GRADUATE ADMISSIONS

Handbook *for* Programs

***Academic Year* 2021–2022**



TRANSFORMATION BEGINS HERE

GRADUATE SCHOOL

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About this Handbook

Words or phrases in orange with underlining are live links in the electronic version of this Handbook. The Index of Links with complete web addresses on pages 20–22 contains the full URLs for the web pages and linked documents referenced in the Handbook, and should also be helpful if you need to copy and paste a URL into another document.

Section 1: The Role of the Program Coordinator

The exact duties of the Graduate Program Coordinator can vary depending on the program's needs and resources. In most departments, the Program Coordinator is responsible for:

- Coordinating graduate recruitment efforts
- Leading the program's admission decision process
- Disseminating information from the Graduate School to faculty and students
- Providing program information to the Graduate School
- Representing and promoting the interests of graduate students and graduate study with the department and college
- Leading program assessment activities
- Reviewing and maintaining program-specific policies (including Program Handbook)

Important Permissions for Program Coordinators and Staff

New Program Coordinators or Staff should request access permissions for the following from the Graduate School:

- GS Program Coordinator listserv
- GS Administrative Assistant listserv (for all staff working with graduate students)
- Admit (for application review)
- Prospect (for recruitment)
- GS61 Report (for assistantships)

You should also request to be added to the GS Program Contacts web page as Program Coordinator (faculty) or Program Contact (staff).

Section 2: The Prospective Student

Express Inquiry Form

This simple online form allows prospective students to submit contact information and identify their programs of interest. Prospective students who submit the Express Inquiry form will receive a series of communications from the Graduate School. However, ideally they should receive information directly from the program they are interested in.

These inquiries will be sent to each program on a weekly basis, in PDF format. You as Program Coordinator are encouraged to follow up with each one.

These inquiries also load into Prospect CRM, which programs may access and use to build program-specific communication and recruitment plans.

You may also post the Express Inquiry link on your program web page.

Recruiting and Marketing Resources

Prospect CRM

- Set up your own communication plan
- View in-progress applications
- Load Excel spreadsheets of prospective applicants
- Assess recruitment efforts with tracking and reporting tools

Contact the Director of Graduate Admissions, Kathleen Costello for a demo of Prospect CRM. Some Prospect information and training documents may be found online here as PDF files.

Printable/emailable Materials

Informational flyers about the Graduate School are available in PDF format at the Graduate School Faculty/Staff Recruiting & Marketing web page (requires CU login).

Banners, Tablecloths, and Swag

The Graduate School has a limited supply of banners, tablecloths, and swag that may be requested for recruitment events that programs sponsor or attend. Requests may be submitted to Kathleen Costello or Jill Bunch.

Application Fee Waivers

Programs may choose to pay the application fee for prospective students as a recruitment tool. You may request any number of application fee waiver codes from the Office of Graduate Admissions. Once a signed IDO is received from the program for the full amount owed, the fee waiver codes will be issued. Fee waiver codes do not expire, are not transferable, and may be used only once. For additional details, go to the Best Practices page (login required) and click "Graduate Application Fee Waivers." Please contact Kathleen Costello to request a fee waiver code.

Four Phases of Recruitment

1. Awareness
2. Consideration
3. Application
4. Enrollment

Recruitment is most effective when viewed as a process that starts with awareness and continues on through enrollment. Recruitment does not end when someone applies. When building a recruitment strategy and communication plan, consider all phases.

Recruiting Best Practices

The Faculty/Staff Toolkit web page (login required) hosts a comprehensive Recruitment Best Practices Overview as an interactive PDF.

Recruiting professionals should strive to present their institutions accurately and comprehensively in all areas of communications, including written materials, social media, website materials, correspondence, and presentations, as well as in discussions with candidates, the public, media, and other interested persons. To the greatest extent possible, a professional's responsibilities are to:*

1. State clearly and accurately the requirements for graduate/professional school admission, including any necessary forms, academic records, letters of reference, and standardized tests.

* Adapted from NAGAP, "Best Practices for Graduate Enrollment Management Professionals," 2009. Accessed at http://www.nagap.org/documents/BestPracticesforGraduateEnrollmentManagementProfessionals10-28-09_2_.pdf

2. Share accurate information about the admissions calendar, including application deadlines, decision and notification dates, deposit/refund policies, required candidate reply dates, and waiting list placement, as applicable.
3. Offer precise information about institutional costs, academically related opportunities for financial assistance, and general financial packages, including appropriate deadlines.
4. Use pictures and descriptions of the campus and surrounding areas that are current and realistic.
5. Provide up-to-date information about graduate student housing options (if available) and inform students of any special programs or support services.
6. Avoid any subjective or disparaging comparisons of graduate/professional school programs with similar offerings at other schools.
7. Establish appropriate policies that address the prospective student's rights to privacy during any pre-admission period.
8. Avoid making any guarantee of program placement to prospective students or to any other person making an inquiry on behalf of a prospective student during any pre-admission period.
9. Periodically review all recruitment and promotional materials to ensure their accuracy, efficiency, and objectivity. In addition, conduct periodic review of web links and redirects.
10. In the institution's pre-admission information, define and publish policies and procedures for awarding credit and/or advanced standing.
11. Seek to alleviate a prospective student's test-related anxiety through careful advising and by expressing concern for the whole student. Inform students about test preparation programs and discuss alternative approaches and available materials for assistance.
12. Publicize clearly any policies (such as admission, placement, or credit transfer) which relate to test results.
13. If requested, provide accurate information for previously enrolled classes of students only. A minimum-to-maximum score range of those accepted may be used as a reporting guideline.
14. Respond to inquiries in a timely and professional manner. Establish a follow-up process through Prospect CRM.

Section 3: The Admissions Process

Overview of Graduate Admissions Process

The Clemson University Graduate School oversees the admissions process for all graduate programs at Clemson University. Criteria used in making decisions will vary according to the college and program being applied for, but all decisions include an evaluation of the applicant's potential for graduate work and the ability of a program to accommodate additional students.

Typically, each academic department accepting graduate students will form its own admissions committee and review all requests, then forward its recommendations to the Graduate School for final approval and processing. While Program Coordinators submit ***recommendations*** to the Graduate School, all official ***decisions*** are processed by the Graduate School and signed by the Dean of the Graduate School.

The Clemson University Graduate School accepts online applications only. Students can begin their application and check the status of their pending application online at the Online Application Menu.

Please be aware that different programs have different application deadlines, and there are some programs that accept applicants only once a year. In addition, international students often have earlier deadlines in order to allow enough time to secure a visa.

The Graduate School and all graduate programs use an online system called Admit, administered by CollegeNET's ApplyWeb® portal, to process graduate applications.

