

# COMBINED BACHELOR'S/ MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM

## ASK A QUESTION OR SUBMIT FEEDBACK ON THIS POLICY

**Effective Date:** Fall 2023

**Last Reviewed:** Fall 2022

**Last Revised:** Spring 2023

**Next Review:** Fall 2026

## Policy Statement

A combined bachelor's/master's degree program allows exceptional, well-prepared Kent State University undergraduate students early admission into a graduate program. Students in a combined degree program take graduate-level coursework as undergraduate students, thus enabling courses to be applied toward both degree programs.

Students in a combined degree program must meet the minimum requirements for each degree earned. Undergraduate requirements must be fully satisfied before a bachelor's degree will be awarded. Until that time, students continue to have undergraduate student status and are charged undergraduate tuition and fees. Following the awarding of the undergraduate degree, their status is changed to that of graduate student.

## Eligibility for Admission

To be eligible for admission to a combined degree program, undergraduate students must meet the following stipulations:

- Earn a minimum 60 credit hours (junior standing)
- Achieve a minimum 3.000 overall Kent State GPA (some combined degree programs may require a higher GPA)
- Complete a standard online graduate application, including paying the application fee
- Meet all admissions requirements for the master's degree program (consult the University Catalog for specific requirements)
- Be admitted to the master's degree program
- Submit the Combined Bachelor's/Master's Degree Form prior to the first semester of enrollment in the combined program

## Application of Graduate Credit

Undergraduate students in a combined degree program may complete a maximum 9 credit hours of graduate-level coursework and apply the courses and credit hours toward their undergraduate degree. Once students complete the undergraduate degree and enter graduate student status, their graduate-level coursework may be applied toward the graduate degree (i.e., courses are double counted). Students who undertake a combined bachelor's/master's degree program must complete a minimum 141 unique credit hours, with a minimum 30 of those credit hours applied toward the master's degree.

To be eligible for double counting, the coursework must meet all the following criteria:

1. Be of graduate level – under no circumstances will undergraduate-level coursework be applied toward the master's degree
2. Apply to degree requirements for the bachelor's and master's degrees
3. Are not awarded as credit by examination

4. Meet minimum standards as described in the Academic Standing - Graduate policy in the University Catalog

Combined degree programs are initiated by students in consultation with their academic advisor. The combined degree program should be developed according to the individual career interests and goals of the student and should be an integrated learning experience rather than merely the completion of a certain number of undergraduate and graduate credits. The proposed combined degree program requires the approval of both the undergraduate and the graduate programs involved, as well as the respective college dean(s).

## Reason for Policy

Policy enforces uniform standards for undergraduate students seeking early admission to a graduate degree at Kent State University and aligns with the policy from the Ohio Department of Higher Education.

## Procedures

There are no procedures with this policy.

## Forms/Instructions

- Combined Bachelor's/Master's Degree Form

## Additional Resources

- Academic Advising (Schedule an Appointment)
- Financial, Billing and Enrollment Center
- Graduate College

## Frequently Asked Questions

*There is no FAQ associated with this policy.*

## Definitions

**Credit by examination:** a special examination, which upon successfully completion, a student is awarded college-level credit hours but no grade.

**Graduate-level courses:** numbered with the first digit of 5 and 6 at the master's degree level and the first digit of 7 and 8 at the doctoral degree level.

**Undergraduate-level courses:** numbered with the first digit of 0, 1, 2, 3 and 4. These courses are taken by students declare in an associate or bachelor's degree or undergraduate certificate. Undergraduate courses cannot be applied toward requirements for a graduate degree or certificate.

## Related Information

- Academic Standing - Graduate
- Academic Standing - Undergraduate
- Credit-Hour Requirement for Graduation
- Dual Degrees/Double Majors
- Undergraduate Students Enrolling in Graduate Courses

## Revision History

**Amended August 2023:** Revised policy decreases the maximum of graduate courses that may be double-counted toward both degrees, from 9-12 credit hours (depending on the credit hours of the master's degree) to 9 credit hours for all combined programs.

**Amended August 2020:** Revised policy permits a minimum total of 141 unique credit hours earned (111 for bachelor's and 21 for master's and 9 double counted) with approval of the university and Ohio Department of Higher Education. The revised policy also replaces specific GPA per credit hours with a minimum 3.000 overall GPA for eligibility for a combined degree program; removes requirement that a letter grade must be earned in courses that will be doubled counted toward both degrees; and removes categories of formal and informal combined programs.

**Amended August 2014:** Revised policy requires a minimum total of 150 unique credit hours earned (120 for bachelor's and 30 for master's) before double counting of credit hours is allowed. The revised policy also distinguishes between formal (university approved) and informal programs and clarifies that students in the combined program are classified as undergraduate until the bachelor's degree is earned; after that award, they are reclassified as graduate.

**Amended August 1988:** Revised policy allow maximum 12 credit hours of graduate courses that may be double-counted toward both degrees. Those credit hours can only be counted as electives, and not toward any requirements, in the bachelor's degree.

**Effective September 1976:** Establishes a policy to allow baccalaureate-seeking students early admission to a master's degree and be dually enrolled in both degrees upon recommendation of the academic department, the undergraduate college dean and upon approval of the dean of the Graduate College.