ETS GRE

Partnering in Potential.

Supporting the Graduate Community in Addressing Evolving Challenges

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What we'll cover today

- Graduate admissions landscape
- Share key findings of our *GRE®* perceptions study
- How ETS and the GRE Program are responding, and next steps.

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Graduate Admissions Landscape

- Increased competition, declining international enrollment, need to reduce barriers → evaluating admissions processes
- Programs that drop *GRE®* scores requirement:
  - Doubt test's ability to predict success
  - Perceive it is a barrier to diversity
- Case is bolstered by recent studies
  - Small sample sizes, other research issues
  - Add to confusion about the test, creating dangerous situation for students and programs

GRE® Brand Awareness Study

Purpose: Provide ETS with a better understanding of the perceptions of the GRE Program — including the *GRE®* General Test, GRE Subject Tests and GRE Program tools and services — among graduate admissions decision makers at U.S. institutions.

Methodology

Disciplines	Total	GRE Usage		Degree Level	
		GRE® Users	*GRE*® Non-Users	Master's	Doctoral
Arts & Humanities	40	29	11	20	20
Business	40	34	6	31	9
Education	40	32	8	15	25
Engineering	40	37	3	20	20
Life Sciences	40	26	14	22	18
Physical Sciences	40	37	3	19	21
Social Sciences	40	32	8	20	20
TOTAL	**280**	**227**	**53**	**147**	**133**

- ✓ 280 admissions decision makers: deans, admissions officers, dept. chairs and faculty.
- ✓ 188 U.S. institutions
- ✓ GRE users and non-users
- ✓ Mix of selectivity
- ✓ 40 surveys per discipline

Throughout the study, statistical testing has been conducted at the 95% confidence level.

Key Findings: Admissions Challenges

Areas of priority by program selectivity
High Selectivity 1. Increasing Diversity 2. Increasing Quality of Applications/Program Reputation
Moderate Selectivity 1. Increasing Quality of Applications/Program Reputation 2. Increasing # of Applications/Students
Low Selectivity 1. Increasing # of Applications/Students 2. Increasing Quality of Applications/Program Reputation

Top admissions challenges vary by program type and are typically centered on expanding volume of applicants/students, improving application quality/program reputation, and/or diversity.

Key Findings: Admissions Challenges

Areas of priority by degree level

Doctoral Non-Users

1. Diversity/Creating Supportive Environment for members of Underrepresented Groups
2. More Accurately Assessing Noncognitive Skills
3. Increasing Program Reputation

Doctoral *GRE*® Users

1. Increasing Quality of Applications/Program Reputation
2. Increasing # of Applications/Students
3. Diversity

Master's *GRE*® Users & Non-Users

1. Increasing # of Applications/Students
2. Increasing Quality of Applications/Program Reputation

There are a few notable differences among doctoral non-users.

Key Findings: Admissions Processes

Less than half of respondents describe their admissions process as holistic, and about one in five are unsure.

