

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I WANT TO BEGIN MY GRADUATE PROGRAM STARTING IN JANUARY. WILL YOU CONSIDER MY APPLICATION FOR SPRING ADMISSION?

No. Due to the sequencing of our courses, we only consider applicants for the fall semester.

IS THERE A SPECIFIC FORM TO USE FOR MY LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION?

Yes. Your application packet should include a recommendation form that can be used or you can get the form at

<http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/prospect/gradapprec.pdf>

However, you may alternatively ask your referees to write using their own letterhead stationery.

IS THERE A SPECIAL FORM FOR MY STATEMENT OF PURPOSE?

No.

WHAT SHOULD I WRITE IN MY STATEMENT OF PURPOSE?

We are assessing your potential to benefit from and to contribute to the MSU graduate program in economics. Your statement of purpose should explain your interest in graduate study. What are your particular interests? How do your interests fit with our faculty's research interests or department strengths? Why do you believe you have the capacity to make a distinctive professional or scholarly contribution to our field? Can you provide evidence of leadership potential that would be helpful in a diverse educational community? Please include relevant personal history that has shaped your interests and outlook, including evidence of overcoming social, economic, or personal obstacles.

I HAVE NOT TAKEN THE GRE. WILL YOU ACCEPT MY SCORES FROM THE GMAT INSTEAD?

No. GRE scores are required before we can consider you for admission.

WHAT IS THE MINIMUM GRE SCORE REQUIRED FOR ADMISSION TO THE GRADUATE PROGRAM?

We do not have a rule that specifies an admission decision based on GRE scores alone. While a person may be denied admission based on a relatively low GRE score, another applicant with a similar GRE score might be admitted if the rest of the record (including transcripts and letters of recommendation) is very strong.

MY NATIVE LANGUAGE IS NOT ENGLISH. WHAT IS THE MINIMUM TOEFL SCORE REQUIRED FOR ADMISSION TO THE GRADUATE PROGRAM?

The minimum TOEFL score is 550 on the written test with no subscore below 52. This corresponds to a total score of 213 with no subscore below 19 on the computerized version of the test.

DO YOU REQUIRE THE SUBJECT TEST OF THE GRE?

No.

I HAVE WRITTEN SEVERAL PAPERS. SHOULD I ENCLOSE THEM WITH MY APPLICATION?

No. We will not consider anything other than test scores, transcripts, statement of purpose, and letters of recommendation. Your letters of recommendation and statement of purpose can highlight any noteworthy research accomplishments.

I CANNOT AFFORD TO PAY THE APPLICATION FEE. CAN YOU WAIVE THE FEE?

No. The University assesses the application fee. The Economics department has nothing to do with this. Furthermore, we will not process any application until the Admissions Office notifies us that the fee has been paid.

IF I TELL YOU MY GRE SCORES, GRADE POINT AVERAGE, AND OTHER DETAILS ABOUT MY ACADEMIC LIFE, CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT MY CHANCES ARE FOR ADMISSION AND/OR FINANCIAL AID?

No. We cannot look at any one application in isolation. We have to consider the merits of each application relative to the entire pool of applications.

I SUBMITTED MY ENTIRE APPLICATION IN OCTOBER BUT I HAVE NOT YET HEARD ANYTHING. THIS IS ALREADY DECEMBER. HAVE YOU LOST MY MATERIALS?

We do NOT begin processing applications until January. Decisions regarding financial assistance are not fully completed until the end of March.

I AM APPLYING FOR THE M.A. PROGRAM. WHAT FORMS OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE ARE AVAILABLE?

Our resources are fairly limited. As such, the Department of Economics is not able to offer financial assistance to M.A. students.

I AM AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT APPLYING FOR THE Ph.D. PROGRAM. WHAT ARE MY CHANCES OF RECEIVING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE?

We cannot offer assistance to all students admitted to the Ph.D. program. We do offer assistantships to some international students. However, we must be certain of your fluency in spoken English. The best signal in this regard is a score of 50 or higher on the Test of Spoken English that is administered by the Educational Testing Service.