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Graduate
Management
Admission
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Diversity Insights

Latino/Hispanic American Candidates



The Diversity Insights Series

The Diversity Insights Series offers the graduate management education community data, analysis and observations about select candidate populations in 2020. The first installment of the series looks at US underrepresented populations, including Black/African Americans, Latino/Hispanic Americans, and Native Americans, collectively and individually.

Data and analysis from the mba.com Prospective Students Survey, plus GMAT test-taker data and external sources, illustrate what makes candidate groups distinct in the midst of the COVID-19

pandemic. This includes where they live, when they begin the school search, and their motivations as well as career goals.



Latino/Hispanic American Candidates

In early 2020, the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic shut down and disrupted education systems across the globe at essentially the same time.

The unfolding triple threat¹—challenging the health, educational, and financial context for current and future decisions—has required business school institutions to innovate and adapt, as well as adjust to the new norms facing the talent they seek to fill their cohorts.

Groups that have historically been underrepresented in business schools may be especially vulnerable to recent social and financial insecurities and encounter long-term impacts from the crisis. Combined with a global social justice movement, the pandemic has further emphasized diversity among the critical priorities for schools in the United States and worldwide.²

Data collected in the midst of the pandemic taps into the mindset and decision making for key student populations—particularly among the prospective candidates who use the mba.com website, which receives approximately 460,000 visitors per month.³ As such, the Graduate Management Admission Council™ (GMAC™) has a distinctive platform to provide analysis from survey respondents and test takers that can offer graduate management education (GME) stakeholders information to meet the challenges of creating more effective and meaningful planning, marketing, and designs for student engagement.

About This Data

This brief compiles data from GMAT™ examinees and the mba.com Prospective Students Survey to help graduate business schools plan and execute diversity recruitment initiatives.

Sections include:

- Connecting with Hispanic American Candidates
- Educational Attainment and Business Studies
- Study Formats
- Work Experience and Skills
- Financing Plans
- Population and Geography
- Demographic Profile

¹UN News. Human development backslides, education at global levels 'not seen since the 1980s'. Retrieved May 16, 2021 from <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/05/1064542>

²Ethier, Marc. (2021, February 22). The Top HBCU Feeders to U.S. MBA Programs. Poets & Quants. Retrieved March 26, 2021 from <https://poetsandquants.com/2021/02/22/the-top-hbcu-feeders-to-u-s-mba-programs/>

³GMAC. (2021). mba.com website. Retrieved March 26, 2021 from <https://www.mba.com/>



Hispanic Americans are a key underrepresented population (URP)⁴ group in the US GME pipeline. The awareness, access, and engagement among the prospective students within this segment varies, as demonstrated by the perceptions, goals, experience, finances, and changing profile demographics noted below.

This brief refers to Latinos or Hispanics, meaning those US citizens who trace their roots to Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Central America, South America, and other Spanish-speaking or Latin American countries. The survey research uses the terms Hispanic and Latino interchangeably, along with the more recent

gender-neutral alternative term “Latinx.” As candidates may be Hispanic and of any race, this analysis does not address additional segments that may reflect a candidate’s immigrant experience, geographic origins, or significant blended ancestries from Africa, Asia, Caribbean, or indigenous groups that are also present within the Latinx community.^{5,6} In 2019, there were 60.6 million people who self-identified as Hispanic, making up roughly 18 percent of the US population. Hispanics are the second largest ethnic group in the nation and will become 29 percent of the US population by 2050.⁷

⁴The term underrepresented population (URP) refers to US citizen racial or ethnic groups including—Black or African American, Hispanic American or Latino, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaska Native—that have historically constituted a disproportionately smaller percentage of those enrolled in higher education than they do of the US population. The term non-underrepresented populations (non-URP) category refers to US citizens identifying racial or ethnic groups including Asian Americans, White (non-Hispanic), and other.

⁵Lopez, M.H., Krogstad, J.M., Passel, J. (2020, September 15). Who is Hispanic? Pew Research Center Fact Tank News. Retrieved April 1, 2021 from <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/09/15/who-is-hispanic/>.

⁶Schelenz, R. and Freeling, N. (2019, October 10). What’s in a name? How the concepts of Hispanic and Latino identity emerged. University of California News. Retrieved April 1, 2021 from <https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/whats-in-a-name-how-concepts-hispanic-and-latino-identity-emerged>.

⁷Passel, J. and Cohn, D. (2008, February 11). U.S. Population Projections: 2005–2050. Pew Research Center Hispanic Trends. Retrieved April 2, 2021 from <https://www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/2008/02/11/us-population-projections-2005-2050/>.

Connecting with Hispanic American Candidates

The motivation compelling a majority of Hispanics to pursue GME is primarily to “build upon existing education and experience” (64%), and more than one-third of Hispanics (36%) are aiming to “learn a new field.”⁸

Top expectations among Hispanics after obtaining a GME degree include the ubiquitous get a raise/salary increase (54%) and manage people (43%)—which matches the expectations of non-underrepresented populations in the US (non-URP) survey respondents. Other expectations expressed by more than one-third of Hispanics (as well as non-URP) were: obtain a senior-level or executive position, manage projects, get a job with a different company, and change job functions/occupation. A slightly greater percentage of Hispanics is interested in working for a company where they can travel internationally when compared with non-URP respondents (30% vs. 24%).

By job role, similar percentages of Hispanics and non-URP respondents are aiming for entry-level or mid-level positions; however, the greatest gap when comparing Hispanics and non-URP respondents is seen in those expecting to obtain a C-suite position after their GME degree (17% Hispanics vs. 25% non-URP). Forgoing the climb of a corporate ladder could be explained in part by the greater interest among Hispanics to be self-employed or in entrepreneur roles (23% vs. 19%). Latino-owned businesses are the fastest growing business segment in the United States, empowered by organizations like the Latino Business Action Network (LBAN) which seeks to double the number of \$10+ million, \$100+ million, and \$1+ billion Latino-owned businesses by 2025.⁹

Opinions about the value of GME to safeguard one’s career in tough economic times may be reinforcing the overall commitment expressed by Hispanics in 2020 for a GME credential. A majority of Hispanics and candidates from non-underrepresented populations in the United States viewed the global economy to be *very weak or weak* (each 70%) and described their regional economy as *very weak or weak* (58%) compared with 59 percent of non-URP respondents.

