

## **Applying to the PhD and MA programs in Global Studies at UCSB**

### **Frequently asked questions:**

#### **How important are GRE scores?**

Your application must include GRE scores and they are an important component. However, application packages are evaluated holistically, i.e. all elements of your application are relevant and will be carefully considered together. A strong GPA will be at least as important as strong GRE scores and in some cases can help balance out weak GRE scores.

#### **Is there a minimum GRE score below which an application will not be considered?**

At this time, no formal minimum GRE score has been defined for applications to be considered. However, strong verbal and writing skills as reflected in the qualitative GRE scores are important for a successful application. High quantitative GRE scores are somewhat less critical.

#### **How important is my GPA?**

Your GPA will be one of the most important components of your application and a strong GPA can counterbalance weaker GREs. However, application packages are evaluated holistically, i.e. all elements of your application are equally important and will be carefully considered together.

#### **If accepted, can I defer starting the program for a year?**

No. Once accepted, you are expected to start the program right away or you will lose your admission. In exceptional circumstances, a deferral may be granted on a case by case basis.

#### **If accepted to the MA program, does this make me eligible to later switch into the PhD program if I would like to?**

No. The MA program is a terminal program and you would need to apply for the PhD program after completing the MA program. Graduating from the MA program will not make you more or less competitive among the applicant pool.

#### **Do I have to pick a professor to work with when applying to the MA or PhD program?**

You don't have to pick a particular faculty member you would like to work with when applying to either the MA or PhD programs. You are encouraged, however, to indicate those faculty members who work in areas of particular interest to you. If accepted to the program – either into the MA or PhD program – you will have ample time to get to know professors and to put together your advising committee. In some cases, a PhD applicant may be drawn to the program only because of the work of one single professor. In such cases, an application is encouraged to contact this professor to discuss the possibility of collaboration if admitted.

#### **Do I need to know exactly what I want to study when I apply?**

You should convey that you have a good idea of the general area you would like to work in and why. However, it is understood, even expected, that your interests will most likely shift, as you start the program and get exposed to the great intellectual resources and learning opportunities that the Global Studies Department and UCSB has to offer.