

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL  
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE  
REQUEST FOR DECISION

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**PRESENTED BY:** Alison Oates, chair, Academic Programs Committee

**DATE OF MEETING:** October 21, 2021

**SUBJECT:** **Changes to Admissions Qualifications – Master of Arts (MA) in Psychology- Clinical Stream**

**DECISIONS REQUESTED:**

*It is recommended that the Council approve the change to admissions qualifications to the Master of Arts (MA) in Psychology – Clinical Stream to remove the requirement of a Graduate Record Examination (GRE), effective the 2022-23 admissions*

**PURPOSE:**

University Council has the authority to approve changes to admissions requirements degree-level programs. Senate confirmation is required for such changes.

**CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND:**

The College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS) proposed to remove the requirement of a Graduate Records Examination (GRE) score for the Master of Arts in Psychology-Clinical Stream. The rationale for the change was to better align the requirements for admissions to the MA in Psychology- clinical stream both with other graduate-level study in Psychology at USask and to align with requirements for most clinical psychology graduate programs in North America.

**CONSULTATION:**

The academic programs committee reviewed the proposal for this program at its October 6, 2021 meeting. The committee agreed that removing the requirement of the GRE for admissions to the program would ensure that the committee had the tools needed to assess the quality of candidates.

**FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED:**

University Senate will be asked to confirm Council's approval of this change at its next meeting

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- 1. Proposal for change to admission qualifications for the Master of Arts (MA) in Psychology- Clinical Stream**



## Memorandum

**To:** Executive Committee of CGPS

**Copy:** Megan O'Connell, Clinical Psychology Executive Committee

**From:** Graduate Programs Committee of CGPS

**Date:** September 17, 2021

**Re:** Change to Admission Requirements – Master of Arts in Psychology, Clinical Stream

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On September 7, 2021, the Graduate Programs Committee reviewed a request to remove the requirement to submit a Graduate Records Examination Score, General for admission to the Master of Arts, Psychology, Clinical Stream.

The six-part rationale provided for the removal of the GRE requirement was as follows:

1. *GRE scores have low predictive validity of graduate students' success*
2. *The GRE requirement puts underrepresented minorities at a disadvantage*
3. *Most clinical graduate programs in North America do not require the GRE*
4. *The GRE is not required for accreditation for clinical psychology graduate programs*
5. *Other programs in our department (ASP, CHHD, and Cognition and Neuroscience) do not require the GRE*
6. *There are better ways to evaluate applicants' knowledge and preparedness for graduate studies."*

The members of the Graduate Programs Committee found that case for a change in admission requirements well rationalized in relation to evidence, comparators, and other programs in the unit.

The Graduate Programs Committee passed the following motion:

*To recommend removal of the requirement to submit a GRE Score for admission to the M.A. Psychology, Clinical Stream.*

CARRIED unanimous

Attached please find the memorandum providing the detailed rationale for the change in admission requirements.

If you have any questions, please contact Ryan Walker at [ryan.walker@usask.ca](mailto:ryan.walker@usask.ca)

## MEMORANDUM

**To: CGPS**

**From: Graduate Program in Clinical Psychology**

**Date: 10 August 2021**

**Re: Changes to Admission Requirements – Master of Arts in Psychology, Clinical Stream**

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### Admission requirements (with proposed changes marked)

#### Master of Arts

- Language Proficiency Requirements: Proof of English proficiency may be required for international applicants and for applicants whose first language is not English.
- a cumulative weighted average of at least a 70% (USask grade system equivalent) in the last two years of study (i.e. 60 credit units)
- a four-year honours degree, or equivalent, from a recognized college or university in an academic discipline relevant to the proposed field of study

~~If applying to the following streams you will also need a Graduate Records Examination (GRE) Score, General:~~

- ~~Clinical stream~~

#### The rationale for the change:

1. GRE scores have low predictive validity of graduate students' success
2. The GRE requirement puts underrepresented minorities at a disadvantage
3. Most clinical graduate programs in North America do not require the GRE
4. The GRE is not required for accreditation for clinical psychology graduate programs
5. Other programs in our department (ASP, CHHD, and Cognition and Neuroscience) do not require the GRE
6. There are better ways to evaluate applicants' knowledge and preparedness for graduate studies.