The perceived worth of a GME degree in the workforce holds up. Greater shares of Hispanics indicated a willingness to consider specific adjustments to their plans, such as online learning (39% Hispanics vs. 26% non-URP respondents) or a business school closer to home (25% vs. 21%) rather than abandon their GME goals.

These views (in addition to job insecurity concerns discussed below) may be what’s driving a faster timeline among Hispanics in 2020 about their ideal timing for school enrollment and the reverse trend for many non-URP candidates who appear to be maintaining a slower timeline for enrollment.

- Hispanic Americans aiming to enroll in GME within the next six months increased (from 36% in 2019 to 50% in 2020) and diminished for those planning within 7–12 months (31% in 2019 to 13% in 2020). By contrast, lower percentages of non-URP are planning to enroll within a year, and instead MBA programs are seeing greater shares of talent targeting within the next 13–18 months or even pushing their view of enrollment to beyond a two-year timeline.
- When compared with non-underrepresented populations, the earlier timing is especially noticeable among Hispanics for study within the next six months (50% Hispanics vs. 34% non-URP), and any longer timeline thereafter is almost evenly distributed among Hispanics within timeframes of the next 7–12 months (13% vs. 22%), or those planning to study within 24 months (13% vs. 28%), as well as among those who consider a timeline longer than two years (10% vs. 15%).

⁸GMAC. (January–December 2020). mba.com Prospective Students Survey. <https://www.gmac.com/ProspectiveStudents>. And, previous GMAC diversity research can be found at: <https://www.gmac.com/market-intelligence-and-research/research-library/diversity-enrollment/diversity-in-graduate-management-education-2020?fromsearch=1>

⁹Latino Business Action Network. (2021). Retrieved April 2, 2021 from <https://lban.us/about-lban/>

With half of Hispanic candidates surveyed in 2020 reporting they are looking to begin studies sooner relative to other groups, schools will need to review and strategize for an even shorter timeframe to connect with these applicants. For example, schools may need weekly (rather than monthly or quarterly) planning and more rapid communication strategies to transmit effective messaging through their most consulted sources of information.

- In their GME decision making, the most often cited resources among Hispanics include: school websites (54%), mba.com website (53%), friends/family (49%), school-related websites (46%), and information sessions (37%).
- Hispanics do not typically refer to published rankings as much as other groups (33% Hispanics vs. 48% non-URP). Similarly, fewer percentages of Hispanics are consulting the school brochures/publications (25% vs. 32%). On the other hand, Hispanics are consulting third-party sources more so than others about business school, including: admissions consultants (20% Hispanics vs. 13% non-URP), virtual business school fairs (20% vs. 13%), social networking sites (25% vs. 20%), and career/school advisors (22% vs. 19%).

Navigating the GME process may be more difficult for many Latino college students, particularly those who are first in their family to attend college (external data reports 48% of Hispanic/Latino students are first-generation undergraduate students) and come from low-income backgrounds or from predominantly Spanish-speaking homes, where parents may be unable to help them with resumes and cover letters.^{10,11} This is seen in GMAC 2020 survey data, where smaller percentages of Hispanics reported being motivated to apply to GME because parents



suggested it (11% Hispanics vs. 16% non-URP). Federal data show that only 9 percent of Latino students have at least one parent who went to college, and a USA Today investigation in 2020 found that Latino students tend to be “intimidated by the cost, whiteness, and bureaucracy” of US colleges.^{12,13}

¹⁰Postsecondary National Policy Institute. (2021, February 1). Fact Sheets: First-Generation Students. Retrieved April 1, 2021 from <https://pnpi.org/first-generation-students/>.

¹¹Julia, G. (2020, October 9). 4 Tips for Recruiting at Hispanic-Serving Institutions. Ripplematch. Retrieved April 2, 2021 from <https://ripplematch.com/insights/article/tips-for-recruiting-at-hispanic-serving-institutions-3e4ad691/>

¹²Redford, J. Hoyer, K.M. (2017, September). “First-Generation and Continuing-Generation College Students: A Comparison of High School and Postsecondary Experiences. NCES DOE Stats in Brief. Retrieved April 2, 2021 from <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2018/2018009.pdf>.

¹³Quintana, C. (2020, January 6). More Latino students than ever are trying to get their degree, but it's fraught and costly. Retrieved April 2, 2021 from <https://www.usatoday.com/in-depth/news/nation/2020/01/06/more-hispanic-students-than-ever-go-college-but-cost-high/2520646001/>

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, considering the GME pipeline status in 2020 of Hispanics surveyed, 62 percent are researching programs and actively applying (down slightly from 64% in 2019).¹⁴

Conversely, 8 percent of Hispanics had postponed, not yet committed, or deferred in 2020, a slight increase from only 6 percent in 2019. There was almost no change for the percentage of non-underrepresented populations in these phases: non-URP researching programs and actively applying (59% in 2019 and 60% in 2020) and those that had postponed, not yet committed, or deferred (6% in both 2019 and 2020).

Given the increase in the percentage of Hispanics postponing or opting out of the GME process, it will be important to establish new recruiting locations as well as leverage third-party communication channels to start an earlier pipeline for sourcing Hispanic graduate student talent. In 2020, about 1 in 4 Hispanics (26%) were interested in pursuing GME even if they did not get into their preferred school, although this is a slightly smaller share when compared with non-underrepresented counterparts (29%). This suggests an opportunity to demystify the application process for Hispanic candidates and the graduate management schools and programs that would be a good fit for these prospective students.