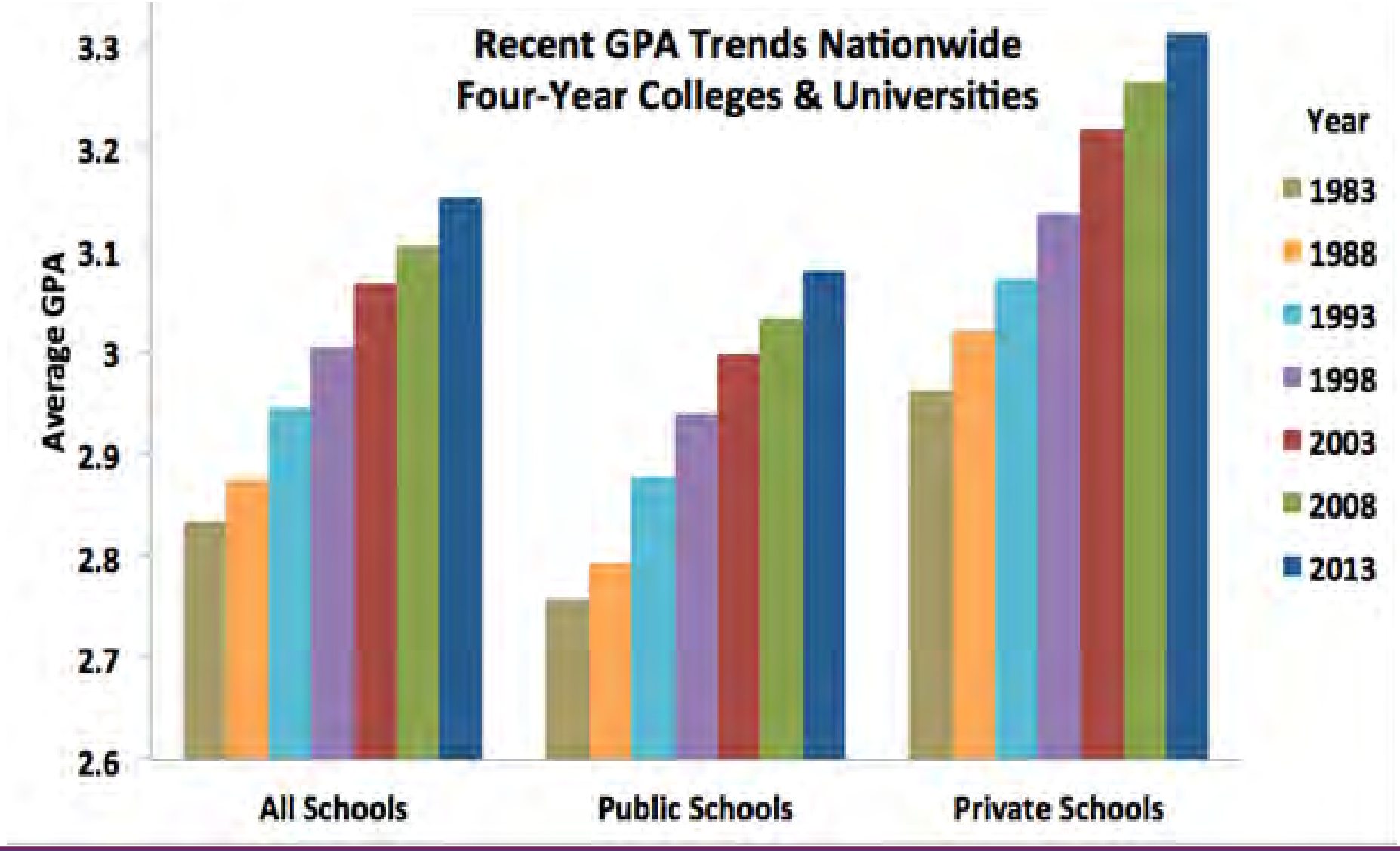
Description selected	*GRE*® Users	*GRE*® Non-Users
Holistic	43%	49%
Partially holistic	35%	26%
Not holistic	4%	4%
Not sure	17%	21%

- ✓ **Holistic** – high selectivity, business, A&H
- ✓ **Partially holistic** – education, engineering, high percentage of international applicants
- ✓ **Not sure** – engineering, A&H, physical science

Key Findings: GRE Use and Perception

About 95% of *GRE®* score users anticipate continued use of the GRE test three years from now, though 4% of score users that currently require scores are anticipating making score submission optional.