#### 1. GRE scores have low predictive validity of graduate students' success

(copied from February 3, 2020 memo from ASP written by Valery Chirkov  
<https://governance.usask.ca/documents/council/agenda/2019-2020/march2020/2020-03-19-councilagendapackage.pdf> )

*“Numerous studies, mostly based on the meta-analysis of large samples of students from different universities and disciplines, unequivocally indicate that the GRE scores have low predictive validity regarding graduate students’ success (Golberg et al., 1992; Kincel et al., 2010; Morrison et al., 1995). Other studies reported that undergraduate GPA is a better predictor of Graduate GPA (GGPA) than GRE for both MA and Ph.D. students (Feeley et al., 2005). It was also discovered that the GRE validity coefficients vary depending on disciplines (Thornell, et al., 1985). As some researchers indicated (Feeley et al., 2005; Goldberg, 1992), one of the main problems for investigating the predictive power of the GRE is the choice of criterion variable: what indicator should be used to measure graduate studies' success? Currently, researchers use GGPA, first-year GPA, faculty ratings, and degree attainment. Even with this limited list of indicators, it is evident that graduate success is a multidimensional parameter that depends on several factors where the GRE scores (reasoning and the level of knowledge of discipline) serving as only one of them. Other factors include students’ motivation, their organizational and time-management skills, intelligence and creativity, their psychological and physical wellness, the culture of research in the institution, relationships with a supervisor, relationships with fellow students and other faculty, economic conditions, family issues and some others. Our own experience indicates that, for years, when we used the GRE as an admission criterion, we rarely if ever used its scores for admission decision making. Other parameters, such as UGPA, reference letters, personal interviews, conference presentations and publications are considered to be more informative for this purpose.”*

## **2. The GRE requirement puts underrepresented minorities at a disadvantage**

Increasingly the GRE and its associated financial costs to write has been recognized as a barrier for highly capable underrepresented minorities (Miller & Stassun, 2014; Pacheco et al., 2015; Posselt, 2014; Sternberg & Williams, 1997), an effect recently demonstrated at one American University’s Department of Psychology where GRE scores were gathered but not used for admission decisions. Gomez et al. (2021) detailed how underrepresented minority candidates would have had their admission barred at the rate of 44% versus for 17% for white/Asian/Pacific islanders if the GRE would have been used for decisions for admission.

## **3. Most clinical graduate programs in North America do not require the GRE**

A recent survey of the Council of University Directors of Clinical Psychology (CUDCP) – an organization of clinical psychology programs across North America reported that only 3 or 3.9% of the sample of clinical programs required the GRE in 2021. The UofS was one of these. Only 2 programs (or 2.6% of the sample) reported that they will require the GRE in 2022, which included the UofS. The UofS Graduate Program in Clinical Psychology retaining this requirement is clearly in the minority across North America.

## **4. The GRE is not required for accreditation for clinical psychology graduate programs**

In no accreditation standard, and notably the Canadian Psychological Society Accreditation Standards that apply to the UofS program is the GRE mentioned ([https://cpa.ca/docs/File/Accreditation/Accreditation\\_2011.pdf](https://cpa.ca/docs/File/Accreditation/Accreditation_2011.pdf)).

**5. Other programs in our department (ASP, CHHD, and Cognition and Neuroscience) do not require the GRE**

The clinical stream is the only program in the department that currently requires the GRE, and the lack of the GRE has not had any appreciable impact on student quality seen across the other streams.

