

RECOMMENDATION OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON GRADUATE COURSE AND CURRICULUM AND THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE TO ESTABLISH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND REVIEW OF ACCELERATED MASTER'S DEGREES.

I. Description of Accelerated Master's Degrees

Accelerated master's degrees are intended for high achieving undergraduate students who are interested in continuing their study at the graduate level, and for high achieving high school and junior college students who might be attracted to pursuing both degrees at UWM. Students follow prescribed curricula, allowing them to begin graduate study before completion of the undergraduate degree. Accelerated master's degrees may be established between UWM undergraduate and graduate programs, between external undergraduate programs and UWM graduate programs, or between UWM undergraduate programs and external graduate programs.

II. Definitions

- A. Double Counting:** counting the same course credit for fulfillment of the requirements of both the bachelor's and the master's degree.
- B. Forward Double Counting:** double counting course credit taken by an undergraduate student completing graduate level work prior to admission by the Graduate School. Forward double-countable credits are transferred into the master's degree upon admission to the Graduate School. Students accruing forward double-countable credits are in undergraduate standing, paying undergraduate tuition for graduate-level courses, and remain eligible for undergraduate federal financial aid, such as Pell Grants.
- C. Backward Double Counting:** double counting graduate course credit to fulfill remaining undergraduate requirements or electives after admission to the master's program. Students accruing backward double-countable credits are in graduate standing, pay graduate tuition, and are eligible for all forms of graduate assistantships and financial aid.

III. Current Policies Affected By Adoption of the Accelerated Master's Degree

- A. Standard Graduate School Admission Requirements (GFC Document 1328)** An applicant must meet the requirements of the individual graduate program unit and the following Graduate School requirements in order to be considered for admission in regular standing:
 - A bachelor's degree
 - Proficiency in the English language (GFC Documents 1328 and 876)

IV. Proposed Criteria and Procedures for Accelerated Master's Degrees

A. Entry to Accelerated Master's Degree

The departments/schools and colleges proposing a particular accelerated degree will determine the undergraduate program requirements that may be satisfied through graduate coursework.

Minimum requirements for students to be admitted to the graduate portion of an accelerated degree are described in section III.C, below. Individual accelerated master's degrees may adopt additional requirements.

Applications for graduate admission will be reviewed according to the process outlined in each specific accelerated master's proposal. Students planning to pursue the accelerated master's while still at the undergraduate level will receive an indicator in the student information system to facilitate appropriate advising and identification during the graduate admission process.

B. Undergraduate Requirements

Students should plan their studies to complete their general education requirements, school or college general requirements, and most of their major requirements prior to their admission to the master's degree. The undergraduate requirements that may be satisfied through graduate coursework must be specified within the accelerated master's proposal. Students also must satisfy any residency requirements for the undergraduate degree. Students cannot secure waivers of university requirements based upon their participation in an accelerated master's. Students should work closely with their advisors in selecting appropriate courses each semester.

Undergraduates who intend to pursue an accelerated master's degree must meet the minimum GPA requirements for admission to the Graduate School before attempting graduate level work. Programs may specify additional requirements before permitting undergraduates to attempt graduate level work.

C. Admission to Graduate School

1. Admission Requirements

Students must meet the regular Graduate School admission requirements, with the following exceptions:

- a. Completion of the bachelor's degree. Instead, before entering graduate school students must have completed undergraduate credits equal in number to the total number of required credits in the bachelor's degree (usually 120) minus the number of credits available for backward double counting as part of their accelerated master's degree.
- b. Graduate school English language proficiency requirements. Undergraduates already are subject to the undergraduate proficiency requirements, which will determine proficiency for accelerated degrees.
- c. Additional standards set by individual programs (such as higher GPA or required standardized tests).

*Classroom credits may be earned in person or online and can include those credits earned in regular courses after admission to university studies, including earned credit for research and independent studies. Some of these credits can be earned for graduate level work taken in undergraduate standing, per this policy. With the approval of the undergraduate program on a case-by-case basis, appropriate college credits already

completed through the Advanced Placement (AP) Program, the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), the International Baccalaureate (IB), and enrollment in college courses while in high school, may be applied towards the credits required for the bachelor's degree, provided the student's undergraduate program approves.

