

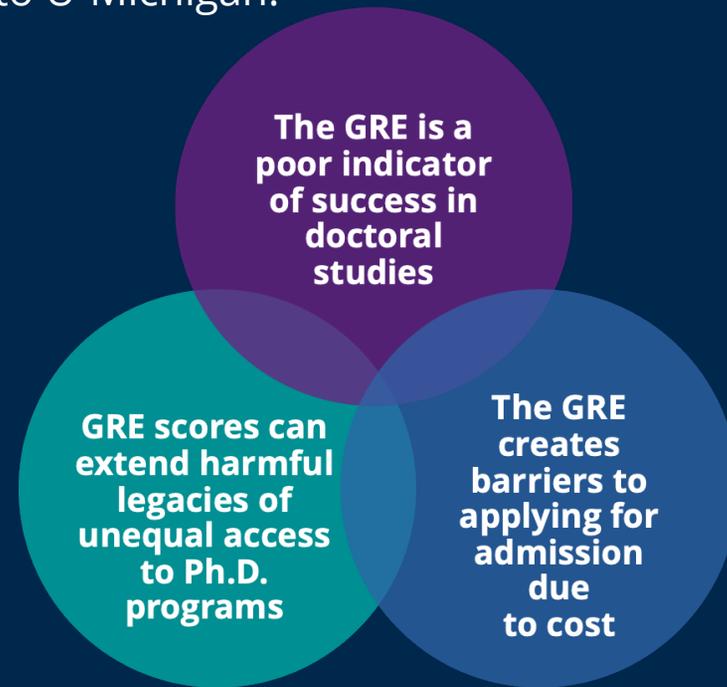


Rackham Proposal to End the Use of the GRE General Test in Doctoral Admissions

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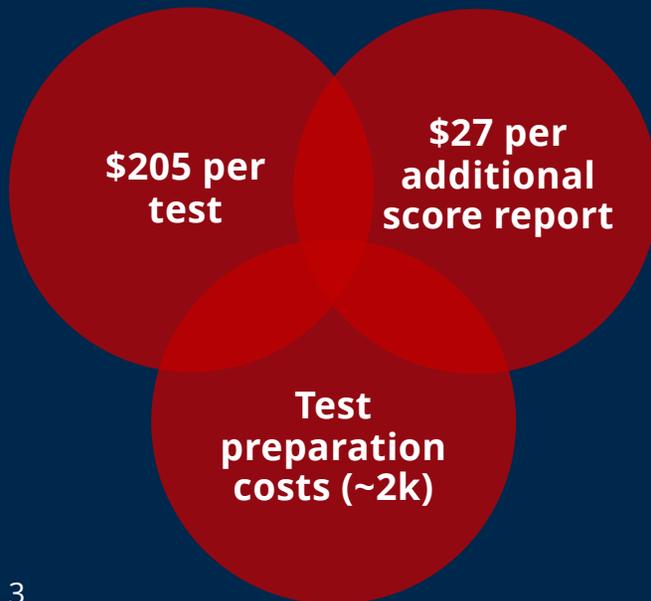
Motivation for the Proposal

- Graduate faculty, doctoral programs, and Rackham share the common goal of admitting and recruiting the best students to U-Michigan.
- To support this goal, Rackham
 - (1) uses mechanisms to increase the quality, quantity, and breadth of applications (in partnership with programs); *and*
 - (2) develops data-driven best practices for graduate admissions (holistic admissions).
- There is significant evidence that the GRE general test is one barrier to achieving our goal.



The Opportunity Cost of the GRE

Potentially well-qualified students are potentially discouraged from applying due to cost



The GRE can extend inequity based on race, gender, and socioeconomic status

- Many for-pay test preparation firms guarantee outcomes on the GRE, including score increases equivalent to decades in percentile
- GRE General Test scores correlate with social identities