**6. There are better ways to evaluate applicants' knowledge and preparedness for graduate studies.**

Admission procedures to the Graduate Program in Clinical Psychology involve a review of transcripts, 3 letters of reference, the students' CV, and a personal statement. Transcript review is detailed – and this can inform our evaluation of longstanding academic performance versus a snapshot of performance such as is provided by the GRE. Finally, if a student appears strong and is a good fit for the Graduate Program in Clinical Psychology (a decision made by consensus of the Clinical Executive Committee) they are interviewed independently by two clinical faculty. A final decision is made by consensus of the Clinical Executive Committee and is based on a holistic appraisal of the applicant, their academic achievement, and interpersonal skills. The GRE does not play an appreciable role in this holistic appraisal.



Megan O'Connell on behalf of the Clinical Psychology Executive Committee

**Consultation with the Registrar Form**

This form is to be completed by the Registrar (or his/her designate) during an in-person consultation with the faculty member responsible for the proposal. Please consider the questions on this form prior to the meeting.

**Section 1: New Degree / Diploma / Certificate Information or Renaming of Existing**

1 Is this a new degree, diploma, or certificate?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Is an existing degree, diploma, or certificate being renamed?

If you've answered NO to each of the previous two questions, please continue on to the next section.

2 What is the name of the new degree, diploma, or certificate?

3 What is the credential of this new degree, diploma, or certificate? [Example - D.M.D. = Doctor of Dental Medicine]

4 If you have renamed an existing degree, diploma, or certificate, what is the current name?

5 Does this new or renamed degree / diploma / certificate require completion of degree level courses or non-degree level courses, thus implying the attainment of either a degree level or non-degree level standard of achievement?

6 If this is a new degree level certificate, can a student take it at the same time as pursuing another degree level program?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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7 If YES, a student attribute will be created and used to track students who are in this certificate alongside another program. The attribute code will be:

8 Which College is responsible for the awarding of this degree, diploma, or certificate?

9 Is there more than one program to fulfill the requirements for this degree, diploma, or certificate? If yes, please list these programs.

10 Are there any new majors, minors, or concentrations associated with this new degree / diploma / certificate? Please list the name(s) and whether it is a major, minor, or concentration, along with the sponsoring department.

11 If this is a new graduate degree, is it thesis-based, course-based, or project-based?

**Section 2: New / Revised Program for Existing or New Degree / Diploma / Certificate Information**

1 Is this a new program?

Yes  No

Is an existing program being revised?

Yes  No

If you've answered NO to each of the previous two questions, please continue on to the next section.

2 If YES, what degree, diploma, or certificate does this new/revised program meet requirements for?

3 What is the name of this new/revised program?

4 What other program(s) currently exist that will also meet the requirements for this same degree(s)?

5 What College/Department is the academic authority for this program?

6 Is this a replacement for a current program?

Yes  No

7 If YES, will students in the current program complete that program or be grandfathered?

8 If this is a new graduate program, is it thesis-based, course-based, or project-based?

9 If this is a new non-degree or undergraduate level program, what is the expected completion time?

**Section 3: Mobility**

Mobility is the ability to move freely from one jurisdiction to another and to gain entry into an academic institution or to participate in a learning experience without undue obstacles or hindrances.

1 Does the proposed degree, program, major, minor, concentration, or course involve mobility?

Yes  No

If yes, choose one of the following?

Domestic Mobility (both jurisdictions are within Canada)

International Mobility (one jurisdiction is outside of Canada)

2 Please indicate the mobility type (refer to Nomenclature for definitions).

Joint Program

Joint Degree

Dual Degree

Professional Internship Program

Faculty-Led Course Abroad

Term Abroad Program

3 The U of S enters into partnerships or agreements with external partners for the above mobility types in order to allow students collaborative opportunities for research, studies, or activities. Has an agreement been signed?