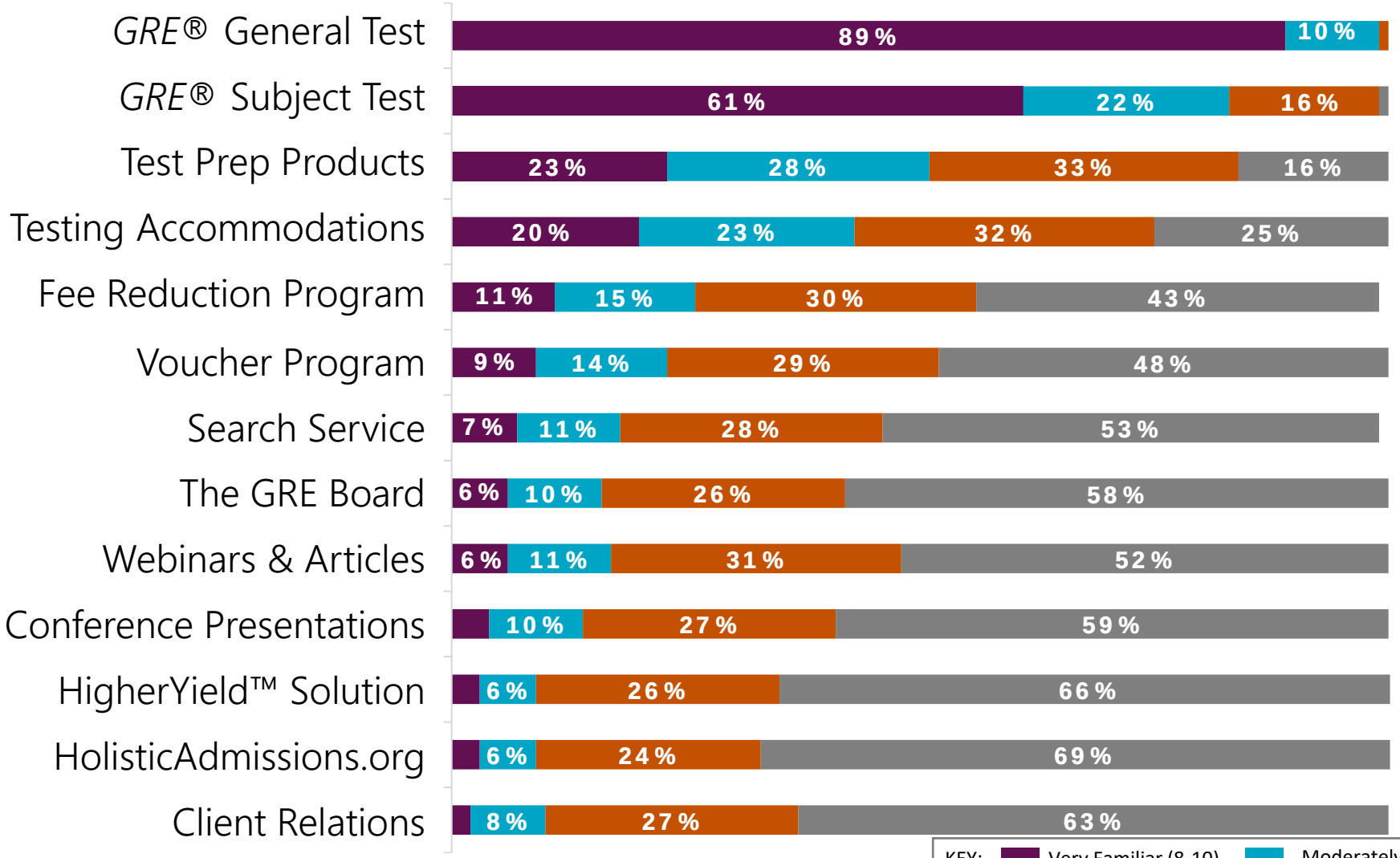
The Problem with Test Optional



Use caution when evaluating other measures, even quantitative measures.

Image from www.gradeinflation.com

Key Findings: GRE Use and Perception



The GRE Program is identified almost exclusively with the GRE assessments. Awareness and usage of GRE Program services and tools beyond the tests is low.

