

**Academic Policies and Procedures Committee
PROPOSAL FORM -- Part A**

___ ADD ___ DELETE <u>XX</u> CHANGE	Proposal # <u>GS 200910-02</u> Effective Date (semester/year) <u>Fall 2010</u>
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College/School Graduate School

Dean Edelma Huntley

Department Graduate Studies

Departmental Chair N/A

1. Briefly describe the action(s) requested:
Change the policy on minimum criteria for full admission to the Graduate School for graduate programs.
2. Rationale for this request:
See attached
3. Required attachments:
 - a. CURRENT and PROPOSED undergraduate or graduate catalog copy
 - b. SYLLABI are required when adding or making significant changes to courses.
 - c. CHECKSHEETS are required when adding or revising degree programs or concentrations.
4. List the committees, councils, and other groups that have considered this proposal; the action taken; and the dates that action was taken.

Area	Action	Date of Action
Departmental Curriculum Committee		
Departmental Faculty		
College Council(s)		
Core Curriculum Committee		
Teacher Education Council		
Graduate Council		
Other Committees/Councils:		
Academic Policies & Procedures Committee		

5. Have all appropriate departmental chairs and the Registrar's Office been consulted in the development of this proposal?

yes XX no ___ n/a ___ If yes, list the date(s) and person(s) contacted and response:

See attached.

6. a. Are there any existing programs or courses that will be curtailed or discontinued as a result of the proposed new program or course? yes ___ no XX
- b. Is this course cross-listed in another (other) department(s)? yes ___ no ___
- c. List courses in other departments that may cover or partially cover the subject matter of the proposed course.
- d. Is this course dual-listed? yes ___ no ___ (*If yes, attach undergraduate and graduate syllabi*)

7. Core Curriculum or Special Designator Course proposal must include a syllabus (*more than one if multiple instructors*).

a. Is this a Core Curriculum course? yes ___ no ___

b. Is this a Special Designator Course? yes ___ no ___
 W ___ S ___ MC ___ ND ___ C ___ CD ___

Rationale:

The issue: When the basic criterion for admission to a degree program was decentralized approximately 10 years ago, the intent of that criterion gradually became lost. The original intention (and the one that the Graduate School still uses) is to set an objective measure below which only very rare exceptions would be considered for admission if the Graduate Dean approved, and those exceptions would have the first semester on probation to prove they could succeed.

Some departments still view the condition in this way, but others have increased their criteria over time to be the program admission “in or out” test (rather than the minimal test for consideration for unconditional admission).

This has led to an increasing number of denied requests for probationary admission for students who do not meet the (maybe too high) basic admission condition in some degree programs. The rationale is often, “This is a non-traditional student with many hours of coursework after the bachelors, who is bad at taking tests.” That rationale is precisely what provisional admission is for (as can be seen from the bulletin description).

We anticipate this issue getting worse in light of the Deans’ Council recommendation that the Graduate School decrease the number of provisional admissions we allow from 20% of a cohort (our current operational limit) to 10%. Our goal in 2010 is to enact the 10% limit for each programs new admits beginning with the Fall admission cycle. Please note that exceptions are not legislated as a right for any student or program. Allowing any at all is at the discretion of the Graduate Dean, and the 20% “rule” was advertised by the graduate school over the years solely to help graduate programs understand the number the Dean is willing to allow when faculty are planning their entering classes.

The common practice among graduate schools is to have an objective formula to serve this purpose, and most do as we are proposing, rely on test scores for applicants who do not have at least a 3.0 GPA in the last degree earned. Recall that 3.0 is the minimum GPA required for good standing at the graduate level.

CURRENT BULLETIN DESCRIPTIONS

In the bulletin in the section on admission:

Persons who apply for admission to the Graduate School, if accepted, may be admitted in one of several categories as described below. If a student does not complete degree requirements within seven years of being admitted, the admission expires.

REGULAR. Regular admission to the Graduate School is granted to students who meet the requirements for entrance established by a specific program. Conditions, such as the completion of one or more additional undergraduate or graduate courses, may be specified.

PROVISIONAL. Provisional admission to a graduate program may be granted in the following circumstances with a recommendation from the program director and the departmental chair of the admitting program: 1) a student whose application materials do not meet the basic criteria for a program, but who has compensating work experience or outstanding alternative credentials; 2) a student whose undergraduate degree is in another discipline but who shows evidence of potential success in the desired program. Students admitted provisionally may be required to take additional prerequisite courses during their first year, and may have to achieve a specific graduate GPA as determined by the admitting program. Provisionally admitted students cannot hold assistantships, scholarships, or tuition scholarships during the first semester.

TENTATIVE. Students may be admitted either regularly or provisionally under a tentative status. Tentative status is given to any student who must complete a specified requirement prior to registration and enrollment, such as completion of the undergraduate degree.

In the program descriptions:

Wording varies in each degree program description; here is an example (clinical mental health counseling). The **red font** indicates the text that is the same for all programs, i.e., all graduate degree programs require a complete application, an earned degree at the appropriate level (Bachelor’s for master’s, etc.), and an entrance test (GRE, GMAT, or MAT depending on the program).