Yes  No

4 Please state the full name of the agreement that the U of S is entering into.

5 What is the name of the external partner?

6 What is the jurisdiction for the external partner?



**Section 4: New / Revised Major, Minor, or Concentration for Existing Degree Information (Undergraduate)**

1 Is this a new or revised major, minor, or concentration attached to an existing degree program?

Yes  No  Revised

If you've answered NO, please continue on to the next section.

2 If YES, please specify whether it is a major, minor, or concentration. If it is more than one, please fill out a separate form for each.

3 What is the name of this new / revised major, minor, or concentration?

4 Which department is the authority for this major, minor, or concentration? If this is a cross-College relationship, please state the Jurisdictional College and the Adopting College.

5 Which current program(s), degree(s), and/or program type(s) is this new / revised major, minor, or concentration attached to?

**Section 5: New / Revised Disciplinary Area for Existing Degree Information (Graduate)**

1 Is this a new or revised disciplinary area attached to an existing graduate degree program?

Yes  No  Revised

If you've answered NO, please continue on to the next section.

2 If YES, what is the name of this new / revised disciplinary area?

3 Which Department / School is the authority for this new / revised disciplinary area? (NOTE - if this disciplinary area is being offered by multiple departments see question below.)

4 Which **multiple** Departments / Schools are the authority for this new / revised disciplinary area?

4a Of the **multiple** Departments / Schools who are the authority for this new / revised disciplinary area and what allocation percentage is assigned to each? (Note - must be whole numbers and must equal 100.)

4b Of the **multiple** Departments / Schools who is the primary department? The primary department specifies which department / school policies will be followed in academic matters (ex. late adds, re-read policies, or academic misconduct). If no department / school is considered the primary, please indicate that. (In normal circumstances, a department / school with a greater percentage of responsibility - see question above - will be designated the primary department.)

5 Which current program(s) and / or degree(s) is this new / revised disciplinary area attached to?



**Section 6: New College / School / Center / Department or Renaming of Existing**

1 Is this a new college, school, center, or department?

Is an existing college, school, center, or department being renamed?

Is an existing college, school, center, or department being deleted?

If you've answered NO to each of the previous two questions, please continue on to the next section.

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

2 What is the name of the new (or renamed or deleted) college, school, center, or department?

3 If you have renamed an existing college, school, center, or department, what is the current name?

4 What is the effective term of this new (renamed or deleted) college, school, center, or department?

5 Will any programs be created, changed, or moved to a new authority, removed, relabelled?

6 Will any courses be created, changed, or moved to a new authority, removed, relabelled?

7 Are there any ceremonial consequences for Convocation (ie. New degree hood, adjustment to parchments, etc.)?

**Section 7: Course Information - NOT APPLICABLE**

1 Is there a new subject area(s) of course offering proposed for this new degree? If so, what is the subject area(s) and the suggested four (4) character abbreviation(s) to be used in course listings?

2 If there is a new subject area(s) of offerings what College / Department is the academic authority for this new subject area?

3 Have the subject area identifier and course number(s) for new and revised courses been cleared by the Registrar?

4 Does the program timetable use standard class time slots, terms, and sessions?

Yes  No

If NO, please describe.

5 Does this program, due to pedagogical reasons, require any special space or type or rooms?

Yes  No

If YES, please describe.

NOTE: Please remember to submit a new "Course Creation Form" for every new course required for this new program / major.  
Attached completed "Course Creation Forms" to this document would be helpful.

**Section 8: Admissions, Recruitment, and Quota Information - AS PER CURRENT SET-UP EXCEPT NOTED BELOW**

1 Will students apply on-line? If not, how will they apply?

2 What term(s) can students be admitted to?

3 What is the application deadline for each term(s) students can be admitted to?

4 For undergraduate programs, will students be admitted to one of the approved majors or an undeclared major?

5 For undergraduate programs, if there's more than one degree proposed (ex. 3Y and 4Y), which program/degree will students be admitted to?

