Admissions Policies

September, 2015

1. Applications Outside the Online System
Applications that are submitted outside the online system (CollegeNET) complicate systems for processing applications and decisions. We recognize that there may be legitimate reasons to permit an applicant to submit an application off-line, but this option should be permitted only for extraordinary reasons, sparingly and only upon request by the program. (As a point of reference: for the fall 2015 cohort, we received 19 out of our roughly 4,300 applications outside the online system.)

Upon request from a program, we will provide a blank version of the application PDF, which a program can pass on to an applicant. After the applicant has submitted the application, the program staff must (a) complete a brief data entry form in the CollegeNET system in order to create an online record for that applicant, and (b) upload and attach a complete set of application materials to that online record, using the Admit module.

Applications submitted off-line are not eligible for fee waivers. Applicants can pay with a check made out to Emory University, submitted with the application.

2. Late Applications
There are legitimate reasons for programs to accept occasional applications after their stated deadline dates and the online application grace period (five days), but late applications should be accepted only for extraordinary reasons, and sparingly.

Late applications must be submitted off-line. See item #1.

At some point, the lateness of an application compromises the possibility of a fair and thorough review and appropriate comparison with the applicant pool as a whole. To minimize the potential for this detrimental impact, applications to PhD programs may not be accepted after January 29. Exceptions to this require a written appeal to the Dean, which should be submitted to Tamika Hairston, Manager of Enrollment Processes and Records, at tamika.hairston@emory.edu.
3. **Application fee: $75**

4. **Fee Waivers**

   Applications submitted by October 31, 2015 (by midnight, Pacific time) will receive an automatic application fee waiver. (This does not apply to applications submitted off-line.)

   We also provide automatic fee waivers for underrepresented minorities who have participated in programs that encourage and prepare them to pursue graduate study. These programs include:
   - Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS),
   - Emerging Researchers National Conference (ERN),
   - Emory University STEM Research and Career Symposium,
   - Institute for Recruitment of Teachers (IRT),
   - Gates Millenium Scholars
   - GEM
   - MARC Scholars – Minority Access to Research Career
   - McNair Scholars Program,
   - Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship,
   - National Name Exchange
   - NIH Graduate and Professional School Fair,
   - NIH PREP Programs,
   - Project 1000,
   - RISE Scholars – Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement, and
   - Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) National Conference.

   If applicants request a fee waiver due to economic hardship, please ask them to contact Damon Williams, Director of Community, Diversity and Recruitment, at damon.l.williams@emory.edu.

   Off-line applications are not eligible for fee waivers (see item #1).

5. **English Language and TOEFL Requirements/Scores**

   Applicants whose native language is not English must demonstrate their ability to participate in education and research in the English language. The Laney Graduate School has no specific requirement for how this should be accomplished, and different programs set their own policies. Many programs require some minimum TOEFL test score, but some prefer to rely on writing samples and other evidence.

   **Please note:** ETS considers TOEFL scores valid for only two years. For an example of this policy, see [http://www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/scores/](http://www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/scores/).

   All admitted students whose native language is not English must participate in English language assessment through the English Language Support Program ([http://www.gs.emory.edu/academics/elsp/index.html](http://www.gs.emory.edu/academics/elsp/index.html)).

6. **Non-Standard Test Scores**

   If programs accept scores other than and in addition to the standard ones required by the Laney Graduate School, they are responsible for obtaining official verification of these scores by completing the Score Verification Form, and attaching the official verification to the applicant’s online application record.
(Standard tests are GRE (general), GMAT, and TOEFL. Non-standard scores may include LSAT, MCAT or others.)

7. Timing of Admissions Decisions
Admitted applicants are under no obligation to respond to offers prior to April 15 and may not be compelled to accept offers before that date. This policy implements the “Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars, Fellows, Trainees and Assistants” developed by the Council of Graduate Schools and supported by Emory University. The resolution is available at http://www.cgsnet.org/portals/0/pdf/CGS_Resolution.pdf.

International students need prompt notification of admissions decisions because of the time it takes to obtain visas. The Laney Graduate School recommends that programs identify applicants who are not competitive for admission as early as possible.

**Important:** After April 15, no program may make an offer of admission without prior approval from the Dean of Laney Graduate School. After that date, requests to make an offer should be sent to Rosemary Hynes, Assistant Dean, Program Planning and Strategic Initiatives, at rosemary.hynes@emory.edu.

There are no mid-year admissions. In an extraordinary case, Directors of Graduate Studies should consult Rosemary Hynes, Assistant Dean, Program Planning and Strategic Initiatives, at rosemary.hynes@emory.edu.

8. Waiver of Required GRE Scores
Unless a program is exempted from the requirement, all applicants offered admission must have official scores from the general test of the GRE as part of their application. “Official scores” means scores received directly from ETS, either via the direct score delivery into OPUS (and then transferred to ADMIT), or via a phone call or other verification. ETS will not provide or verify scores that are more than five years old. If a program wishes to waive that requirement for an applicant, the DGS should submit a request, including a substantive rationale for the waiver, to the Laney Graduate School. Submit requests to your admissions specialist.