GRE Score Users (n=227)

KEY: Very Familiar (8-10) | Moderately Familiar (5-7) | Low Familiarity (1-4) | Not Aware

Key Findings: Trends in Test Usage

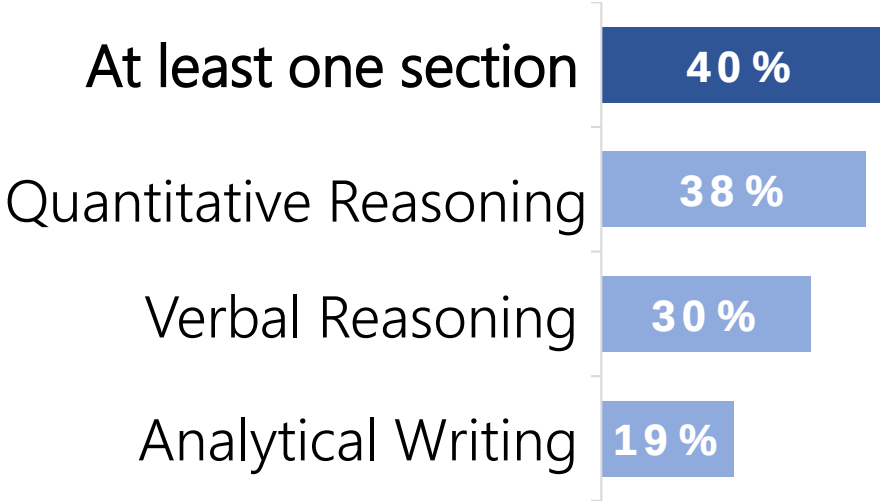
13% of Non-User respondents (n=57) are considering using the *GRE®* tests in some way during the coming three years. Influencing factors include:

- Changes in department staff/roles
- Possible accreditation requirements

Key Findings: Other Trends in Test Usage

Despite the *GRE*® Program's recommendations against the use of threshold (cut) scores, they are continuing to be used. Use is likely to increase as well.

Use of Minimum Threshold Score Among *GRE*® Score Users (n=227)



Potential New Users:

10% of those not currently using a minimum threshold score

are considering adopting a threshold score over the next three years

Likely Adjustments Among Threshold Users:

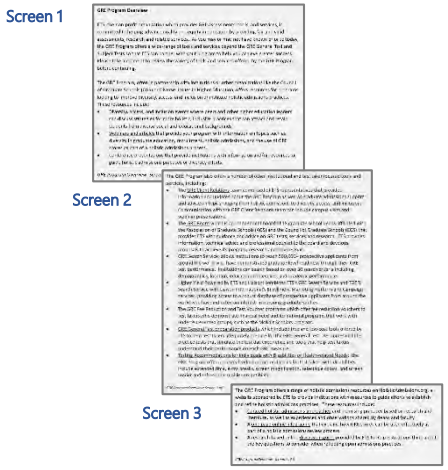
- **23%** may increase thresholds
- **8%** may lower thresholds
- **3%** may remove thresholds

Key Findings: Reactions to *GRE®* Program Overview

Information about GRE Program positively influenced perception.

