

# Graduate Student Admission

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Qualified applicants can seek graduate-level admission to The University of Texas at El Paso for the following:

- master's or doctoral degree,
- non-degree post-baccalaureate,
- post-master's study (certification or endorsement),
- prerequisite coursework for later graduate study,
- courses for personal or educational enrichment,
- graduate or post-master's certificates.

Applicants who hold, or are within a year from receiving, a four-year baccalaureate degree or its equivalent, must submit their application through the Graduate School. Applicants pursuing a second or subsequent undergraduate degree must go through undergraduate admissions. The Graduate School makes admissions determinations on the basis of recommendations from the relevant program. Degree programs differ in their specific requirements and guidelines for admission.

## General Admission Factors

The University of Texas at El Paso takes a holistic approach to the admission of applicants to graduate programs as authorized by section 51.842 of the *Texas Education Code*. This section authorizes graduate programs to consider certain academic, socioeconomic, family, geographic, and other factors relating to an applicant's background in making an admissions decision.

Section 51.842 of the *Texas Education Code* also provides that an applicant's performance on a standardized test may not be used in the admissions process as the sole criterion for consideration of the applicant or as the primary criterion to end consideration of the applicant. If an applicant's performance is used for such purposes, then the applicant's test scores must be compared with those of other applicants from similar socioeconomic backgrounds to the extent that those backgrounds can be determined. This section provides that the prohibition and score comparison requirement does not apply to a standardized test used to measure the English language proficiency of a student who is a graduate of a foreign institution. This section prohibits the assignment of a specific weight to any one factor being considered in the admissions process for a graduate program.

## General Admission Requirements

The following documents must be submitted to the Graduate School for consideration for admission into a graduate degree program:

1. Completed application for admission.
2. Application/processing fee (\$45 for U.S. citizens or permanent residents/Mexican nationals; \$80 for international applicants).  
Note: Application fees are subject to change *because* of legislative and/or institution action and become effective when enacted.
3. An official transcript, with the four-year baccalaureate degree posted, from the degree-granting institution and copies of transcripts for all other relevant upper-division and graduate work at accredited U.S. institutions or equivalent work and degrees at foreign institutions.

Successful applicants generally have an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher; although, programs may have more stringent requirements. Students who apply to receive educational benefits through the Department of Veterans Affairs should, in addition to the above requirements, submit copies of the Joint Services Transcript (JST), as well as copies of transcripts from all other colleges and universities previously attended. UTEP transcripts are not required of students who received their baccalaureate degree from UTEP.

Please note that all transcripts in languages other than English must be accompanied by an English translation prepared by the educational institution, an American Consulate, or a certified English translator. All documents submitted to the University for admission purposes including transcripts, become part of the official files of the University and cannot be released or returned to the student or to another institution.

1. For graduates of institutions outside the United States where English is not the first language, UTEP requires students to demonstrate English proficiency. One way this can be demonstrated is through English proficiency testing to include the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), PTE, and the Duolingo English Test. Required scores can be found on the Student Affairs student testing page (<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/testing/tests/required-scores.html>). Official test scores must be sent directly from the testing agency to the Graduate School. Programs might have different minimum score requirements, and may request higher levels of English proficiency for certain positions such as serving as a teaching assistant. .
2. Evidence of satisfactory academic achievement and potential. This may be assessed by review of performance in completed upper-division (junior- and senior-level) and graduate-level courses. Most programs require additional evidence of academic performance and promise including interviews, personal statements, and letters of recommendation.
3. Most programs consider results on standardized tests, including the GRE, GMAT, and Miller Analogies Test in making recommendations for admission. Official test scores must be sent directly from the testing agency to the Graduate School. As described in the General Admission Factor section above, programs that consider results on standardized tests also consider other information regarding the applicant's background.
4. Evidence of adequate subject preparation for the proposed graduate major. This may include previous undergraduate or graduate coursework in the discipline or job experience that helps demonstrate sufficient knowledge about the proposed graduate major to take graduate coursework.

