

## **Guidelines and Procedures for Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's Degree Programs at WVU (5/2/18)**

**Note that this document contains guidelines, policies, and procedures. A brief version of this document that focuses only on policies is included in the Undergraduate and Graduate/Professional Catalogs.**

### Definition:

Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's degree programs (ABM programs) offer WVU students the opportunity to pursue both a bachelor's and a master's degree at WVU in the same discipline or in related disciplines in an accelerated time frame. Students in these approved programs are able to begin taking courses for the master's degree prior to completion of the bachelor's degree.

### Program Approval:

New ABM programs must be approved by the Associate Provosts for Undergraduate and Graduate Academic Affairs and be included in the Undergraduate and Graduate/Professional Catalogs before students may be enrolled. ABM programs must only combine existing approved bachelor's and master's degree programs. The catalog listing must include, at minimum, admission requirements, a listing of course requirements, and standards for continuation in the program. Approval ensures that the integrity of both the undergraduate and graduate degree programs are maintained despite any efficiencies built into the ABM program (such as shared credits, allowing graduate courses to meet undergraduate requirements, and early participation in graduate courses). This administrative review also ensures that appropriately high standards for admission to, continuation in, and completion of these programs are in place. At the prerogative of the Associate Provosts, Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee or Graduate Council review of proposed programs may be requested.

See below for [instructions on obtaining approval for an ABM program](#).

### Admission:

An ABM program may directly admit first-year students (early admission), or may admit students after completion of at least 60 credits (regular admission), or both.

#### Early admission:

For early admission, entering WVU first-year students must have a minimum high school GPA of 3.0 and SAT or ACT test scores above the 70<sup>th</sup> percentile, unless higher values are required by the program. Early admitted students must meet the standards described below for regular admission to continue in the ABM program after the completion of 60 credits.

### Regular admission:

Only currently enrolled WVU students may be considered for regular admission to the program. Transfer students must complete at least 24 credit hours as degree-seeking students at WVU before applying to the program. ABM programs are not available to students seeking a second (or subsequent) bachelor's degree unless approval is granted by the appropriate dean(s).

Regular admission cannot occur until the semester in which an undergraduate student is expected to complete 60 credits or occur later than the semester after which the student needs two additional semesters to complete the bachelor's degree. The minimum standard for regular admission is a cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.0, with no provisional admissions allowed. Additional admissions criteria (such as completion of particular courses, entrance exam scores, letters of recommendation, or personal statements) are determined by individual programs.

See below for [admission procedures](#).

### Requirements:

Students in ABM programs complete all requirements for both degrees (as currently approved for students who are completing each degree independently) and are subject to all relevant University and program rules in place for students in either degree program. Students in ABM programs are conferred both degrees simultaneously following completion of all requirements for both degrees.

Decreasing the time to complete the two degrees can be facilitated by allowing students to begin some of the work for the master's degree prior to completion of the bachelor's degree, and by allowing students to count up to 12 credits of specific courses toward both bachelor's and master's degree requirements (these credits are "shared" by the two degree programs). Most commonly, an ABM curriculum will allow students to substitute required graduate program courses for required bachelor's program courses. Sharing graduate credits with the bachelor's degree program is preferred over sharing undergraduate credits with the master's degree program, though substituting 400-level courses required by the bachelor's degree program for master's degree program requirements may be approved when clearly justified.

Because students with undergraduate status (see section below on [student status](#)) may not enroll in 600- or 700-level courses, required courses at these levels that undergraduate students in the ABM program must take need to be either changed to 500-level or offered at the 500-level (the 500-level version may be cross-listed with the 600- or 700-level version of the course).

Programs are responsible for reporting to the Office of the University Registrar any courses completed by each student enrolled in an ABM program that are to be applied to

both the student's bachelor's degree and the student's master's degree. See below for [course reporting requirements](#).

#### Student status:

Programs must determine the point at which students in the ABM program will be changed from undergraduate to graduate status. In general, students should have graduate status during semesters when they are taking predominantly graduate coursework, after completing a minimum of 120 undergraduate credits, or during the last two or more semesters of their program. See below for [procedures concerning student status](#).