1 Pre-exposure assessment of perceptions of GRE Program

2 Exposure to GRE Program Overview

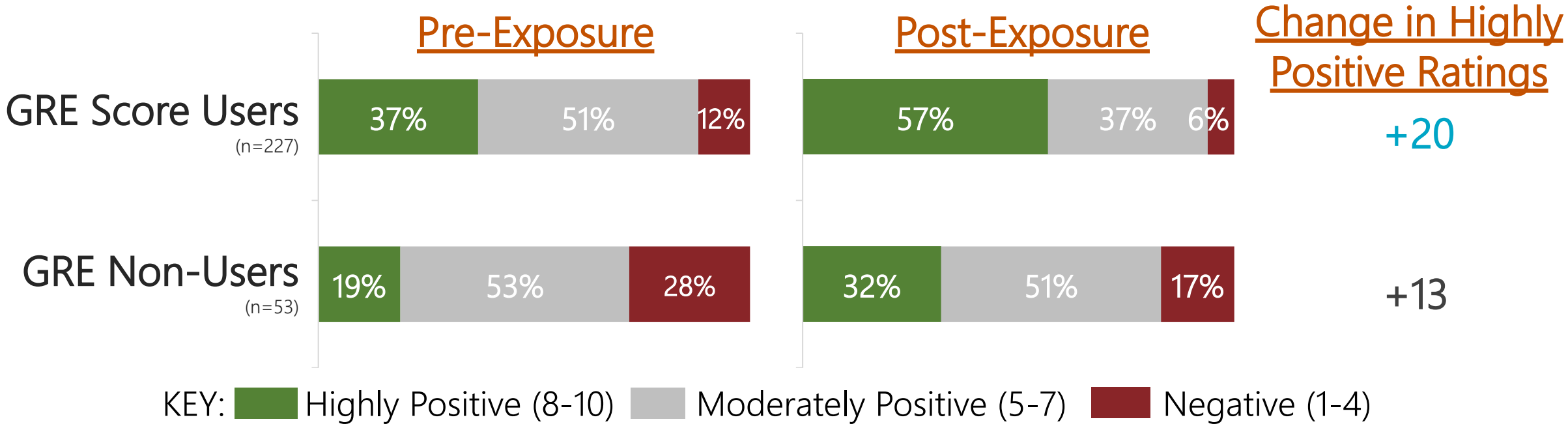


3 Post-exposure assessment of perceptions of GRE Program

Key Findings: Reactions to *GRE®* Program Overview

Information about GRE Program positively influenced perception.

Overall Perceptions of the GRE Program: Pre- vs. Post-Exposure



How we're responding

- Expanding resources and communications
  - Holisticadmissions.org
  - Fee Reduction Program
- More visibility
  - Events
  - Social interactions
- Engage with community
  - Understand needs
  - Partner on new solutions

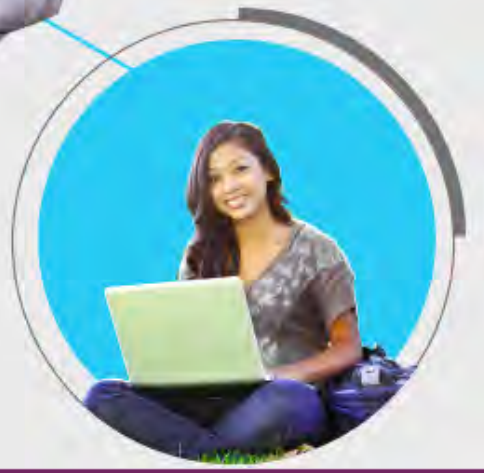
ETS Resources: HolisticAdmissions.org

ETS GRE. Partnering in Potential.

Home | Why Holistic? | Curated Approaches | Implementation | Using *GRE*® Scores | Recruiting | Events