Admit

What is Admit?

Admit is an online system used to manage the application evaluation process collaboratively — within a program and between Graduate Admissions and the program.

Admit Links

For Admit-related information and tools, visit the GS Faculty & Staff Tools web page.

Admit Training Resources

The Graduate School provides brief individual guidelines in PDF format for most Admit tasks, and also hosts several informational videos, on the GS Faculty & Staff Tools page.

Request Access to Admit

The Graduate School provides an Admit/Prospect Access Request form in PDF that can be completed on-screen and returned to the Graduate School.

Note: Admit works best with Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome internet browsers (avoid Internet Explorer).

Admit Overview

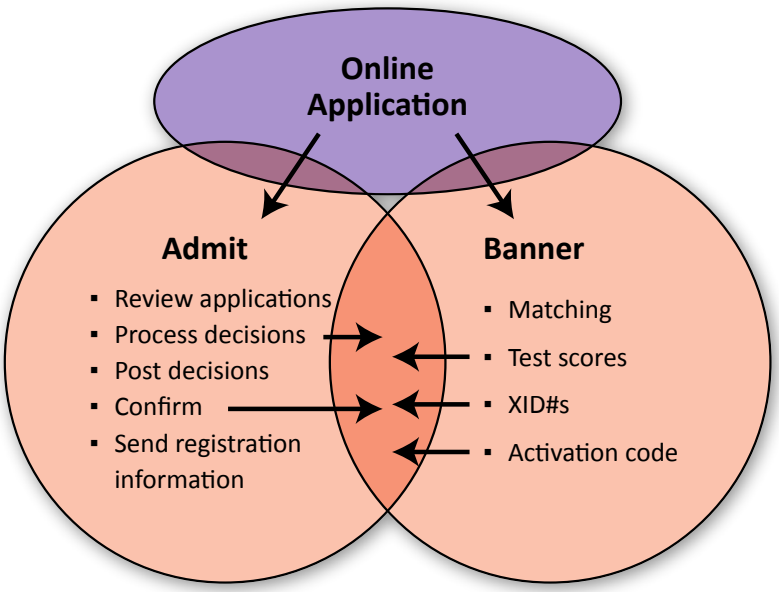
Admit is used to

- View applications
- View document images
- Review applications
- Submit decisions
- Check status of application
- Notify applicants of decisions
- Capture an admitted applicant's decision
- Communicate with applicants

Benefits of Admit

- No software to install or maintain — accessible anywhere
- Single sign-on with Clemson ID (XID#)
- Customizable by program
- Images from application updates checklist
- Search and sort by any field
- Email students directly from Admit
- Update application data, when necessary
- Electronic decision letters
- Capture applicant decision

Relationship between Admit and Banner



Application Requirements

The following requirements are the standard application requirements; however, programs have the right to waive certain requirements or add additional requirements, as deemed necessary by the program.

Standard Requirements

- Transcripts
- Test scores
- Letters of recommendation
- Resume/CV
- Personal statement

Common Additional Requirements

- Writing sample
- Portfolio
- Professional certifications

Standard Requirements Policies and Practices

Transcripts

- Unofficial transcripts are acceptable for an offer of admission.
- Once admitted, final official transcripts are required. A registration hold will be placed on a student's record during their first term if final official transcripts have not been submitted.
- Final official transcripts must come directly from the issuing institution to the Graduate Admissions office. Hard copies must come in a sealed university envelope. Digital copies should be emailed to gstranscripts@clemson.edu.

- A minimum of a bachelor's degree (or equivalence to a U.S. bachelor's degree for international students) is required for admission as a graduate student.
- Unofficial transcripts are required by the Graduate School in order to process a decision to accept an applicant.
- No offer of admission should be made if transcripts are not uploaded to Admit.
- If final official transcripts are sent to your office, please ***do not open the envelope*** — send to the Graduate Admissions Office (E-209 Martin Hall).
- ***Programs may not waive the transcript requirement.***

Grade Conversion/Degree Equivalence for International Transcripts

Foreign Credits, Inc. Grade Conversion Tool
World Education Services International Grade Conversion Guide for Higher Education
World Education Services Degree Equivalence Tool and Information

GPA Calculator for International Transcripts

Foreign Credits, Inc. GPA Calculator

Test Scores

Standardized exams may be used as one measure of assessment of a student's potential to complete graduate work satisfactorily. Minimum or cutoff scores should not be required for admission to any of Clemson's graduate programs.

Students must request that official test scores be sent to Clemson directly from the test administrator. Self-reported scores on the application and uploaded score sheets are not considered official.

GRE/GMAT

- Most programs require either the GRE or the GMAT. Some will allow either. Some do not require either, but look at work experience or other factors more relevant to the program.
- Students in an approved bachelor's to graduate program need not take the GRE/GMAT.
- Programs may waive the GRE for all or some applicants.
- If an applicant is admitted with no GRE or GMAT scores, it will be assumed that the program is waiving the requirement.
- Once admitted to the University, students cannot be required to take or retake any portion of a standardized exam.
- GRE and GMAT exam scores are valid for 5 years. The testing agencies will not send expired scores. Acceptance of expired test scores is equivalent to waiving the requirement.
- Clemson University's school code is 5111.

Test Score Usage Tools

GRE Guide to the Use of Scores
GMAT Score Usage
Prior GRE and Revised GRE Comparison Tool

English Language Proficiency Exams

International students whose native language is not English must demonstrate competency in written and spoken English. Competency may be demonstrated by presenting one of the following:

1. A satisfactory score on the TOEFL exam (GS recommendation is 80 or higher); or
2. A satisfactory score on the IELTS exam (GS recommendation is 6.5 or higher); or
3. A satisfactory score on the PTE exam (GS recommendation is 54 or higher); or

4. Documentation of having received a previous undergraduate or graduate degree from a U.S. institution or an institution where the language of instruction was English (Language Proficiency Exemptions); or
5. Completion of an approved ESL program; ELS Level 112 or Agape Level 6.

TOEFL, IELTS, and PTE exam scores are valid for 2 years. Expired scores will not be sent from the testing agency.

Any waiver of language proficiency requirements should be made using the Request for English Proficiency Waiver form and must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Proficiency Exam Scoring Tools and Information

TOEFL–IELTS Comparison Tool
PTE–TOEFL–IELTS Comparison Tool
TOEFL Guide to Setting Score Requirements
IELTS Guide to Band Scores

Letters of Recommendation

- Programs generally require 2 or 3 letters of recommendation with the application.
- An online recommendation form (via online form or using PDF Form GSL) is used.
- The form allows a letter to be uploaded along with the form.
- Both the form and any letters submitted will be viewable in Admit.
- Applicants submit the request to their recommenders via the application.
- Applicants may send reminders or replace references through the Application Portal, if needed.
- This requirement may be waived by the program for all or some applicants.
- Use letters of recommendation to look for factual information that might not show up elsewhere in the application.
- Look for traits important to specific field (e.g., undergraduate research, leadership, etc.), as well as traits that are helpful in any program (e.g., perseverance, curiosity, etc.).