5. Certain programs require students to submit to and satisfactorily complete a background check review as a condition of admission to and/or participation in education experiences. Students who refuse to submit to a background check or who do not pass the background check can be dismissed from the program.

After all required documents have been received and reviewed by the Graduate School, the Graduate Studies Committee graduate studies committee of the proposed program of study makes a recommendation to the Graduate School: acceptance, conditional acceptance, or rejection of the application. The Graduate School approves these recommendations and notifies the applicant of the final decision.

All documents submitted to the University for Admission purposes become part of the official files of the University and cannot be released or returned to the student or to another institution.

## Graduate Entrance Examinations

Students may be required to take one or more standardized tests as part of the graduate admission requirements of their particular program. Results of standardized tests are used as part of a holistic review process.

## Graduate Record Examination General Test

The General Test of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) assesses skills important to all fields of study: verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, and analytical writing. The GRE is taken at the applicant's expense at licensed sites; it is not offered on the UTEP campus.

## Graduate Management Admission Test

The Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT) is intended to assess analytical, writing, quantitative, verbal and reading skills. The GMAT is taken at the applicant's expense at licensed sites; it is not offered on the UTEP campus.

## Miller Analogies Test

The Miller Analogies Test (MAT) requires the solution of problems stated as analogies, assessing analytical thinking skills. The MAT is taken at the applicant's expense at licensed sites; it is offered on the UTEP campus.

## Student Assessment and Testing Office

The Student Assessment and Testing Office provides a wide array of testing services for admissions, professional certification, course placement, and credit by examination purposes. Institutional administrations of the TOEFL are offered throughout the year; TOEFL tests taken at UTEP are valid only at UTEP.

## Transfer of Credit

Except for shared/co-operative programs, the majority of credit for a graduate degree must be earned at the University. For a master's degree, up to fourteen (14) semester hours of graduate work can be transferred from another accredited institution with the approval of the program. When such transfer is approved, the student must still meet the residence requirements of two full semesters or the equivalent, and coursework must fall within the six-year time period. Doctoral students are advised to consult their respective doctoral program for information on transfer of credit. All coursework transferred from other accredited institutions requires both the approval of the graduate studies committee in the student's major area and the Dean of the Graduate School.

- Only graduate-level courses can be transferred for credit.
- Only earned credit hours transfer; institutional grade point average does not transfer.
- Courses used to fulfill other degree requirements cannot be transferred.
- Courses for which a grade of C or lower was earned cannot be transferred.
- Correspondence courses are not accepted for graduate credit.

All documents submitted to the University for transfer purposes become part of the official files of the University and cannot be released or returned to the student or to another institution.

## Prerequisites

The first prerequisite for entering students is a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution. The second prerequisite is that entering students must have taken at least 12 semester hours of advanced undergraduate courses in the area of study in which they propose to pursue a graduate major. Some areas may require more semester hours of undergraduate or master's level preparation; prospective applicants can consult with individual programs on this. Students must earn at least a 3.0 grade point average in any preparatory or leveling work required (refer to section on Conditional Acceptance). These courses will be in addition to the 30 hours (or more) required for the master's degree itself. Leveling work will be generated on a transcript reflective of the level of the course and will affect cumulative grade point average.

## Academic Fresh Start Program

An applicant who has earned a baccalaureate degree under the Academic Fresh Start statute, Texas Education Code, §51.931, and applies for admission to a postgraduate or professional program will be evaluated on only the grade point average of the coursework completed for that baccalaureate degree and the other criteria stated herein for admission to the postgraduate or professional program.

## Acceptance into a Graduate Program

The Graduate School sends complete, verified applications to individual programs. Programs review applications and make decision recommendations to the Graduate School. The Graduate School is responsible for notifying applicants of admissions decisions.

### Acceptance

Applicants deemed by a graduate program to meet the requirements for admission can be accepted into the program without conditions.