9. Dean’s Notice of Academic Qualifications (formerly “Dean’s Review”)
Dean’s Notice Letters should be submitted after applicants who fall under the criteria below accept an offer of admission.

When an applicant who falls into one or more of these categories accepts an offer of admission, the program should submit a Dean’s Notice Letter to the LGS signed by the DGS (1) explaining why faculty believe the student will succeed at Emory (for example, rich research experience) and, if applicable, (2) describing a mentoring/monitoring/enrichment plan to assure student progress. Attach the letter to the applicant’s record in the online application system, and submit it to the LGS with the student’s file (see item #11).

A Dean’s Notice Letter is required when an applicant who has accepted admission has the following performance record:

- two GRE (or three GMAT for business) scores below the fiftieth percentile, or
- one GRE (or three GMAT for business) score below the fiftieth percentile and a GPA of 3.0 or less, or
- no official GRE (GMAT for business) scores. Submit the approved waiver request (see item #8) along with the Dean’s Notice.
When applicants have taken a standardized test several times, use the highest available score for each sub-test to determine whether an applicant meets the criteria above.

10. **Deferrals and Admissions Fellowships**

Students may request that admission be deferred for one year following initial admission. Programs may recommend deferred admission to the Dean, and, if approved, the Laney Graduate School will reserve the student’s merit award for admission in the following year. An applicant may be granted only one deferral; after that, he or she would need to reapply in order to be considered for admission. Upon recommendation by the program and approval of the Dean, admissions fellowships (Woodruff, EGDF) may also be deferred for one year. Whether a Laney Graduate Fellowship may be deferred is a program decision.

Recommendations for deferral of admission and admissions fellowships should be sent to Rosemary Hynes, Assistant Dean, Program Planning and Strategic Initiatives, at rosemary.hynes@emory.edu, with a cc: to lanegs@emory.edu, as soon as possible after an admitted student requests the deferral.

11. **Submitting Paperwork at the End of the Admissions Process**

All applications and all application materials must be entered into the CollegeNET online application system. This includes applications and supporting items received off-line, which should be uploaded as attachments to the applicants’ record in the Admit module (see item #1).

For applicants who have accepted an offer of admission, LGS asks programs to submit complete student files through the CollegeNET system, and to use the checklist screen in that system to indicate that an application is complete.

For applicants who were denied admission or who declined an offer of admission, the application and supporting materials in the CollegeNET system serves as the record to be retained for three years. Programs should destroy and delete all application records kept in any other medium or location. (See item #14.)

12. **Official Transcripts**

Each applicant who accepts an offer of admission must submit an official, degree granting (when applicable), printed and sealed transcript from each undergraduate and graduate educational institution he or she has attended. One transcript must confirm that the student has received a Bachelor’s degree (or its equivalent) from an accredited institution. All transcripts should be received by the Laney Graduate School no later than August 1.

If a newly admitted student submitted official (degree granting, printed and sealed) transcripts to a program as part of his or her application, please make a copy for the program records and then send the original to your admissions specialist at the Laney Graduate School.

The newly admitted students who have not yet submitted official transcripts should arrange for transcripts (official, degree granting, printed, sealed) to be mailed directly to the Laney Graduate School. Contact your admissions specialist to arrange for copies for program files.

13. **Admission in Full or Advanced Standing**

If new students should be admitted in Advanced Standing, programs should use the CollegeNET checklist (see item #11) to indicate this. The final deadline for changing the academic standing of newly admitted students is at the end of the drop/add period of the student’s first semester. Retroactive changes of standing at admission will not be accepted, so this deadline is final.
14. **Admissions Records Retention**

Our general obligation is to preserve for three years “records that document the application and evaluation process for students applying to enter an academic graduate program” [emphasis added](http://records.emory.edu/content/records/graduate-students-denied-admission-no-show-records). Those records can be electronic.

(a) **Application Records**

The Laney Graduate School requires programs to (1) create records in the CollegeNET system for all applications received off-line, and (2) upload and attach all items received off-line to the relevant records in the CollegeNET system.

For applicants who accept an offer of admission, programs should submit to LGS a complete application for the student file, using the CollegeNET application record (see item #11, above).

For applicants who will not be entering as students, applications remain accessible in the CollegeNET system for five years, and after that are retained indefinitely on off-system servers. Consequently, the applications in the CollegeNET system satisfy our retention obligation.

Programs are encouraged to delete and destroy all application materials that will not be incorporated into newly admitted student files, including official transcripts received from applicants who will not be enrolling in the Laney Graduate School. Since some paper records (including transcripts) may contain sensitive information, it should be shredded, if possible through a secure shredding bin.

(b) **Evaluation Process Records**

Programs are required to retain items that document the selection process – for example, notes from committee meetings or rankings from faculty reviewers – for three years.