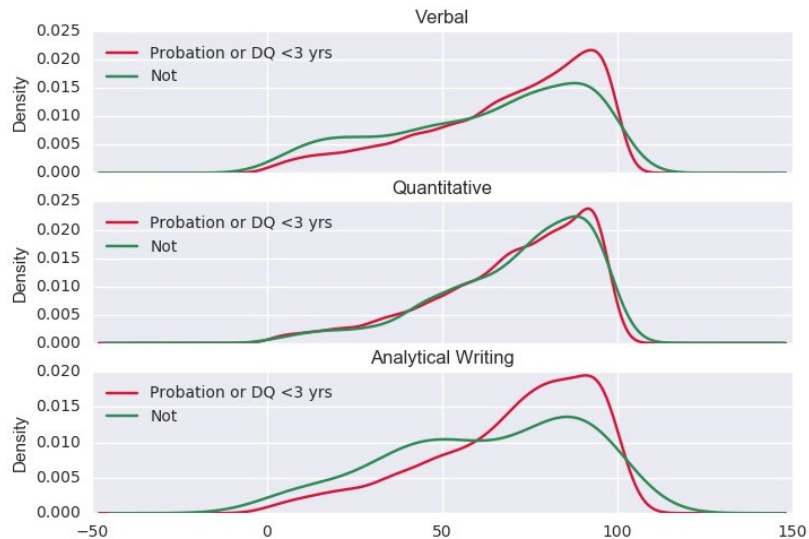
The data represent the scores typically achieved in the quantitative reasoning test of the graduate record examinations (GRE) by US students from different ethnic groups applying for graduate school. In the physical sciences, a minimum score of 700 is required by many PhD programmes.



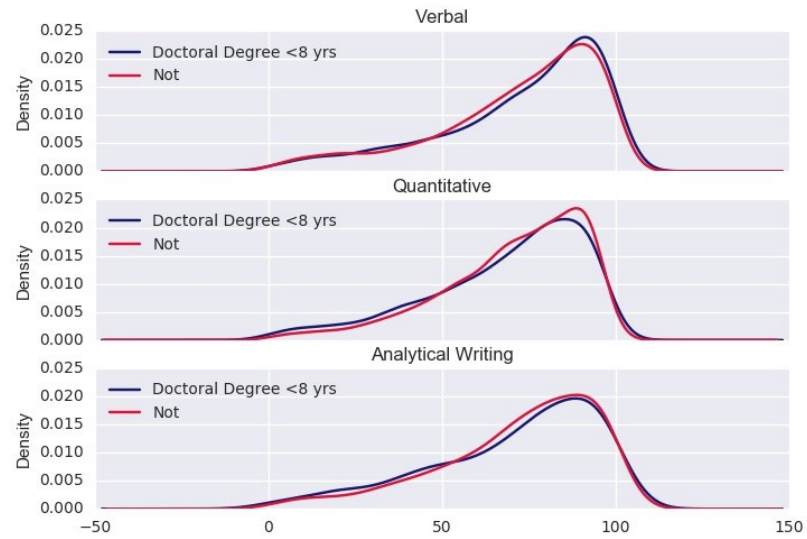
A requirement that applicants exceed a certain threshold (e.g. top 30% of test takers in Quantitative) removes a high share of URM applicants from consideration (e.g. ~70% of Latinx, >75% of Afr-Am in physical sciences, compared to ~40% Asian-am, 50% White).

Simple correlations of campus GRE scores are surprisingly low.

Students who go on probation and/or DQ within 3 years have higher GRE scores



GRE distributions almost identical for PhD completers, non-completers



UC Davis GRE Correlations

	GRE Verbal	GRE Quant	GRE Writing
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GRE Verbal			
GRE Quantitative	0.15		
GRE Writing	0.35	0.50	
GPA after 3 quarters	0.19	-0.02	0.13
Credit Hours after 3 qtrs	0.01	0.00	0.02
Retained after 3 quarters	0.01	0.01	0.01
TTD master's	0.09	-0.09	-0.12
Master's degree <3 years	-0.05	0.03	-0.02
TTD doctoral	0.16	-0.10	-0.04
Doctoral cand. <3 years	-0.11	0.07	0.07
Doctoral degree <6 years	-0.10	0.07	0.03
Doctoral degree <8 years	-0.02	0.05	0.03
Probation/DQ <3 years	-0.06	0.01	-0.07

If you plan to use the GRE...

1. Familiarize yourself with the [GRE Guide to the Use of Scores](#).
2. Avoid using GRE scores as a first sort (anchoring).
3. Use GRE scores to confirm or prompt reevaluation of impressions gained from richer sources.
4. Do not set cut-offs.

