

Web Resources:

- Darden Website: <http://www.darden.virginia.edu/>
- Darden Full Time MBA Class of 2018 Discussion: <http://gmatclub.com/forum/calling-all-darden-uva-applicants-2016-intake-class-of-198658.html>
- Valuable content from Darden Class of 2016 Applicants' discussion: <http://gmatclub.com/forum/important-posts-from-darden-class-of-2016-discussion-196173.html>

Live Q&A With UVA Darden's Member of Admission Committee, Rita Morrow.	
	Topic set by Narenn on Thu Nov 05 2015 21:15:58 GMT+0530 (India Standard Time)
21:30	Narenn Hello Everyone, Thank you for joining GMAT Club UVA Darden Q&A session today and a BIG welcome to Member of Darden's Admission Committee – Rita Morrow. Thanks Rita for joining us in this chat.
21:30	Narenn Today Rita will answer your questions regarding applications, essays, interviews, and life at Darden.
21:30	Rita_Darden Happy to be here. Thanks, Narenn.
21:30	lidabhai123 hello Narenn and Rita, hope you are doing well. When will we start?
21:32	Narenn It is a humble request to all participants to adhere to the following rules....
21:32	Narenn 1) Ask the questions one by one. Before posting your question, make sure the earlier question is answered.
21:32	Narenn 2) Do not ask profile specific questions e.g. What are my chances etc.
21:32	Narenn 3) Keep the question typed in advance and paste them in chat box when earlier question is answered.
21:32	Narenn Rita could you please tell us about your role and responsibilities at Darden?
21:32	Rita_Darden Sure, I'm a member of Darden's admissions committee. I evaluate applications, interview candidates, participate in recruiting events. Over the years, I've traveled to Asia, Latin America and Europe on behalf of Darden. In recent years, most of my travel outside the US has been to East Asia.
21:33	Narenn Thanks!! Dear Participants, this chat is now open for Q&A. Please ask your questions to Rita.
21:33	JV There are a lot of different paths we can go with the essay question. What more specifically is the admissions committee looking for?
21:34	Rita_Darden We're looking for character insight. As an MBA student and young professional you are likely to

		receive a great deal of developmental feedback. How do you/will you respond to such feedback.
21:35	generalist	Hi Rita, by when can the round 1 International applicants start getting interview invites?
21:36	Rita_Darden	Invitations began to go out earlier this week. Another batch will go out early next week. However, please keep in mind that we will continue to issue invitations and interview right up until the decision deadline.
21:36	helvcn	Hi Rita, I just got a Skype interview, would it be with an admission officer or a second year student? Would it be video-based or audio only? Thanks.
21:38	Rita_Darden	Congratulations on your interview invitation. In the 1st round only members of the professional admissions committee conduct remote interviews. Those interviews are conducted via Skype, ideally with video, provided Skype cooperates!
21:36	abhinav	Could you talk about the Experiential Learning opportunities offered at Darden?
21:42	Rita_Darden	Regarding experiential learning opportunities, just this year, Darden has added a experiential piece to the 1st year curriculum. Toward the end of the year all 1st years will be completing a hands-on project for an organization. Please also note there are experiential opportunities through several clubs and our center for global initiative.
21:39	mib_t6njbx	I am interested in scholarship programs
21:40	mib_t6njbx	Do you provide any scholarship
21:42	Rita_Darden	Scholarships - yes, we award over 6 million dollars in scholarships per year.
21:45	Narenn	For those who just joined, Rita has made an important announcement regarding Interview Invitations. I am quoting here her comment
21:45	Narenn	"Invitations began to go out earlier this week. Another batch will go out early next week. However, please keep in mind that we will continue to issue invitations and interview right up until the decision deadline."
21:45	lidabhai123	Do the interview invites go out by country? And how will interviews for Indian candidates be conducted in round 1, skype or face-to-face?
21:46	Rita_Darden	Not generally. The only time interview invitations go out by country would be when we ask alumni to interview on our behalf. Interviews for Indian candidates... I'm assuming you mean for an Indian candidate living in India? If that is the case, interviews will be conducted both by skype and face-to-face by alumni. The choice is generally based on the availability of alumni in a given location.

