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.