Also:

Program degree requirements usually state whether the GRE is required in section 1) Admissions requirements

Holistic Review : Use a Rubric

- Rubric or evaluative template
 - Provides equitable evaluation of all applicants
 - Evaluation is consistent across reviewers
 - Faculty discussion focuses on successful applicant attributes or desirable attributes
 - Saves faculty time using a common tool

Develop your evaluative rubric for broad skills key materials

or **17**

- Identify successful graduate student attributes.
- Decide on elements to evaluate, e.g. coursework, SOP, PHDS, writing sample, resume/cv.
- Determine how to score and meaning of each score.
- Use a few past examples to “norm” between reviewers.
- Share common definitions, e.g. first generation, pipeline or grad school prep programs.

Holistic Review – Application Content

- **Consider many forms of information about each applicant located in different places within the Slate application system:**
 - **Pipeline and graduate school preparation programs**
 - **Prior family access to education and first-generation college/graduate students**
 - **Active military/veterans**
 - **Résumé/CV**
- **Consider the order in which content is reviewed**

Holistic Review – Application Content

385405368 West TEST, Iris TEST 2019-20: Communication, Ph.D. Se:

2 / 2, Dashboard

slate

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UC DAVIS GRADUATE STUDIES

GRADUATE PREPARATION PROGRAMS

UC Davis has partnered with several programs which prepare undergraduate students for success in graduate school. Applicants affiliated with these selective programs are considered highly competitive on a national level. Any applicable programs will be listed below in blue. You can find a link to descriptions of these programs at the top of the review form.

AGEP (Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate), CAMP (California Alliance for Minority Participation), Envision UC Davis program participant, Gates Millennium Scholar, LSAMP (Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation), McNair Scholar, MMUF (Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship), UC LEADS (Leadership Excellence through Advanced Degrees)

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Race/Ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino?: **No**
Black or African American, Black or African American - African American

Highest Level of Parent/Guardian education: **Bachelor's degree**

Number of siblings: **1** Number of siblings who have attended/are attending college: **None**

First family member to earn a college degree?: **No** Native Language: **English**
First family member to earn a graduate degree?: **Yes** Primary Language: **English**
Other Languages: **French**

U.S. Military Service: **Current dependent of U.S. military service member or veteran**
U.S. Army

Holistic Review – Application Content

385405368 West TEST, Iris TEST 2019-20: Communication, Ph.D.

Search...

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First family member to earn a graduate degree?: Yes

U.S. Military Service: Current dependent of U.S. military service Native Language: English
U.S. Army Primary Language: English
Other Languages: French

Rate and Comment

Rate and Comment

*****This form cannot be edited after submission. If you need to edit a submitted form, please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator.*****

NOTE: This applicant is affiliated with one or more UC Davis partner programs which prepare undergraduate students for success in graduate school. Applicants affiliated with these selective programs are considered highly competitive on a national level. See the page two of the Dashboard tab for the name of the Graduate Preparation Program(s) and [click here for more information about the individual program\(s\) themselves.](#)

Reviewer #1

Reviewer Name

Overall Rating (10=highest, 1=lowest)

Comments

Recommendation to Admission Chair

Test Scores Entry

Holistic Review – Application Content

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Dashboard
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U.S. Army

You can achieve diversity in a Prop 209 environment.

Cannot use ability, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, citizenship, etc. as the basis for admission decisions.

Can use other factors to make admission decisions, for example:

- First generation to receive a bachelor's degree
- Service to underserved communities
- Potential for leadership in the field or experience living or working among diverse communities
- Contribution to higher education through their understanding of the barriers facing women, minorities and members of other groups underrepresented in higher educations, as evidenced by life experiences and educational background.

Incorporate holistic review guidelines that apply to your program.

- Consider all information within the file, particularly in the first round of review
- Emphasize potential as much as achievements
- Contextualize information about applicant achievements in light of access and opportunity (e.g. “distance traveled” from start to college)
- Acknowledge the value of diversity for one’s specific context, the types of diversity to seek, and how to recognize it (e.g. UCOP PFP selection criteria)

Incorporate holistic review guidelines that apply to your program.

- **Recognize and discuss how reviewers will manage subjectivity in graduate admissions review**
- **Include systematic evaluation of behavioral attributes (e.g. leadership, persistence, resilience, preference for long term goals, strong network of support)**
- **Minimize reliance on undergraduate institutional prestige**
- **Deemphasize or eliminate GRE scores**

Include basic graduate admissions preparation.

- Establish graduate program/group admissions process for 2018.
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), <https://registrar.ucdavis.edu/faculty-staff/privacy>
- Implicit bias, <https://equity.ucla.edu/know/implicit-bias/>

Holistic Review Takeaways - Part I

- Knowledge, development and preparation are keys to successful review.
- Holistic review is equitable and inclusive resulting in a more diverse cohort.
- You can align success attributes w/selection criteria.
- Holistic Review involves contextualizing preparation and potential for success.

Holistic Review Takeaways - Part 2

- A diverse graduate cohort can be achieved by valuing contributions to diversity.
- Developing a rubric is worth the time, saving time later for self and colleagues.
- GRE scores are not predictive of program success.

UC DAVIS

GRADUATE STUDIES

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Q & A