For example, smaller percentages of Hispanics report initial consideration of GME while they are in high school or completing their undergraduate degree (46% Hispanics vs. 52% non-URP). This suggests opportunities for recruiting to take place at both Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs)—the 400 colleges or universities (including those in Puerto Rico) certified by the US Department of Education where Hispanic students comprise at least 25 percent of the full-time equivalent student body— as well as at the more than 300 “Emerging HSIs” (with 15% to 24% Hispanic student enrollment) that are experiencing significant growth in Hispanic enrollment at colleges where they once made up a smaller percentage of the student body.¹⁵⁻¹⁶ In addition, Prospanica, the association of Hispanic professionals, formerly

the National Society of Hispanic MBAs (NSHMBA), as well as the Association of Latino Professionals For America (ALPFA) can be partners in hosting virtual career fairs, chapter events, and other outreach to Hispanic aspiring business school candidates.¹⁷

In the post-coronavirus context, it will be imperative for schools to widen their partnerships with third-party sources and continue to adapt the key resources Hispanics use for decision making, like offering virtual information sessions in both Spanish and English, scheduling during nontraditional hours in the evenings and weekends for students (and family members) whose jobs may prevent them from obtaining information during the day, specifying any available assistance for undocumented students, and promoting academic support programs to better retain Hispanic students, and other programs that affirm their heritage and unique contributions. These tactics address the importance of the family decision for pursuing GME. An education consultant characterizes the family dynamic not just as a tendency of Latino parents to be protective, but deeper concerns from parents who need to be involved in the decision for graduate studies not only because they may not be accustomed to giving their children as much independence as peers, but also to confront fears that they could “lose” their children to another culture or that they will not come back home after college.¹⁸ In practical terms, parents may not want their children to attend college because they want or need them to work and support the family financially. Parent engagement is crucial, and therefore providing details about student safety, daily life, successful past students or role models, as well as paid internship or other work experiences will be key.

This information and other materials in Spanish will be helpful if language is a barrier for parents. Furthermore, schools can expand their news coverage and social media outreach to include Spanish language outlets, including tv, radio, and blogs. These media are depended upon by many Hispanics as their source of news and information, illustrated by the February 2021 sweeps week where Spanish-language television network Univision averaged 1.4 million total viewers, making it the number five network on all of television with adults 18-49 and tied at number four with NBC among adults 18-34. Additionally, education analysts stress that new communication formats, like focused text messaging to graduate-level students and having live,

¹⁴GMAC. mba.com Prospective Students Survey. Data prior to 2020 among students about deferment specifically is not available, as this was a new item detail added to 2020 questionnaire separate from status of postponed or not yet committed. Retrieved from <https://www.gmac.com/ProspectiveStudents>.

¹⁵Moody, J. (2020, December 16). Hispanic Serving Institutions: What to Know. U.S. News & World Report. Retrieved March 31, 2021 from <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/articles/hispanic-serving-institutions-what-to-know>

¹⁶Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities. (2018-2019). HACU List of Hispanic-Serving Institutions 2018-2019. Retrieved March 31, 2021 from <https://www.hacu.net/images/hacu/OPAI/HACU%20LIST%20OF%20HSIs%202018-19.pdf>.

¹⁷Prospanica, the association of Hispanic MBAs and business professionals. (2021). Retrieved April 2, 2021 from <https://www.prospanica.org/>. And Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting (ALPFA). (2021). Retrieved April 2, 2021 from <https://www.alpfa.org/>.

¹⁸Lincoln, N. (2016, July 7). Challenges and Strategies for Assisting Latino Students with College Access and Completion. Independent Educational Consultants Association (IECA). Retrieved May 10, 2021 from <https://www.iecaonline.com/quick-links/ieca-news-center/resource-library/college-focused-publications/challenges-and-strategies-for-assisting-latino-students-with-college-access-and-completion/>

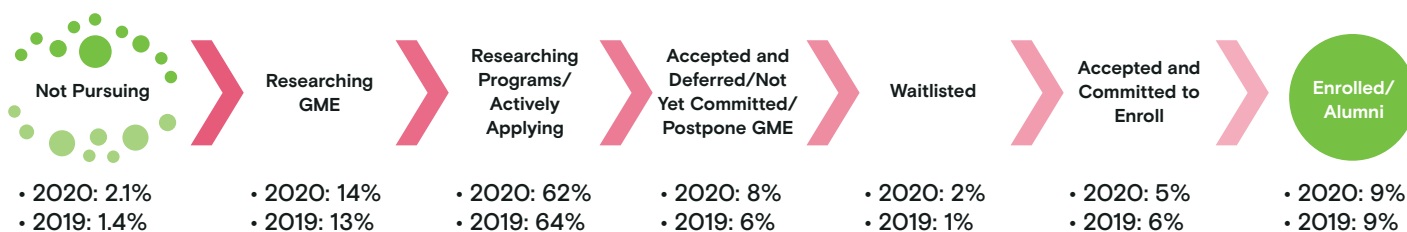
quick-response options that open two-way communication, are now essential to build more engagement with students of all backgrounds.¹⁹

GMAC survey data note that 9 percent of Hispanics are prompted to consider GME during their first year in the workplace, compared with 7 percent of non-URP counterparts. This is a promising foundation for the Latinx Equity at Work Certification to be launched by the Management Leadership for Tomorrow (MLT) organization.²⁰ Presumably, the Latinx program will mirror the 2020 MLT Black Equity at Work Certification, a first-of-its-kind clear and comprehensive standard for employers committed to achieving Black equity. The Certification (a three-year initial plan followed

by annual review) provides a roadmap, support, and recognition to enable and encourage employers across the United States (like Amazon, Boston Consulting Group, Nike, and other industry leaders) to pursue equity with the same rigor and results applied to other key business priorities.²¹

Hispanic candidates surveyed in 2020 have greater representation among the student motivation profiles of Respect Seeker and Balanced Careerist when compared with candidates from non-underrepresented populations in the United States. Additional details can be found in the research conducted by GMAC with IPSOS marketing firm.²²

GME Pipeline Status Among Hispanics Surveyed in 2020 and 2019



Source: GMAC. (2020, 2019). mba.com Prospective Students Survey. Retrieved from <https://gmac.com/prospectivestudents>.

Overall, the perception of Hispanics in 2020 survey data reveal that COVID-19 is not in itself seen as a barrier to prevent them from pursuing GME:

- In general, the top concerns relative to the coronavirus and potential impact on GME cited by more than half of Hispanics were school closures (62%) and job market status (60%), which echoed the top apprehensions of non-URP US respondents.
- 28 percent of Hispanics were extremely or very concerned about the impact COVID-19 may have on their pursuit of GME in the future, compared with 26 percent of non-URP US respondents.
- By contrast, about 1 in 6 Hispanics (16%) indicated the pandemic was not a concern for their pursuit of GME, compared with a slightly greater percentage among non-URP US respondents (19%) who were unfazed.
- In spite of COVID-19, 60 percent of non-URP respondents were holding firm to their original plans about a specific business school, compared with fewer than half of Hispanics (45%).