Resume/CV

- Resumes/CVs are uploaded directly to the application and are viewable in Admit.
- This requirement may be waived by the program for all or some applicants.

Personal Statement

- Personal statements are uploaded directly to the application and are viewable in Admit.
- On the personal statement section, applicants are asked the following:

  • Please articulate your career goals and your motivation for pursuing a graduate degree at Clemson University in your chosen field of study.

  • Discuss your specific interests and how earning an advanced degree will help you achieve these goals. Describe the courses, jobs, professors, research, service projects, internships or professional and/or volunteer activities that have shaped your aspirations. Describe how this program at Clemson University will help you reach your goals.

  • Demonstrate your motivation and capacity to succeed. If you have any items in your application, such as low test scores or poor grades this is your chance to tell us why this weakness is not a reflection of your current ability.

  • Please provide any additional information that may assist the selection committee in evaluating your preparation and aptitude for graduate studies at Clemson University.

- This requirement may be waived by the program for all or some applicants.
- A particularly well thought-out statement of purpose often overrides mediocre test scores or grades.

Waiving Requirements Recap

- Programs **may not** waive the transcript requirement.
- Programs **may not** waive the English Language Proficiency requirement without submitting a waiver to be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.
- Programs **may not** waive the application requirement.
- Programs **may** waive any other requirement(s).

Evaluating Applications

If there is one guiding principle that generally should be followed in evaluating applications, it is that evaluators should not rely too heavily on any one component of the application. In particular, evaluators should be on guard against the use of rigid numerical cutoffs for GPAs and test scores. It is easy to use such cutoffs, especially when a program receives many applications, but testing services, the Council of Graduate Schools, and the Clemson University Graduate School advise against it. Programs are encouraged to employ a holistic approach to application evaluation (*see* Section 5: Holistic Application Review).

- Evaluations can be completed by every admissions committee member in Admit.
- Individual Evaluator decisions and the overall Committee Decision can be captured in Admit. This is for departmental use only.
- A Department Decision is submitted through Admit.
- The Graduate School takes action on Department Decisions.
- The official decision comes from the Graduate School.
- The official Decision Letter posts to the Application Portal 48 hours after the Graduate School Decision is rendered. This buffer allows time to catch any mistakes. Please contact the Graduate Admissions Office if you think you entered an incorrect Department Decision.
- Applicants are notified via email to view their decision letter in the Application Portal.

Additional Admissions Policies and Practices

Application Changes

Changes are made to the online application once a year. You will receive an email asking for changes in the spring. This is the time of year to submit changes to your program requirements. Requirement changes cannot be approved once the new fall term has been made available on the application.

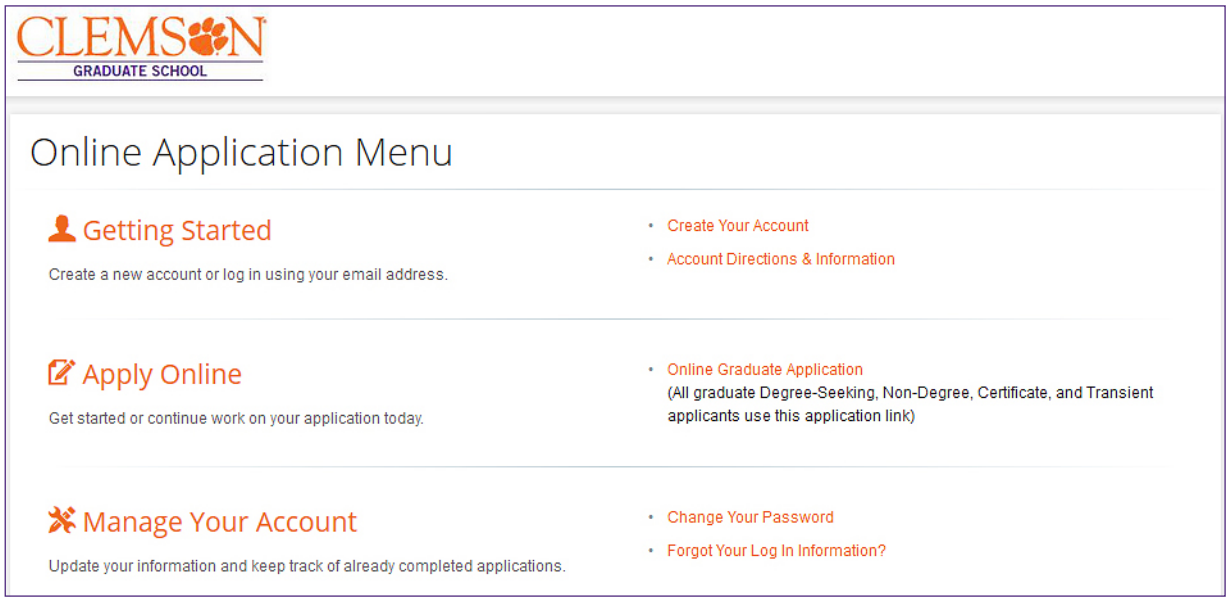
- Review the online application.
- Make sure the terms and deadlines (if any) are correct.
- Make sure information/instructions/links for your program are up to date.
- Make sure Specialty Areas are up to date.
- Make sure Requirements are up to date.