2. Graduate Student Status

Students admitted to the Graduate School as part of an accelerated master's degree carry the same graduate student status as those admitted with a bachelor's degree. They are eligible for the same types of competitive financial assistance as all other graduate students, including appointments as TAs, PAs, and RAs. Their programs of study require completion of the same academic work as is required of all other graduate students. They are subject to the same performance requirements. Once admitted they will be required to pay tuition at the graduate rate. Students and program administrators should be aware that some forms of undergraduate financial aid, such as Pell Grants, may not be available to support graduate study.

3. Failure to Gain Admission to Graduate School

A student who intends to pursue an accelerated master's degree but who does not gain admission to the Graduate School can continue as an undergraduate student in order to complete the bachelor's degree. Students who are not admitted to the Graduate School through an accelerated program can apply again later to enter with a completed bachelor's degree.

D. Double Counting of Credits

1. Double Counting Limits

Students must complete the requirements for both their bachelor's and master's degrees within the prescribed limits on double counting of credits. Undergraduates must complete at least 120 credits for a bachelor's degree. Graduates must complete at least 30 credits for a master's degree, and substantially more in some programs.

The amount of credits that can be double counted both forward and backward will be scaled to the total credits required by the master's degree. The number of forward double-counted credits cannot exceed 20 percent of the total credits required for the master's degree. For a 30-credit master's, 6 graduate-level credits may be forward double counted toward the graduate degree; for a 60-credit master's, 12 credits may be forward double counted.

Backward double-counted credits are calculated according to a formula that establishes a base of 15 double-countable credits for all master's degrees, and that permits additional double-counted credits based on the total number of master's credits required. The formula for calculating the maximum of backward double-countable credits is:

$$15 + (\text{Total Credits in Master's Degree} - 30) / 3)$$

For a 45-credit master's degree, 20 graduate credits could be backward double counted toward the undergraduate degree. No more than 30 credits may be backward double counted for master's degrees that require more than 75 total credits.

In determining double-countable credits, the results of these calculations should be rounded down to the nearest whole credit. For example, 20 percent of a 39-credit master's degree is 7.8, which must be rounded down to 7 total credits available for forward double counting.

Programs may design accelerated master's degrees that permit the full amount of forward and backward double counting, or they may limit either or both. Programs should ensure that the courses necessary for completing accelerated degrees are offered regularly, and that a lack of course offerings does not impede students' time to degree.

2. Double Counting Procedures

Proposals for accelerated degree must identify specific courses available for double counting, and must clearly indicate which requirements such double-counted credits can fulfill.

Credit from a course cannot be split to meet multiple requirements. For example, credit for a 3-credit course cannot be double counted as credit for both a 2-credit and a 1-credit course. Programs should ensure that students can make use of the maximum amount of double-countable credits they permit. This will be especially important for programs that permit additional double-counted credits that are not divisible by 3. For example, a program that permits 7 forward double-countable credits should ensure that all seven credits can be double counted in practice.

Undergraduates who intend to attempt graduate-level work in G or U/G courses for the purpose of forward double counting must declare their intent to apply for an accelerated master's program, meet the minimum GPA requirements for admission to the Graduate School at the time of enrollment, and meet any additional requirements established by programs. Programs are responsible for monitoring these requirements.

Programs are responsible for ensuring that students who meet the general requirements for attempting graduate-level work, described above, and any additional program requirements have courses in which they can enroll to complete their degrees in a timely way. Programs should consider carefully how they will ensure access to sufficient courses for students in accelerated degrees. Individual instructors should not bar students from attempting graduate level work if the course is identified as part of an accelerated degree, if the students meet the requirements for taking the course, and if the students have declared an intention to pursue an accelerated degree.

Undergraduates who take a graduate-level U/G course must enroll in the appropriate offering designated for graduate-level work (e.g. U/G course number followed by letter G).

Undergraduates will need instructor permission to enroll in G courses or in the graduate-level offerings of U/G courses.

Forward double-countable credit will be transferred into the master's degree upon admission to the Graduate School using the Graduate Transfer Credit Evaluation Form.

Because forward double-counted credits are transferred into the master's degree upon admission to the Graduate School, students must earn a B or higher in the course (B- is not acceptable) in accordance with existing Graduate School policy.

Once forward double-counted graduate-level credit has been transferred into the master's degree, it is available for other forms of double counting, such as that permitted between master's degrees and certificates. In the case of coordinated degrees, a coordinated master's degree must submit a joint proposal for an accelerated version, even if one or both partners have separate accelerated master's degrees already.

Backward double-counted credit will be transferred to the undergraduate transcript once the student completes all required undergraduate credit and applies for graduation.

