

Frequently Asked Questions

- **What are the GRE/TOEFL codes for UC Berkeley?**

GRE Department Code: 0110

GRE/TOEFL Institution Code for UC Berkeley: 4833.

TOEFL Department Code: 40

- **Is the GRE required?**

Yes. Although the Graduate Division no longer requires the GRE, ESPM requires all applicants to submit current scores.

- **Do I need to take a GRE Subject Test?**

No, we do not require a GRE Subject Test for admission.

- **What is the deadline for the GRE?**

The last day to take the GRE is mid-December since it takes about 15 days for ETS to send it to us (when you ask them to send your scores to ESPM, with the department code 0110). Basically you have two chances to take the GRE. We actually take the LATEST scores and we do not average them out. So, if you did not do as well as you would hope on the first one, we do not account it against you.

- **When is the application deadline?**

We accept applications for the Fall Semester only. The application must be submitted on or before December 1, 2008 until 11:59pm. The deadline for application is December 1 while the deadline for your supplementary materials (letters of recommendation, GRE, TOEFL, and transcripts) will be by December 31, 2008.

- **How much is the application fee?**

If you are a U.S. citizen or current permanent resident, the application fee is \$60; for all others, the fee is \$80.

- **How many letters of recommendation do I need?**

We only require 3 letters of recommendation, but if you want to send more, that's permissible (although keep in mind that faculty only normally read three letters in the order of application listing because of the volume).

- **What supplementary materials do I need to send to the Graduate Office?**

- ✓ GRE scores (and TOEFL if foreign student). These scores must be sent electronically by contacting ETS and submitting them to our Department using the codes listed above.
- ✓ 2 copies of your transcripts. You must send transcripts from all the institutions you have attended. Transcripts do not have to be sent to us directly from your university. If collected by you, make sure the envelope remains sealed and therefore will remain official.
- ✓ 3 letters of recommendation

- **How do I send my letters of recommendation?**

When sending the letters of recommendation, make sure that you and your recommenders complete FORM G (You may find this form online at: http://www.grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/pdf/form_letter_recommendation.pdf). The easiest way to complete this FORM is for you to complete the top half, and then sending it to all three of your recommenders. Each of them must complete the bottom half and attach this FORM to their letter of recommendation whenever they send it to our department.

Sending them electronically:

We ask that letters of recommendation be submitted as a PDF by the recommender via email and sent to espmgrad@nature.berkeley.edu from an academic email address, i.e., 'edu.' When seeking recommendations please allow sufficient time for the letters to reach us by the December 31st deadline.

NOTE: The letters of recommendation do not necessarily have to come from an 'edu' email address. If an employer is writing a letter of recommendation, they may send them electronically as well.

Sending them via post mail:

Simply have your recommenders send them to our department. Make sure we receive the letters of recommendation by the December 31st deadline.

- **What address do I send my supplementary materials?**

University of California, Berkeley
Graduate Student Services Office
Department of ESPM
137 Mulford Hall #3114
Berkeley, CA 94720-3114

- **Do I have to have a faculty sponsor to apply?**

No, you do not need a faculty sponsor to apply. However, at the time you submit your application, we require that you list 3 or 4 faculty with whom you are interested in working with until the completion of your degree. These faculty members will look at your application before he/she looks at other applications. They will then make their preferences known to the Admission Committee and final recommendations for admission are made to the Dean of the Graduate Division. Faculty sponsorship of entering graduate students is not determined until all applications are reviewed and final admission offers are made.

- **Where can I find more information about the faculty?**

You may find their information at:

http://espm.berkeley.edu/directory/dir_fac_list.php

By clicking on a faculty's name, you will find more specific information about their research.

- **If I am reapplying, what materials are still valid?**

You have to fill up the new application. Transcripts, GRE/TOEFL and your letters of recommendations are still valid (GREs are valid for 5 years). Though you need to have one new letter of recommendation of what you have been doing the past year. Moreover, you must also change your statement of purpose in the new application.

JUST REMEMBER TO SEND US AN EMAIL ONE OR TWO WEEKS AFTER THE APPLICATION DEADLINE GIVING US PERMISSION TO USE THE SUBMITTED MATERIALS FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

NOTE: We only keep transcripts, GRE/TOEFEL and letters of recommendations for one year.