Reviewing the online application

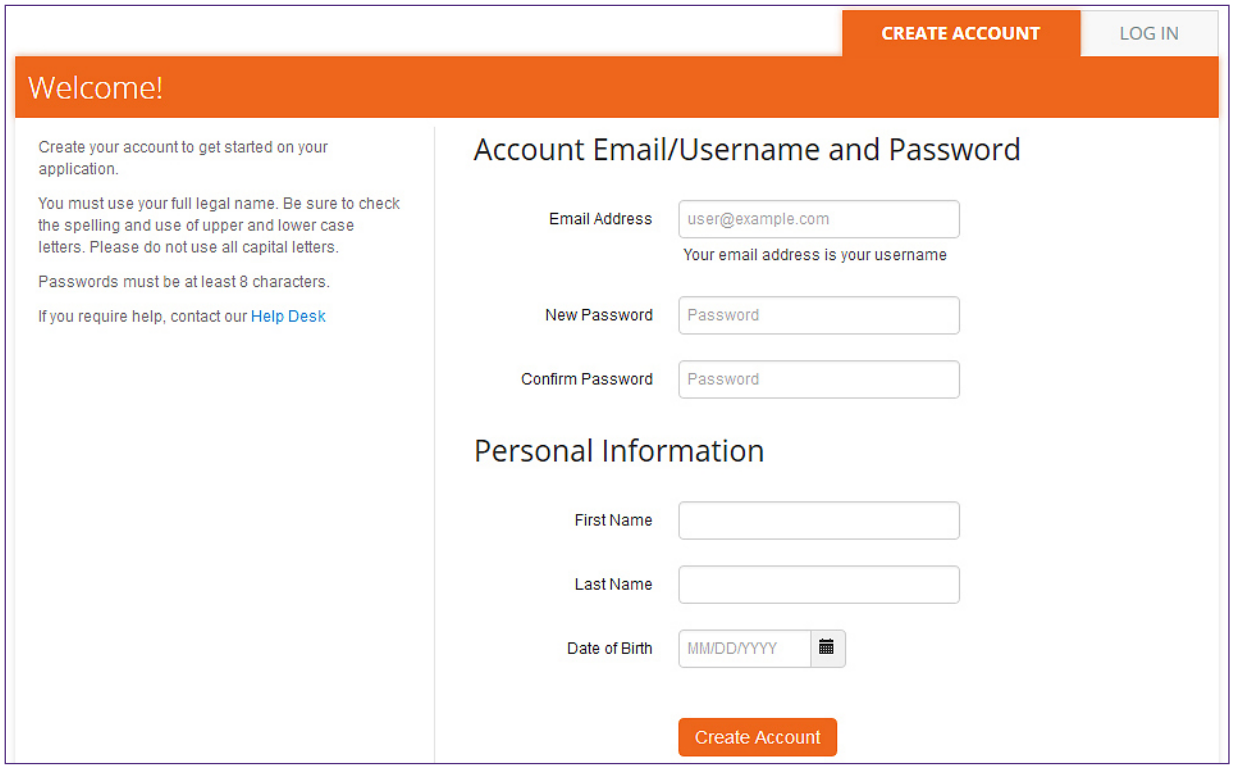
It is a good idea to walk through the application, to make sure everything is accurate and to familiarize yourself with each step in the process. In order for you to see the application, you will need to create a testing account.

Following are step-by-step instructions with screen shots to walk you through the process.

1. Go to the Online Application Menu.



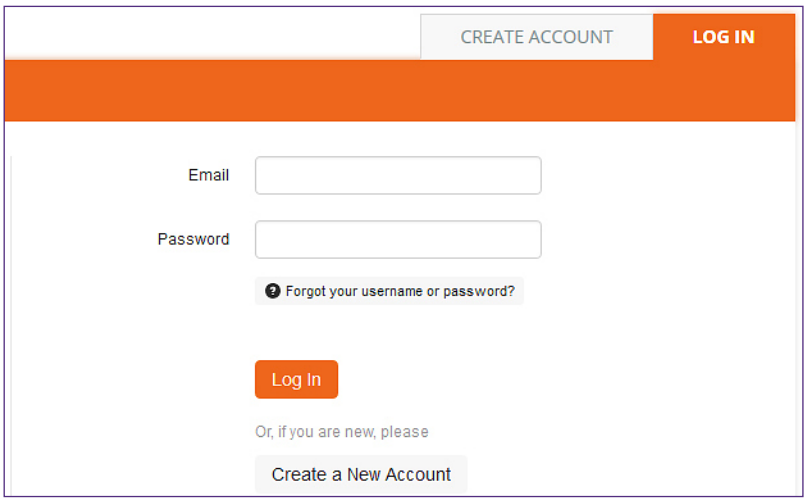
2. Click "**Getting Started**." Follow instructions to create an account. Use "**Just**" as your first name and "**Testing**" as your last name so that no fee will be charged even if you submit your test application. Middle name is not required.



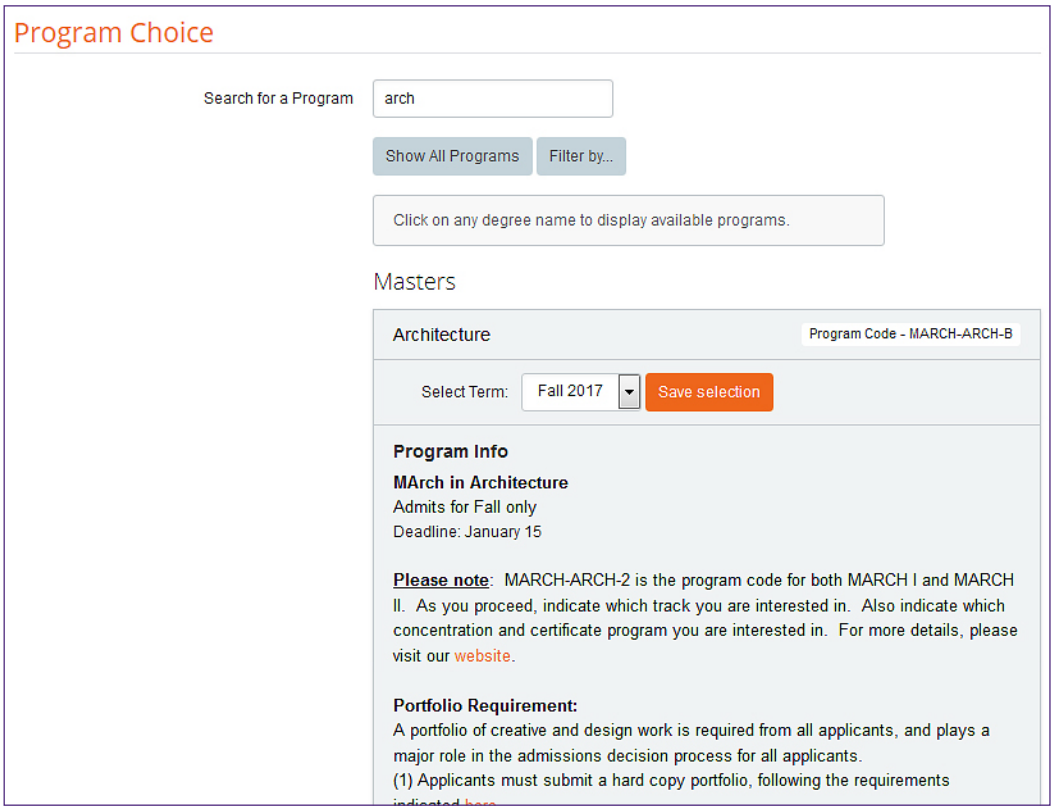
3. Once you create an account, you'll be directed back to the **Application Menu**. Click "**Apply Online**" to review the application.