E. Advising

Undergraduate students who declare their intent to pursue an accelerated master's will receive an indicator in the student information system to facilitate appropriate advising and identification with their school or college advisor. Program level advisors must track and monitor those students who intend to pursue or are pursuing accelerated master's degrees so they can advise them appropriately. This will involve advising students about which requirements they can most effectively double count, the sequencing of courses, and the timely completion of undergraduate requirements. Program level advisors may need to coordinate with school or college advisors to ensure that students who intend to pursue accelerated degrees are indicated in the student information system appropriately.

Programs are reminded to advise all students that once admitted to the Graduate School they may lose eligibility for some forms of financial aid, such as Pell Grants. Similarly, once admitted by the Graduate School students will pay the higher graduate tuition rate.

Students in accelerated master's degrees may end up completing their bachelor's and master's degrees at the same time, but programs should enable and encourage students to complete their bachelor's degrees as early as possible.

F. Completion of Degrees

1. Bachelor's Degree

Upon completion of the courses and credits required for the bachelor's degree (including all completed backward double-counted credit), the student should apply for graduation in the undergraduate degree program. Upon receipt of the application for graduation, the

Registrar's Office will transfer the credits completed at the graduate level into the undergraduate record to facilitate the review of the student for undergraduate degree clearance. Degree clearance procedures at the undergraduate level will follow established procedures once the graduate credit is transferred to the undergraduate record.

2. Master's Degree

Upon admission by the Graduate School, credits earned in graduate-level work while the student was still an undergraduate will be transferred into the master's degree using the Graduate Transfer Credit Evaluation Form. Students graduate with the master's degree when they have completed all requirements. This may occur concurrently with or after completion of the bachelor's degree.

G. Accelerated Degree Administration

Degree granting programs are responsible for designing a method of internal oversight and administration. Proposals for new accelerated degrees must specify:

1. The maximum number of graduate-level credits that are proposed for forward and backward double counting, the list of classes available for double counting, and a sample table of semester-by-semester coursework that students will complete over the course of the accelerated degree (typically five years).
2. Title of an appropriate administrator who can receive a student's declared intent to pursue an accelerated master's and assign the appropriate indicator in the student information system.
3. In programs that utilize forward double counting, an appropriate administrator, such as the director of undergraduate studies, who will identify, track, and advise undergraduates who declare an intent to pursue an accelerated master's degree.
4. In programs that utilize backward double counting, an appropriate administrator, such as the director of graduate studies, who will track and advise graduate students applying to and admitted by the Graduate School as part of an accelerated master's degree.
5. Any additional standards for selecting undergraduates who will be permitted to enroll in G and U/G courses at the graduate level of work, with the intention of forward counting those credits toward the master's degree later. (See III.D.3 above.)
6. Any additional admissions requirements beyond the Graduate School's minimums for admission to the master's degree (such as a higher GPA requirement). Programs should specify whether they prefer selective or guaranteed admission.

H. Accelerated Degree Authorization

Requests to develop accelerated degrees through existing UWM bachelor's and master's degree programs must be approved through the normal process for changes to undergraduate and

graduate programs, including approval first by the Graduate Curriculum Committee and second by the Academic Program and Curriculum Committee. These requests will follow the attached template for an accelerated master's degree proposal and the attached approval matrix.

When the accelerated degree involves an articulation agreement with a bachelor's degree at another institution, the approval matrix need not include the APCC. When the accelerated degree involves an articulation agreement with a graduate degree at another institution, the approval matrix need not include GCC.

Those creating new accelerated degrees are strongly encouraged to consult with appropriate advisors in their school or college, the Graduate School, or the Provost's office to ensure the accelerated degree can be implemented before governance considers the proposal.

I. Accelerated Degree Review

Accelerated master's degrees will be assessed as part of both the normal undergraduate and graduate program reviews.

J. Changes to Academic Program Requirements

Changes to the requirements of the undergraduate and graduate portions of an accelerated degree will follow the standard academic approval process of each participating unit and institution.

