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## Admissions and Hiring Policies

This is what was found by the CEOAS OSU Pod at Oregon State University on Hiring and Admissions Policies, as well as what the pod would propose to change and improve.

*Note: We acknowledge this information is not always accessible to students and even staff. If you do not have access to this information, please reflect on your own experience and outline what admissions and/or hiring should be like to foster a diverse and inclusive community.*

Admissions practices for graduate students - CEOAS Graduate (note more info below):

CEOAS admits students as part of various discipline groups. Every discipline group handles admission processes somewhat differently. Below are some specifics:

- **Do all disciplines use an admissions rubric?**
  - No, discipline groups use different metrics and rubrics. There have recently been changes to the admissions processes, and clearly some re-aligning is still needed.
- **Does EVERY application get read? If not, why not? If yes, is it read by only 1 faculty member or by more than one?**
  - Many discipline groups do read all applications, but we believe that this is not true for all.
- **Are GRE scores included in the evaluations in:**
  - Most discipline groups (if not all) do not utilize the GRE, though this is a relatively new practice, partially motivated by reading and talks by some of the URGE authors for this week's session.
- **For foreign applicants: How is the TOEFL interpreted?**
  - Admissions for international applicants have minimum scores for regular admission and transitional admission programs. OSU also provides a minimum score of 110 in the popular language learning app, Duolingo. CEOAS uses the same benchmarks set by the Graduate School.
- **What EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) statement<sup>1</sup> is included in a standard job or admissions advertisement? Are there other inclusion statements and resources publicly available<sup>2</sup>?**
  - Standard statement for job announcements: "OSU commits to inclusive excellence by advancing equity and diversity in all that we do. We are an

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<sup>1</sup> R. Kelley, 10 Samples of an Effective EEO Statement, [blog.ongig.com/diversity-and-inclusion/eeo-statement-samples](http://blog.ongig.com/diversity-and-inclusion/eeo-statement-samples), (2017).

<sup>2</sup> <https://careers.who.edu/opportunities/diversity-inclusion/>

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Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity employer, and particularly encourage applications from members of historically underrepresented racial/ethnic groups, women, individuals with disabilities, veterans, LGBTQ community members, and others who demonstrate the ability to help us achieve our vision of a diverse and inclusive community.”

- This information is provided by the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access. They offer a few versions on their [website](#).
- There is no obvious statement of equal opportunity on the [CEOAS admissions information](#) page or on the OSU main admissions page.
  - In the [description of requirements](#) for 1st year undergraduate admissions, OSU includes this statement: “Oregon State is also looking for students who will lend educational and cultural diversity to our campus. We are looking for students who go above and beyond the minimum whether in talent, academic ability or potential. Combined with academic strengths, evidence of these characteristics may be considered in our review of applicants for admission.”
  - The CEOAS graduate admissions page includes a statement about holistic admissions: “CEOAS believes in holistic admissions which means our programs consider the whole applicant, not just a numerical measure such as grades and test scores.”
- **Where are advertisements posted or sent? Are there other strategies for reaching applicants for hiring and/or admissions, e.g. job fairs, showcases?**
  - CEOAS/OSU should make sure to have a booth at conferences held by groups like SACNAS, AISES, and others, not just the AGU and Ocean Sciences meetings.
- **What are the requirements for an applicant, e.g. letters of recommendations, fees/test scores<sup>3</sup>/grades? Is providing any of these a potential barrier that could be further lowered or removed? Are there any problematic questions asked?**
  - For graduate admissions in CEOAS:
    - GRE scores are no longer required as of this year, which removes one potential barrier.
    - Three letters of recommendations, a resume/cv, and a statement of interest are required.
      - Prompt for statement of interest: The statement “should present the reason why you are pursuing an advanced degree including any specific topics you’re interested in, a description of research

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<sup>3</sup> K. Cobb, #GRExit Resources, <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.13215461.v1>, (2020).

