

Accelerated Master's Degree Program
Pittsburg State University
November 27, 2013

The Accelerated Master's Degree option enables outstanding undergraduate students to begin taking graduate coursework in their junior or senior year and thus combine components of the undergraduate and graduate curricula. Students enrolled in this Program can use up to 12 hours of 700 level courses as dual credit between their bachelor's and master's degrees and thus have an accelerated path toward receiving a master's degree. Students must apply and be admitted to the accelerated master's program by their Department and the Graduate School before enrolling for courses which will apply to the graduate degree. Interested departments will decide criteria for admission to the accelerated master's option.

Rationale

The Accelerated Master's Degree Program offers an opportunity to outstanding students to advance their academic career by simultaneously pursuing both the undergraduate and graduate degrees in the same field of study. It is thus extremely likely that a student in this program will complete the requirements for both degrees in an accelerated time frame and thus advance through their degrees in less calendar time. Through this option, a student can receive a graduate degree in as little as one year after receiving their bachelor's degree.

Additional reasons for establishing an accelerated master's program are:

- A tool for departments to recruit undergraduate students , particularly incoming freshmen, who are interested in ultimately earning a master's degree
- Create a streamlined transition for students to continue their education beyond a bachelor's degree
- Develop an environment so that students receive more training and faculty time on research project(s) including finishing their thesis on time
- Faculty will get to work with students on more detailed publishable research problems
- Departments attract and retain outstanding students for their Graduate Programs
- Programs show higher graduation and completion rates positively impacting the overall campus environment

Procedure for Submitting the Accelerated Master's Degree Program Proposal

1. Department Develops Guidelines: Interested graduate programs will set criteria and develop guidelines for admission into the accelerated master's program and for guiding students admitted to the program. These guidelines will include the basis for identifying eligible outstanding students, the semester of admission into the graduate program (normally as a junior or senior), the plans in place to provide the student with the high level of advising necessary for program success, and crediting of joint- or dual-degree hours to both the undergraduate and the graduate degree requirements which will be reflected on both the graduate and undergraduate transcripts.

Any deviations from the standard undergraduate program and the standard graduate program will have to be legislated. One obvious deviation from the standard programs may be the possibility that a limited number of hours taken for graduate credit (700 level) can be

applied to the Bachelor degree (as per Graduate School policy). Joint-degree hours may not be workshop courses and cooperative education courses.

2. Department Legislates Program through Graduate Council: Any department wishing to create an Accelerated Program will complete a request form and will include any departmental requirements. This form will start at the Department Chair and make its way to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs' Office after appropriate approvals.
3. Department Legislates Program through Faculty Senate: The faculty senate accepts the premise that the graduate classes taken under dual credit can also be applied to the undergraduate degree.
4. Student Applies for Admission and General Guidelines:

Undergraduate students apply for the accelerated master's program using the regular Graduate School application form and admission process (including paying the Graduate School application fee) as well as completing a Dual Credit Permission Form. This form will also show enrollment each semester and courses that the student wishes to use as dual enrollment. Dual Credit Permission Form could be revised with the approvals of the Graduate Advisor, Department Chair, and Graduate Dean.

Students will be admitted under a dual enrollment code of Accelerated Grad. Upon graduation of their bachelor's degree, the student is guaranteed admission in the master's program and will complete a graduate admission application.

Admission to the accelerated master's program could occur during the first semester of the junior year or any time after the student has completed 60 hours of undergraduate work...note that only exceptional students will be admitted to the accelerated program. Students would normally apply for graduate admission at least one semester before the semester in which they plan to obtain credit at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

A minimum cumulative undergraduate G.P.A. of 3.25 is required for admission (programs are free to set this requirement higher). Departments may require additional admission criteria including a higher admission G.P.A.

After admission, continuation in the accelerated master's program requires a continuing undergraduate cumulative G.P.A. of at least a 3.00 and a graduate G.P.A of at least 3.0.

Students will be able to use up to 12 hours of 700-level courses as dual credit between their bachelor's & master's degrees. Dual credit courses must be courses completed at PSU. No transfer courses can be used in this capacity. Courses used as dual credit will be footnoted on both the Undergraduate and Graduate transcripts. Undergraduate students will be assessed at the undergraduate rate for all dual credits.

Students accepted into an accelerated program will work closely with an advisor for both undergraduate and graduate degrees.

An accelerated student is only eligible for aid on one program at a time and therefore will only receive undergraduate aid until he/she graduates from their bachelor's program.

Accelerated Master's Degree Admission Request

The Accelerated Master's Degree allows undergraduate students to begin taking graduate coursework in their senior year and thus combine components of the undergraduate and graduate curricula. To qualify for this program students must apply and be admitted to the program by their Department and the Graduate School, the student must be admitted to the Graduate School and must have a minimum 3.25 overall grade point average. Up to twelve hours of graduate credit can be taken during the student's senior year and nine hours of graduate-level coursework may count towards both the bachelor's and master's degrees. The student is required to maintain a minimum of a "B" for this coursework. (Department requirements may be different)

_____ Student's Name _____ ID Number

To be completed by the Department:

Term the student is set to graduate with their undergraduate degree: _____

Students undergraduate GPA to date: _____

Course(s) to be included as part of the Accelerated Master's Degree:

Course:	Credit Hours:	Course:	Credit Hours:
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

The above student is approved to be in the Accelerated Master's Degree program.

_____ Signature of Graduate Advisor _____ Date

_____ Signature of Department Chair _____ Date

To be completed by the student:

Please read and sign that you understand the following statement:

I, _____, understand that, in order to be in the accelerated master's program I must be in my senior year, can take up to twelve hours of graduate credit with nine hours of graduate-level coursework that may count towards both my bachelor's and master's degree and that I must earn a minimum of a "B" for this coursework.

_____ Student's Signature _____ Date

To be completed by the Graduate Office:

The above student is approved to be in the Accelerated Master's Degree program.

_____ Dean of the Graduate School _____ Date