V. Summary of Proposed Changes to Current Policies

1. Change in terminology from "integrated bachelor's/master's" to "accelerated master's" degrees, which reflects terminology that has become more common since 2014.
2. The previous version permitted students to double count up to 30 credits of graduate coursework backward toward the completion of their bachelor's degree after admission by the Graduate School. The current version permits a base of 15 credits to be counted backward, and additional credits based on the total size of the master's up to a maximum of 30 credits. The formula for determining backward double-countable credits is: $15 + (\text{Total Credits in Master's Degree} - 30) / 3$
3. The previous version did not permit forward double counting. The current version permits students to forward double count up to 20 percent of the total credits required by the master's degree.
4. By permitting forward counting, undergraduates can begin accruing graduate credit while still paying undergraduate tuition and while retaining Pell Grant eligibility. This improves accessibility to graduate education and is consistent with the university's access mission.
5. To track undergraduates in U/G courses taken at the graduate level work, the proposal requires students to enroll in separate graduate-level "second offerings" of each course. For instance, the

undergraduate version of a course numbered “500” will be accompanied in the catalog by a second offering that meets at the same time, same place, and with same instructor, but that will be numbered “500G.” This course number will appear in PAWS and on the student’s transcript. The UWM Registrar will begin phasing in these second offerings for U/G courses in fall 2019, and will provide them for all U/G courses by spring 2020. For instructors, both offerings will be automatically combined in Canvas.

6. The revision eliminates all continuous GPA monitoring. GPAs will be monitored by programs only when undergraduates attempt graduate-level work, and by the Graduate School upon application for admission.
7. The revision eliminates GPA requirements above the normal Graduate School GPA requirements for admission. Individual programs may institute higher GPA requirements for admission or for undergraduates who want to attempt graduate-level work.
8. The revision loosens the specific requirements for oversight, advising and administration at the program level. Programs have more flexibility to devise administrative structures that work for them.
9. A requirement that GFC must reauthorize all accelerated degrees every ten years has been eliminated. Instead, accelerated degrees will be reviewed as part of the existing undergraduate and graduate program reviews, and face no special requirement for renewal or review.
10. The Proposal Template has been simplified. The previous version required programs to offer extensive justifications for why they needed to accelerate their master’s degree, so resembled the proposal template for a new degree. This shorter and simpler proposal template reflects the increasing popularity and familiarity of accelerated master’s degrees nationwide, and should make proposals simpler and easier to write.

Appendix 1

Double Counting Example

For a student in an accelerated master's that combines a traditional 120-credit bachelor's degree with a 30-credit master's degree, and that permits the maximum amount of both forward and backward double counting, the student's credit array over five years leading to both degrees might look like this:

Year	Fall Semester				Spring Semester			
	Bachelor's Credits (U level work)	Bachelor's Credits Double Counted Forward (G level work)	Total Master's Credits (G-level work)	Master's Credits Double Counted Backwards (G-level work)	Bachelor's Credits (U level work)	Bachelor's credits Double Counted Forward (G level work)	Total Master's Credits (G-level work)	Master's Credits Double Counted Backwards (G-level work)
1	15				15			
2	15				15			
3	15				15			
4	9	6					9	9
5			9	6			6	0

In this example, a student in a bachelor's program takes 6 credits of graduate-level courses in fall of the fourth year. After admission to the Graduate School in time for spring of the fourth year, those forward double-countable credits will be transferred into the master's degree. During and after spring of the fourth year, some of the credits taken for the master's degree will be double counted backward to fulfill remaining requirements for the bachelor's degree. By the end of the fifth year, the student will complete both the bachelor's (in fall) and the master's (in spring) degrees.

Programs also may adopt a simpler version of the accelerated master's that utilizes only forward double counting to allow advanced undergraduates to get a head start on earning graduate credit. Because students in such degrees will complete their bachelor's before admission to the Graduate School, these arrangements are significantly simpler to design and administer, but they do not permit the completion of both degrees in five years. For example, a spring semester senior may take two U/G courses at the graduate level, and later, after being accepted into a master's program, could transfer those courses into the master's degree. The limits on forward double counting expressed in this policy apply.

ACCELERATED MASTER'S DEGREE
Proposal Template

RECOMMENDATION OF THE [INSTITUTION AND UNDERGRADUATE UNIT] AND THE [INSTITUTION AND
GRADUATE UNIT] TO ESTABLISH AN ACCELERATED MASTER'S DEGREE

I. Overview

Provide a general description of the program of study and the degrees that the students will earn. Identify the undergraduate majors (and/or minors) that will lead to the specific accelerated master's degree.

Envision possibilities for recruiting high achieving undergraduate students who are interested in continuing their study at the graduate level, and for high achieving high school and junior college students who might be attracted to pursuing bachelor's and master's degrees at UWM.

Describe opportunities for establishing further accelerated master's degree articulation agreements with external undergraduate programs.