4. Sign in with the username and password you created.



5. **Program information** is found on page 4. To find and select your program, enter part of the name in the Search box or expand the program listings by degree. Click on your program, choose a term, and click "**Save selection**." This will take you to the program specific requirements. Recommendations are on the following page.



- Please make sure your program **deadlines, start terms, personal statement, resume, LOR, test requirements, and specialty areas** are correct.
- Let us know if any changes should be made.
- Also let us know if you would like to add anything, such as instructions, links, data fields, specialty areas, documents (e.g., writing samples).
- Uploads are limited to 10MB.

Application Status Check

Applicants may check their status online at any time by visiting the Online Application Menu and clicking "Manage Your Account."

- The applicant will use the same username and password created for the application to check application status.
- The applicant will see what materials have been received, what materials are awaiting, and an overall status of "Complete" or "Awaiting Materials," based on program requirements.
- If an applicant failed to upload any materials with the application, they can upload them through the status check portal.
- The applicant also can send reminders or change recommenders through the status check portal.
- Decision letters will post to the status check portal in PDF format.
- Accepted applicants will confirm their intent to enroll through the status check portal.

Decision Letters

- Official decision letters are issued by the Graduate School and signed by the Dean of the Graduate School.
- Decision letters post 48 hours after the Graduate School decision has been posted in Admit.
- Applicants are notified via email that a decision has been made on their application. They are directed to the status check portal.
- Decision letters will post to the status check portal in PDF format.
- Accepted applicants must confirm their intent to enroll through the status check portal.
- ***No admissions communications should be sent to the applicant prior to the Graduate School decision letter posting.***

Community Standards

The "Community Standards" section of the application (introduced in fall 2013) contains 6 questions intended to assess whether or not an applicant poses a threat of violence to others, or to the Clemson University community.
The responses to these questions are reviewed by the Director of Graduate Admissions and, as necessary, by the Applicant Conduct Review Committee.

This review takes place before the application is reviewed by the program. The applicant's privacy is maintained unless it becomes necessary for the program to be aware of the review. If the Applicant Conduct Review Committee does not recommend admission due to a potential threat posed by the applicant, the program will be made aware and the Graduate School will submit a denial decision.

Appeals Process

An applicant who is denied admission may request a review of the decision by submitting Form GS-Appeal within 30 days of the decision posting. The full Appeals Process policy can be found in the Graduate School Policy Handbook.

Dates and Deadlines

In general, Clemson follows a rolling admission process, which means that a student may apply at any time for admission consideration. However, some programs at Clemson have designated program-specific deadlines for receipt of completed applications from prospective students interested in enrollment in a given term.

Program deadlines should be posted on the program website and submitted to the Graduate Admissions office to be included on the application.

Deadlines for International Students

Typically, the University requests that international students' applications are completed no later than April 15 for fall semester enrollment, October 15 for spring semester enrollment, and February 1 for summer enrollment. International

students must consider that additional steps — including receipt of necessary immigration documentation from the University (DS-2019 or I-20 forms) — require that the financial certification process be complete prior to issuance of these forms.

Forms I-20 and DS-2019 are normally completed by the Office of International Services by July 1, November 15, and April 15 for registration in the fall, spring, and summer semesters, respectively, to allow the international student adequate time to secure a visa.

CGS April 15 Resolution

As a member of the Council of Graduate Schools, Clemson University subscribes to the CGS April 15 Resolution, "Regarding Graduate Scholars, Fellows, Trainees and Assistants."

In accordance with the resolution, students have until April 15 to respond to an offer of an assistantship for the following Fall term. Students may accept or decline earlier, but are not required to do so.

Note: The April 15 Resolution includes a stipulation that a link to — or a copy of — the Resolution "... should accompany every scholarship, fellowship, traineeship, and assistantship offer." The Resolution is also available as a PDF.

Change of Start Term (Deferred Enrollment)

Enrollment may be deferred for up to one (1) year beyond the initial semester desired for any student who has received an offer of admission from the Graduate School, pending approval from the program of study.

Students wishing to defer enrollment must request and receive written approval from the academic program that recommended admission. The program will then use the Change of Term form to notify the Graduate School of the requested change.

The application and supporting materials are valid for 1 year. Should a student wish to defer his/her admission beyond 1 year of the initial semester desired, a new application, supporting documentation, and the prevailing application fee must be submitted.

International students should notify the Office of International Services when approval to defer admission is received from the admitting program.

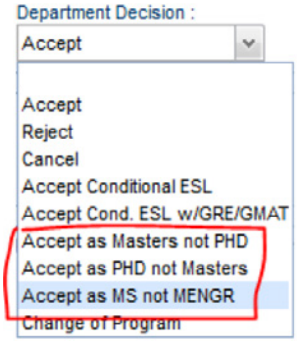
Change of Degree or Program

Change of Degree/Program on Application

If, after submitting the application, the student or the program determines a different program or degree is preferred, the applicant does not need to re-apply. The exception would be if the applicant wants to change from Non-degree/Certificate to Degree-seeking. ND/Cert applicants would need to re-apply to be considered for a degree program.

Change of Degree — Request by Program

If you would like to admit a student to your program, but not to the degree level they applied for, you may indicate the correct degree level through the Department Decision in Admit, by choosing among the following:



- Accept as Masters not PHD
- Accept as PHD not Masters
- Accept as MS not MEngr

Change of Program, Concentration, Campus, Site — Request by Program

If you would like to change the program, concentration, campus, or site a student has applied to:

1. Get the student's permission to do so, and
2. Email Kathleen Costello with the applicant's name, XID#, and changes to be made. We will update Admit and Banner accordingly.

Changes to Application — Request by Student

Applicants who want to request a change to their application before an admissions decision has been made should contact Kathleen Costello.

Change of Program — Enrolled Students

Once admitted and enrolled, the student must follow the GS-14 Request for Change of Degree or Major process to make a change of program of study.

Special Groups

Conditional Language Admission

Conditional Language Admission (CLA) allows international students who may need to strengthen their English skills to enroll in an English as a Second Language (ESL) program prior to matriculating into the academic program. The Graduate School provides basic information about CLA at the Admissions portion of the website under ELS Conditional Admission.