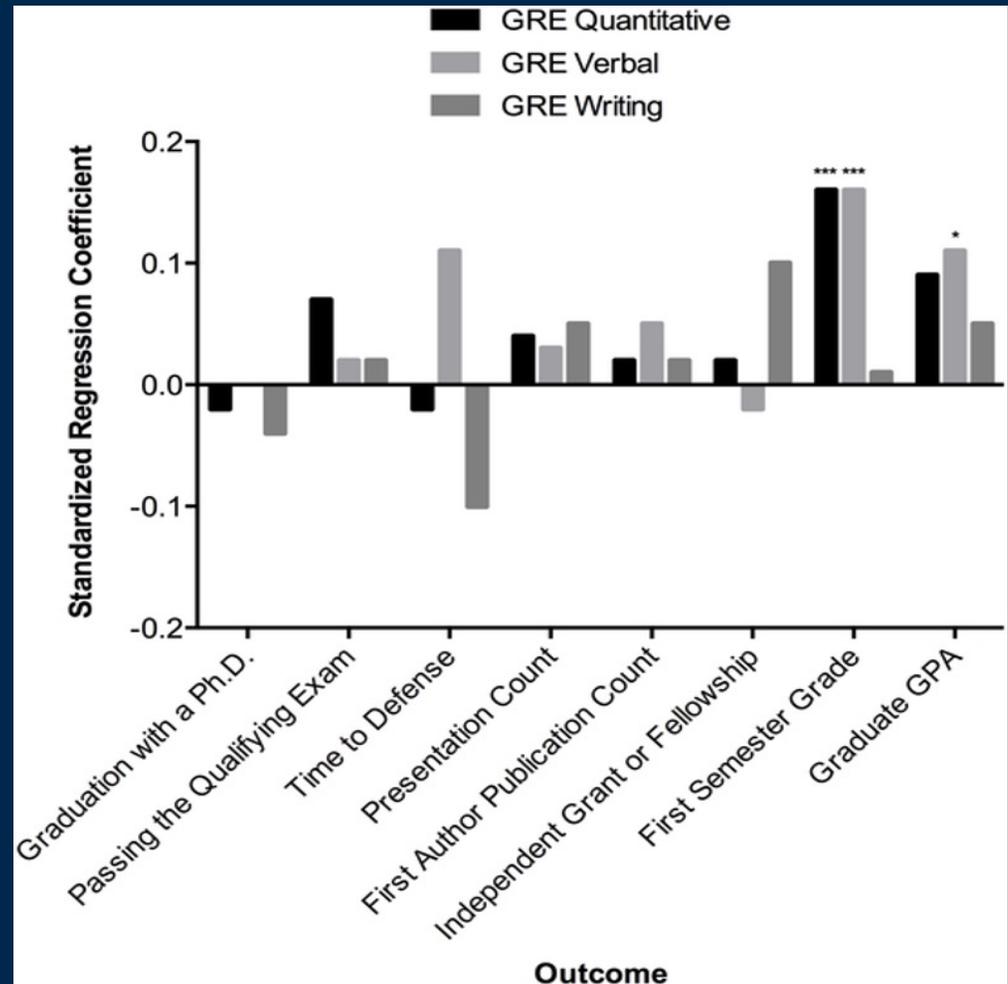
GROUP	V	SD	Q	SD
White Men	155.7	7.1	154.2	7.7
White Women	152.6	7.1	149.5	6.8
U.S. Citizens	152.7	7.8	150.6	8.1
Non-U.S. Citizens	147.7	8.7	158.1	9.3
Black Men	148.5	7.9	146.2	7.9
Black Women	147	7.4	143.6	6.7
Mexican-American Men	151	7.3	149.6	7.6
Mexican-American Women	148.5	7	145.7	6.7

ETS Report, <https://www.ets.org/gre/snapshot>

The Opportunity Cost of the GRE



The GRE General Test does not strongly correlate with desired doctoral outcomes like degree completion and research productivity



Moneta-Koehler, L. et al. PLoS ONE (2017)

The Rationale for a Rackham-Wide Decision

- Studies show that the GRE is a poor indicator of doctoral student success.
- The GRE can extend harmful legacies of unequal access to education on the basis of race, gender, and socioeconomic status.
- The GRE creates unnecessary financial and logistical barriers that deter well-qualified students from applying for doctoral studies.
- Acting in concert across all doctoral programs demonstrates our uniform commitment to removing barriers to doctoral education at U-Michigan.

Additional Discussion: The GRE Is a Poor Predictor of Success in Doctoral Studies

- GRE scores do correlate with first-year grades in graduate school (e.g. Kuncel et al. *Ed & Psych Measure*, 2010).
- The correlation with research productivity is low (e.g. Moneta-Koehler et al., *PLOS One*, 2017; Hall et al, *PLoS One*, 2017).
- The correlation with degree completion is low (e.g. Peterson et al., *PLOS One*, 2018).
- These findings have been confirmed in multiple fields.
- A recent study addresses restriction of range effects; findings hold for an extended range of GRE scores (e.g. Sealy et al. *PLOS One*, 2019).

Additional Discussion: The GRE Can Extend Harmful Legacies of Inequity in Doctoral Education

- Research indicates that overreliance on GRE scores selects against underrepresented students (e.g. Miller et al, *Science Advances*, 2019)
- High parental socioeconomic indicators were associated with higher GRE scores (Pennock-Roman, *ETS Report to Exxon Foundation*, 1994)
- For-pay test preparation courses—some with guaranteed outcomes—are commonly available.

Additional Discussion: The GRE Creates Barriers to Applying for Doctoral Studies

- Doctoral studies at the University of Michigan are fully funded; GRE costs and application fees represent out-of-pocket costs to applicants.
- The GRE cost is currently \$205 plus \$27 to send an extra set of scores to support an application.
- Prospective applicants may perceive the need to engage test preparation services at significant cost.

Additional Discussion: University of Michigan Context

- Doctoral program leaders have expressed that the previous admissions cycle was successful, even given the lack of availability of the GRE.
- Preliminary data indicate that applications from first generation college students, undergraduate Pell Grant recipients, and underrepresented minority (URM) groups were all increased in the applicant pool.
- First generation, Pell Grant recipients, and URM first-time enrollment held to trend in the previous admissions cycle.

What Are the Future Steps If the Proposal Is Implemented?

- The change will take effect in the 2022–2023 admissions cycle to allow for planning, preparation, and implementation.
- Rackham will provide programs with best practices, particularly for programs with high application volume.
- Rackham is available to fund efforts in summer 2022 for graduate faculty to design holistic admission processes for their programs.

Summation and Future Steps

- This change is necessary but not sufficient to realize our goals for doctoral admissions.
- Future admissions excellence will require Rackham to continue and grow efforts to support the ongoing investment of doctoral programs in holistic admissions practices.
- By leaving these scores behind, the rich information of the doctoral application can be reviewed in ways that are truly holistic and responsive to the rich heterogeneity of our applicants.

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12 (updated)

For Discussion

- What are the potential benefits of the proposal to end the collection of GRE general test scores on the Rackham doctoral application?
- What challenges or unintended consequences might you anticipate?
- If the proposal is enacted, what kind of support might graduate programs need from Rackham?



Thank You

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Feedback form is available at myumi.ch/Vew65

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