### Conditional Acceptance

Programs may offer conditional acceptance to students who do not meet all of the specific criteria for admission but who show promise of success in graduate study. Applicants who lack sufficient foundation in the proposed area of study can be required to successfully complete designated courses before qualifying for unconditional admission. Other applicants can be required, on the recommendation of the program's graduate advisor, to meet particular conditions. When recommending conditional admission, programs can also take into account other factors that provide evidence that the candidate would make an important contribution to the program or the University's objectives and mission. Applicants accepted conditionally must work to have conditions removed within one semester. Conditions for acceptance as recommended by the graduate advisors are subject to final approval by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Please note that international students cannot be offered conditional admission.

### Rejection

Applicants who fail to meet the minimum requirements for admission to a degree program will usually be denied admission into that program. An applicant meeting the requirements for admission can be denied by the committee on graduate studies of the proposed major if the number of qualified applicants exceeds the number of students who can be accommodated in the available facilities or who can be adequately instructed by the available faculty. A student who has been rejected can reapply at a later time, can apply to another program, or can apply as a post baccalaureate non-degree student.

## Readmission into Graduate School

An application for readmission and payment of admission fees is required for a student who

- has not enrolled for twelve (12) months or more;
- was not accepted at an earlier date and wants to pursue admission into the same or a different field based on revised criteria or more current documentation; or
- was eligible to enroll, and failed to do so.

The academic record of a student who has not enrolled for twelve months will be inactivated at the conclusion of the twelfth month and an application for readmission is required.

The academic record of a student who is admitted and fails to enroll the semester of admission will be inactivated at the conclusion of the semester of admission and an application for readmission is required.

A student who is accepted into a graduate program and is interested in changing the current program of study must reapply for admission and undergo the admission process. The student must complete one semester in the current program before reapplying for admission to a new program. Application fees are assessed for every application submitted.

If extenuating circumstances exist, a student may request a Leave of Absence. Requests for leave of absence are submitted to the Graduate School by the graduate advisor.

## Readmission of a Student Who Withdraws to Perform Active Military Service

1. This section applies only to a student who withdraws from an institution of higher education to perform active military service as a member of the United States armed forces or the Texas National Guard. This section does not apply to a student who withdraws from an institution solely to perform one or more training exercises as a member of the Texas National Guard.
2. For any academic term that begins after the date a student described by Subsection (a) is released from active military service but not later than the first anniversary of that date, the institution of higher education from which the student withdrew shall readmit the student, without requiring reapplication or charging a fee for readmission, if the student is otherwise eligible to register for classes at the institution. On readmission of the student under this subsection, the institution shall:

- a. provide to the student any financial assistance previously provided by the institution to the student before the student's withdrawal if the student meets current eligibility requirements for the assistance, other than any requirement directly affected by the student's service, such as continuous enrollment or another similar timing requirement; and
  - b. allow the student the same academic status that the student had before the student's withdrawal, including any course credit awarded to the student by the institution.
3. An institution of higher education can adopt rules requiring reasonable proof from a student of the fact and duration of the student's active military service.

## Post-Baccalaureate Non-Degree Admission

Students selecting the post-baccalaureate non-degree option are placed in an unclassified status, indicating that no particular major or program of study has been selected. Students often select the post-baccalaureate non-degree option to complete prerequisite work or to demonstrate their ability to do graduate-level coursework. Post-baccalaureate non-degree students must obtain departmental permission to enroll in graduate-level courses. If a post-baccalaureate non-degree student is subsequently admitted into a degree program, the departmental graduate advisor may recommend that up to nine (9) hours of graduate level coursework or undergraduate courses approved for graduate credit completed prior to formal admission to the program be used toward graduate degree requirements.

Admission as a post-baccalaureate non-degree student does not constitute admission into a graduate degree program of the Graduate School.

Individuals who have received a baccalaureate degree but who do not wish to apply for admission into a graduate degree program can apply for admission as a post-baccalaureate non-degree student. This type of admission is available to individuals who wish to obtain teacher certification or endorsement, graduate certificates, or post-master's endorsement, or to complete prerequisite work to demonstrate their ability to do graduate-level coursework.

