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More Business Schools To Accept GRE Scores

By MELISSA KORN

Momentum for business schools to accept the GRE test, mainly used by graduate-school applicants in the social sciences and humanities, is building as those schools aim to attract less traditional applicants.

Since April, more than 100 business schools have said they will accept applications with GRE—Graduate Record Examination—scores. In the past, business schools have only accepted the Graduate Management Admission Test, or GMAT, which looks more at reading comprehension and reasoning. The GRE has a stronger focus on vocabulary and straightforward quantitative skills.

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intelligence. Finding qualified candidates has proven difficult, but business schools hope to fill the talent gap.

Top business schools started accepting GRE scores in 2006, led by Stanford University's Graduate School of Business. Today more than 600 business schools world-wide, including Harvard Business School, the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business and the University of California's Davis Graduate School of Management, accept GRE scores in addition to the GMAT.

It is a small but growing share of the roughly 13,000 business degree-granting institutions world-wide, according to the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, an

accrediting body.

The aim is to attract students who might otherwise have considered graduate study in public policy, economics or other disciplines. Schools want more than just "quant jocks" or single-minded financial experts, said Scott Shrum, director of M.B.A. admissions research at test-prep and admissions consulting firm Veritas Prep.

The Yale School of Management said it began accepting the GRE to attract a wider range of applicants in fall 2009, for students entering in 2010. About 10% of applicants in that first year submitted GRE scores. Bruce DelMonico, the school's admissions director, said the proportion has likely increased since then. He added that the School of Management accepts GRE test-takers at the same rate as it accepts GMAT-submitting applicants.

While Yale has been pleased with the early results, he adds that it is frustrating not to have much historical GRE score data that could "validate and calibrate" the school's admissions decisions. The first cohort of students who may have submitted those alternate scores are just now entering their second year of school.

Such a lack of institutional history was a turn-off for admissions officers at Rice University's Jesse H. Jones Graduate School of Business. Though it allows GRE tests for its executive M.B.A. program, the school doesn't accept GMAT substitutes for its regular M.B.A.

Assistant Dean Sean Ferguson said that because there's no "prototypical" applicant, the long-used GMAT provides a standard measure of a student's ability.

He also questioned whether applicants who take the GRE are really committed to attending a business program. "If you're interested in business school, we want you to be interested in business school," Mr. Ferguson added.

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