#### Enrollment:

Undergraduate students admitted to an ABM program may enroll in 500-level courses approved for their program without completing a Senior Petition.

Unless given specific permission by the relevant dean, students admitted to an ABM program must maintain full-time continuous enrollment during fall and spring terms. Enrollment requirements in summer term are determined by individual programs.

Students who are admitted to an ABM program may not pursue a dual degree, double major, or certificate unless approved by the appropriate dean(s). They may pursue minors and areas of emphasis, as approved by their advisor. In addition, students admitted to an ABM program will not generally be approved for course overloads (more than 17 credits in any term that includes more than three graduate-level credits, or more than 20 credits in any term that includes three or fewer graduate-level credits).

See below for [procedures concerning student enrollment](#).

#### Graduation:

Students admitted to an ABM program will have their bachelor's and master's degrees conferred simultaneously upon completion of all requirements for both degrees. See below for [graduation procedures](#). Students who choose to graduate with the bachelor's degree prior to completing the requirements for the master's degree will be removed from the ABM program and only allowed to apply a maximum of 12 credits earned prior to the awarding of the bachelor's degree to their master's degree.

#### Tuition and financial aid:

Students in an ABM degree program are charged undergraduate tuition and are eligible for undergraduate financial aid while they have undergraduate status. After their status is changed to graduate, students are charged graduate tuition and are eligible for graduate assistantships (with permission of their program) or other graduate student funding opportunities and financial aid. Colleges/schools may choose to provide tuition scholarships to ABM students to reduce students' college tuition charges.

See below for [procedures concerning student status](#).

Continued eligibility and termination:

Students in an ABM degree program must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (or higher, if specified by the program) in both their undergraduate and graduate courses throughout their enrollment. Grades in courses that will be counted toward both the bachelor's and master's degree requirements will be included in calculation of both the undergraduate and the graduate GPA for the purposes of determining satisfactory performance.

Students' eligibility to remain in the ABM program will be evaluated at the end of each semester. Students failing to meet program or University standards will be placed on program probation for no more than one semester, after which they will be terminated from the ABM degree program. Terminated students as well as students who choose not to continue in the ABM degree program will be eligible to receive their bachelor's degree when they have completed all bachelor's degree requirements. The credits earned by such students in graduate-level courses will apply to the minimum credits required by the bachelor's degree program. The bachelor's degree program may decide to allow such students to substitute graduate-level courses taken as part of the ABM program for specific undergraduate course requirements, but the program is not required to do so.

See below for [procedures concerning student continuation and termination](#).

### **Approval of New Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's (ABM) Degree Programs**

Proposals for new ABM programs must be submitted to and approved by the Associate Provosts for Undergraduate and Graduate Academic Affairs. ABM programs should be designed to allow accelerated completion of a bachelor's and master's degrees for a select group of outstanding students with a strong record of excellent academic performance prior to admission.

**Guiding principles:** Students completing ABM programs should meet the same learning outcomes as students completing the component bachelor's and master's programs sequentially. Acceleration of degree completion should be accomplished through allowing students to complete graduate-level courses in the discipline earlier than usual. If these graduate courses are allowed to count toward bachelor's degree requirements, these courses should cover the same or similar material as the specific undergraduate-level courses that they replace, or provide a similar enhancement of learning if they are counted as elective courses. Students in these programs must complete all relevant University and College requirements.