Interested individuals must complete an application for admission and must submit to the Graduate School an official transcript with the baccalaureate degree posted. Copies of those transcripts are required from each institution at which the applicant earned relevant junior- and senior-level credits and any graduate-level credits. UTEP transcripts are not required of students who received their baccalaureate degree from UTEP.

Eligibility for initial teacher certification, endorsement, and professional certification for classroom teachers includes (1) a minimum 2.5 cumulative grade point average from an accredited college or university, (2) successful completion of THEA (Texas Higher Education Assessment), and (3) development of an approved plan of study. Eligible applicants for certification and endorsement programs will be notified that they can enroll, but will need to contact the Certification Office in the College of Education immediately for eligibility into one of several certification or endorsement programs. The Certification Office and the College of Education are responsible for course scheduling and can require a minimum enrollment per term for admitted students. Additionally, the Certification Office will develop a plan of study for each student in keeping with the requirements set forth by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The certification or endorsement will be earned upon successful completion of all requirements.

Graduate-level coursework completed for certification or endorsement programs that has not been used to meet other graduate degree requirements can be recommended by the departmental graduate advisor to the Graduate School to count toward an advanced degree under certain circumstances. These courses are limited to a maximum of nine (9) semester hours in which the grade of B or higher has been earned within the time limits, and other restrictions detailed in this catalog. Additional information on certification and endorsement programs is available from the Certification Office within the College of Education and the Graduate School.

Post-baccalaureate non-degree admission is not available to international students who need a visa (F-1/M-1 and I-20) to attend school in the United States. Post-baccalaureate non-degree students are ineligible to receive any type of federal or institutional financial aid, including VA benefits. Post-baccalaureate non-degree students cannot be appointed in any capacity such as teaching assistants, assistant instructors, graduate research assistants, academic assistants or graduate assistants and cannot participate in UTEP's CO-OP program. Enrollment as a post-baccalaureate non-degree student is limited to nine (9) hours.

Post-baccalaureate non-degree students are required to maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 2.5. If the cumulative GPA drops below 2.5, the non-degree student will be placed on academic probation and must elevate the CGPA to 2.5 within one semester. Failure to do so will result in dismissal from the Graduate School. Post-baccalaureate non-degree students must declare a major and pursue admission to a graduate program after the completion of nine (9) semester hours.

## Cooperative Programs

UTEP enthusiastically participates in cooperative degree programs with The University of Texas at Austin and the UT Health Science Center in Houston. Applicants to such programs are required to submit separate applications to the degree-granting institution and are classified as non-degree students for any UTEP enrollment. Students are asked to be aware that admission to UTEP as a non-degree student neither offers nor implies admission to the degree-granting institution.

## PhD in Nursing / UT Health Science Center, Houston

Students should contact the School of Nursing for information about this cooperative program.

## **Master of Public Health / UT Health Science Center, Houston**

The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston offers the Master of Public Health degree (MPH) at UTEP. This program was developed to provide students with a basic foundation in public health and an understanding of the unique health problems of the U.S.-Mexico border through coursework and applied research. Courses are provided by the University of Texas at Houston School of Public Health faculty-in-residence at the El Paso campus, as well as through interactive television courses taught by faculty at both the UT Houston and UT San Antonio campuses. In addition, some upper-division and graduate courses offered by UTEP academic departments can be taken concurrently and be considered in fulfillment of degree requirements. The program is fully accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health.

This El Paso satellite program provides students the opportunity to study and conduct research in a binational and multicultural region. Students are expected to gain a competency in the five basic disciplines of public health--administration, behavioral sciences, biometry, environmental health, and epidemiology--with a focus on border health. Degree requirements include the completion of a minimum of 36 credit hours, including a master's thesis in which students examine a specific health issue in depth. The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Public Health is the degree-granting institution. For additional information, students can call 915.747.8500.