



**Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's Degree Pathways # 380.005**

<b>INITIAL EFFECTIVE DATE:</b>	<b>LAST REVISION DATE:</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE UNIVERSITY DIVISION/DEPARTMENT</b>
September 24, 2004	October 14, 2020	University Graduate School

**POLICY STATEMENT**

Accelerated degree pathways include both “combined degree” and “4+1 degree” pathways whereby highly qualified undergraduate students are admitted into a master’s program [either in the same field (combined) or different field (4+1)]. Students take up to 12 graduate credits in their final undergraduate year that are shared with, or double-counted toward, an undergraduate bachelor’s degree. All students participating in a pathway earn a minimum of 120 semester credit hours for an undergraduate bachelor’s degree program and a minimum of 30 hours for a graduate degree program.

Proposals for accelerated Bachelor's/Master's degree pathways must include a strong curricular rationale to support the streamlining of credit requirements in the two degrees and the proposal is subject to formal curricular review and approval through the department and college/school curriculum committees, Dean’s Office, Faculty Senate, University Graduate School, and Office of the Provost.

**Eligibility**

- Students can apply after having completed 75 credits in a bachelor’s degree program.
- Students must apply prior to the semester in which graduate credits will be counted towards the undergraduate degree program.

**Admission to an accelerated bachelor/ master’s degree pathway requires:**

- A selective procedure, requiring an application, review, and approval process established by the college or department.
- Overall GPA of 3.2 or better.
- Students meet all other admissions criteria for the graduate degree program.
- Students may not enroll in graduate level classes until admitted to the graduate program.

**Eligible Courses**

- No more than 12 credits may be counted in both programs.
- Only 5000 level or higher courses may be applied to both degree programs and must be approved by the master’s program director.
- Shared credit is limited to formal coursework, exclusive of independent study.



**Graduate Status**

- Students will not have graduate status until their undergraduate degree is conferred.

**Award of Degrees**

- Students must apply for the award of their bachelor’s degree the semester the degree requirements will be completed.
- The bachelor’s degree and master’s degree cannot be awarded in the same term.
- No undergraduate credit may count toward the graduate degree.

**SCOPE**

This policy applies to academic units with undergraduate and graduate degrees who propose accelerated degree pathways, and to their students who wish to pursue an accelerated academic pathway.

**REASON FOR POLICY**

The University Graduate School proposes policies to bring the university into compliance with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Principles of Accreditation.

**DEFINITIONS**

TERM	DEFINITIONS
Combined degree pathway	Student completes bachelor’s and master’s accelerated degree pathway in the same discipline or closely related disciplines.
4 + 1 degree pathway	Student completes bachelor’s degree and master’s degree for the accelerated degree pathway from two different disciplines.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Academic departments participating in accelerated degree pathways must demonstrate that graduate courses counted towards the undergraduate degree are appropriate for that degree program, consistent with SACSCOC core requirement, Principle 9.1, that degree programs embody a coherent course of study and the SACSCOC Policy on Quality and Integrity of Undergraduate Degrees.

Academic departments sponsoring accelerated degree pathways must demonstrate the integrity of the graduate program is maintained, despite inclusion of bachelor’s students in



graduate courses, per SACSCOC Principle 9.6 (Post-baccalaureate Rigor and Curriculum). Programs will set appropriate admissions standards to ensure that accelerated bachelor's/master's pathway students are adequately prepared for graduate level coursework.

#### RELATED RESOURCES

Program Length, Core Requirement, Principle 9.2, Resource Manual, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.  
Program Content, Core Requirement, Principle 9.1, Resource Manual, Southern Association of College and Schools Commission on Colleges.  
Post-baccalaureate rigor and curriculum, Principle 9.6, Southern Association of Schools and Colleges Commission on Colleges.  
Quality and Integrity of Academic Credentials, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Policy Statement, December 2018.

#### CONTACTS

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#### HISTORY

**Initial Effective Date:** Originally 3.3.2.1 COMBINED BACHELOR/MASTERS DEGREE PROGRAMS (effective 9/21/04) from Graduate Policies and Procedures Manual.  
**Review Dates** (*review performed, no updates*): January 24, 2024  
**Revision Dates** (*updates made to document*): Updated June 2012 in Compliance Website.  
Revised June 15, 2020; October 14, 2022.