GRE and Applying to Graduate School Information Session

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MCB ACADEMIC ADVISOR
GRE: Graduate Record Examination
GRE: Graduate Record Examination

- Most commonly required admission test for graduate school
- Supplements your undergraduate records, recommendation letters, and other qualifications for graduate-level study
- Available on paper or computer
- Allows you to skip questions within a section, go back and change answers, and tackle the questions you want to answer first.
- You can choose which scores to send to graduate school programs
- Assessment of the following:
  - Critical Thinking
  - Analytical Writing
  - Verbal Reasoning
  - Quantitative Reasoning Skills
Computer vs Paper-Based

Computer-Adaptive Version

• Test adapts the difficulty level of its questions every time you submit an answer
• Includes on-screen calculator

Paper-based

• Takes more time to finish
• Calculator provided at test-center.
Professional Schools Requiring the GRE:

- Graduate School – Doctoral and Master’s Programs in math, science, or research methodology
- Business School (MBA)
- Veterinary Medicine
- Physician Assistant School
- Some Law Schools
- Some Pharmacy Schools
- Some Dental Schools
GRE General Test vs GRE Subject Test

**GRE General Test**
- Standard way to compare candidates to each other.

**GRE Subject Test**
- Highlight your strengths in a specific subject area (Biology, Chemistry, Biochemistry, Cell and Molecular Biology, Math, Physics, Literature in English, and Psychology,
- Recommended, not required – could give you competitive edge.
Main Sections of the GRE

- **Verbal Reasoning**
  (30 questions in 30 minutes)

- **Quantitative Reasoning**
  (28 questions in 45 minutes)

- **Analytical Writing**
  (Two sections: 45 and 30 minutes each)

- **Total Test Time**
  ~3 hours and 45 minutes plus short breaks
Verbal Reasoning

- Analyze and draw conclusions from specific readings
- Identify author’s assumptions and/or perspective
- Understand multiple levels of meaning
- Select important points:
  - Distinguish major from minor or relevant points
  - Summarize text
  - Understand the structure of a text
- Recognize relationships among words and concepts:
  - Understand the meaning of words
Types of Verbal Reasoning Questions
Multiple Choice Questions

Sample questions 1 to 3 below are based on this passage:
Policymakers must confront the dilemma that fossil fuels continue to be an indispensable source of energy even though burning them produces atmospheric accumulations of carbon dioxide that increase the likelihood of potentially disastrous global climate change. Currently, technology that would capture carbon dioxide emitted by power plants and sequester it harmlessly underground or undersea instead of releasing it into the atmosphere might double the cost of generating electricity. But because sequestration does not affect the cost of electricity transmission and distribution, delivered prices will rise less, by no more than 50 percent. Research into better technologies for capturing carbon dioxide will undoubtedly lead to lowered costs.

Sample Multiple-choice Question — Select One Answer Choice
1. The passage implies which of the following about the current cost of generating electricity?

A. It is higher than it would be if better technologies for capturing carbon dioxide were available.
B. It is somewhat less than the cost of electricity transmission and distribution.
C. It constitutes at most half of the delivered price of electricity.
D. It is dwelt on by policymakers to the exclusion of other costs associated with electricity delivery.
E. It is not fully recovered by the prices charged directly to electricity consumers.

Answer: C
Sample Select-in-Passage Question

6. Select the sentence that distinguishes two ways of integrating rock and classical music.

Answer: "His music is not a version of popular music packaged to attract classical listeners; it is high art for listeners steeped in rock rather than the classics."
Text Completion Questions

1. It is refreshing to read a book about our planet by an author who does not allow facts to be (1)________ by politics: well aware of the political disputes about the effects of human activities on climate and biodiversity, this author does not permit them to (2)________ his comprehensive description of what we know about our biosphere. He emphasizes the enormous gaps in our knowledge, the sparseness of our observations, and the (3)________, calling attention to the many aspects of planetary evolution that must be better understood before we can accurately diagnose the condition of our planet.

