PROPOSAL FOR A CO-DEGREE MASTERS PROGRAM

Proposed Combined Undergraduate-Graduate Degree (Co-Degree Masters) program

This proposal defines foundational requirements for an OSU combined undergraduate-graduate combined degree program in which undergraduate students could apply to designated master’s programs during their junior year. Students typically would begin some of their graduate coursework and thesis or project work during their senior year. Completion of the program allows both a bachelor’s and master’s degree to be conferred. We propose this as a 3-year pilot to assess interest and success. Participation by individual master’s programs is entirely voluntary, although the pilot phase will be limited to existing master’s programs. Programs deciding to participate may set their own requirements for their program to be more restrictive than what is described in this proposal. The following requirements are based on a review of programs at other universities with co-degree programs (Appendix 1), on feedback from OSU Students (Appendix 2) and previous discussions with members of the OSU Curriculum Council and Graduate Council.

Foundational Requirements

Outstanding undergraduate OSU students who have completed a minimum of 105 of the (minimum) required 180 credits toward their degree with an overall GPA of 3.25 or better are eligible to apply to an OSU co-degree master’s program during the winter term of their junior year. Master’s programs are responsible for determining any additional admissions criteria and competitiveness. The master’s program will notify applicants of admissions decisions during spring term. Accepted students will matriculate during the following fall term. With careful planning students can then complete a master’s degree within 1 year beyond the bachelor’s. Students admitted to the co-degree program must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or better throughout their undergraduate and master’s degree programs or they will be subject to dismissal from the co-degree program.

Successful applicants are allowed to apply up to 9 credits of graduate coursework (taken for a letter grade) taken as an undergraduate to both their undergraduate and master’s degree.
These 9 credits are deducted from allowed transfer credits for students who have transferred into OSU. Only credits with letter grades of B (3.00) or better may be counted for graduate credit. In addition, those students in undergraduate programs requiring a thesis can allow the undergraduate thesis to be a step toward completion of the master’s thesis (for those programs requiring a thesis).

Admission to the co-degree master’s program is not automatic and will be competitive with students applying directly to the program. Students must identify a graduate advisor prior to application to the program. Students requiring a thesis for their degree must have a professor who agrees to serve as the thesis advisor prior to application. For students completing an undergraduate thesis, this may be the student’s undergraduate thesis advisor. For students in non-thesis master’s programs, the graduate advisor must be willing to work with the student to guide the scheduling of required coursework.

TOEFL and ID portfolios are not required, but the following are required:

• Online application via the Graduate School website

• A co-degree study proposal or coursework plan of study, including details of the nine graduate credits to be applied toward both graduate and undergraduate degrees, is required to complete the application for admission and should be signed by the graduate advisor for non-thesis master’s programs or graduate thesis advisor for master’s programs with thesis.

• Statement of Purpose essay of 2-3 pages. This must include details of the graduate plan of study and, for programs with a thesis, the master’s thesis topic.

• Three letters of recommendation from individuals knowledgeable of the student’s academic background and potential for success in a graduate degree program.

• Transcripts from all undergraduate institutions attended.

Students enrolled in a co-degree program will be eligible for financial aid (Pell Grant) until they complete 180 credit hours toward their undergraduate degree. Once the undergraduate degree requirements are met, then the student typically would be supported on a Teaching or Research Assistantship or they would pay graduate tuition and fees. The bachelor’s degree will be conferred after all requirements for the bachelor’s degree are met; the master’s degree will be conferred after all requirements for the master’s degree are met.

Assessment of Pilot Program

The Graduate School, Office of Assessment, Graduate Council and Curriculum Council will assess the success of the program after 3 years. Indicators of success will include, but not be limited to, number of programs participating, enrollment trends in each program for both co-degree and direct admits, time to degree and degree completion rates.
APPENDIX 1. Additional Background on Programs at Other Universities:

Cal Poly: http://me.calpoly.edu/about/degree-programs/graduate/  up to 8 units of undergraduate technical electives may be double-counted towards the masters requirements

Southern Methodist: http://www.smu.edu/Lyle/Departments/EMIS/Programs/41MastersDegree  Up to nine (9) SCH of graduate course work can be applied towards the undergraduate degree requirements.