- **If my major isn't relevant to Environmental Studies, should I still apply?**

Honestly, we do not really look at the major but we look at how strong your research experience is and how competitive your background is about your research interest.

The emphasis in choosing coursework is dependent on the professors you want to work with. Our program's only course prerequisite is a college-level statistics course, but obviously, if you were to work with say an insect biologist, biology expertise would be requisite; soil scientist, chemistry; an environmental policyist, social theory courses, etc.

- **What are the criteria used to evaluate my application?**

The Admissions Committee uses a combination of all submitted materials to rank your application for admission. The GRE scores and the GPA comprise 60% of the score and the letters of recommendation, your statement of purpose, and other relevant background information comprise 40% of your final rank.

- **What is the approximate average GPA/GRE scores of the applicants?**

The scores vary slightly each year but remain consistent as follows:

Ecosystem Sciences:

GPA: 3.62

Verbal: 572/73%

Quantitative: 658/61%

Analytical: 4.90/64%

Organismal and Environment:

GPA: 3.7

Verbal: 677/91.5%

Quantitative: 706/70.2%

Analytical: 5.38/80%

Society and Environment:

GPA: 3.47

Verbal: 583/72%

Quantitative: 666/62%
Analytical: 4.86/66%

NOTE: The GPA is based on undergraduate course work done in the last two years, i.e. junior and senior status.

- **Masters v. PhD**

As we are predominantly a doctoral program, each student is mentored by a given professor who provides funding, tutelage and lab space. The impetus to take on a year-and-a-half- to-completion Master's student is unlikely when a professor would prefer the mentorship of a five-year doctoral student who would provide valuable assistance in the professor's work as well as reciprocally furthering the professor's growth with the research the student conducts. The demand for Master's has not decreased; just this program does not favor such short-term students.

If you apply for the MS/PhD program, it allows you to get the MS degree en route to the PhD by doing some extra coursework.

- **What courses are required for admission?**

A statistics course is the only requirement we have. It does not have to be an upper division or a semester-long course. It can also be taken at a community college as long as you have a transcript to prove it. It does not have to be taken for a grade; passing is all that is required. Less than a B-, however, (though satisfying the prerequisite) might require from your guiding professor some additional course work in statistics here to keep you competitive with the rest of the graduate students.

- **Do you offer Financial Aid?**

Funding packages are *predominantly* a 3 yr package. Moreover, we make every effort to support our entering and continuing students from a variety of resources including University Fellowships, Departmental Restricted Fellowships, and Graduate Student Research Assistantships (GSRs). Continuing students also work as GSIs (Graduate Student Instructor) to teach classes and earn extra money. We make our financial support offers at the time of admission.

- **When do you send out the acceptance letters?**

The acceptance letters will not be out until late February or early March and you have about until May to decide whether or not to attend Berkeley.

The denial letters will be mailed about 2-3 weeks after that.

- **Do you send out hard copies of the application?**

We no longer send out hard copies of our applications. All of our information is now online at <http://espm.berkeley.edu>. You can find all of our information regarding programs, professors, financial aid information, and more on the website. If you have any specific questions regarding the program, feel free to e-mail at espmgrad@nature.berkeley.edu, but please refer to the website first.

- **As an international student, do I still need to take the GRE?**

It is a requirement to take the GRE test. Also, as an international applicant, TOEFL tests are also required. The last day to take the GRE is on December and we take the latest score. I would suggest you look for the ETS website online for more details about GRE test locations in your area (www.ets.org). If you attend school here for one year, you do not need to take TOEFL anymore.

- **Are your students getting jobs with their degrees?**

We have been tracking initial employment for our graduates for several years and have compiled data about placement:

- Postdoctoral Fellowships 23%
- Academic (tenure and non-tenure track positions) 19%
- Non-Government Organizations 11%
- Government 22%
- Consulting/Industry/Research 21%
- Other 4%

- **Is it possible to double major?**

Sorry to inform you that it is not possible to double major with ESPM

- **Do you allow joint degrees?**

Sorry to inform you that we do not allow joint degrees at this time.

- **What is the average length of the Personal Statement?**

The average length is one page single spaced, be concise.

- **What is the average length of the Graduate Program?**

The average length is approximately 5 years

- **Can project work be done abroad?**

After the two coursework years, the project work can be done abroad.

- **Do you accept GMAT or LSAT scores?**

Sorry we do not accept either scores, only GREs.