

Graduate Admissions Best Practices

Admission Profile

Basic Information

1. Enter a URL that will take applicants directly to information about your degree program and admissions process so applicants do not have to navigate your department website.
2. Use a title or office for the contact name (i.e., Graduate Advisor or Academic Services).
3. If you do not request mailed materials, consider displaying a message in the address field such as “We do not receive mailed materials.” Note: You are required to display something in the address field.
4. If you request mailed materials, consider displaying a standard *and* express mail address. You may also display a message such as “we do not accept express mail” if that is the case.
5. Use a general email address instead of your personal UW email address.

Admission Requirements

1. Understand the difference between a hard and soft deadline and select accordingly.
2. Make sure you have deadlines for domestic, international, and graduate non-matriculated (GNM) applicants, if applicable. The Graduate School does not have deadlines!
3. Make sure you have an international deadline or your application will break.
4. Only have a deadline for quarters that you will accept new applicants.
5. Use the additional deadline information field to clarify frequently asked questions.
 - Do letters of recommendation need to be received by the deadline?
 - Do mailed materials need to be received *or* postmarked by the deadline?
6. If additional information cannot be summarized in 1-3 sentences or can be found on your admission web pages, consider providing a URL that will take applicants directly to the information.
7. When providing additional information, consider whether an applicant might encounter conflicting information anywhere on the University web site and clarify. For example, you might require higher English proficiency test scores than those stated in Memo 8.
8. If you have a part-time program (students register for less than 10 credits per quarter), add the following statement to the additional information field: This program is part-time and intended for working professionals. Applicants expecting F-1 student status may not apply.

Application Materials

Preparation

1. Consult with your admissions committee and/or graduate program coordinator at the conclusion of your admissions cycle to plan for changes to the admissions profile for the next cycle.
2. Make all changes to your admissions profile between admissions cycles. Don't wait until applicants start working on their applications for the next cycle!
3. Review the application materials annually; the Graduate School may have an item that meets your needs.
4. Review the prompts/instructions for each item and revise them to address both the needs of your admissions committee and the questions you receive from applicants.

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Application Materials, continued

Online Steps

1. Whenever possible, use the list of items provided by the Graduate School; use the “other” item only when one of the items provided does not meet your program’s unique needs.
2. When writing prompts/instructions, specify a length (characters, words, pages) for the document. Keep in mind that documents uploaded to the online application cannot exceed 500KB.
3. If you have a Program Application Form, check the URL to make sure it works.

Areas of Interest & Keywords

1. Annually review areas of interest and update them if necessary.
2. Make sure areas of interest on your admission profile match those on your department’s website.
3. Copy areas of interest into your keywords.

Test Your Online Application

1. Edit your admission profile and create an application to your program in the sandbox so you can see your application from the applicant’s point of view.
 - Admission profile: <http://sandbox.grad.uw.edu/mgp-dept-start.htm>
 - Application: <https://sandbox.grad.uw.edu/applForAdmiss/>
2. Test your online application when it goes live. When testing, do not to pay the application fee!

Transcripts

1. The Graduate School will be collecting unofficial transcripts through the online application.
2. If graduate programs require official transcripts, ask applicants to submit only **one** copy. These copies should be sent directly to and retained by the graduate program. GEMS will not accept official transcripts from graduate programs.

Admission Web Pages

1. Review your web pages annually to make sure that the content is an accurate reflection of current policies and procedures. Make sure the content is also consistent with the information and instructions in your admission profile.
2. To provide better communication, consider removing all contact information for Graduate Enrollment Management Services (GEMS) from your website so that applicants do not accidentally send GEMS materials intended for your office or contact GEMS with questions specific to your graduate program. GEMS will be communicating directly with applicants about Graduate School admission and enrollment requirements.
3. Remove any mention of Graduate School deadlines from your web pages. Remember, the Graduate School does not have deadlines!
4. Track the type and frequency of questions you get each year so you can improve the information and instructions on your web pages.