¹⁹Inside Higher Ed. (2021). Getting Personal: The Best Way to Recruit and Retain Students. Retrieved March 17, 2021 from <https://www.insidehighered.com/audio/2021/02/09/getting-personal-best-way-recruit-and-retain-students-wednesday-february-17-200-pm>

²⁰Westlaw Today. (2021, February 17). Gibson Dunn, Arnold & Porter sign on to Black equity initiative alongside corporate giants. Retrieved April 15, 2021 from [https://today.westlaw.com/Document/1f89f0c10717411eb8cd591c4f94435a4/View/FullText.html?transitionType=SearchItem&contextData=\(sc.Default\)&firstPage=true](https://today.westlaw.com/Document/1f89f0c10717411eb8cd591c4f94435a4/View/FullText.html?transitionType=SearchItem&contextData=(sc.Default)&firstPage=true)

²¹Management Leadership for Tomorrow. (2021, February 17). Management Leadership for Tomorrow (MLT) Announces Inaugural Cohort of Twenty-Five Industry Leading Employers That Will Pursue Pathbreaking MLT Black Equity at Work Certification. Retrieved April 15, 2021 from https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/management-leadership-for-tomorrow-mlt-announces-inaugural-cohort-of-twenty-five-industry-leading-employers-that-will-pursue-pathbreaking-mlt-black-equity-at-work-certification-301229564.html?tc=eml_cleartime

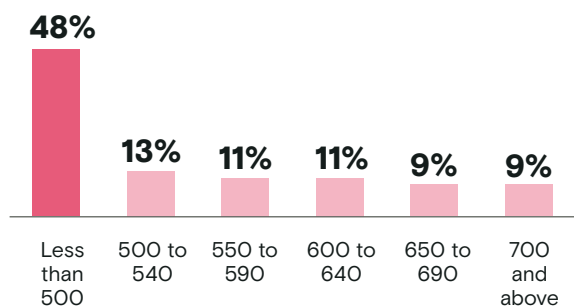
²²GMAC. (2016, October) Meet the Segments. Retrieved April 2, 2021 from <https://www.gmac.com/market-intelligence-and-research/research-library/admissions-and-application-trends/meet-the-segments>.

Educational Attainment and Business Studies

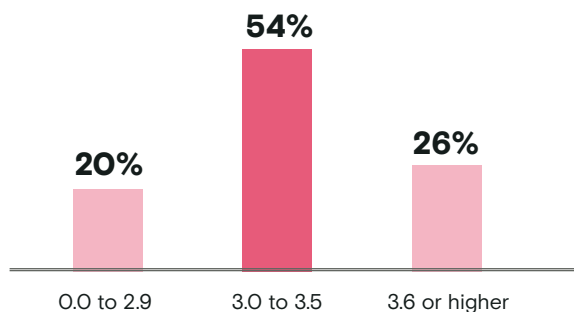
Among Hispanic GMAT examinees in testing year 2020 (TY2020),²³ most had already completed their undergraduate degree (67%) at their time of exam registration. Some were still enrolled as undergraduates (26%), while a smaller share reported pursuing graduate coursework (2%) or already completing a graduate-level degree (4%).

- More than half of unique Hispanic GMAT examinees were business majors as undergraduates (55%), consistent with non-URP US examinees (51%).
- Most unique Hispanic GMAT examinees reported between 3.0 and 3.5 as their undergraduate GPA (54%), and 26 percent reported a 3.6 or greater GPA. Although a smaller share of Hispanics reports highest undergrad grades when compared with non-URP US examinees (41% non-URP with GPA above 3.6 in TY2020), the pipeline is seeing a greater share of Hispanics with 3.6 or higher GPA (up from 23% of Hispanics in TY2017).
- Approximately 1 in 4 Hispanics scored 600 or higher on the GMAT exam (29%) in TY2020—which is a much smaller proportion when compared with non-URP US examinees (49% above 600). And 24 percent of Hispanics scored 500–590 on the GMAT, while fewer than half achieved a total score of less than 500 (48%).
- Nearly 1 in 5 unique Hispanic GMAT examinees were social science majors (18%), while others majored in engineering (10%), science (6%), and humanities (4%).
- Three in 4 unique Hispanic GMAT examinees (78%) intend to pursue a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree, a proportion on par with non-URP US examinees (81%). Other leading popular degree programs for Hispanic examinees include a Master of Accounting degree (16%), Master of Finance (10%), Master of Analytics/BI (8%), and joint MBA/Law (6%).

GMAT® Total Score, Hispanic American Examinees TY2020



Undergrad GPA, Hispanic American Examinees TY2020



Source: GMAC. (2020). GMAT unique examinee data. TY2020.

²³GMAC. (2021, February). Profiles of GMAT Testing: North America, TY2016–TY2020. Retrieved from <https://www.gmac.com/market-intelligence-and-research/assessment-data/profile-of-gmat-candidates>.

Note: Testing year 2020 refers to the period July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. In April 2020 testing centers temporarily closed worldwide as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19) precautions, and correspondingly the interim GMAT™ online exam testing appointments were available beginning April 20 through June 15, 2020. Among unique Hispanic American examinees, 89% sat for the test in-person and 11% completed the online exam.

Study Formats

When asked about *preferred* program options, Hispanic prospective students overwhelmingly select a full-time MBA two-year program (31%) or one-year program (16%), while fewer indicate a preference for flexible MBA (8%), part-time MBA (5%), online MBA (4%), or Executive MBA (1%) program types. The MA/MS program types preferred by Hispanics were master of accounting (5%), as well as finance (4%), and data analytics (3%).

- **Rather than abandon plans to pursue GME due to COVID-19, a greater share of Hispanics indicated a willingness to consider the adjustment of online learning than non-underrepresented population candidates (39% Hispanics vs. 26% non-URP).**
- Moreover, if accepted into a program, Hispanics reported a willingness to complete online 50 percent (median) of the program due to COVID-19, a much greater proportion compared with an average of only 30 percent for non-URP US respondents.
- Most Hispanics selected a preferred delivery format as primarily in person (50%), versus hybrid (23%), primarily online (12%), or undecided (5%). Moreover, the hybrid format was more popular among Hispanics when compared with non-URP counterparts (16%).

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, most GME programs shifted to online program delivery and continue to fine tune to provide an experience that enables students to share learnings and perspectives with other students, engage in networking, and develop leadership skills in co-curricular activities.^{24, 25}

At the same time, the general popularity of online MBA programs has the potential to grow—especially as the pandemic reality of work from home is now standard across all industries—and greater importance is placed on demonstrating digital skills in the workforce. When asked to select curriculum “must-have” items if given the chance to design their ideal program, 62 percent of Hispanic prospective students chose business analytics/data science—a course with similar popularity among the majority of non-URP candidates (64%).

