Commonly-Asked Questions

(A) Application Procedures

What materials do I need to apply?
How can I get an application?
I need a waiver on the application fee.
What minimum scores are needed to be admitted?
How do I decide whether to apply to the EES or EFMH Master's program?
Can I apply to start in Winter or Spring Quarter?
Where do I send the application and supporting material?
What is the application deadline?

Answers

What materials do I need to apply?

Your application must include general GRE scores, 2 copies of official transcripts, a statement of purpose, the web application form, and 3 recommendation letters. TOEFL scores are required of all applicants whose first language is not English. Exceptions are granted for applicants who have earned a U.S. bachelor's or master's degree from a college or university accredited by a regional accrediting association in the United States, or the equivalent of either degree from a non-U.S., college or university of recognized standing where all instruction is provided in English.

How can I get an application?

Application materials typically become accessible on the web by early September. If you wish to be considered for financial aid, these application materials are due in early December – see the website for the exact deadline. The standard application form includes a question on whether you want to apply for financial aid, so no special financial aid forms are needed.

I need a waiver on the application fee.

Applicants who are citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. are eligible for a waiver of the $105 application fee if they can obtain a GRE fee waiver for the current academic year. The GRE Fee Waiver
Certificate can be printed from the web at http://ntis01.ets.org/onyx/feewav.htm
For foreign students, Stanford University will not, under any circumstances, process application materials without an application fee. We realize that this strict policy presents difficulties for students from certain foreign countries, but Stanford will no longer allow us to make ANY exceptions to this rule, no matter what the reason.

What minimum scores are needed to be admitted?

Our department does not have any minimum numerical requirements for either the GPA or for the GREs. Instead, all application materials are evaluated in their entirety, to assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of each applicant, taking into account various factors [described more fully below, under Admissions Procedures]. We will often admit an applicant with a weakness in one area if the applicant appears to be strong in the other areas; however, we are less likely to admit applicants who seem weak in multiple areas.

For foreign students required to take the TOEFL, the University does not allow us to admit anyone whose TOEFL score is less than 575 (paper-based, or 230 for the computer-based test, or 89 for the Internet-based test); in the EES program, we seldom admit students with TOEFL scores of less than 593 (paper-based, or 243 for the computer-based test, or 97 for the Internet), because experience has shown us that such students find it difficult to do well in our graduate program.

Despite the lack of numerically-based evaluation criteria, some potential applicants still seek numerical data regarding our admitted students, to try and gauge what caliber of applicants we tend to admit. While we are willing to provide such data for the EES program, you must recognize that we do not use these numbers as criteria --- while most of our admitted students meet many of these criteria, there are also applicants meeting most of these numerical measures who are not admitted to the EES program.

About 2/3rds of the Master's students admitted to the EES program for 2008-2009 had undergraduate GPAs of at least 3.6, 2/3rds had verbal GREs of at least 550, 2/3rds had quantitative GREs of at least 750, and 2/3rds had analytical writing GREs of at least 4.5. For those admittees who were foreign students, about 2/3rds had TOEFL scores above 105 (Internet-based; equivalent to >620 for paper-based exam; >260 for computerized test).
How do I decide whether to apply to the EES or EFMH Master's program?

While there is substantial overlap between the two programs, EFMH emphasizes more the fluid mechanical, hydrological, mass transport and modeling aspects of environmental problems, while EES is more oriented towards chemical and biological aspects, with an emphasis on treatment technologies.

If you still feel uncertain about which program would be a better fit with your interests, we urge you to examine the MS course requirements for each program at our websites: http://www.stanford.edu/group/ees/guidelines.html for EES, and http://www.stanford.edu/group/efmh/efmh/degreereqs.html for EFMH.

Can I apply to start in Winter or Spring Quarter?

Both the EES and EFMH programs are structured to allow MS studies to be completed within 3 quarters, so many of our winter and spring quarter course offerings have as prerequisites courses offered in the autumn. Because of this, these 2 programs only offer admission starting in autumn quarter.

Where do I send the application and supporting material?

On-line applications are forwarded directly to the department. Supporting documents, i.e., transcripts, letters of recommendation, should be mailed to:

Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
Graduate Admissions Coordinator
Yang & Yamazaki Environment and Energy Bldg., Room 314, MC 4020
473 Via Ortega
Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305.

What is the application deadline?

Applications and supporting material are due in early December. See our department’s admissions website for the specific date: http://cee.stanford.edu/prospective/grad/grad_admissions.html