

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND REVIEW OF ACCELERATED GRADUATE DEGREES.

I. Description of Accelerated Graduate Degrees

Accelerated graduate 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 graduate 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. The administrative academic home for an accelerated graduate degree that involves a UWM graduate program is always the UWM graduate program.

Only master's and some doctoral degrees are eligible for acceleration. Certificates, microcredentials, or other non-degree coursework are not eligible for acceleration. Eligible graduate degrees at the doctoral level include clinical doctorates and professional doctorates that do not require a dissertation consisting of original research. Traditional PhDs are not eligible for acceleration.

II. Definitions

- A. Shared Credits:** counting the same course credits for fulfillment of the requirements of both the bachelor's and the graduate degree.
- B. Forward Shared Credits:** are shared course credits taken by an undergraduate student completing graduate level work prior to admission by the Graduate School. Forward credits are transferred into the graduate degree upon admission to the Graduate School. Students accruing forward shared 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 Shared Credits:** are shared graduate course credits to fulfill remaining undergraduate requirements or electives after admission to the graduate program. Students accruing backward shared 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 Graduate 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 Graduate Degree

A. Entry to Accelerated Graduate Degree

The departments/schools and colleges proposing a particular accelerated degree will determine the undergraduate program requirements that may be satisfied through graduate degree coursework. Minimum requirements for students to be admitted to the graduate portion of an accelerated degree are described in section IV.C, below. Individual accelerated graduate degrees may adopt additional requirements.

Applications for graduate admission will be reviewed according to the process outlined in each specific accelerated graduate proposal. Students planning to pursue the accelerated graduate degree while still at the undergraduate level will receive an indicator in the student information system to facilitate appropriate advising and identification during the graduate degree 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 graduate degree. The undergraduate requirements that may be satisfied through graduate coursework must be specified within the accelerated graduate degree 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 graduate degree. Students should work closely with their advisors in selecting appropriate courses each semester.

Undergraduates who intend to pursue an accelerated graduate 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 shared credits as part of their accelerated graduate 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 graduate 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 degree 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 graduate 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. Shared Credits

1. Shared Credit Limits

Students must complete the requirements for both their bachelor's and graduate degrees within the prescribed limits on shared credits. Undergraduates must complete at least 120 credits for a bachelor's degree. Graduate students must complete at least 30 credits and substantially more in some programs.

The amount of credits that can be shared both forward and backward will be scaled to the total credits required by the graduate degree.

Forward Shared Credits: The number of forward shared credits cannot exceed 20 percent of the total credits required for the graduate degree. (Examples: For a 30-credit graduate degree, 6 graduate-level credits may be forward shared toward the graduate degree; for a 60-credit graduate degree, 12 credits may be forward shared).

Backward Shared Credits: Backward shared credits are calculated according to a formula that establishes a base of 15 shared credits for all graduate degrees, and that permits additional shared credits based on the total number of graduate degree credits required, up to a limit of 30 backward shared credits. The formula for calculating the maximum of backward shared credits is:

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

(Examples: For a 45-credit graduate degree, 20 graduate credits could be backward shared toward the undergraduate degree. For graduate degrees that require more than 75 total credits, no more than 30 credits may be backward shared.)

In determining share-eligible 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 sharing.

Programs may design accelerated graduate degrees that permit the full amount of forward and backward credit sharing, 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. Credit sharing Procedures

Proposals for accelerated degree must identify specific courses available for credit sharing, and must clearly indicate which requirements such shared credits can fulfill.

Credit from a course cannot be split to meet multiple requirements. For example, credit for a 3-credit course cannot be shared 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 sharable credits they permit. This will be especially important for programs that permit additional shared credits that are not divisible by 3. For example, a program that permits 7 forward shared credits should ensure that all seven credits can be shared in practice.

Students who pursue both an accelerated master's degree and subsequently an (accelerated) doctorate degree will not be able to share the same credits for both masters and doctorate accelerated degrees. Sharing of a credit between undergraduate and graduate degrees can only be done once. However, once credits are shared toward the master's degree, credits still eligible for sharing toward doctorate could be considered, as specified by the program.

Undergraduates who intend to attempt graduate-level work in G or U/G courses for the purpose of forward sharing must declare their intent to apply for an accelerated graduate program, meet the minimum GPA requirements for admission to the Graduate School at the time of enrollment in the graduate program, 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 manner. 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 shared credit will be transferred into the degree upon admission to the Graduate School using the Graduate Transfer Credit Evaluation Form.

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

Backward shared 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 graduate degree 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 graduate degrees so they can advise them appropriately. This will involve advising students about which requirements they can most effectively share, 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 graduate degrees may end up completing their bachelor's and graduate 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 shared 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 using the Graduate Transfer Credit Evaluation Form 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. Graduate 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 graduate degree using the Graduate Transfer Credit Evaluation Form. Students graduate with the graduate 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 and maintaining a method of internal oversight and administration. The administrative academic home for the accelerated graduate degree is always the UWM graduate program. Proposals for new accelerated degrees must specify:

1. The maximum number of graduate-level credits that are proposed for forward and backward sharing, the list of classes available for sharing, and a sample table of semester-by-semester coursework that students will complete over the course of the accelerated graduate degree (typically five years for a master's degree and often more for a doctorate).
2. Title of an appropriate administrator who can receive a student's declared intent to pursue an accelerated graduate degree and assign the appropriate indicator in the student information system.
3. (In programs that utilize forward credit sharing) 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 graduate degree.
4. (In programs that utilize backward credit sharing) 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 graduate 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 graduate degree later. (See IV.D.2 above.)
6. Any additional admissions requirements beyond the Graduate School's minimums for admission to the graduate degree (such as a higher GPA requirement). Programs should specify whether they prefer selective or guaranteed admission.