Western Carolina: http://www.wcu.edu/6589.asp  Up to 12 credit hours of these upper level courses can be transferred toward the 30 credit hour requirements of the M.S. program

Claremont Graduate University http://www.cgu.edu/pages/623.asp  variable credits double counted depending on program – 16 credits is the maximum

Duke University http://meng.pratt.duke.edu/4plus1  four departmental graduate courses taken during the senior year can toward the MEng degree.

Tulane http://tulane.edu/sse/psyc/academics/graduate/masters-program.cfm  Up to 6 graduate credit hours may count toward the bachelors and the M.S. degree

University of Delaware http://www.ce.udel.edu/current/graduate_program/4plus1.pdf  Up to 6 credits of graduate course work (600 level and above) taken while a senior, may be “dual-counted” towards the Bachelor’s and the Master’s degrees.

Purdue https://ag.purdue.edu/foodsci/Pages/4plus1_program.aspx

Arizona State University http://sbhse.engineering.asu.edu/academics/accelerated-degree/  It allows students to SHARE up to nine credit hours between their bachelor’s and master’s degrees, and RESERVE up to nine hours to use later in their graduate program.

University of Florida http://www.admissions.ufl.edu/ugrad/combdegree.html Students who meet the combined-degree application requirements can enroll in 12 to 21 credits of approved graduate courses (depending on the major) during their junior and senior years. These credits will satisfy undergraduate degree requirements and, if admitted to graduate school at UF, they also will satisfy graduate degree requirements if the courses are completed with grades of B or better.

San Diego State University http://www.engineering.sdsu.edu/mechanical/msme_4plus1.aspx  students who plan to specialize in Design and Manufacturing can take as double counted classes two of the following courses

Washington University at St Louis http://engineering.wustl.edu/DualDegreeProgram.aspx

Stanford University http://gap.stanford.edu/4-2.html  no units may be double-counted

Rensselaer Polytech http://srfs.rpi.edu/update.do?artcenterkey=291  credits applied to satisfying requirements of the undergraduate degree cannot be used to satisfy the requirements for the master's degree.

Vanderbilt University http://as.vanderbilt.edu/academics/specialdegreeprograms/4plus1/  There is no double-counting of credits

University of Massachusetts Amherst http://www.umass.edu/sphhs/public_health/academics/undergraduate/4plus1DegreeProgram.html
Florida State University [http://www.gradstudies.fsu.edu/Academics-Research/Degree-Programs/Combined-Bachelors-Masters-Degree-Programs] double counting of up to 9 credits allowed in some programs.

Yale University: [http://yalecollege.yale.edu/content/combined-bachelors-and-masters-degree-programs-professional-schools]

SUNY Albany [http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/joint_degree.html] Combined programs require a minimum of 138 credits and up to 12 graduate credits may be applied simultaneously to the requirements for the baccalaureate.

University of Maryland [http://www.provost.umd.edu/PCC_DOCUMENTS/DesignX_Combined.htm] Normally no more than nine credits of graduate courses applied to the bachelor’s degree may be counted also for graduate credit in an individual student program.

Northwestern University [http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academics/academic-programs/degree-programs/bachelors-masters/index.html]

Miami University of Ohio [http://www.units.muohio.edu/reg/bulletins/GeneralBulletin2012-2013/combined-bachelors-and-masters-degree-program.htm] Departments or programs with a combined degree may allow students to double-count up to 9 hours of graduate course work toward their undergraduate degree.

