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Rethinking Physics Graduate Admissions for a Post-Covid World¹ NICHOLAS YOUNG, NICOLE VERBONCOEUR, Michigan State University, MARCOS CABALLERO, Michigan State University, University of Oslo — With the pandemic disrupting research, standardized tests, and grading practices as well as programs stepping up efforts to address systematic racism, physics departments are rethinking their graduate admissions processes. In this talk, we provide an overview of our work studying graduate admissions and suggestions to make the process more equitable. Our first study uses 7 years of admissions data from a U.S., public, research intensive university to explore how the introduction of rubric-based admissions that include socio-emotional factors in addition to traditional academic factors affect which application components are emphasized in the admissions process. Our second study uses 2 years of admissions data to five Big Ten and mid-western universities to demonstrate how the physics GRE does not help “otherwise missed” applicants stand out in the admissions process and instead rewards those already privileged in the admissions process. Based on the results of these studies, we make recommendations for changes to graduate admissions processes to make them more equitable.

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