21:46	mib_fpseg1	What attributes does Darden look for in the MBA applicants?
21:47	Rita_Darden	Strong scores, performance in previous academic work, employment record. Communication and interpersonal skills are of particular importance since we teach using the case method and have learning teams in 1st year.
21:47	javykhan	how work experience and GPA are weighted against each other ?
21:47	Rita_Darden	Work vs. GPA... we're fortunate to have a competitive pool of candidates so, quite honestly, every aspect of the application is important.
21:49	HaddyPainkiller	I was having conversation with a past applicant who was rejected and the feedback call from Darden mentioned that "For Indians the GMAT should be 720 or above for their app to be competitive." Is it true?
21:51	Rita_Darden	We are fortunate to have a large and very competitive pool of Indian candidates. I would generally agree that a score in the low-700's is required for admission unless the candidate really stands out in some other area of the application.
21:53	rajaroy	Hi Rita, I am a Indian candidate but currently working in the US. Would my interview happen on site at darden?
21:54	Rita_Darden	Yes, if you are invited to interview and live in the US, unless there is some compelling reason why you could not come to Darden, your interview will be conducted here.
21:54	HaddyPainkiller	What percentages of seats are filled in R1?
21:55	Rita_Darden	I really can't even guess at the % of seats filled in Rd 1, however, we do tend to over-offer a bit in that round as we believe those candidates who have applied early are those most interested in attending, plus we have every seat to fill, so are not all that concerned with "crafting" the class.
21:56	chinoo411	follow up to your earlier answer - My GMAT is 710 and I am from India. Is that something I should be worried about?
21:58	Rita_Darden	710 from India means that your gmat will not necessarily distinguish you in that part of our pool. What other quality(ies) will distinguish you - outstanding academics? work experience? Extracurriculars? It could be many things that make you stand-out.
22:00	overboard	In regards to the new first year experiential piece you spoke about earlier - "[the] hands-on project for an organization" - is this a local project, national, or global?
22:01	Rita_Darden	Regarding the new 1st year experiential experience... we're still putting together the opportunities, so I really don't know the locations of the organizations. However, I can tell you that our dean has a

goal of every student having an int'l experience before graduation - US students outside the US and int'l students in the US.

22:02 **abhinavdhandh** Hi Rita, could you elaborate upon the leadership development programs/concentrations offered at Darden?

22:04 **Rita_Darden** **Leadership classes are a requirement in the 1st year curriculum and offered as electives in the 2nd year. I don't know that there is a leadership concentration, however. A concentration is not required here and fewer than 1/2 of our students choose one.**

22:05 **stevkang8** Hi Rita, can you please tell us what kind of student body is Darden looking to build?

22:08 **sidduvicster** For prospective students from prominently lecture based education, how does darden measure their fit for the extensive case based teaching in darden?

22:12 **Rita_Darden** **Almost without exception, candidates come to us with lecture-based educational backgrounds. We put a great deal of emphasis on communication and interpersonal skills as reported upon by recommenders and observed in the interview.**

22:08 **GuestUser** Hi Rita, I am sure a lot of fellow Indian applicants have this dilemma. I have a GMAT score of 740, which is not outstanding for my applicant pool. Do you suggest retaking GMAT and score an extra 20-30 points

22:09 **Rita_Darden** **A 740 overall GMAT for an Indian candidate is on-target.**

22:12 **HaddyPainkiller** Does adcom differentiate between different types of Engineers? I mean Is a computer Engineer considered same as a Mechanical Engineer?

22:12 **Rita_Darden** **Engineers...We realize the fundamental differences among engineering educational backgrounds. And look to professional experience as another way to discern the unique contribution and candidate may bring to Darden.**

22:13 **mib_9xbob9** How would you suggest invited applicants prepare for the on-campus interview, and what type of environment should we expect? Thanks

22:13 **danielsasson** Hi Rita, have interview invites to south american candidates already started?

22:18 **Rita_Darden** **Invitations have begun to go out to Latin American candidates with more to come.**

22:16 **wannabemba28** Hi Rita, can you please let us a know a bit more on the 'Kaizen projects' which I believe are something exclusive to Darden.