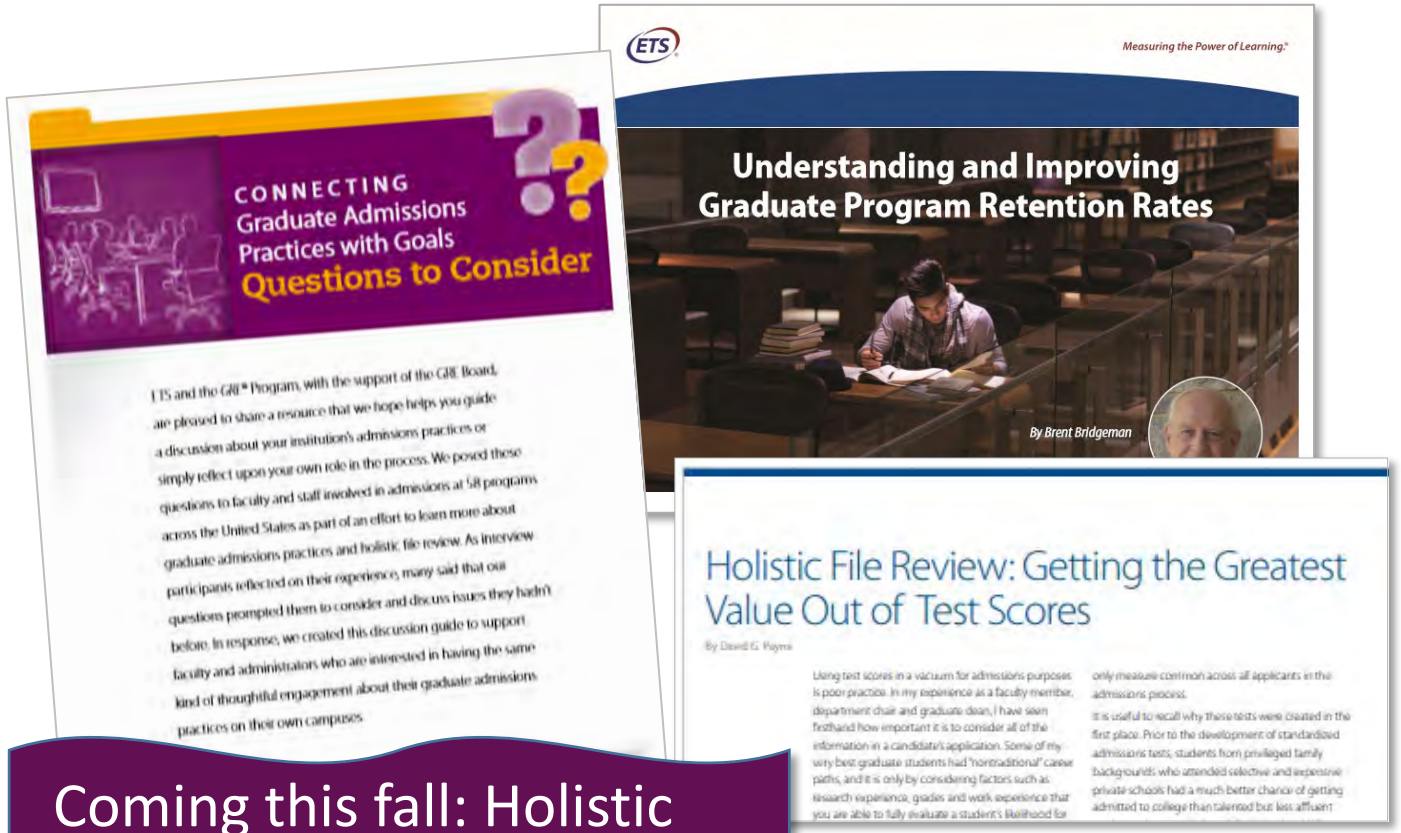
Navigating Holistic Admissions for a Stronger Graduate Program

The *GRE*® Program helps graduate and professional schools around the world identify, recruit and admit the right students for their programs.