Other ideal course curriculum more popular among Hispanics when compared with non-URP, included: marketing and communications (40% Hispanics vs. 36% non-URP), brand/product management (38% vs. 34%), leadership/change management (61% vs. 57%), and social entrepreneurship/nonprofit (25% vs. 21%).

The flexibility noted among some Hispanics in the context of the pandemic is noteworthy and suggests a larger trend unfolding. For example, in the context of a possible decision *not* to pursue GME, candidates were asked what if any alternative they might take to achieve their goals. The idea of registering for a massive, open online course (MOOC) was considered by 28 percent of Hispanics, a greater share when compared with non-underrepresented US respondents (18%). Professional certification was another popular alternative among Hispanics and non-URP counterparts (37% vs. 30%). At the same time, those that did not consider any substitutions included 17 percent of Hispanics and 13 percent of non-URP candidates.

²⁴BusinessBecause. (2020, April 7). Wharton MBAs Petition for Lower Tuition Fees. Retrieved March 17, 2021 from <https://www.businessbecause.com/news/coronavirus-latest/6869/wharton-mba-petition-lower-tuition-fees>

²⁵Byrne, John (2020, April 6). The Student Revolt Over MBA Tuition for Online Classes. Poets & Quants. Retrieved March 17, 2021 from: <https://poetsandquants.com/2020/04/06/the-student-revolt-over-mba-tuition/?pq-category=business-school-news/>

Work Experience and Skills

Nearly 4 in 5 unique Hispanic GMAT examinees (77%) have more than one year of work experience. Most have either one to three years' experience (37%) or four to nine years' experience (31%). Nine percent have 10 or more years' experience.

A smaller share of unique Hispanic GMAT examinees has less than one year of work experience (23%) compared with non-URP US examinees (29%).

| Work experience | Hispanic American GMAT examinees | Non-URP GMAT examinees |
|------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Less than 1 year | 23% | 29% |
| 1 to 3 years | 37% | 36% |
| 4 to 9 years | 31% | 28% |
| 10 or more years | 9% | 7% |

Source: GMAT Testing Data, TY 2020

Nearly half (46%) of Hispanic prospective students surveyed in 2020 reveal that they were prompted to take action on the journey to GME because they had “always planned to do so at this point in their career.” Other top triggers for action among Hispanics in 2020 related to career goals in current or future employment, including: a “desire to apply for a job but lacking the required skills and/or degree to be competitive” (42%).

Additional factors most often cited by Hispanics is the “convenient time to go to school” (40%) and with “no children left at home, having available time” (25%). While most of the catalysts for a GME journey among Hispanics compare closely with those of non-URP US respondents, other exceptions are seen related to job insecurity and monetary viewpoints: “Not working at the time/recently became unemployed” (17% Hispanics vs. 11% non-URP), “my coworker(s) were laid off/fired from their job” (7% vs. 2%), “able to receive tuition assistance at my current job” (13% vs. 16%), and “I have the financial resources to apply” (18% vs. 26%).



Areas of concentration chosen in 2020 offer additional insight into what skills prospects want after their GME studies that they can use on the job or in a new career:

- The five most popular areas of study concentration for Hispanics and non-URP respondents include: consulting, strategy, finance, business analytics/data science, and leadership.
- Slightly greater shares of Hispanics when compared with non-URP respondents were drawn to concentrations such as: product management (19% Hispanics vs. 16% non-URP), media management (8% vs. 6%), as well as accounting (15% vs. 11%), and tax (8% vs. 4%).
- Conversely, when compared with non-URP respondents, smaller percentages of Hispanics indicated interest in areas such as: operations management (13% Hispanics vs. 17% non-URP), manufacturing and technology management (4% vs. 8%), and engineering management (4% vs. 8%).

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the demographic changes already underway in educational achievements, work experience, and gender (see data below and in the demographic profile on page 18) may have major implications for business schools' engagement in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hispanic examinees “still in undergraduate studies” account for a greater percentage of unique GMAT examinees (26% in TY2020 compared with 18% in TY2017). This suggests that even as the pandemic unfolded this young segment of talent recognized the value of GME and yet likely face greater support needs to secure training opportunities such as internships, work partnerships, and job networking when compared with previous cohorts of Hispanic talent.

External data indicate the pandemic has exacerbated the challenges faced by women in general, signaled by 2020 survey reports of taking up side jobs for supplemental income, experiencing feelings of burnout, as well as declining career ambition.²⁶ Hispanic women likely face additional challenges,

as jobs data for early 2021 noted “greater unemployment rates for Hispanic women (8.5%) when compared with women overall (5.9%).”²⁷ Twice as many Latina-led companies experienced closure compared to Latino-led businesses (30% versus 16%).²⁸

Latinas have seen the highest pandemic unemployment rate of any group—20.1 percent in April 2020. And as of January 2021, more than 1 million fewer Hispanic women were employed compared with pre-pandemic levels. Throughout the recession, Hispanic women's unemployment rate has been consistently higher than that of Hispanic men. While Latina workers have seen devastating job losses due to overrepresentation in the hardest-hit industries, they are also leaving the labor force at greater rates than Latino men because they have shouldered more of the increased caregiving responsibilities during the pandemic.²⁹

By gender, women in TY2020 accounted for 41 percent of the Hispanic GMAT examinee pipeline (compared with 42% in TY2019 and 44% in TY2017), signaling a continued decline in female representation compared with Hispanic male counterparts in GMAT testing. This suggests an opportunity for schools to share information about their available support mechanisms that may especially resonate with and reassure women (like backup childcare services, mental health resources, or mentorships) as tools to help balance demands of obligations at home with school or work.

²⁶Connley, C. (2021, March 9). Women's ambition plummeted during the coronavirus pandemic, as careers stalled and burnout spiked. CNBC. Poll data collected February 22–March 1, 2021 following Women at Work survey reported by CNBC and SurveyMonkey. Retrieved March 15, 2021 from <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/03/09/65percent-of-working-women-say-pandemic-has-made-things-worse-at-work.html>.