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<tr>
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<th>Blank (3)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>overshadowed</td>
<td>enhance</td>
<td>plausibility of our hypotheses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>invalidated</td>
<td>obscure</td>
<td>certainty of our entitlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>illuminated</td>
<td>underscore</td>
<td>superficiality of our theories</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1. Although it does contain some pioneering ideas, one would hardly characterize the work as ________.

   A. orthodox  
   B. eccentric  
   C. original  
   D. trifling  
   E. conventional  
   F. innovative

   Answer: C and F
Recommended Courses

- Creative writing
- Editing
- Fiction
- Novel
- Poetry
- Plays
- Screenwriting
- Typing
- Brainstorming
- Grammar
- Drama
- Thought
- Left
- Right
- Dreaming
- Pencil
- Punctuation
- Re-writing
- Paper
- Science
- Essays
- Re-reading
- Creating
- Peer feedback
- Reading
Quantitative Reasoning

- Understand, interpret and analyze quantitative information
- Solve problems using mathematical models
- Apply basic skills and elementary concept of arithmetic, algebra, geometry and data analysis
Types of Quantitative Reasoning Questions
Quantitative Comparison Questions

**Directions:** Compare Quantity A and Quantity B, using additional information centered above the two quantities if such information is given, and select one of the following four answer choices.

A. Quantity A is greater.
B. Quantity B is greater.
C. The two quantities are equal.
D. The relationship cannot be determined from the information given.

A symbol that appears more than once in a question has the same meaning throughout the question.

1. \[\frac{x^2 + 1}{2x - 1}\]

**Quantity A**

**Quantity B**

A. Quantity A is greater.
B. Quantity B is greater.
C. The two quantities are equal.
D. The relationship cannot be determined from the information given.

Answer: A

**Diagram:**

- **RSTU** is a parallelogram.

\[\text{Diagram of a parallelogram} \]
Multiple Choice Questions

1. The figure above shows a circle with center $C$ and radius 6. What is the sum of the areas of the two shaded regions?

   A. $7.5\pi$
   B. $6\pi$
   C. $4.5\pi$
   D. $4\pi$
   E. $3\pi$

   Answer: D
1. If $x = 10^{-1}$, what is the value of $(x + \frac{1}{x})(\frac{1}{x})$?

Answer: 101
4. Approximately how many people are in the production and transportation sector of the workforce?

A. 9 million
B. 12 million
C. 15 million
D. 18 million
E. 21 million

Answer: E
Recommended Courses

MATH

DATA MANAGEMENT
CALCULUS
AREA
ADDITION
BEDMAS
SUBTRACTION
VOLUME

PERCENTAGES
PERIMETER
DIVISION

ALGEBRA
TRIGONOMETRY
MULTIPLICATION
RATIOS

FUNCTIONS
PATTERNING
FACTORS

FRACTIONS
NUMERACY

STATISTICS
BEDMAS
DIVISION

GEOMETRY
CIRCUMFERENCE

PYTHAGOREAN THEOREM
Analytical Writing

- Articulate complex ideas clearly and effectively
- Support ideas with relevant reasons
- Examine claims and evidence
- Sustain a well-focused, coherent discussion
- Understand standard written English
Types of Analytical Writing Questions
Analyze an Issue (45 min)

Assesses your ability to think critically about a topic of general interest and to clearly express your thoughts about it in writing.

1. As people rely more and more on technology to solve problems, the ability of humans to think for themselves will surely deteriorate.

Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, you should consider ways in which the statement might or might not hold true and explain how these considerations shape your position.
Analyze an Argument (30 min)

Assesses your ability to understand, analyze and evaluate arguments and to clearly convey your evaluation in writing.

"Over the past year, our late-night news program has devoted increased time to national news and less time to weather and local news. During this time period, most of the complaints received from viewers were concerned with our station's coverage of weather and local news. In addition, local businesses that used to advertise during our late-night news program have just canceled their advertising contracts with us. Therefore, in order to attract more viewers to the program and to avoid losing any further advertising revenues, we should restore the time devoted to weather and local news to its former level."