**Components of the program proposal (see attached forms):**

- Cover sheet (with accompanying narrative)
- Curriculum chart
- Catalog copy

## **Procedures and Program Responsibilities for Approved ABM Programs**

1. Admission.
  - a. Admission to the ABM program is managed by the ABM program director.
  - b. The ABM program director must notify the Office of the Registrar when a student is admitted to the ABM program.
2. Course reporting requirements.
  - a. The ABM program director must notify the Office of the Registrar when a student completes a course that will be counted toward both the bachelor's and master's degree requirements.
3. Student status.
  - a. The ABM program director must notify the Office of the Registrar (via an Academic Status Update) and the Office of Graduate Admissions and Recruitment when a student's status is to be changed from undergraduate to graduate. This change must be made by the end of the course registration period (normally the end of the first week) of the academic term during which the change should take effect.
  - b. The ABM program director must inform ABM students when their status is to be changed from undergraduate to graduate, and describe the impact this change will have on the students' eligibility for financial aid.
  - c. Information about financial aid eligibility during the program must also be provided to students before they are admitted to the program.
4. Student enrollment.
  - a. The ABM program director must send a list to the Office of the Registrar prior to each academic term to request enrollment in 500-level courses by ABM students who have undergraduate status. The OUR will manually enroll these students without requiring a Senior Petition.
  - b. The ABM program director is responsible for monitoring ABM students' continuous enrollment and summer enrollment; approval for dual degrees, double majors, certificates, minors, and areas of emphasis; and requests for course overloads.
5. Graduation procedure.
  - a. The student must submit an online application for graduation with their master's degree.
  - b. The ABM program director also must submit an application for graduation with the bachelor's degree to the Office of the Registrar on behalf of each student who has completed all ABM requirements.
6. Student continuation and termination.
  - a. The ABM coordinator is responsible for monitoring students' continued eligibility for the program. This monitoring will require manual calculation of students' GPAs in the bachelor's and master's program when courses are used to meet requirements in both programs.
  - b. The ABM coordinator is responsible for managing program probation and termination, including informing students of their status in the program.
  - c. The ABM coordinator must inform the Office of the Registrar if a student is terminated from or chooses to discontinue participation in the ABM program.

- d. If a student is terminated from or chooses to discontinue participation in the ABM program, the ABM program director or an appropriate administrator from the bachelor's degree program must inform the Office of the Registrar if any completed graduate courses taken by the student may be applied to undergraduate program requirements.

**Proposal for a New Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's (ABM) Degree Program**

Program Title: Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's Program in \_\_\_\_\_

College/School (list both if two are involved): \_\_\_\_\_

Bachelor's Degree Program (degree and major title): \_\_\_\_\_

Master's Degree Program (degree and major title): \_\_\_\_\_

This approval page must be accompanied by the following items:

- Description of the proposed program, including the following sections:
  - Brief rationale for the program
  - Admission to the program (including application requirements and acceptance procedure)
  - Continuation in the program (procedures and standards for student review, probation, and termination)
  - Program demand and enrollment projection
  - Resource needs (identify any additional needs for faculty time, facilities, equipment, etc., needed to provide this program)
  - Administration (identify the person or group who will oversee this program and describe how students in the program will be advised)
- Curriculum: Complete the attached chart.
- Catalog entry: Complete the attached form.

**Approval Signatures** (add lines if needed)

Proposal preparer:

Name	Signature	Date
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Department curriculum committee:

Name	Signature	Date
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Department chair:

Name	Signature	Date
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College/school curriculum committee:

Name	Signature	Date
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Dean (or designee):

Name	Signature	Date
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Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education:

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Name	Signature	Date
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Associate Provost for Graduate Academic Affairs:

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Name	Signature	Date
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**Catalog Copy for a New Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's (ABM) Degree Program**

Program Title: Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's Program in \_\_\_\_\_

College/school (list both if two are involved): \_\_\_\_\_

Bachelor's Degree Program (degree and major title): \_\_\_\_\_

Master's Degree Program (degree and major title): \_\_\_\_\_

The information below will appear in the Undergraduate and Graduate/Professional Catalogs.

Brief description of the program:

Learning outcomes for the program (based on the learning outcomes for the existing bachelor's and master's degree programs):

Admission requirements:

Standards for continuation in the program:

Course requirements (list of all required courses):

Suggested plan of study (including all courses, not just courses in the two majors; add lines as needed):

<b>First Year</b>					
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Summer</b>	<b>Hours</b>
	<total>		<total>		<total>
<b>Second Year</b>					
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Summer</b>	<b>Hours</b>
	<total>		<total>		<total>
<b>Third Year</b>					
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Summer</b>	<b>Hours</b>
	<total>		<total>		<total>
<b>Fourth Year</b>					
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Summer</b>	<b>Hours</b>
	<total>		<total>		<total>
<b>Fifth Year</b>					
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Summer</b>	<b>Hours</b>
	<total>		<total>		<total>