Freshman Admission Policy (effective for new freshmen entering Fall, 2008-2014)

UWM will consider for admission freshman applicants who present evidence of appropriate preparation and potential for intellectual development. Both academic and non-academic factors will be assessed in an individualized, holistic applicant review. Academic factors considered include high school graduation or the equivalent, completion of an appropriate college preparatory curriculum, and evidence of academic ability and readiness based on the applicant's high school record and performance on standardized tests. Relevant non-academic factors include characteristics or experiences that will contribute to UWM's diversity, support the university's educational mission, and provide additional evidence of the applicant's academic potential.

Academic Factors Considered

Academic factors considered in the review of freshman applicants will include the following:

1. High school graduation or its equivalent.*
2. Completion of an appropriate college preparatory curriculum, including, for most students, at least 17 academic units as specified by UWS and campus policy.
3. Evidence of academic ability and readiness as demonstrated by academic performance in high school. Indicators include high school class rank; grades and grade point average; choice of curriculum; and strength of the academic program relative to the choices available to the student in the high school.
4. Evidence of academic ability and readiness as demonstrated by performance on a standardized test.

*Note: For applicants who attended high school outside the U.S., applicants who were home-schooled or who otherwise present non-traditional secondary school credentials, alternative measures of academic preparation will be considered. These might include, but are not limited to, completion of a secondary education benchmark; performance at an appropriate level on an English language assessment (for applicants who are non-native speakers of English); GED scores; portfolio-based or narrative academic assessments; participation in AP, IB or honors level coursework, if available.

In assessing academic factors, the goal is to identify applicants whose academic preparation and abilities are indicative of the potential for success at UWM. The academic profile of successful students admitted in prior years will be used as the benchmark for preparation expectations. Expectations may vary from program to program, with higher expectations, including additional high school academic unit requirements, for more selective academic programs. Overall preparation expectations may also vary from year to year, depending on the number and quality of the applicant pool, campus enrollment capacity, and specific enrollment management goals and targets.
Since the review process described herein is new for UWM, as a starting point we will continue to admit students with academic profiles similar to those admitted in recent years. In other words, although specific criteria such as minimum GPA, class rank or test score requirements will not be rigidly applied, we will continue to use the previously existing criteria as guidelines in determining admissibility. These guidelines may be refined in the future as we learn more about applicant characteristics that are likely indicators of success at UWM.

**Additional Factors Considered**

While primary emphasis is placed on the applicant’s academic preparation, additional factors will be considered in the review process. These include, but are not limited to: evidence of leadership, creativity, special talents or abilities; membership in an underrepresented racial or ethnic group; veteran status; involvement in community service; educational or economic disadvantage; and evidence of motivation and maturity.

In assessing these factors, of particular interest will be relevant information that provides complementary evidence of the applicant’s academic potential, and characteristics or experiences that contribute to UWM’s diversity, or otherwise support the university’s educational mission.

The application form, including the applicant’s personal statement and other information about extra-curricular activities, employment, etc., will be the primary source of this information. Supplemental information (such as the school counselor’s statement, letters of recommendation, etc.) is not required, but will be taken into consideration if present.

Especially since the comprehensive review process is a new one for UWM, non-academic factors will play only a limited role in the admissions review. However, as we gain experience and learn more about which non-academic factors, or combination of factors, are indicative of success at UWM, their value may increase, particularly for applicants whose academic preparation does not fit traditional expectations.

**Review Process**

For most programs, applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. We do not currently employ a waitlist or postpone admission decisions for most programs, but may do so in the future.

1. **First Review Process**
   
   Each completed application file is individually reviewed by a trained admissions examiner. Applicants whose academic preparation meets or exceeds the specific criteria employed for admission prior to implementation of this new policy will typically be offered admission subject to capacity limitations. Applicants who come close to meeting these criteria will receive closer scrutiny and have their file forwarded to another staff member or admissions committee for a second review. No applicant will be denied after review by a single examiner.

2. **Second Review Process**
Every applicant not approved for admission during the initial review process is given a second review. Depending on specific circumstances, this second review may be by another admissions examiner, a senior staff member, or an admissions committee. The results of this second review may be admission, referral to an admission committee for additional review, or denial.

3. Appeal Process

Applicants who are denied admission may appeal for reconsideration. The appeal must be in writing; made within a specified period of time; and should include new or additional information (e.g. an expanded personal statement, senior year grades, new test scores, letters of recommendation, etc.) to support the request. If an application is received very close to the deadline, it may only be possible to appeal for consideration for a future term. The appeal will be approved or denied and the decision communicated to the applicant in writing, at which point the decision is considered final.

Application Deadline

Beginning in 2008 Fall 2014, the published application deadline for priority consideration of undergraduate degree candidates (including freshmen, transfers and re-entry students) will be as follows:

- Fall term: July–March 1*
- UWinterim: December 1*
- Spring term: December 1*
- Summer: Varies by session

If necessary to achieve enrollment targets, these deadlines may be extended. However, if enrollment capacity has been reached by an earlier date, it may be necessary to close admission earlier. Should this occur, every effort will be made to notify and accommodate students with applications already in progress. Applicants will have the right to appeal for an exception to the deadline, and exceptions may be granted when circumstances warrant. Applicants whose appeals for reconsideration are not granted will be offered the opportunity to apply for a subsequent term.

Assessment

The Department of Enrollment Services will report data on the most recently admitted freshman cohort annually to the Admissions and Records Policy Committee. This information will be used to help the A&RPC monitor and assess the alignment of the admission policy and practices with campus goals regarding student access, retention and academic success. For the initial class admitted under this new policy (2008-09 academic year) this assessment will take the form of comparison to recent cohorts and currently enrolled students on various standard measures such academic preparation and first year retention. The A&RPC will review the appropriate data and, if necessary, recommend additional assessment criteria and measures to be used in subsequent years.
*Note: When the specified date falls on a weekend, the deadline will be the first subsequent business day.

Final Version/Procedural Guidelines for Freshman Admission-FINAL-41207/Approved by Admissions & Records Policy Committee April 12, 2007