II. Proposed Curriculum

Provide the maximum number of graduate-level credits that are proposed for forward and backward double counting, the list of classes available for double counting, and a sample table of semester-by-semester coursework that students will complete over the course of the accelerated degree (typically five years).

III. Administration of the Degree

Explain how the degree will be administered in compliance with section G of this policy:

- a. Identify the title of an appropriate administrator who can intake a student's declared intent to pursue an accelerated master's and assign the appropriate indicator in the student information record.
- b. In programs that utilize forward double counting, identify the title of an appropriate administrator, such as the director of undergraduate studies, who will identify, track, and advise undergraduates who have declared an intent to pursue an accelerated master's degree.
- c. In programs that utilize backward double counting, identify the title of an appropriate administrator, such as the director of graduate studies, who will track and advise graduate students applying to and admitted by the Graduate School as part of an accelerated master's degree.

- d. Identify and provide justification for any additional standards for selecting undergraduates who will be permitted to enroll in G and U/G courses at the graduate level of work, with the intention of forward counting them toward the master's degree later. (See III.D.3 in policy.)
- e. Identify and provide justification for any additional admissions requirements beyond the Graduate School's minimums for admission to the master's degree (such as a higher GPA requirement and/or standardized test scores). Select and articulate the type of admission to the accelerated graduate program that you envision: selective or guaranteed.

IV. Implementation Issues

Discuss any issues that may be impediments to implementation of the accelerated degree, and propose resolutions of those issues.

V. Date of Implementation

Identify the semester and year in which the accelerated degree will be implemented.

VI. Accelerated Degrees Involving External Partners

Proposals for Accelerated master's degrees between UWM and other institutions must also include a Program to Program Articulation Agreement.

ACCELERATED MASTER'S DEGREE
APPROVAL MATRIX

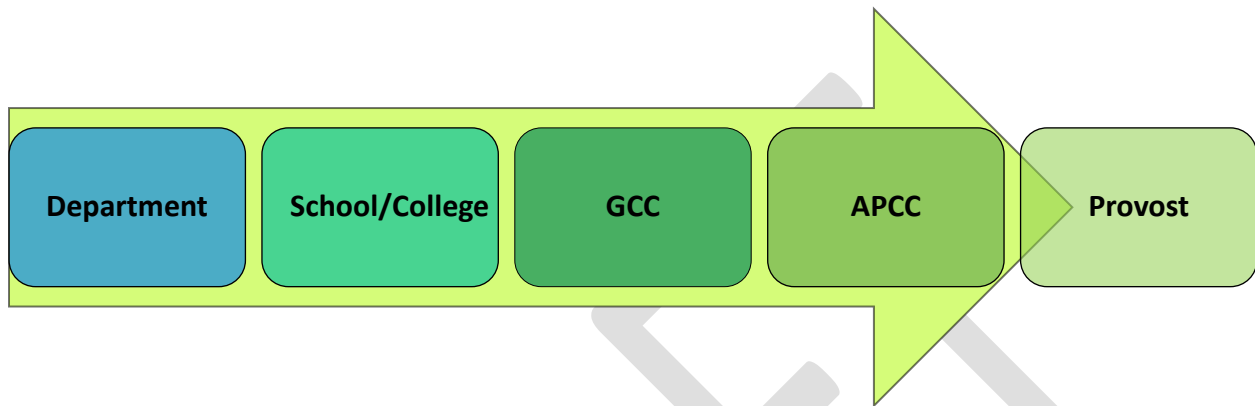


Figure 1: Steps in approval matrix for approval of a new accelerated master's degree. Program representatives who are creating proposals for these degrees are strongly encouraged to consult with appropriate advisors in their school or college, the Graduate School and/or the Provost's office to ensure the accelerated degree can be implemented, as envisioned, before governance considers the final proposal for approval.

Graduate Faculty Committee Document 1311
Revised and Approved by APCC December 11, 2018
Revised and Approved by GFC December 10, 2018
Revised and Approved October 19, 2015
Approved May 12, 2014

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

1. Accelerated master's degrees shall be authorized and follow the requirements described above.
2. Following appropriate administrative approval, this policy is effective Spring 2019.

DOCUMENT APPROVAL HISTORY

Graduate Faculty Committee May 12, 2014
Graduate Faculty Committee October 19, 2015
Graduate Faculty Committee December 10, 2018
Academic Program and Curriculum Committee December 11, 2018

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