# SES Prospective Graduate Student Assessment

Version 5
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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 9 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[1] (20%) | 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[2] (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[3] (20%) | Community | has clearly contributed positively to prior department/school culture, and would do the same for our program | some evidence of participating in service activities | applicant only discusses him/herself; no evidence of engagement in department or university activities |
| Language skills (20%) | Proof of skill in writing as evaluated by application materials | High | Medium | Low |

[1] Track record in research is evaluated based on the prospective student's career thus far and thus is assessed differently for students applying to the PhD program having already received an MS degree, versus those having received a Bachelor of Science.
[2] This is assessed via letters of recommendation and CV.
[3] 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)