Currently, the Graduate School recognizes the following ESL programs as meeting the CLA requirement:

1. Agape English Language Institute (AELI) — Greenville or Columbia, SC — Level 6
2. ELS Language Centers — any location — Level 112

Criteria for recognizing other ESL programs:

1. Accreditation: regional accreditation, or ACCET (Accrediting Council for Continuing Education and Teaching), or CEA (Commission on English Language Program Accreditation)
2. EnglishUSA membership
3. Level equivalence to CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) C1

CLA Admissions Process

Programs may accept students who need to achieve graduate-level English language proficiency and who may also need to achieve competitive GRE/GMAT test scores. There are two options for this type of admission:

CESL: Require ESL Instruction Only

The Program Coordinator should go to the Department Decision option on the Decision tab in Admit. Choosing the "Accept Conditional ESL" option from the drop-down menu will require the student to attend an approved ESL (English as a Second Language) program. Students are required to complete the approved level within one year of the start term specified on the decision notification. After the ESL program sends transcripts and an official certificate of completion to the Graduate School, the student will be able to matriculate into the Graduate School.

CESLG: Require ESL Instruction and GRE or GMAT

The Program Coordinator should go to the Department Decision option on the Decision tab in Admit. Choosing the "Accept Cond. ESL w/GRE/GMAT" option from the drop-down menu will require the student to attend an approved ESL (English as a Second Language) program and to take the GRE or GMAT (depending on the department requirements). Official test scores must be sent within one year of the start term specified in the decision notification. After the official transcripts and certificate of completion of the ESL program and official test scores have been received by the Graduate School, the Graduate Admissions Office will notify the Program Coordinator that the application is ready for a final admission recommendation. The Program Coordinator (or administrative contact stating "per Program Coordinator") then lets the Admissions Specialist know the student's final admissions recommendation by email.

What if the scores are not competitive enough?

If the student is still within one year of the original start term, the program may choose to not make an immediate admission decision and allow the student to retake the GRE or GMAT exam, thus allowing the student to submit a second set of scores before the program makes an admission recommendation. Alternately, the program may deny admission.

What if the student matriculates into the program, but does not do well?

If the student is not performing well due to poor English language proficiency within the first year of matriculation into the program, the program may recommend that the student return to the ESL program. ELS and Agape will allow students to return at no cost for additional ESL instruction.

Conditional Admission: Academic Requirements

- This option is used when a program wants to admit a student conditionally because they need to take some undergraduate coursework before they would be ready for graduate coursework or the program is are not sure they are prepared for full admission to the degree program.
- To utilize this type of admission in Admit, for Department Decision, choose "Admit ND not Degree."
- The applicant status will be changed to non-degree. They can take undergraduate and graduate courses in this status.
- Once admitted as non-degree, communicate with the student, in writing, what the specific additional requirements are.
- Students in this status are not eligible for graduate assistantships and most international students will not be able to obtain a student visa in this status.
- Once the requirements have been met, and the program is ready to fully admit, the student must re-apply and be re-admitted to the degree program.
- Programs may request an application fee waiver code for students in this category, at no cost to the program.
- By admitting the student to the degree program, the program is confirming that all prior requirements have been met.

Non-Degree Seeking Students (ND)

Admission in this category is for students who do not plan to complete a degree; for example, students pursuing a teaching certificate or seeking recertification. If a non-degree student wishes to obtain a degree at a later date, then they will have to re-apply to the appropriate degree program and may only transfer up to 12 credit hours of completed course work earned while in a non-degree status.

The only support material typically required for non-degree admission is an unofficial transcript showing an appropriate background and confirming the awarding of a bachelor's degree or higher. However, programs may choose to add additional requirements as deemed necessary.

In most cases, international students are not eligible for non-degree status.

ND applications will appear in your program pool in Admit when an applicant chooses the specialty area associated with your program.

Transient Students

Transient students are those who take a course (or courses) at Clemson in order to transfer the credits back to their home institution.

Transient students submit the online application and pay the non-degree application fee. Unofficial transcripts are required for admission. Applicants will indicate that they are transients on the first page of the application.

Combined Bachelor's/Graduate Plan

Clemson students may reduce the time necessary to earn both degrees by applying graduate credits to both undergraduate and graduate program requirements. To be eligible, the student must have completed the bachelor's curriculum through the junior year (minimum 90 credits) and have a minimum overall grade-point ratio of 3.4. A maximum of 24 credit hours of graduate courses taken as an undergraduate may be applied to the graduate program. However, only 12 credit hours may be applied to the undergraduate degree.

As determined by the participating bachelor's program, graduate courses may be applied to the bachelor's degree as electives or technical requirements or by substitution of 7000- or 8000-level courses for required undergraduate courses. Under no circumstances may 6000-level counterparts of 4000-level courses required for the bachelor's degree be counted toward master's requirements.

A combined bachelor's/graduate plan student is not eligible for graduate appointments for financial aid.

Form GS6-Bachelor-to-Graduate, "Request for Combined Bachelor's/Graduate Education Plan," should be completed and signed by the student and relevant faculty members, and returned to Graduate Admissions, E-209 Martin Hall.

Note: As the GRE exam is a tool used to facilitate admission decisions, the GRE requirement for admissions is eliminated for all students approved via Form GS6-Bachelor-to-Graduate to pursue graduate degree programs.

Departments and graduate programs desiring to participate in the combined bachelor's/graduate program should submit a written notification to the Dean of the Graduate School identifying the date on which they intend to make this option available to their students.

Section 4: The New Student

Once the student confirms, they should expect a registration email 2–3 days later.

A number of administrative steps following the student's confirmation notice account for this 2–3 day delay.

Summary — The Journey from Admitted to Enrolled

1. Department **accepts** student in Admit.
2. GS processes **department decision** in Admit.
3. Banner is updated with **decision code** the next day.
4. Official **decision letter** posts to student's status check 48 hours after the GS decision is submitted.
5. Student confirms **intent to enroll** (required in order to register).
6. Banner is updated with student's **confirmation** (the next day).
7. An **activation code** is generated in Banner and sent to Admit (the next day).
8. An **email** containing ID, activation code, and registration information is sent to student.
9. Student **onboards** (logs in for the first time) with ID and activation code, receives a username, and sets up a password.
10. From there, student can go to iROAR and **register for classes** once registration is open.

Steps for New Students

Comprehensive steps for "First things first," "Before you arrive," and "Once you get here" are outlined on the New Student To-Do List web page.

Information for New International Students

The International Services Office hosts an information-rich International Student Arrival Guide online.

Applicant Response

Students must accept Clemson's offer of admission in order to be able to register for classes. To do this, they log into the Application Portal using the username and password they used for the application. There they will click a "Decision Form" button and choose to "**Accept**" or "**Decline**" the offer of admission.

The **Applicant Response** is displayed in Admit.

If an applicant tells you they are declining the offer, do not "Cancel" the application. You may update the applicant response on the **Decision** tab to "Decline," and then update with today's date using the calendar prompt.

