

University of North Texas – Ryan College of Business



Graduate Admissions Recommendation Report

University of North Texas – Application Timing and GPA Analysis

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1. Introduction

This report summarizes a study of graduate-school applicants at the University of North Texas (UNT). The analysis focused on how a student's undergraduate GPA (grade point average) and when they applied (Early, Mid, or Late in the admission cycle) relate to one another. The goal was to understand whether stronger students tend to apply earlier and to help UNT identify groups that may need additional outreach or encouragement.

The analysis identified clear patterns in graduate application timing. Lower undergraduate GPA, domestic citizenship, and MBA program enrollment are associated with significantly higher odds of late application. In contrast, international applicants and MS program applicants tend to apply earlier. These behavioral differences can inform targeted admissions strategies to encourage earlier submissions, reduce processing bottlenecks, and improve decision timelines.

2. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to create a clear, easy-to-follow report that connects data findings to actionable steps for the admissions team. The broader project goal is to increase the number of qualified applicants by 25% by Fall 2026 and to improve graduation rates by 10%. Understanding who applies when—and how GPA patterns differ—can help UNT plan targeted outreach, design early-decision campaigns, and improve yield rates.

3. What the Data Showed

When the data were grouped by application timing (Early, Mid, Late), the results were clear: students who applied earlier had higher GPAs on average, while late applicants had noticeably lower GPAs. This difference was not random—it was confirmed through a statistical test that showed the differences between groups were meaningful.

The study also found that Master of Science (MS) applicants had higher GPAs (around 3.5–3.6) than MBA applicants (around 3.3–3.4). This means MS programs tend to attract academically stronger applicants—and those students also tend to apply earlier in the cycle.

4. Understanding the Patterns

The predictive model revealed three key insights. First, GPA plays a strong role—students with lower GPAs are more likely to apply later. Second, international students were much more likely to apply early, likely due to visa and travel requirements. Third, MS applicants applied earlier than MBA applicants, suggesting program differences in structure or advising. Overall, the model predicted application timing correctly for about 57% of applicants, which is quite good for behavioral data.

5. Who Is at Risk and Who Is Highly Qualified

By combining GPA data and timing patterns, we can identify two key groups for admissions focus. High-risk students are typically domestic MBA applicants with lower GPAs (below 3.2) who apply late in the cycle. They may be less prepared academically and more likely to

miss deadlines or fail to complete applications. Highly qualified applicants are those who apply early and have GPAs of 3.6 or higher, especially international or MS program applicants. These students are prime candidates for scholarships, fast-track processing, or early admission decisions.

6. Recommendations for the Admissions Office

Recommendation 1: Targeted Early Outreach for Domestic Applicants

Launch early-cycle email reminders and information sessions specifically for domestic applicants.

Highlight benefits of early submission (priority review, funding consideration, reduced delays).

Use personalized messaging through CRM tools.

Expected Impact: Earlier submissions reduced late-cycle congestion, smoother processing.

Recommendation 2: GPA-Based Advising and Support

Give more priority to early applicants because they are the ones who have the best undergraduate record.

Identify lower-GPA applicants through inquiry forms or pre-application portals.

Offer pre-application advising, workshops, or document checklists.

Provide guidance on strengthening applications (résumé, statement of purpose, recommendations).

Expected Impact: Encourages earlier engagement and reduces last-minute submissions.

Recommendation 3: Program-Specific Communication for MBA Applicants

Develop tailored communication timelines for MBA prospects, acknowledging work-life constraints.

Promote flexible deadline reminders via SMS or mobile notifications.

Consider earlier priority deadlines or incentives (e.g., early review windows).

Expected Impact: Shifts MBA application behavior toward earlier submission.

Recommendation 4: Resource and Staffing Alignment

Allocate staffing and review resources in anticipation of late-cycle spikes from domestic and MBA applicants.

Use model predictions to forecast peak processing periods. Implement phased staffing to avoid bottlenecks.

Expected Impact: Improved operational efficiency and faster turnaround times.

Recommendation 5: Data-Driven Monitoring Dashboard

Use developed dashboard tracking application timing by:

GPA bands

Citizenship

Program type

Update regularly to identify emerging delays and adjust outreach strategies in real time.

Expected Impact: Continuous monitoring and proactive intervention.

7. Looking Ahead

This report completes the milestone of providing clear, actionable recommendations based on GPA and application timing. The next step is to integrate these insights into the interactive dashboard and present visual results for leadership review. By using these findings, UNT can plan recruiting earlier, engage at-risk applicants sooner, and reward proactive, high-achieving students. Together, these steps will move the university closer to its 2026 goals of stronger enrollment and student success.

Prepared by: Shelby Johnson, Project Manager
University of North Texas Graduate Admissions Project