

**Proposal to Change Admission Requirements for
All Applicants to the MA and MAT degrees in the
Department of Languages, Linguistics, and Comparative Literature
Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters**

September 23, 2011

Graduate faculty members in the Department of Languages, Linguistics, and Comparative Literature are recommending the elimination of the Graduate Record Examination admission requirement for all applicants to the MA in Spanish, French, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics, and to the MAT in French and Spanish. The rationale for this recommendation is based on several factors. First and foremost, we aim to have admission requirements that are both effective for helping us select students who will thrive in our programs, as well as be competitive with other respected programs. We believe that the most critical criteria for successful MA/MAT students are successful undergraduate work, excellent letters of recommendation, a strong writing sample, and foreign language proficiency. While the GRE may be a reliable predictor of student success in the STEM disciplines, over the years the faculty in LLCL have found the scores often to be an unreliable predictor of student success in our programs.

Our current admission requirements are:

1. Bachelor degree from an accredited institution
2. GPA of at least 3.0 in the last 60 hours of bachelor's degree
3. GRE of 1000
4. Two letters of recommendation
5. Statement of Purpose essay (in English) in which the student describes his/her background relative to the degree sought, and long-term professional goals
6. Writing sample (in the language of the program to which the student is applying)
7. TOEFL score (for international applicants) of 500, or CBT score of 173, or IBT score of 61

The rationale for the elimination of the GRE requirement is that we believe that a successful undergraduate career is a better predictor of success in MA/MAT programs than is the GRE. Additionally, the GRE is inaccessible to many international students and recruiting international students is an important goal for us. As an example, when looking for GRE test sites in Spanish-speaking countries, we discovered that there was not a single GRE testing site in eight Latin American countries (Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and Uruguay).

SAMPLE OF INSTITUTIONS WITH GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN COMPARABLE FIELDS THAT DO NOT REQUIRE THE GRE

Name of University	Degree for which GRE is not Required
Florida International University	MA Spanish
Indiana State University	MA Spanish and TESL
University of Louisville	MA Spanish
University of Missouri	MA Romance Languages
University of Colorado at Boulder	MA Spanish (but recommended for students who wish to be considered for special fellowships)
University of Texas at Dallas	MA Latin American Studies (but GRE scores may be requested to augment or clarify a student's academic record)
University of Illinois at Chicago	MA Hispanic Studies
Tufts University	MA French
Middlebury College	MA Foreign Languages
University of South Florida	MA French
University of Texas San Antonio	MA Spanish
West Chester University of Pennsylvania	MA Spanish
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale	MA Foreign Languages and Literatures
University of Connecticut	MA Latin American Studies
University of Maryland BC	PhD Language, Literature, and Culture
Texas State University	MA Spanish