

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CHEMISTRY)

Is the GRE required and what is the minimum GRE score?

The general GRE is required. The GRE subject test is optional. Individual exceptions to this requirement may be considered for students with previous graduate degrees from US colleges/universities. We currently do not have a minimum score, but considering the competitive nature of our program, it's advisable to prepare for this exam and obtain the best score possible.

What is the minimum GPA?

“For admission to graduate study at VCU, the Graduate School requires a minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0.” In cases where the undergraduate GPA is below 3.0, additional factors that include performance in the last 60 hours of course work, GRE scores, and letters of reference, may be weighted more heavily in the admissions assessment. For students with earned graduate degrees from accredited institutions, the graduate GPA may be the primary basis for consideration.

What is the minimum TOEFL score?

The **recommended** TOEFL score is 600 (paper-based), 250 (computer-based), 100 (internet based). Scores must be current (within 2-years). In some cases, students may be admissible with scores lower than those listed above. The university minimum TOEFL score requirement is 550 (paper-based), 213 (computer-based) or 80 (Internet-based);

Can the IELTS substitute for the TOEFL? What is an acceptable score for the IELTS?

Satisfactory scores on the IELTS can be used as evidence of English proficiency, in some cases. The university minimum IELTS score requirement is 6.5, but Chemistry prefers an IELTS score of 7.0 or higher.

I come from an English speaking country/my education was in English; am I exempt from taking the TOEFL?

Students with American, English-speaking Canadian and U.K. baccalaureate degrees may be exempted with the approval of the department. All others must take the TOEFL.

Can I still be accepted even though I haven't taken my GRE/TOEFL exams yet?

In general, no. All students receiving a teaching assistantship position, in particular, must take the GRE and TOEFL (international students) prior to admission. Individual exceptions to the GRE requirement may be considered for students with previous graduate degrees from US colleges/universities.

What are the VCU codes for the TOEFL and GRE exams?

GRE= 5570

TOEFL=5570

Do I need transcripts/certificates from secondary school (high school)?

No

What is the stipend for a TA position?

Most of our students are supported on a teaching assistantship (TA) during their first two years. Research assistantships are also possible (usually in subsequent years and during the summer semesters) depending on the choice of a research advisor and the availability of external funds. Annual stipends (as of Fall 2008) typically range from \$20,000 to \$23,000.

What is the Spring/Fall deadline for domestic? For international?

Application deadlines are particularly important for international students because of the amount of time required to process applications and the time needed to obtain visas. Students should apply well in advance of the international application deadlines. The University deadlines are April 1 for the fall semester and Oct. 1 for spring semester.

For domestic students, the deadlines are less critical. However, because we receive more applications than we have positions, early applications are recommended.

Can I email my letters of recommendation?

No. Hard copies are preferred.

Do I have to have research experience to be considered?

No, although research experience is desirable and all undergraduate students are encouraged to take advantage of undergraduate research opportunities at their current college/university.

Do I have to include my resume/CV with my application?

No, but if you have one available, include it with your application.

Do I have to know who I want to be my advisor when I arrive?

No. During orientation, incoming students will have a chance to meet the faculty and listen to 10-minute research presentations. In October, the Department hosts a poster session where all graduate students will present a poster of their research. First year graduate students are required to attend the poster session, which gives them an

opportunity to learn more about the diversity of different projects on-going in the Department. Research advisors are normally chosen in the time period that begins after the poster session and before winter break.

How can I pay the \$50 application fee?

Applicants can pay by check, money order, or credit card. Credit card payment is preferred but not required.

Do I have to fill out an on-line application form?

Domestic students: online applications are required.

International students: paper applications are currently only accepted (as of 2008).

Where can I go for more general information about admission to graduate school?

VCU Bulletins: Graduate School. Admission to Graduate School

<http://www.pubapps.vcu.edu/bulletins/graduate/?uid=10045&iid=30032>

<http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/admission/prospective/apply.html>