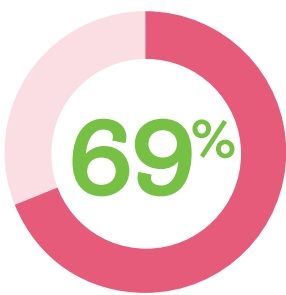
²⁷Connley, C. (2021, March 5). Unemployment rate understates what's going on, expert says, as millions of women remain out of workforce. Retrieved March 15, 2021 from <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/03/05/unemployment-rate-understates-whats-going-on-especially-for-women.html>.

²⁸Stanford Graduate School of Business Latino Entrepreneurship Initiative. (2020). State of Latino Entrepreneurship Report. Retrieved April 2, 2021 from <https://www.gsb.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/publication-pdf/report-2020-state-of-latino-entrepreneurship.pdf> (Accessed April 2, 2021)

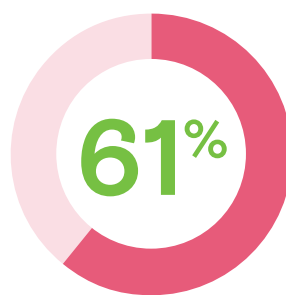
²⁹Zamarripa, R. and Roque, L. (2021, March 5) Latinos Face Disproportionate Health and Economic Impacts From COVID-19. Center for American Progress News. Retrieved April 3, 2021 from: <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2021/03/05/496733/latinos-face-disproportionate-health-economic-impacts-covid-19/#fn-496733-22>

Financing Plans

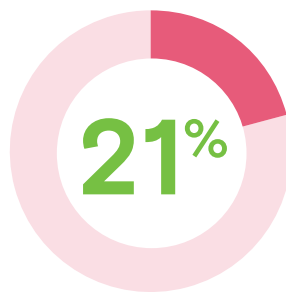
Hispanic business school candidates are traditionally more likely than non-URP US candidates to plan to use grants, fellowships, and scholarships, as well as loans to finance their graduate management education. In addition, Hispanics are less likely to plan on parental support or use personal savings than non-URP peers.



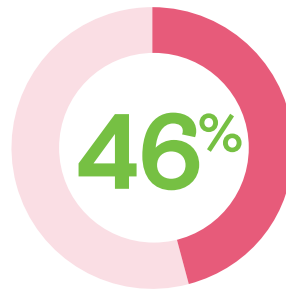
A majority of Hispanic business school candidates plan to use grants, fellowships, and/or scholarships to pay for business school. By comparison, 55 percent of non-URP US candidates plan to use these funding sources.



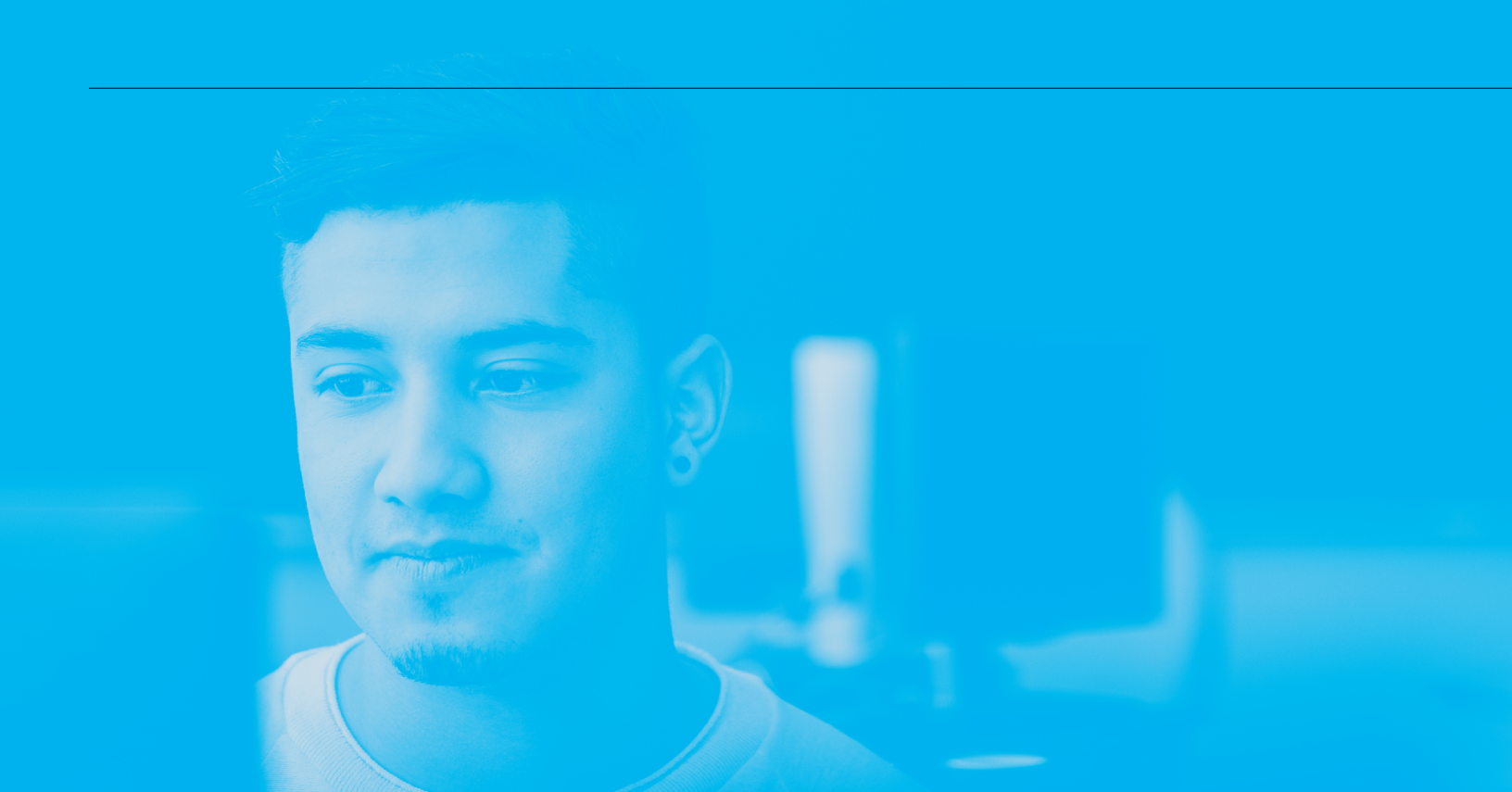
More than half of Hispanic business school candidates (61%) plan to take out student loans, compared with 53% of non-URP US candidates.



