

Abstract Submitted
for the GEBPC17 Meeting of
The American Physical Society

Findings on Graduate Admissions Studies¹ CASEY MILLER, Rochester Institute of Technology, GEOFF POTVIN, Florida International University — One possible contributor to the underrepresentation of certain groups in physics is graduate admissions. In this plenary session, we present results of several past and current studies that have been investigating issues related to graduate admissions in physics. In particular, we summarize work that directly probed factors influencing admissions decisions amongst PhD- and MS-granting physics departments, and work aiming to understand from the students' perspective which experiences and undergraduate factors are associated with a greater interest in graduate school, and the barriers to pursuing graduate school. Further, we present the results of a study conducted within US physics programs that aimed to identify which admissions input parameters undergraduate GPA, GRE-Quantitative, GRE-Verbal, and GRE-Physics are predictive of success in physics PhD programs. This comprehensive study spanned 25 large programs across rankings, with student level data for approximately 15% of the students admitted to US Physics programs in 2000-2010. Our results indicate that the only parameter that is a statistically significant predictor of PhD completion is undergraduate GPA, but only for US males at institutions of NRC-R ranking of 20 or better.

¹FIU work supported by NSF 1143070; RIT work was supported in part by NSF 1649297.

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Date submitted: 20 Jan 2017

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