6 Does this impact enrollment?

7 How should Marketing and Student Recruitment handle initial inquiries about this proposal before official approval?

8 Can classes towards this program be taken at the same time as another program?

9 What is the application deadline?

10 What are the admission qualifications? (IE. High school transcript required, grade 12 standing, minimum average, any required courses, etc.)

For the Master of Arts-Thesis (MA-T-GP program and the PSY (Psychology) major and the CLIN (Clinical) concentration remove the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) admission requirement

11 What is the selection criteria? (IE. If only average then 100% weighting; if other factors such as interview, essay, etc. what is the weighting of each of these in the admission decision.)

12 What are the admission categories and admit types? (IE. High school students and transfer students or one group? Special admission? Aboriginal equity program?)

13 What is the application process? (IE. Online application and supplemental information (required checklist items) through the Admissions Office or sent to the College/Department?)

14 Who makes the admission decision? (IE. Admissions Office or College/Department/Other?)

15 Letter of acceptance - are there any special requirements for communication to newly admitted students?

16 Will the standard application fee apply?

17 Will all applicants be charged the fee or will current, active students be exempt?

18 Are international students admissible to this program?

Yes  No

If YES, what is the tuition amount for the first 12 months for a full-time international student? This information is required for the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada [IRCC] form (this form is for students who need to get a visa to study here).

**Section 9: Government Loan Information - NOT APPLICABLE**

NOTE: Federal / provincial government loan programs require students to be full-time in order to be eligible for funding. The University of Saskatchewan defines full-time as enrollment in a minimum of 9 credit units (operational) in the fall and/or winter term(s) depending on the length of the loan.

1 If this is a change to an existing program, will the program change have any impact on student loan eligibility?

2 If this is a new program, do you intend that students be eligible for student loans?

**Section 10: Convocation Information (only for new degrees) - NOT APPLICABLE**

1 Are there any 'ceremonial consequences' of this proposal (ie. New degree hood, special convocation, etc.)?

2 If YES, has the Office of the University Secretary been notified?

3 When is the first class expected to graduate?

4

What is the maximum number of students you anticipate/project will graduate per year (please consider the next 5-10 years)?

**Section 11: Schedule of Implementation Information**

1 What is the start term?

2 Are students required to do anything prior to the above date (in addition to applying for admission)?

Yes  No

If YES, what and by what date?

**Section 12: Registration Information - NOT APPLICABLE**

1 What year in program is appropriate for this program (NA or a numeric year)?

(General rule = NA for programs and categories of students not working toward a degree level qualification; undergraduate degree level certificates will use numeric year.)

2 Will students register themselves?

Yes  No

If YES, what priority group should they be in?

**Section 13: Academic History Information - NOT APPLICABLE**

1 Will instructors submit grades through self-serve?

Yes  No

2 Who will approve grades (Department Head, Assistant Dean, etc.)?

**Section 14: T2202 Information (tax form) - NOT APPLICABLE**

1 Should classes count towards T2202s?

Yes  No

**Section 15: Awards Information**

1 Will terms of reference for existing awards need to be amended?

Yes  No

2 If this is a new undergraduate program, will students in this program be eligible for College-specific awards?

**Section 16: Government of Saskatchewan Graduate Retention (Tax) Program - NOT APPLICABLE**

1 Will this program qualify for the Government of Saskatchewan graduate retention (tax) program?

Yes  No

To qualify the program must meet the following requirements:

- be equivalent to at least 6 months of full-time study, and
- result in a certificate, diploma, or undergraduate degree.



**Section 17: Program Termination**

1 Is this a program termination? Yes  No

If yes, what is the name of the program?

2 What is the effective date of this termination?

3 Will there be any courses closed as a result of this termination? Yes  No

If yes, what courses?

4 Are there currently any students enrolled in the program? Yes  No

If yes, will they be able to complete the program?