Admission Requirements: Baccalaureate **degree from an accredited college or university; complete application to the Cratis Williams Graduate School, including resume, three letters of recommendation, official GRE general exam scores, and official transcripts from all colleges attended;** a completed department of Human Development and Psychological Counseling questionnaire.

Basic Criteria for Admission: GPA of 3.0 or higher in the last 60 hours of undergraduate work and official GRE scores from ETS. OR Cumulative GPA or last 60 hours GPA below 3.0 but above 2.70, and official GRE Verbal plus Quantitative (or Analytical if available) score of 800. The GRE Writing test will be considered, but no minimum score has been established.

PROPOSED BULLETIN DESCRIPTIONS

In the bulletin in the section on admission:

Persons who apply for admission to a program in the Graduate School, if accepted, may be admitted in one of several categories as

described below. If a student does not complete program requirements within seven years of being admitted, the admission expires.

REGULAR ADMISSION: To be **considered** for regular admission to a degree program in the Graduate School at Appalachian, an applicant must meet one of the criteria below, using the test required for admission to the program (GRE, GMAT, or MAT – check the program section for information on which test is required).

Meeting one of these criteria does **not** guarantee admission to any program; academic departments must **also** recommend admission after consideration of other factors, including recommendation letters, supplemental materials, size and quality of the applicant pool, etc.

- 3.0 GPA in the last earned degree and official scores from the appropriate admission test(s), **OR**
- 2.5 GPA in the last earned degree and official scores at the 25% (or percentile) level from the appropriate admission test(s).

The program may request that a GPA in the most recent 60 hours of graded coursework completed be used in place of the GPA in the last earned degree.

PROVISIONAL ADMISSION: In exceptional circumstances, such as significant life/work experience or other non-academic credentials, a program may petition the Graduate School for provisional admission for an applicant who does not meet the criteria for regular admission. That petition must include a rationale and a plan of study for the first semester. Provisional admissions are strictly limited, and any conditions of admission must be met by completion of the first nine hours of enrollment in order for the applicant to continue in a degree program. Provisionally admitted students cannot hold assistantships, scholarships, or tuition scholarships during the first term of enrollment.

TENTATIVE ADMISSION: Students may be admitted either unconditionally or provisionally under a tentative status. Tentative status is given to any student who must complete a specified requirement prior to registration and enrollment, such as completion of the undergraduate degree.

In the program description, if the program chooses to advertise a higher minimum for screening purposes (again red font is the standard language for all):

Admission Requirements: <<Baccalaureate, Master's>> **degree from an accredited college or university; completed online admission application to the Cratis Williams Graduate School, including a resume, three recommendations, official transcripts from all colleges attended, and official test scores from the <<MAT, GMAT, GRE, GREQ, GREV>> test;** a completed department of Human Development and Psychological Counseling questionnaire.

Applicants must meet the criteria for admission to the Graduate School outlined in the Admissions section of this Bulletin. In addition, the program faculty will give preference to applicants who meet the following: GPA of 3.0 in the last 60 hours of undergraduate work and official GRE scores from ETS. **OR** Cumulative GPA or last 60 hours GPA below 3.0 but above 2.70, and official GRE Verbal plus Quantitative (or Analytical if available) score of 800. The GRE Writing test will be considered, but no minimum score has been established.

Notes:

- *The test used will be up to the program; currently all HSOM, CAS, and FAA programs use the GRE or one component of it, such as verbal only. WCOB uses GMAT, and RCOE uses a mixture of GRE and MAT.*
- *The following are the current 25% scores, along with some recent admit data (Fall 2007 to present)*
 - *MAT: 375 (3 out of the last 50 admits were below 3.0 and also below this MAT cut-off);*
 - *GMAT: 460 (12 out of last 190 admits were below 3.0 and also below this GMAT cut-off);*
 - *GRE: 370V / 490Q (10 out of the last 1700 admits were below 3.0 and also below one or both of these GRE cut-offs).*
- *The sentence starting with "In addition" in second paragraph will be omitted if the program does not wish to advertise a higher screening preference.*
- *Departments would have until March 15, 2010, to determine whether they wished to include a screening preference for the 2010-11 bulletin.*

Persons consulted

Consultation 1: All graduate program directors, staff and department chairs were asked to provide feedback on the idea via email on 3/6/09. Feedback was received and used to formulate this current statement. Note: The genesis of the review of these policies was a Graduate Education Task Force recommendation to better document and enforce quality benchmarks as well as a follow up recommendation from the Deans to reduce the percentage of provisional admits

Consultation 2: An ad hoc committee of Graduate Council members and graduate program directors reviewed the policy statement after meeting on 9/11/09.

Consultation 3: After the ad hoc committee agreed to the wording (9/15/09), each department chair and program director was contacted via email (9/16/09), and their responses received can be read at:

<http://www.graduate.appstate.edu/facultystaff/council/agendas/sep09/GS0910-02response.html>