Only 21 percent of Hispanic candidates plan on receiving parental financial support. By comparison, a third of non-URP US candidates (34%) plan on receiving financial support from their parents to help pay for graduate business school.



Hispanic candidates are also less likely than non-URP candidates to plan to use personal savings (46% Hispanics vs. 51% non-URP), spouse/partner earnings (5% vs. 8%), and employer sponsorship (21% vs. 27%) to finance their degree.



In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the financial concerns as a barrier to entry were more prevalent among Hispanics in 2020 compared with non-URP US prospective students.

Past survey data has shown that Hispanics express greater concern about funding when compared with non-URP candidates. In a COVID-19 era of general uncertainty, financial obstacles that may actually prevent Hispanics from pursuing GME are cited more often when compared with non-URP respondents, including future debt burden (28% Hispanics vs. 20% non-URP), cost of the program (27% vs. 22%), current debt level (13% vs. 8%), and current uncertainty of the economy (15% vs. 9%).

In mid-January 2021, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) organization announced COVID-19 Mobility Grants for students in San Antonio, Texas as a

resource for emergency funding to cover students' basic needs (food, housing, transportation, and dependent care) as well as educational expenses and technology requirements necessitated by virtual learning. Due to high demand, applications for such assistance closed within 14 days.³⁰

Similarly, in 2020 the Association of Latino Professionals For America (ALPFA) launched Operation Helping Hands, a paid virtual internship program designed to solve the issue of Hispanic undergrad students who had internships rescinded due to COVID-19. ALPFA is hosting the Fellows program again in 2021 and selecting talent from across the country to join a virtual team for eight weeks to solve real-life business or societal problems determined by participating business organizations.³¹ Schools can look to encourage Hispanic prospective students to apply for scholarships available from these groups and other partner organizations. Additionally, they can be flexible with deadlines for admissions and financial aid to give more students a chance to apply, as well as be proactive about helping students fill out federal-aid applications.³²

³⁰HACU. (2021, January 12). HACU accepting applications for the COVID-19 Mobility Grants for college students in the San Antonio area. Retrieved March 31, 2021 from <https://www.hacu.net/NewsBot.asp?MODE=VIEW&ID=3280>.

³¹Association of Latino Professionals For America (ALPFA). (2021). Retrieved April 3, 2021 from https://www.alpfa.org/page/ALPFA_Fellowship_Program

³²Poohle, A. (2021, March 16). Is It Harder to Get into College in 2021? The Wall Street Journal. Retrieved March 17, 2021 from https://www.wsj.com/articles/is-it-harder-to-get-into-college-in-2021-11615918281?mod=searchresults_post1&page=1

Population and Geography

Measurements of pipeline data may appear distorted when compared with previous years, as standardized testing centers temporarily closed around the globe in spring 2020 due to coronavirus (COVID-19) precautions and correspondingly many students had tests cancelled or postponed before the transition to an online GMAT exam was implemented.

The lack of consistency in TY2020 figures is further intensified by the quick adjustments of schools to maintain business continuity and altering their usage of the GMAT exam—for example, allowing applicants to request test waivers, accepting an alternative test (e.g., GMAC’s Executive Assessment Online exam launched early May 2020), modifying requirements to become test optional, or simply not requiring a test for the 2020-2021 school year.³³

Hispanic Americans in TY2020 are the largest URP group in the US graduate management education pipeline.³⁴

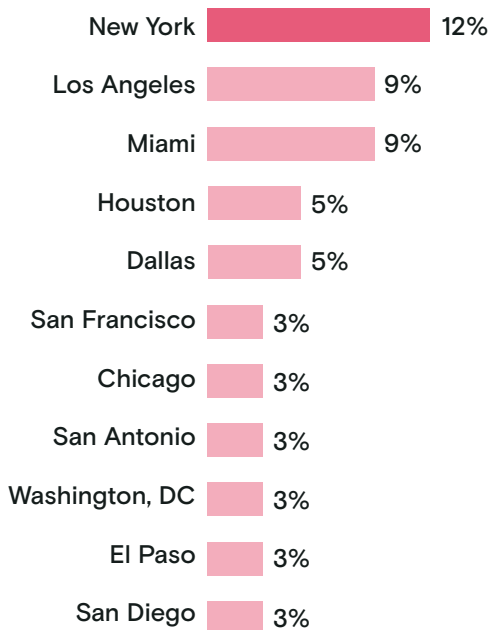
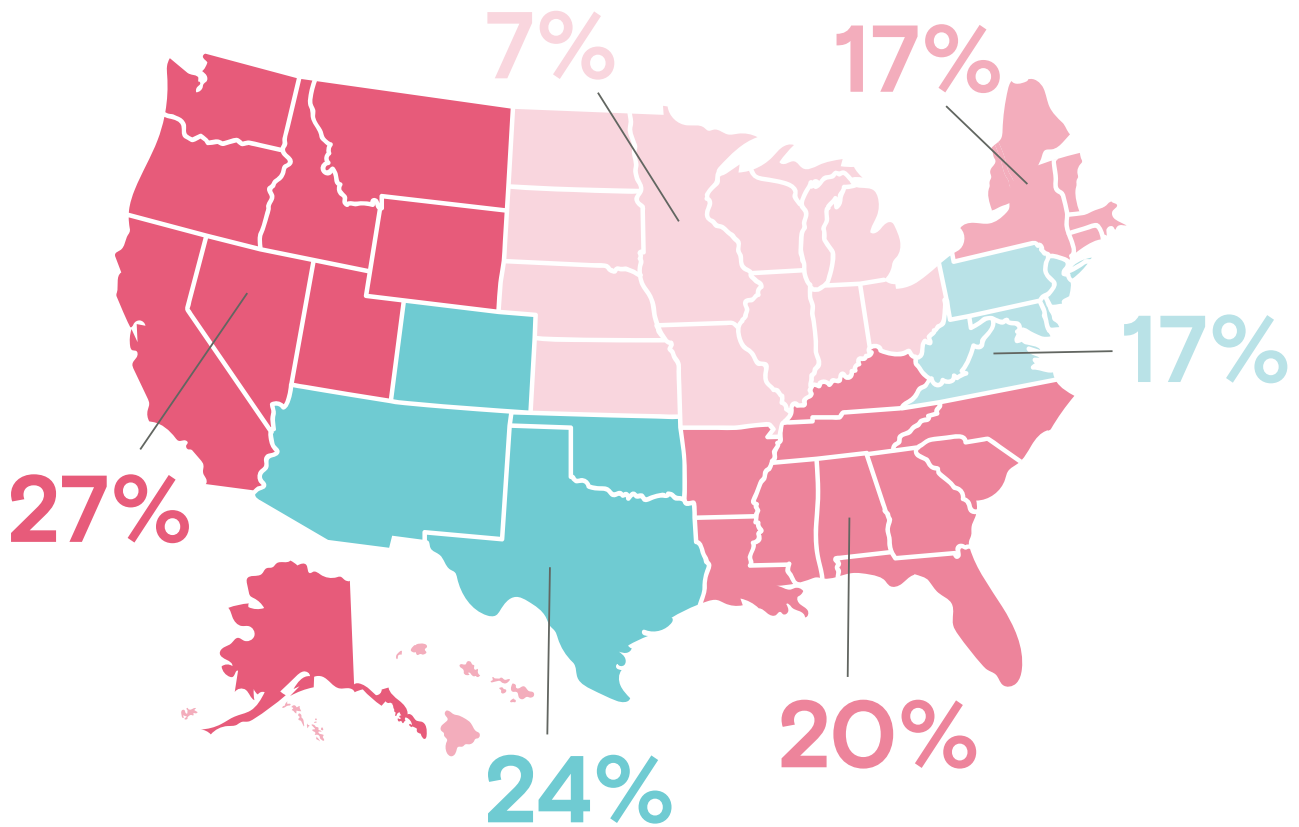
- Among unique Hispanic GMAT examinees, 60 percent identify as men and 41 percent identify as women.
- A majority of unique Hispanic GMAT examinees (86%) are 30 years old or younger. Within this age segment, a slightly greater share is younger than 25 (44%) and between the ages of 25 and 30 (42%).