5 If not, what alternate arrangements are being made for these students?

6 When do you expect the last student to complete this program?

7 Is there mobility associated with this program termination? Yes  No

If yes, please select one of the following mobility activity types.

Dual Degree Program

Joint Degree Program

Internship Abroad Program

Term Abroad Program

Taught Abroad Course

Student Exchange Program

  
  
  
  
  

Partnership agreements, coordinated by the International Office, are signed for these types of mobility activities. Has the International Office been informed of this program termination?

Yes  No

**Section 18: Proposed Tuition and Student Fees Information - NOT APPLICABLE**

1 How will tuition be assessed?

- Standard Undergraduate per credit
- Standard Graduate per credit
- Standard Graduate per term
- Non standard per credit\*
- Non standard per term\*
- Other \*
- Program Based\*

\* See attached documents for further details

2 If fees are per credit, do they conform to existing categories for per credit tuition? If YES, what category or rate?

3 If program based tuition, how will it be assessed? By credit unit? By term? Elsehow?

4 Does proponent's proposal contain detailed information regarding requested tuition?

Yes  No

If NO, please describe.

5 What is IPA's recommendation regarding tuition assessment? When is it expected to receive approval?

6 IPA Additional comments?

7 Will students outside the program be allowed to take the classes?

8 If YES, what should they be assessed? (This is especially important for program based.)

9 Do standard student fee assessment criteria apply (full-time, part-time, on-campus versus off-campus)?

10 Do standard cancellation fee rules apply?

11 Are there any additional fees (e.g. materials, excursion)? If yes, see NOTE below.

12 Are you moving from one tuition code (TC) to another tuition code?

Yes  No

If YES, from which tuition code to which tuition code?

13 Are international students admissible to the program? If yes, will they pay the international tuition differential?

NOTE: Please remember to submit a completed "Application for New Fee or Fee Change Form" for every new course with additional fees.

**Section 19: TLSE - Information Dissemination (internal for TLSE use only)**

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |     |                          |    |                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| 1 Has TLSE, Marketing and Student Recruitment, been informed about this new / revised program?                                                                                                            | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 Has TLSE, Admissions, been informed about this new / revised program?                                                                                                                                   | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 Has TLSE, Student Finance and Awards, been informed about this new / revised program?                                                                                                                   | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 Has CGPS been informed about this new / revised program?                                                                                                                                                | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 Has TLSE, Transfer Credit, been informed about any new / revised courses?                                                                                                                               | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 Has ICT-Data Services been informed about this new or revised degree / program / major / minor / concentration?                                                                                         | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 Has the Library been informed about this new / revised program?                                                                                                                                         | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 Has ISA been informed of the CIP code for new degree / program / major?                                                                                                                                 | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 Has Room Scheduling/Scheduling Hub/Senior Coordinator of Scheduling been informed of unique space requirements for the new courses and/or informed of program, course, college, and department changes? | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10 Has the Convocation Coordinator been notified of a new degree?                                                                                                                                         | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11 What is the highest level of financial approval required for this submission? Check all that apply.                                                                                                    |     |                          |    |                          |
| a. None - as it has no financial implications                                                                                                                                                             |     | <input type="checkbox"/> |    |                          |
| <u>OR</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                 |     |                          |    |                          |
| b. Fee Review Committee                                                                                                                                                                                   |     | <input type="checkbox"/> |    |                          |
| c. Institutional Planning and Assessment (IPA)                                                                                                                                                            |     | <input type="checkbox"/> |    |                          |
| d. Provost's Committee on Integrated Planning (PCIP)                                                                                                                                                      |     | <input type="checkbox"/> |    |                          |
| e. Board of Governors                                                                                                                                                                                     |     | <input type="checkbox"/> |    |                          |
| f. Other                                                                                                                                                                                                  |     | <input type="checkbox"/> |    |                          |

**SIGNED**

Date:

Registrar (Russell Isinger):

College Representative(s):

IPA Representative(s):