SES Prospective Graduate Student Assessment

Version 4.2
March 4, 2024

Adapted from https://arxiv.org/pdf/2110.04329.pdf

Overview

There are three parts to the assessment. First are two yes/no questions, second is the potential adviser's funding situation for each student, and third is a set of 11 categories that we evaluate for each student.

Yes/No Questions

These are each represented as a separate yes/no column in the evaluation spreadsheet.

1. Is there an adviser willing to advise this student? To answer this question, an adviser must give their go ahead.
2. Would this student bring a unique value-added skill needed in SES, such as competence related to TA-ing upper level courses.

Additional Information

The funding situation of each adviser related to each prospective student must also be assessed, prior to decision-making processes.

Evaluation Categories

		High	Medium	Low
Academic Preparation (20%)	Overall Coursework	Consistent high performance in courses.	Mixed performance in courses.	Poor performance in many relevant courses.
	Math and Science Coursework	Courses form excellent preparation for graduate work.	Courses form adequate preparation for graduate work.	Coursework preparation has important gaps.
	Academic Honors or Recognition	multiple honors, e.g., Dept/University Honors; Phi Beta Kappa, etc	one academic award or recognition	No academic honors in college documented in the application

Research (20%)	Variety / Duration	two years in research	one year in research	nothing more than coursework laboratories
	Quality of work	multiple indications of excellence such as research products / awards	clearly made significant contributions to the project	limited intellectual or technical contribution to projects
	Technical skills	Shows mastery of a particular skill OR a variety of skills (e.g. field, laboratory, computational)	Has proficiency in at least one skill	nothing more than coursework laboratories
Non-cognitive competencies (20%)	Achievement Orientation / Conscientiousness	Consistently strives to improve or meet a high standard of excellence in all areas, or demonstrates exceptional efficiency and organization	Has demonstrated a high standard of excellence in selected areas, or demonstrates excellent efficiency and organization	No evidence of striving for excellence provided in application or student record AND minimal evidence of efficient, organized work
	Initiative and Perseverance	Consistently seeks out or acts on opportunities and takes leadership, OR Application clearly describes successful coping with failures/obstacles	Consistently seeks out or acts on opportunities or takes leadership. Basic or perfunctory description of overcoming challenges	Has not sought out or taken advantage of opportunities AND does not have a record of leadership. Application does not describe experience with failure/obstacles.
Citizenship* (20%)	Community	has clearly contributed positively to prior department/school culture, and would do the	some evidence of participating in service activities	applicant only discusses him/herself; no evidence of engagement in department or

		same for our program		university activities
	Service supporting underrepresented groups in Earth Science	Has engaged in multiple extracurricular service activities supporting underrepresented groups in Earth Science	Has engaged in one extracurricular service activity supporting underrepresented groups in Earth Science	Has not engaged in extracurricular service activity supporting underrepresented groups in Earth Science
Language skills (20%)	Proof of skill in writing as evaluated by application materials	High	Medium	Low

* Note this refers not to one's national citizenship status, but rather "the quality of an individual's response to membership in a community" (Merriam Webster dictionary definition)