Rutgers: [http://soe.rutgers.edu/oaa/BS-Masters-programs]

Clemson: [http://www.clemson.edu/ces/math/combined-bachelors-masters-program.html]
Appendix 2. Feedback from Student Ambassadors in CAS, COEng, PHHS to the Co-Degree Proposal

CAS

- For programs that require a thesis (honors/BRR) would like to see a combined type thesis.
- Curious as to how reserving credits for graduate school and this would work together
- Curious as to how this would work with early entrance into professional programs like vet school and pharmacy programs that currently allow student to apply during their 3rd year
- Would this impact their full-time status as undergrads for financial aid and scholarship

COE

- Would like to see a combined honors/master’s thesis similar to the “opportunity plus” program we had a few years ago in engineering
- They thought 3 years might be a bit short for a pilot...recommended 4
- They were curious about criteria for which 9 credits could be utilized...how would this be determined
- Some of our majors require 192 credits...so Venn diagram would need to be adjusted slightly
- Would any new master’s programs come from this...specific request...biomedical
- How would admission be determined? Objective or subjective?

Overall students were very positive towards this concept and receptive to it.

PHHS

Would this co-degree be of interest to you and other students in your college if it were offered in your area of study?

What questions do you have about how the co-degree program would work?

- Yes this would be of interest to students in the dietetics option. Especially since many grad students are already in our 400 level classes, taking them as 500.
- I would love to see a co-degree option in our college. I believe with the option of fitness and nutrition, adding on additional experience or having the ability to explore the various options within our degree would help students hone in on a better understanding of what and why they are in this particular field.
- The co-degree would not be of interest to me and other students of my option in particular (PTAH). However, that is only because the pre-med, pre-PA, pre-nursing, pre-therapy kids don’t have the opportunity of completing their desired graduate degrees here at OSU. I think that it is definitely intriguing to the others though! If OSU offered a PT grad program, I would love the opportunity for a co-degree program.
- This degree would be of interest to public health students in the HPHB track because many of our upper-division courses have equivalents in the 500-range. The ability to work on a co-degree would allow us to do similar coursework while allowing those interested in pursuing MPH to begin acquiring credits.
- I have talked to a number of students about the co-degree possibility, most of which were extremely interested. They were excited that they could apply and begin their co-degree while in undergrad. That aspect was very appealing. A few asked me about requirements. Would it be like a regular master's program admissions or would it a set of requirements that, if met, would guarantee admission. Other than that the response was very positive regarding the program.
- First, I think that it is a great concept. However, I don’t know that HDFS is the best degree to have this option in. I know few students who are seeking graduate degrees, and the only HDFS graduate degree that is offered here at OSU is a PhD program, and not a terminal Master’s. However, I know a lot of child development students are also double degree in education students, so if they had the option of doing the Master’s in Education, that could be great. So I guess my first question would be: would this only be offered for existing OSU Master's programs? Would students be able to choose any Master's to obtain, or would it have to be in the same career path? My second question is: What is the application/admittance process? What would the Junior level qualifications be? Since Juniors would not have the same number of upper division courses on their transcripts to judge by, I would be concerned that the requirements for them would have to be more 'lax', and might prevent high quality students from other schools from being able to attend the programs.
- I am having a tough time of seeing how this would directly benefit someone. If I am going to take the grad-level of say biomechanics during my undergrad, won't I still need my undergrad level biomechanics as a pre-req for that grad-level course? I don't really have any questions beyond that.
- Would those graduate credits be transferrable to institutions outside of OSU?
- I believe many students would be interesting in this type of program in the College of Public Health and Human Sciences. One thing that I believe would need to be taken into consideration is the amount of students from our college that go on to pursue degrees from specialized school, such as the allied health professions.
- One question I would have would be what master's programs would be available for this type of program? What would be the projected time of master's degree completion?
- Yes, I would be interested in the co-degree option if it were available for my degree.
- What master's programs would it apply to? Would only juniors be able to apply and what would determine junior status?
- Would this co-degree be of interest to you and other students in your college if it were offered in your area of study?
- I think the co-degree program would be of interest to other students in the college, also if this had been offered when I started I would have loved to take advantage of the opportunity
- Would the tuition cost all be for undergrad classes or be more to taking graduate level courses?
- Would classes for this program only be in the grad programs we already have or would new ones be added?
- Would any student in the college be able to enroll in this co-degree program or would there be an application process?