ETS Resources: HolisticAdmissions.org

Holistic Admissions Implementation

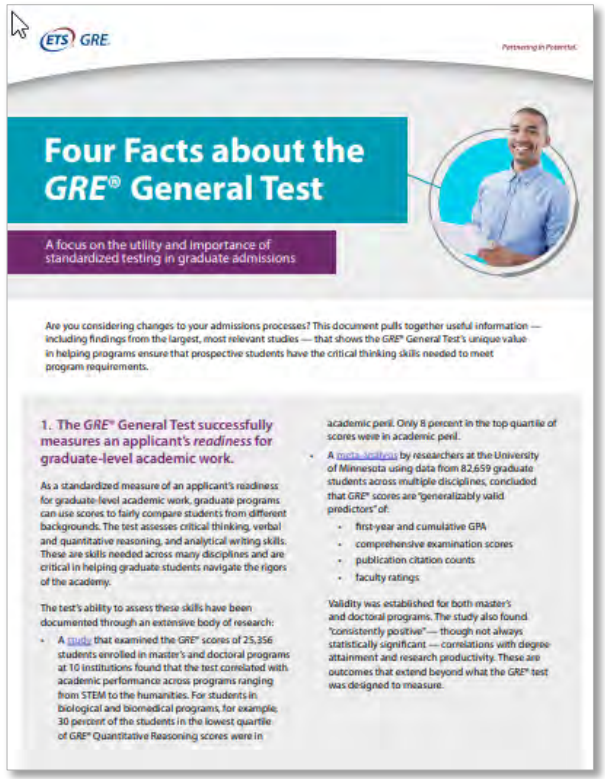


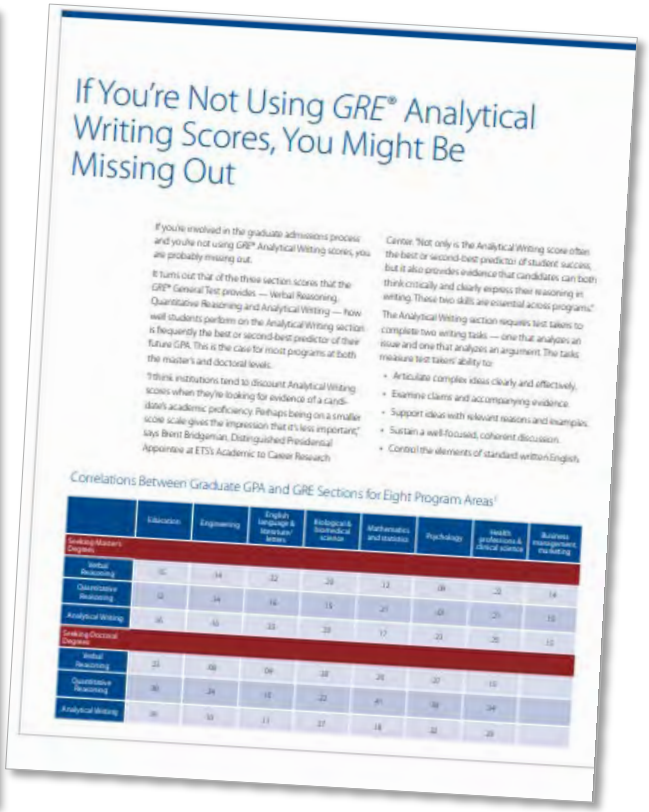
Coming this fall: Holistic Admissions Digital Guide

Recruitment

ETS Resources: HolisticAdmissions.org

GRE® Test Value and Validity





ETS Resources: Fee Reduction

- 50% fee reduction vouchers have been available to individuals who can demonstrate financial need or through programs like McNair Scholars.
- Three significant changes introduced this month:
  - Now voucher recipients also receive free access to our top-of-the-line test prep, valued at $100.
  - Vouchers available through three more national programs (IRT, LSAMP & SACNAS®), bringing the total number to 10.
  - Vouchers available for the first time to international students through EducationUSA.

- EducationUSA Opportunity Funds Program
- Gates Millennium Scholars Program
- Institute for Recruitment of Teachers (IRT)
- Maximizing Access to Research Careers (MARC) Undergraduate Student Training in Academic Research (U-STAR) Program
- National Consortium for Graduate Degrees for Minorities in Engineering and Science Program (GEM)
- NSF Lewis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) Program
- Postbaccalaureate Research Education Program (PREP)
- Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement (RISE) Program
- Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS)
- TRIO Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program
- TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) Program

ETS Resources: Supporting Institutions (Excerpt)

Recruitment	*Admissions*
Search Services — Reach 1 million+ prospective applicants. Search *GRE®* and *TOEFL®* test-taker databases by country of citizenship, academic performance, educational objectives and ~30 other criteria: ets.org/searchservice.	**Admissions Support** — Resources to support a goal-oriented, fair admissions practice inclusive of *GRE®* General Test and *GRE®* Subject Test scores: ets.org/gre/admissions.
HigherYield™ **Enrollment Marketing Solution** — Launch and manage dynamic multichannel campaigns to qualified candidates through a solution powered by ETS and Liaison International: higheryield.org.	**Holistic Admissions Support** — Tools for implementing a holistic admissions practice, including promising practices curated from programs using them successfully now: holisticadmissions.org.
Test-Taker Trends — Download *A Snapshot of Individuals Who Took the GRE® General Test*: ets.org/gre/snapshot.	**Test-Taker Essays, Photos and Scores** — View scores and test-taker photos online, create custom reports, and access actual Analytical Writing responses with the *ETS®* Data Manager: ets.org/gre/edm.
Best Practices — Learn recruitment tips through webinars and articles. Opt in: ets.org/gre/update.	**Score Use and Interpretation** — Guidance and resources for using scores appropriately in making admissions decisions: ets.org/gre/institutions/admissions/using_scores and ets.org/gre/scoreresources.