H. Accelerated Degree Authorization

Internal degrees

Requests to develop accelerated degrees through existing UWM bachelor's and graduate degree programs must be approved through the normal process for changes to undergraduate and graduate programs, including approval by both the Graduate Curriculum Committee and by the Academic Program and Curriculum Committee in any order or in parallel. However, if one committee makes a substantial change, then the proposal needs to go back to the other committee before moving to review/approval by the Provost. These requests will follow the attached template for an accelerated graduate degree proposal and the attached approval matrix.

External articulations

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, and the Provost's office to ensure the accelerated degree can be implemented before governance considers the proposal.

I. Accelerated Degree Review

Accelerated graduate 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.

Appendix 1

Credit Sharing Example

Example: An accelerated graduate degree 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 credit sharing. , The 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 Shared Forward (G level work)	Total Master's Credits (G-level work)	Master's Credits Shared Backwards (G-level work)	Bachelor's Credits (U level work)	Bachelor's Credits Shared Forward (G level work)	Total Master's Credits (G-level work)	Master's Credits Shared 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 sharable 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 backward shared 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 graduate degree that utilizes only forward credit sharing 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 credit sharing expressed in this policy apply.

ACCELERATED GRADUATE DEGREE

Proposal Template

RECOMMENDATION OF THE [INSTITUTION AND UNDERGRADUATE UNIT] AND THE [INSTITUTION AND GRADUATE UNIT] TO ESTABLISH AN ACCELERATED GRADUATE 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 graduate 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 graduate degrees at UWM.

Describe opportunities for establishing further accelerated graduate 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 sharing, the list of classes available for credit sharing and a sample table of semester-by-semester coursework that students will complete over the course of the accelerated degree (typically five years for a master's degree and more for a doctorate degree).

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 graduate degree and assign the appropriate indicator in the student information record.
- b. In programs that utilize forward credit sharing, 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 graduate degree.
- c. In programs that utilize backward credit sharing, 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 graduate 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 credit sharing toward the graduate degree later. (See IV.D.2 in policy.)
- e. Identify and provide justification for any additional admissions requirements beyond the Graduate School's minimums for admission to the graduate 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 graduate Degrees between UWM and other institutions must also include a Program to Program Articulation Agreement.

ACCELERATED GRADUATE DEGREE
APPROVAL MATRIX

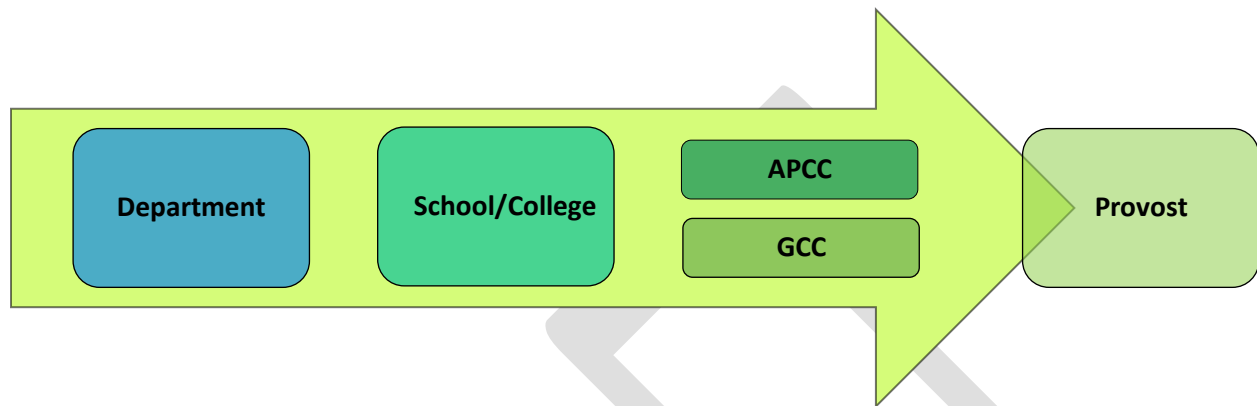


Figure 1: Steps in approval matrix for approval of a new accelerated graduate degree. Program representatives who are creating proposals for these degrees are strongly encouraged to consult with appropriate advisors in their school or college, the Graduate School and/or the Provost's office to ensure the accelerated degree can be implemented, as envisioned, before governance considers the final proposal for approval. Review by APCC and GCC can occur in any order or in parallel. However, if one committee makes a substantial change, then the revised proposal needs to go back to the other before moving to review/approval by the Provost.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

1. Accelerated graduate degrees shall be authorized and follow the requirements described above.
 2. Following appropriate administrative approval, this policy is effective Spring 2023
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