Onboarding

3–5 days after accepting the offer of admission, students will receive an email from the Graduate School containing a permanent Clemson ID number (XID#) and a one-time use activation code. They will use their XID# and activation code to access their Clemson username and set up their password. From there, they can log into iROAR to register once registration is open.

Registering

Graduate students are permitted to register as soon as registration opens for the new term. It is the program's responsibility to advise new students regarding which courses to register for. The Students section of the Graduate School website offers brief instructions and a portal under "Registering for Courses."

iROAR

Students use iROAR to register for classes, update their contact information, and view their bills and financial aid information. Start at the iROAR portal.

Health Insurance

All graduate students are required to have health insurance. Information about the health insurance requirement, insurance waivers, and the University's student health insurance plan, along with an extensive Q&A regarding health insurance, is available at the Clemson Student Health Services website.

Medical Clearance

All graduate students must provide proof of immunization as outlined at Student Health Services' Immunizations and Allergy Injections page.

International Visas

Once confirmed, international students will be sent visa-related information from the Office of International Services. Once a student provides the necessary documentation for receiving an I-20 or DS2019, it may take up to 2 weeks for the I-20 or DS2019 to be issued. From there, it may take 2–3 months (or longer in some cases) to obtain a visa. Hence, late admission decisions for international students are not possible. (*See topic* Deadlines for International Students.)

Graduate Assistantships

Look for information on the Graduate School's Financial/Tuition page under Student Employment.

Lawful (Legal) Presence

South Carolina law requires students to show documentation proving they are in the U.S. legally. This is a separate classification from *state* residency. Most U.S. students are cleared when they submit the FAFSA. Others must provide documentation listed here (select the topic "Legal presence"). International students are cleared through SEVIS. A registration hold will be put on uncleared students' records after their first term until they provide documentation.

Legal presence information online is hosted by the Office of the Registrar. A list of documents that prove legal residence is available at this FAQ page.

Orientations

New graduate students are expected to attend Graduate Student Orientation and the orientation held by their program.

Additionally, **international students** are required to attend International Student Orientation.

Veteran graduate students are invited — but not required — to attend Veteran Student Orientation held at the beginning of each semester. The Office of Student Affairs' Student Transitions and Family Programs web page for new Veteran students notes, "If you self-identify as a veteran with Clemson, you will automatically receive an email notification of this event," and provides an email contact.

Section 5: Holistic Application Review*

What is Meant by Holistic Review?

- Full-file review.
- Gives careful consideration to all the credentials included in the application materials to determine if the applicant possesses qualities known to contribute to a successful completion of the degree program.
- Ensures that no single factor leads to either accepting or denying the student for admission.
- Recognizes that an applicant's strength in one area might offset a weakness in another. By carefully weighing strengths, achievements, and the ways in which an applicant might contribute to the educational environment of the graduate degree program, evaluators increase the likelihood that they offer admission to those most likely to succeed.

Use of Holistic Review in Higher Education

A wide range of higher education organizations use holistic review because positive outcomes, such as higher completion rates and shorter time to degree, are seen when academic achievement as well as related skills and experiences are taken into account during the admissions process. The application and review process for National Science Foundation Graduate Fellowships use this holistic approach. Similarly, the Gates Millennium Scholars Program uses full file review to select students for both the graduate and undergraduate awards.

Note: A holistic approach to application review is the best way to ensure a diverse student body and is approved by the CGS. Decisions based on one factor alone (e.g. race, ethnicity, test scores, etc.) are not legally supported.

Factors to Consider in the Holistic Review Process

Essentially, the components in holistic review fall into three categories. These are the applicant's:

1. Academic performance to date;
2. Potential for contributing to research; and
3. Persistence in and commitment to educational success.

Each category is assessed by a combination of quantitative and qualitative measures found in different parts of the application.

The examples included in the list below are not definitive, nor are they given in any order of importance.

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* Adapted from "Holistic Review of Applications for Admission to Graduate Degree Programs," University of Michigan Rackham Graduate School. http://www.rackham.umich.edu/faculty-staff/information-for-programs/resources-for-recruiters/holistic-review-of-applications

Academic Performance

- Rank in class
- Overall GPA and GPA in major
- Written communication skills
- Curriculum in prior degree programs
- Progression of academic performance over time
- Standardized test scores
- Foreign language fluency

Research Potential

- Research activity on and off campus
- Relevant work experience
- Creativity in problem-solving
- Aptitude for planning and organization
- Scholarly engagement outside of coursework

Persistence and Commitment

- Indicators of leadership
- Recognition of achievements over time
- Extracurricular activities
- Community involvement or service
- Special talents or skills
- Personal and professional ethics
- Learning differences
- Educational, cultural and geographic background

Changes enacted in advance of the 2018–2019 Academic Year

Based on the conclusions of the Holistic Review Task Force, the following changes were implemented beginning with the Fall 2018 admission cycle. The changes are intended to better support holistic review, no matter the size of the applicant pool.

Changes to the Application

Revised General Personal Statement Question

The updated question specifically asks them to discuss their motivation and capacity to succeed. Programs still have the option to provide custom questions or guidelines for applicants, to specifically meet the needs of their review process.

Personal Characteristics Self-Identification

Applicants are asked to identify 2 or 3 areas they feel are their strongest. They can provide a brief explanation (500 character limit) for each strength they check. This makes the data manageable for evaluators to review and consider. This section is optional for the applicant.

Research Questions

Short description of research experience and months of documented research. Although these questions have been available for programs to use, it was decided that more awareness of the option would be beneficial. These questions can be added to any program, but must be requested.

Diversity Question

Applicants are asked to briefly explain how they might contribute to diversity and inclusion at Clemson University and within their programs. This section is optional for the applicant.

Letter of Recommendation (LOR) Changes

Updated Characteristics Chart

A few additional characteristics added to capture indicators of success.

Updated Rating Criteria

Added description to percentiles to make it friendlier for recommenders who are not professors.

Updated Questions

Intended to help recommenders address the characteristics of the applicant that the reviewers will benefit from.

The updated LOR form (PDF) can be found here.

The online LOR form that most recommenders use has been similarly updated.

Admit Rating Changes

Default Rating Section

The Rating Section in Admit that evaluators may use has been expanded to better support holistic review. All rating areas are optional, so a program can use the ratings that best apply to their program. Custom Rating Sections are also possible.

Custom Rating Sections

A program can request a custom Rating Section that specifically supports their evaluation process.

Graduate Admissions Contacts

Graduate School staff contacts list and a link to the staff directory at http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/contact/directory.html.

