



Dear colleague,

I am writing to provide information about the steps required if you have an applicant you are interested in admitting into your program who does not meet the minimum University of Utah Graduate School requirements.

As you may know, each degree program may use a certain number of 'exception' slots to admit applicants who do not meet the minimum GPA requirement of 3.00. The number of slots is on file with the Admissions Office. These slots must be allocated before sending files forward to the central Graduate Admissions Committee. Note, a slot can be 'recycled' within the academic year if an applicant accepted as an exception declines the offer.

If your program has used these slots and still wants to go forward, please ensure that a complete packet is prepared for the Graduate Admissions Committee. This includes all of the candidate's information, including letters of recommendation and transcripts. Be sure to include in addition: 1) a Department Referral Form (an AY internal form) and 2) a strong Letter of Support written by the Department Chair or Director of Graduate Admissions. This letter should explain why the department feels the applicant will be successful in their graduate program and may include steps that faculty will take to ensure the success of the student.

Please be aware that the Committee considers the following items when reviewing a case for exception to policy:

- The time since degree: applicants who are two to three years post degree (or more), have used this time gain relevant experience, and have shown accomplishment in these pursuits are often viewed more favorably than are recent graduates.
- Any experience as it relates to intended plan of study can be important.
- At least one letter from a supervisor which speaks to the applicant's motivation and maturity. At least one (preferably two) letter(s) from individuals who are knowledgeable about the applicant's academic potential.
- The quality of the undergraduate program from which the baccalaureate degree was earned as well as the applicant's academic standing in that program—especially in coursework related to the intended plan of study.
- Information gained from personally interviewing the candidate.
- Performance in non-matriculated graduate courses.

- The student's Statement of Purpose and/or statement addressing circumstances.
- Standardized test scores when available.

Overall, we look holistically at the applicant's file for indications that they will be successful in the graduate program. Our committee aims to make decisions within two weeks of receiving the file. The following outcomes are possible:

ADMIT: the committee approves the recommendation to admit.

ADMIT ON PROBATION: The applicant must complete at least six graduate credit hours and his/her grade point average must be 3.00 or higher for the first semester of graduate study. Applicants admitted on probation will not be eligible for a graduate tuition waiver until the probation period is over.

DEFER: If the file is lacking sufficient documentation, the committee may return it to the department for additional information.

DENY: If the department wishes to appeal this decision, an in-person meeting can be held.

It is important to wait for notification from Admissions before notifying applicants, so there is no confusion.

If you have questions on this process, please contact Elizabeth Castillo (elizabeth.castillo@utah.edu) in Admissions.

Sincerely,



Katharine S. Ullman, PhD
Chair, Graduate Admissions Committee
Associate Dean, The Graduate School
University of Utah