

Prospective Students

Frequently Asked Questions:

- **How many applications do you receive on average per year?** The PhD program receives over 80 applications per cycle; nearly half of the applications are from countries other than the U.S.
- **How many applicants are offered admission per year?** Graduate Division makes that determination for us based on the number of students enrolled in our program. Typically we can offer admission to eight to twelve applicants; entering class size average between five and six students. Our program is geared to consist of 25-30 students at varying stages of completion.
- **How do I contact a professor to determine if s/he will agree to advise me?** Sometimes faculty are unable to respond to prospective students' queries about mentorship prior to admissions decisions because the admissions committee is responsible for making recommendations for admitted students' assigned advisors. Applicants with an interest in working with a particular faculty member should indicate this in their applications.
- **What aspects of the application are weighed more heavily than others?** We look at an application in its entirety to determine a person's strengths and relative fit to our program; available advisors, areas of research interest and academic history are important considerations as is research work experience. Letters of recommendation are also carefully reviewed.
- **What are the average GRE scores of accepted candidates?** The average entering student has a verbal score above the 85th percentile and a quantitative score above the 70th percentile.
- **My GRE scores from two years ago were better than this year's scores. Can I use those scores instead?** All scores from the past five years will show on your GRE report; we will count the scores from the exam which had the highest average scores.
- **How important is it to have a Master's degree to be considered for admission?** The Admissions Committee only occasionally considers related work experience in lieu of advanced academic work. However, most students admitted do have a master's degree. Students without prior coursework in **microeconomics, epidemiology, and statistics** must remedy deficiencies in their first year.

- **Can I apply for the doctoral program directly from an undergraduate program?**
The Berkeley PhD program is rigorous; it is most effectively completed by students with professional experiences. Recent undergraduate students should not apply; instead, they should spend time gaining relevant full-time work experience.
- **Can I apply for spring admission?** The academic year begins in the fall; spring admission is not permitted.
- **Do you have a part-time program for persons who want to continue to work full-time?** No, the Ph.D. program is a full-time doctoral training program with a residency requirement. Overall, the program averages 4-5 years in length. There are no on-line or night courses available. The first two years of the program are primarily devoted to required coursework.
- **How soon after I submit my application can I expect to hear an official response?**
The Admissions Committee will begin reviewing applications in mid-January; decisions are generally made by the beginning of March. Members of the committee may contact applicants during this review period to arrange for phone interviews. Final decisions may be made as late as the end of April.
- **If I am not admitted, can I apply again next year?** Admission to the program is a very competitive process; the committee tries to balance out applicants per track for an equal representation. They do encourage some applicants to reapply the ensuing year to allow for additional coursework and/or relevant research experiences.
- **I have been waitlisted for admission; when will I know if I am officially admitted?**
Waitlisted candidates will receive information about their final status on or before June 1. Some of our best students were originally on the wait list for admission before receiving their offer of admission. We regret the inconvenience and ask for your patience during this process.
- **I have been offered admission—how can I arrange to visit campus and Berkeley in order to make a decision?** The Ph.D. Program typically hosts a Spring Visit Day in mid-March for those candidates who have been offered admission. There are also department and campus events held to inform prospective students of what they can expect as a graduate student at UC Berkeley.
- **If offered admission, can I defer and begin a year later?** Graduate Division and the Ph.D. Program do not allow for deferred admission. We recommend that you update your CV, obtain at least one new letter of recommendation, and reapply.