Kathleen Costello	**Director of Graduate Admissions & Recruitment** • Policies & procedures • Oversees recruitment & admissions operations • Training • SAS Advisery Board Grad School representative	E-209A Martin Hall kcostel@clemson.edu 864.656.2561
Scott Phillips	**Assistant Director of Graduate Admissions** • Systems administrator for CollegeNET & Prospect CRM • Training • Oversees department communication plans • Data integrity • Change of term process	E-209 Martin Hall sphill8@clemson.edu 864.656.6824
Position pending	**Domestic Admissions Coordinator** • All domestic applicants, A–Z • All domestic transcripts for new & enrolled students • New student emails	E-209 Martin hall (email pending) 864.656.4185
Jessie Stokes	**International Admissions Coordinator** • All international applicants, A–Z • All international transcripts for new & enrolled students • New student emails	E-209 Martin Hall jnstewa@clemson.edu 864.656.5342
Position pending	**Graduate Assistant** • grdapp & gsmail email • Express inquiries • GS online chat • CollegeNET assistance • Grad School 101 • Recruitment	E-209 Martin Hall grdapp@clemson.edu

Index of Links

Description	Web address — live link
ACCET language accreditation	http://accet.org/member-institution-directory
Admit/Prospect access request form	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/faculty-staff/docs/GS_ADMIT-access-request.pdf
Admit/Prospect information toolbox	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/faculty-staff/index.html
Admit/Prospect training resources	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/faculty-staff/admit-training.html
Agape English Language Institute	http://aeliusa.com/
Appeal of denied admission (GS-Appeal form)	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/files/pdfs/GSAppeal.pdf
Application portal	https://www.applyweb.com/clemsong/index.ftl
Application status check	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/admissions/application-status.html
Best Practices admissions & recruitment resources	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/faculty-staff/best-practices.html
CEA language accreditation	http://cea-accredit.org/accredited-sites
CEFR C1-level equivalency	http://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale
CGS April 15 Resolution	• http://www.cgsnet.org/april-15-resolution • http://cgsnet.org/ckfinder/userfiles/files/CGSResolution_Jan2017.pdf
Change of degree or major form (GS-14)	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/students/gs14.html
Change of term form (deferred admission)	https://graduate.sites.clemson.edu/faculty-staff/change-of-term.php
Combined bachelor's/master's plan request form (GS6-Bachelor-to-Master)	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/files/pdfs/GS6BSMS.pdf
Conditional language admission student info	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/admissions/els-conditional-application.html
ELS conditional admission page	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/admissions/els-conditional-application.html
ELS Language Centers	http://www.els.edu/
Email address for final official transcripts	gstranscripts@clemson.edu
English Language Proficiency Exemptions form	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/admissions/preparing-to-apply/language-proficiency.html
English Proficiency Waiver form	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/files/pdfs/GSEnglishProficiencyWaiver.pdf
EnglishUSA membership	http://www.englishusa.org/search/custom.asp?id=4393

Index of Links (*continued*)

Description	Web address — live link
Express Inquiry	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/admissions/request-program-information.html
Faculty/staff best practices	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/faculty-staff/best-practices.html
Faculty/staff toolkit index	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/faculty-staff/index.html
GMAT score usage	http://www.gmac.com/gmat/learn-about-the-gmat-exam/gmat-scoring-by-exam-section-normal-view.aspx
GPA calculator for international transcripts	http://www.foreigncredits.com/Resources/GPA-Calculator/
Grade conversion tools for international transcripts	• http://www.foreigncredits.com/Resources/Grade-Conversion/ • http://www.wes.org/gradeconversionguide/index.asp • http://www.wes.org/evaluations/preliminary.asp
Graduate assistantships index (student employment)	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/finance-tuition/student-employment/index.html
Graduate School contact list	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/contact/directory.html
Graduate School forms page	• http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/students/forms.html • http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/faculty-staff/forms.html
Graduate School homepage	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/index.html
Graduate School *Policies & Procedures Handbook*	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/students/policies-procedures/index.html
Graduate Student orientation info	https://www.clemson.edu/studentaffairs/stfp/grad-orientation.html
Graduate Student orientation sign-up	https://secure1.vzorientation.com/clemson/ssoldapsignin.aspx
GRE score usage	http://www.ets.org/s/gre/pdf/gre_guide.pdf
GS program contacts webpage	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/academics/program-contacts.html
Health insurance	http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/student-health/insurance-and-billing.html
IELTS guide to band scores	https://www.ielts.org/ielts-for-organisations/setting-ielts-entry-scores
Immunization requirements and medical clearance	http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/student-health/medical/services-and-departments/immunizations-and-allergy-injections.html
International student arrival guide	http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/international/student-arrival/arrival-guide.html
International student orientation	https://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/international/student-arrival/orientation.html
International student orientation sign-up	https://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/international/student-arrival/orientation.html

Index of Links (*continued*)

Description	Web address — live link
iROAR portal	https://iroar.clemson.edu/
Langauge proficiency exemptions	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/admissions/preparing-to-apply/language-proficiency.html
Lawful presence in U.S. (international students)	info http://www.registrar.clemson.edu/html/lawfulPresence.htm form http://www.registrar.clemson.edu/pdf/lawfulpresence.pdf
NAGAP *Best Practices*	http://www.nagap.org/documents/BestPracticesforGraduateEnrollmentManagementProfessionals10-28-09_2_.pdf
New student to-do list	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/students/new-student-to-do.html
Online Application Menu (portal)	https://www.applyweb.com/clemsong/index.ftl
Pre-arrival information (international students)	http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/international/
Printable materials for recruiting	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/faculty-staff/recruiting-and-marketing.html
PTE–TOEFL–IELTS comparison tool	http://pearsonpte.com/organizations/why-pte-academic/understand-our-scores/
Recommendation form PDF (recommendation for admission)	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/files/pdfs/GSL.pdf
Recruitment Best Practices Overview	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/faculty-staff/docs/best-practices-overview.pdf
Registering for courses	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/students/registering_for_courses.html
Request English Proficency Waiver form	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/files/pdfs/GSEnglishProficiencyWaiver.pdf
Student employment guide	http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/finance-tuition/student-employment/index.html
Student health insurance	http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/student-health/insurance-and-billing.html
Student Health Services webpage	http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/student-health/insurance-and-billing.html
Test score usage tools	• http://www.ets.org/s/gre/pdf/gre_guide.pdf • http://www.gmac.com/gmat-other-assessments/accessing-gmat-exam-scores-and-reports/how-to-use-gmat-scores.aspx • http://www.ets.org/s/gre/pdf/concordance_information.pdf
TOEFL guide to setting score requirements	https://www.ets.org/toefl/institutions/scores/set/
TOEFL–IELTS comparison tool	http://www.ets.org/toefl/institutions/scores/compare/
Veteran students, new (info)	http://www.clemson.edu/studentaffairs/stfp/veterans/new-students.html