Write a response in which you discuss what specific evidence is needed to evaluate the argument and explain how the evidence would weaken or strengthen the argument.
Recommended Courses

Any courses that combine critical thinking with writing: Philosophy, Ethics, Research Methods, Logic and Reasoning, World Religions, Courses on Racial and Diversity Issues, Creative Writing, Comparative and World Literature, and many others.
GRE Test Centers and Dates

- Computer-Delivered General Test - offered year-round at Prometric test centers.
- Paper-Delivered General Test – specific dates posted on the GRE website.
- GRE Subject Tests – offered year-round at paper-delivered test centers.

You can find all the test centers and dates here: https://www.ets.org/gre/subject/register/
Scores

- Average score is 150-152 for the Verbal and Quantitative Reasoning Sections.
- Average score is 3.7 for Analytical Writing Section
- Anything between a combined score of 250-330 is considered a good GRE score (*MBA programs might require higher*)
- *ScoreSelect* Option – lets you decide which test scores to send to the institutions you designate.
- Takes 10-15 days for institutions to receive your score

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<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Score Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Reasoning</td>
<td>130–170, in 1 point increments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative Reasoning</td>
<td>130–170, in 1 point increments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical Writing</td>
<td>0–6, in half point increments</td>
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Retaking the GRE

- **Computer-delivered Test** – retake once every 21 days, up to five times within any continuous rolling 12-month period.

- **Paper-delivered Test**: retake as often as it is offered.
Free Resources Available:

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<tr>
<td><em>POWERPREP® II, Version 2.2 Software:</em> Preparation for the Computer-delivered GRE revised General Test</td>
<td>FREE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Practice Book for the Paper-delivered GRE® General Test, Second Edition (PDF)</em></td>
<td>FREE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Math Review (PDF)</em> — including links to Khan Academy® instructional videos</td>
<td>FREE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Math Conventions (PDF)</em></td>
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You can find these and other resources at:
[https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/about/fees/](https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/about/fees/)
Applying to Graduate School
Applying to Graduate School – Requirements

1. Bachelor’s Degree or recognized equivalent from an accredited institution - *Transcripts*

2. Usually minimum grade-point average GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale

3. Undergraduate training to do graduate work in your chosen filed (RESEARCH)

4. English Language Proficiency Test – TOEFL

5. GRE scores – consult schools to confirm you need to take it

6. Letters of Recommendation - at least three

7. Personal Statement / Statement of Purpose
Applying to Graduate School – Preparation (May-July)

✓ Start researching graduate schools early – most have rolling admissions but others have specific deadlines (usually in the fall).
✓ Take the GRE practice test
  ✓ This will help you determine how much preparation you will need for the real one.
✓ Request information from schools that interest you.
✓ Ask graduate students and professors to recommend good programs and even help you make some connections.
Applying to Graduate School – Timeline (August-December)

- **August**: take the GRE General Test – if you are not happy with your scores, it will give you time to take it again.

- **September**: Contact your letters of recommendation providers and begin drafting your personal statement.

- **October**: request official transcripts from your undergraduate institution and follow up with letters of recommendation.

- **November**: have someone in the field or The Career Center read over your personal statement and make sure your GRE scores are being sent to schools.

- **December**: complete and submit all graduate school applications and verify your recommendations have been sent.
Applying to Graduate School

ALWAYS CONSULT WITH THE GRADUATE SCHOOL PROGRAM OF YOUR CHOICE REGARDING REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES!!!!
Questions?

- Visit The Career Center for help with personal statement and mock interviews. [https://www.careercenter.illinois.edu/](https://www.careercenter.illinois.edu/)

- Visit MCB Advising for undergraduate research opportunities and planning your classes. [https://mcb.illinois.edu/undergrad/advising/](https://mcb.illinois.edu/undergrad/advising/)

- Contact me for additional information or to request this presentation: tacruz@illinois.edu