ETS Resources: Reducing Barriers for Test Takers

Free Resources and Services	
Free Official Test Prep — Online practice that simulates the actual test, Analytical Writing topics, a 100-page math review and more: ets.org/gre/prepare.	**International Applicant Resources** — Advice on applying to and managing the cost of graduate school, "how to" videos and much more: takethegre.com.
In-Language Webinars — Learn about the test, discover prep tools and interact with a GRE test expert: ets.org/gre/webinars.	***GRE*® Search Service** — Free opt-in service that connects test takers and graduate programs interested in them: ets.org/gre/perfectmatch.
Fee Reduction Program — 50 percent off the regular test fee plus free test prep for those who demonstrate financial need: ets.org/gre/feereductions.	**Accommodations** — Industry-leading support for test takers with disabilities and health-related needs: ets.org/gre/disabilities.
***ScoreSelect*® Option** — Allows test takers that test more than once to send only their best set of scores to schools: ets.org/gre/scoreselect.	**Test Center Convenience** — Year-round testing at 1,000+ centers in 160+ countries: ets.org/gre/testcenters.
GRE Diagnostic Service — Free Quant and Verbal section performance insight for test takers: bit.ly/2pO0xIS.	**Official *GRE*® Advisor Kit** — Presentations, materials and videos to help advisors guide prospective students to important information: ets.org/gre/institutions/prepare/advisor_kit.

More Visibility: ETS event, webinars, GRE LinkedIn® Page

Strategies for
Increasing Graduate Program Diversity

Promising Practices in Graduate Admissions, Case Studies in Successful Innovation

International Recruitment Strategies, Successful Solutions, and Tools

NAGAP Webinars

Follow us!

linkedin.com/showcase/the-gre-program

Continued Engagement with the Graduate Community

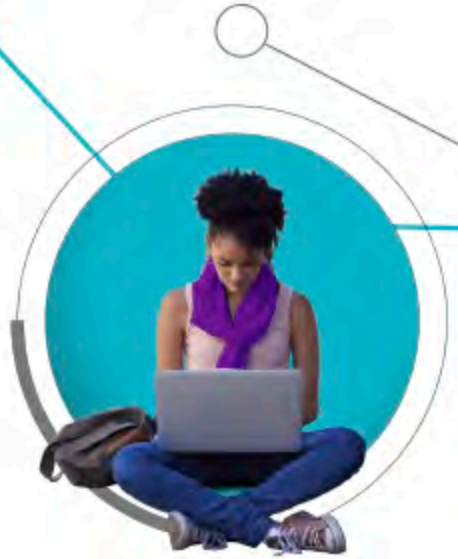
- The *GRE*® Board
  - 18 graduate deans, including appointments from CGS and AGS.
  - Guide the program and share information with us about challenges and opportunities in the graduate community.
- New GRE Program market research study – A qualitative study that take a deeper look at graduate program needs; wrapping up this summer.
- Hiring about 10 graduate faculty and deans across a variety of disciplines to consult with the GRE Program team.
- Looking to use our research expertise and experience for the good of the graduate community through the development of new offerings and resources that can help address these needs.

How You Can Help

- ✓ Sign up for the *GRE®* Program email list at www.ets.org/gre/update.
- ✓ Add us as a "safe sender" to ensure that our emails are coming to your inbox, not your clutter folder.
- ✓ Share our emails with your teams.
- ✓ Follow us on LinkedIn®: linkedin.com/showcase/the-gre-program
- ✓ Respond to our surveys if asked; it's one of the ways that we learn what you need.
- ✓ If you are dealing with requests to drop the GRE test, email me at (gretests@ets.org) for materials, client relations support.
- ✓ If you know of organizations or disciplinary societies that might be interested in working with us on solutions to address graduate program needs, please let me know.

Thank you

David Payne
Vice President and COO, Global Higher Education



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