³³Blackman, S. (2020, December 14). Standardized Tests for Business School. Retrieved March 17, 2021 from <https://www.stacyblackman.com/standardized-tests-for-business-school/>

³⁴Testing year 2020 refers to the period July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. In April 2020 testing centers temporarily closed worldwide as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19) precautions, and correspondingly the interim GMAT online exam testing appointments were available beginning April 20 through June 15, 2020. Among unique Hispanic American examinees, 89% sat for the test in person and 11% completed the online exam.

Unique Hispanic American GMAT™ Examinees, by Residence for US Regions and Metro Areas



By US region of residence, the West has the largest percentage of unique Hispanic GMAT examinees (27%). Large representations of Hispanic American examinees are also in the Southwest (24%), South (20%), Northeast (17%), followed by fewer shares in the Midwest (7%), and Middle Atlantic (5%) regions.

By US metropolitan area, the greatest representation of unique Hispanic GMAT examinees were in New York (12% in TY2020, on par with 13% in TY2017). Other areas with large representations of Hispanics remain consistent: Los Angeles and Miami (each 9%), Houston and Dallas (each 5%), as well as equal distributions (each 3%) in Chicago, San Francisco, San Antonio, Washington, DC, El Paso, and San Diego. The metro areas of Texas cities (San Antonio and El Paso) as well as San Diego are notable inclusions in the top metro areas for Hispanics when compared with leading metro areas for Non-URP US examinees.

Source: GMAT Testing Data, TY2020

Demographic Profile

Presented below is demographic data for unique US GMAT examinees in TY2020 who self-identified among a Hispanic group, including: Mexican American, Puerto Rican, or other Hispanic/Latino and reside in the United States. Examinees are not required to provide biographical and demographic information. **Bold** indicates the largest group within each data series.

GMAT® Exam Testing Year 2020, Hispanic Americans, Unique GMAT® Examinees

Gender

- **Men: 60%**
- Women: 41%

Age range

- **Younger than 25: 44%**
- 25–30: 42%
- 31–39: 11%
- 40 and older: 3%

US region

- Middle Atlantic: 5%
- Midwest: 7%
- Northeast: 17%
- South: 20%
- Southwest: 24%
- **West: 27%**

Years of work experience

- Less than 1 year: 23%
- **1–3 years: 37%**
- 4–9 years: 31%
- 10 or more years: 9%

Highest education level attained

- Still an undergraduate: 26%
- **Earned bachelor's degree: 67%**
- Taken graduate courses beyond first degree: 2%
- Earned master's degree: 4%
- Earned doctorate: 0.4%

Undergraduate major category

- **Business and commerce: 55%**
- Social science: 18%
- Science: 6%
- Engineering: 10%
- Humanities: 4%
- Other major: 6%

Undergraduate GPA

- 2.9 or below: 20%
- **3.0–3.5: 54%**
- 3.6 or above: 26%

Total GMAT score

- **Below 500: 48%**
- 500–540: 13%
- 550–590: 11%
- 600–640: 11%
- 650–690: 9%
- 700 and above: 9%

Intended degree program

- **Master of Business Administration (MBA): 78%**
- Executive MBA: 4%
- Master of Accountancy: 16%
- Master of Analytics/Business Intelligence: 8%
- Master of Business/IT: 3%
- Master of Entrepreneurship: 3%
- Master of Finance: 10%
- Master in Health Care Administration: 2%
- Master of Human Resources: 2%
- Master of Management: 2%
- Master of Marketing/Communication: 4%
- Master of Public Administration: 1%
- Various other degrees MS/MA: 9%
- Joint degree, MBA/engineering: 2%
- Joint degree, MBA/law: 6%
- Other joint degree: 1%
- Doctorate in business: 3%
- Other specific degree: 2%
- Undecided: 1%

Source: GMAC. (2020). GMAT Testing Data.

Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding. Data from 3,315 unique US citizens who self-identified as Latino or Hispanic.

Contributors

The following individuals from GMAC made significant contributions to the publication of this report:

Michelle Sparkman Renz, Consultant lead author, literature review, and manuscript review; Devina Caruthers, Manager, Research, data facilitation and preparation; Tacoma Williams, Associate Manager, Research Operations, data facilitation and preparation; Rachel Nana, Consultant, Data Science, data preparation; Tania Hernandez-Andersen, Senior Director, Corporate Brand, manuscript review; Sabrina White, Vice President, School and Industry Engagement, manuscript review, editorial review.

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