

 FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY	NEW/CHANGE PROGRAM REQUEST Graduate Programs		UGPC Approval _____ UFS Approval _____ Banner _____ Catalog _____
	Department Urban and Regional Planning College Science		
Program Name Master of Urban and Regional Planning		<input type="checkbox"/> New Program* <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Change Program*	Effective Date (TERM & YEAR) Fall 2023
<p>Please explain the requested change(s) and offer rationale below or on an attachment.</p> <p>Make GRE optional for admissions.</p> <p>Memo attached.</p>			
<p><small>*All new programs and changes to existing programs must be accompanied by a catalog entry showing the new or proposed changes.</small></p>			
Faculty Contact/Email/Phone Louis Merlin, lmerlin@fau.edu, 561-440-3185		Consult and list departments that may be affected by the change(s) and attach documentation NA	
Approved by Department Chair <u>Jesse Saginor</u> College Curriculum Chair <u>Louis Merlin</u> College Dean _____ UGPC Chair _____ UGC Chair _____ Graduate College Dean _____ UFS President _____ Provost _____			Date <u>10/18/2022</u> <u>10/26/2022</u> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Email this form and attachments to UGPC@fau.edu 10 days before the UGPC meeting.

Admission Requirements

Applicants for admission must hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited school. Each applicant should have a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher in the last 60 credits. A personal statement of no more than 1000 words is also required. A Graduate Record Examination (GRE) test is not required but may be submitted as additional evidence of an applicant's readiness for the program.

An international student for whom English is a second language is required to achieve a minimum score of 550 (IBT of 61 or higher) on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). A graduate of a college or university outside of the United States who has completed an academic program equivalent to an American bachelor's degree may apply for admission. All international applicants whose transcripts are from non-U.S. institutions must have their credentials evaluated course by course, including the GPA, by a professional evaluation service. A service may be found at www.NACES.org.

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Deleted: completed and scores of at least 150 (verbal) and 150 (quantitative) on the Graduate Record Examination. Official scores should be sent directly to the FAU Graduate College. Only GRE scores from within the last five years will be accepted. All applicants must submit their scores on the GRE, regardless of GPA, as well as a brief personal statement (approximately 500 words)

Deleted: If an applicant presents either a GPA of 3.0 or higher or GRE verbal and quantitative scores of 150 or higher, but not both, that applicant will be considered by the graduate admissions committee. The committee will review all evidence of high promise, including, but not limited to:

1. Trend of undergraduate grades;
2. Type of undergraduate degree program;
3. Mature work experience;
4. Completion of up to three graduate courses with a "B" or higher in each;
5. Scores upon retaking the Graduate Record Examination; and
6. Personal statement.

MEMO

To: DURP Faculty
Cc: Jesse Saginor
From: MURP Committee
Date: September 21, 2022
Subject: Making GREs Optional for the MURP Admission Process

Historically admission to the MURP program has required students to submit GRE scores and to have scores over 150 in the mathematics and verbal section. These requirements are reflected in the 1-page summary of our graduate program produced by the Graduate College (attached).

However, in practice, this criterion has not been applied for many years, and there have been many exceptions to this policy:

- Starting in Sept. 2020, FAU allowed all graduate programs to waive the GREs. Since then, the MURP program has waived GREs for admission without a notable decline in the quality of admitted students. As of fall 2022, our program is still waiving GREs for admission.
- The Advanced Standing program has long permitted FAU students with a grade point average (GPA) over 3.25 to apply without submitting a GRE score. Generally, Advanced Standing students have performed well in the MURP program. In addition, students from other colleges and universities with similar GPAs have succeeded at least as well as FAU applicants. Therefore, it does not make sense to hold outside applicants to a higher standard for admission than we do for FAU's own Advanced Standing students.
- Even before the Sept. 2020 waiver, the MURP program often admitted students who did not exceed 150 on one or the other of the GREs.

The MURP committee finds that we can adequately ascertain an applicant's quality from transcripts, personal statements, and letters of recommendation. Specifically, we find that we can determine who is likely to be successful in the MURP program based on the following criteria:

- Demonstrated diligence in coursework as illustrated by GPA, especially GPA in the most recent year of coursework and in planning-related courses;
- Motivation as demonstrated by accomplishments in coursework, professional life, and volunteering. We have found that on several occasions, students returning for the MURP program after a lengthy period out of college have performed exceptionally well in the program despite not having taken the GRE in recent years. The common factor among these successful students is a high and well-articulated level of motivation;
- Ability to express oneself in written communication, as demonstrated by a well-written personal statement.

In addition, the GRE requirement comes with several distinct disadvantages:

- The preparation, monetary, and time cost of the GRE can deter some students from applying, especially international students and returning students;
- It is likely that requiring the GRE reduces our applicant pool. Most students who inquire about our program have not already taken the GRE, and many ask if they can avoid taking it.

Given these considerations, the MURP committee recommends that we drop the requirement for applicants to report GREs as part of their application for admission. We find that the additional benefits of knowing applicants' GRE scores are insufficient relative to the costs of deterring applicants and eliminating potentially qualified students.