- or relevant work experiences, and how OSU can help you achieve your long-range goals.”
- There are also some specific questions (such as about their actions towards diversity) and it is unclear from the students’ perspective if they are supposed to submit just one statement covering everything or two separate statements.
  - This could be made more specific and clear to both prospective students and to make sure the admissions reviewers have relevant information, as discussed in the Inclusivity Tip video.
  - There is a GPA requirement: “grade point average of at least 3.00 GPA on the last 90 hours of coursework” but the Graduate School says that you may still be considered for admission even if you don’t meet the requirement.
  - There is a \$75 fee, but it can be waived if you can provide documentation of financial hardship.
  - Our admissions rubric does not align with what the students are told, we should modify the rubric and make it public to the students (with specific examples). Openness in the judgement criteria.
  - For [undergraduate admissions](#):
    - OSU is test-optional.
    - Applications are evaluated based on “high school grades; rigor of coursework, considered in the context of options at your school; class rank; grades in any college or dual-credit courses; information provided in your personal statement on the application; your responses to one of our available application essay prompts.”
    - No letters of recommendation are required.
  - **How are applicants/applications evaluated? Is that process and/or rubric<sup>45</sup> public? What kind of biases are introduced in this process and what strategies are used to address these, e.g. removing applicant names?**
    - The OSU Graduate School provides guidelines for [“Holistic Admissions”](#) as well as some sample rubrics.
      - Challenge with the example rubric is that it doesn’t define average/above/below. But otherwise, good questions for the reviewers and for interviews.
    - OEAS process did not take these holistic admissions into account (although they said they did) the rubric from GnG does not align with the example rubrics in the

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<sup>4</sup> J. Posselt, Inside Graduate Admissions: Merit, Diversity, and Faculty Gatekeeping, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvjghw8s>, (2016).

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.brandeis.edu/diversity/dei-recruitment-hiring/rubric-for-evaluating-diversity-statements.html>

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link or the process. We need to provide details if we are setting particular expectations for students.

- In 2021, The “fellowship award nominations” were selected before all applications were reviewed. So that created a bias in which applicants were considered for fellowship, it came down to which faculty pushed their preference the most (at least from the perspective of several people inside and outside the GAT).
- What can be improved?
  - All applications reviewed by 3 people at least.
  - Questions asked, expectations clearer to applicants
  - Consider interviews for top candidates
  - Rubric more clear for reviewing and shared with students before they apply!
  - Have people peripheral to the main advisor make final decision among top candidates to avoid using irrelevant metrics such as shared hobbies (“they like organic farming!”)
  - Rubric evaluations could be shared with applicants after decisions are announced, to increase transparency and help applicants understand why they were or were not admitted. Similar to feedback on fellowship applications like the NSF GRFP, this could help students who were not admitted improve their application and reapply. Rubric comments would need to be written constructively.
  - Add personalized touch to the acceptance letter based on positive feedback from rubric.
  - Incentivize taking risks on admitting students who aren’t “mini-me”? Through promotion/tenure, through rethinking how we define success of a student?
  - Admitting students in a cohort (without advisor) for first year to make the admissions process less subjective and emphasize bringing in students of color.
  - Make sure faculty are set up to mentor students well (provide more structured mentoring training and make faculty take it).
- **Who is on selection committees and who makes the final decisions? Who interacts with the applicants?**
  - OEAS Graduate Admissions Team (in 2021 they were all white male faculty, no students or search advocate)
    - Add students to the graduate admissions committee
  - Faculty hiring - faculty led search committee, with search advocate, we are implementing a mechanism to have students on this committee

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- **Has your hiring and/or admissions process been evaluated by outside consultants? What is the process for changing it?**
  - Graduate admissions? Only the review that happens as part of the normal reaccreditation processes.
  - Faculty hiring? No
- **Has your university or company implemented or considered strategies like cohort hiring, mentoring, dual career support and partner hires, re-visioning your work culture, or other considerations outlined in “Leveraging Promising Practices”<sup>6</sup>?**
  - OSU’s University practices around student and faculty recruitment were reviewed by OSU’s President and Provost’s leadership Council on Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Justice and produced a [report](#) that includes an analysis of current practices and recommendations for improvements.
  - OSU has an active [Search Advocate Program](#) that advocates for the use of best practices regarding hiring through an equity lens.
  - Dual career support for graduate students is done on a case by case basis if a faculty member is paying attention and cares. This issue led to at least one top student declining OSU for fear that her partner would not have a job here.
  - Faculty hiring dual career support is better. There is funding at the Provosts level for this specifically and it is acknowledged as a major impact on success of getting top candidates.
  - OSU has a [Tenured Faculty Diversity Initiative](#).

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<sup>6</sup> K. Griffin, J. Bennett, T. York, Leveraging Promising Practices, Washington DC: Aspire Alliance, (2020).