22:16 **Rita_Darden** **Regarding Kaizen projects, please check-out this link: <http://www.darden.virginia.edu/mba/global->**

[opportunities/kaizen-projects/](#)

22:19 mib_8wuqpp This may have already been asked but when will invitations go out until? I am in the United States.

22:19 Rita_Darden **Invitations have begun to go out to candidates both in and outside the US, but more will be coming over the next several weeks.**

22:20 helvcn Hi Rita, asking on behalf of my Chinese friends, what would be the on-target GMAT for China applicants pool? And would GMAT be a more important factor in scholarship determination?

22:21 Rita_Darden **Chinese candidates should aim for a GMAT score of at least 700. We have a number of types of scholarships in which different factors are considered - need-based scholarships are not as GMAT sensitive as some others.**

22:22 HaddyPainkiller Does Darden give any special weight to government employees?

22:26 Rita_Darden **I would not say we give special weight to government employees; however, a government employee does tend to stand-out in our applicant pool because of their rarity - a good thing!**

22:22 mib_fpseg1 What are the learning opportunities in terms of projects for students seeking a career in technology?

22:29 Rita_Darden **The number of technology industry recruiters has grown substantially over the past several years. Darden has made a concerted effort to attract tech firms and projects as an increasing number of our students have interest in the industry. Our Dean visited in Silicon Valley this fall as part of the effort.**

22:22 wannabemba28 Do the companies come for recruitment during the 'First Coffee' or is that time reserved strictly for faculty-student interaction?

22:25 Rita_Darden **Just today at 1st coffee a company offered a buffet breakfast for our community. Company representatives were present to informally interact with students and others, and they will also be holding "office-hours" for further discussions with students.**

22:28 mib_9xbob9 What is the most important aspect you look for during the interviews?

22:33 Rita_Darden **In interviews, we are looking to determine whether a candidate "fits" with Darden's culture and whether or not s/he has the communication and interpersonal skills to both contribute to and gain from our case-method pedagogy and our community.**

22:34 mib_9xbob9 Thanks for that, Rita

22:34 helvcn Hi Rita, thank you very much for your time! Have a nice day! Best, Lucas

22:34 Narenn **Thanks everyone for participating in this chat today.**

22:34	Narenn	Thank you very much, Rita, for spending time with us and answering applicants' questions. Hope you enjoyed the chat.
22:35	Narenn	We will publish summary of this chat in Darden forum in few days. Keep an eye on this thread... http://gmatclub.com/forum/calling-all-darden-uva-applicants-2016-intake-class-of-198658.html
22:35	Narenn	Regarding interview invitations to R1 applicants, Rita has made it clear that invitations have begun to go out to candidates both in and outside the US, but more will be coming over the next several weeks.
22:35	Narenn	Thanks again everyone and good luck!!
22:34	Rita_Darden	Thanks for your great questions everyone. If there are further questions, email me at morrowr@darden.virginia.edu Best wishes to all of you!!
22:34	kapoormanas1	Thanks Rita!
22:35	abhinavdhandh	Thanks for the answering the questions today, Rita!
22:35	wannabemba28	thanks for your time Rita

- 1) 2015 Live Q&A Session Schedule: <http://gmatclub.com/forum/announcement-mba-info-sessions-on-gmatclub-174827.html>
- 2) All Chat transcripts are available to download here <http://gmatclub.com/forum/live-q-a-with-b-school-adcoms-2015-season-174827.html#p1416987>

GMAT Club's MBA Resources

All MBA Rankings	http://bit.ly/1FaDIT3	Application Experiences of Applicants	http://bit.ly/1lecA6z
All MBA Deadlines	http://bit.ly/19RSTSX	MBA Applicant Blogs	http://bit.ly/1Hx5LJE
All School Stats	http://bit.ly/1MPOguZ	Current Student Blogs	http://bit.ly/1NPG4rD
Live Chats with B-School Adcoms	http://bit.ly/1NJ7v4w	All school discussions	http://bit.ly/1K0N43a
MBA Admission Consultant Reviews	http://bit.ly/1y6eLpt	Best MBA Books	http://bit.ly/1Cvz2qC
2015 MBA Applicants' Profiles	http://bit.ly/1DJKnBO		
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