

## Department of Community Health Sciences Application Review Process: Review Criteria And Suggestions (2009)

### ***Initial Application Review by CHS Graduate Program Administrator and/or Graduate Coordinator***

#### **Is your application complete?**

The required documents are listed on our website. Surprisingly, quite a number of applicants do not follow these instructions completely. For example, official transcripts must be sent [in envelopes sealed by the educational institution](#). (Originals not in sealed envelopes, and photocopies that have been notarized, are not acceptable.)

Begin the application process early enough so your documents arrive on time. Check back with the Graduate Program Administrator if you are unsure they have been received.

#### **Is your Grade Point Average 3.2 or higher on your last 20 half courses?**

Applicants' grades are converted to the UofC grading system so they are comparable. The conversion tables are available on the Faculty of Graduate Studies website.

If your grade point average is less than 3.2, consider taking 1-2 graduate courses to raise your grades prior to applying. (Note: only our elective courses are available until you are registered in the program.)

### ***Admissions Committee Review Criteria***

#### **1. Graduate Readiness:**

##### **a. Student Motivation (application question B)**

*The student's motivation for pursuing a graduate degree should be understandable in terms of the his/her background and career aspirations, and appropriate for our graduate program.*

You need to be able to clearly answer the question why you want to pursue a graduate degree in research and how this fits into your career plans.

##### **b. Student Readiness (application question C)**

*The student has considered reasons for choosing this graduate program and his/her potential contribution to research; the student has addressed his/her funding situation.*

Not only do you need to be clear about why you are interested in graduate training in research, but why the Department of Community Health Sciences and the University of Calgary rather than somewhere else. Be specific; generic responses such as "this is the best university in the world" don't support your application.

Graduate school is expensive and while we do not want details of your finances, we do want to know that you have considered how you will finance your studies.

#### **2. Research Potential**

**a. Curriculum Vitae** - *the student has engaged in a variety of activities that prepare for graduate studies in Community Health Sciences at her/his application level (MSc/PhD).*

Your preparation may be demonstrated through experience such as working as a research assistant in an area of interest; assisting with (MSc) or participating in (PhD) funding applications and publications; volunteering in a community agency working with seniors (related to research interests).

**b. Letter from Proposed Supervisor** - *It must be evident that the proposed Supervisor is a good fit for the student, will be available to supervise the student if admitted, and is supportive of the student's admission and proposed research.*

Ensure you have a basic understanding of the research area your proposed supervisor is in and that your interest area is compatible. Provide a summary of your skills, experience and research interests to your proposed supervisor so they can better indicate support for your application.

#### **3. Academic Aptitude**

**a. References** - *Referees' support indicates the student's ability to succeed in graduate studies at his/her application level (MSc/PhD).*

Choose your referees wisely, i.e. ones that can address your research potential and academic ability (e.g. supervisor for your thesis, course instructor, etc.)

**b. Transcripts** – *Student's grades indicate consistently strong academic performance in relevant course work and other academic activities.*

Most applicants have a GPA considerably higher than the minimum of 3.2. You may consider completing 1-2 graduate courses in relevant areas to demonstrate your ability to complete high quality work at this level.

**Other** – written and oral English are important skills for success in graduate studies where much of the work is in critical thinking and writing. If you have been away from academic writing for awhile or your TOEFL score only meets the minimum requirement, you may want to seek writing assistance or upgrading through the Writing Skills Centre here or any university close to you. Make sure you mention this extra effort on your part to sharpen your skills.

*Updated May 22, 2009*