

**Final Report of the Ad hoc Committee on Co-terminal Degrees**  
**5/1/2018**

**Executive summary and recommendations**

The Committee has developed a proposal to combine the co-terminal and graduate advanced standing programs into a coherent Accelerated Masters Program (AMP) framework. This framework is designed to provide maximal access and flexibility for students, degree granting units, and administration, and solves most issues identified and previously reported to the UFC by this Committee.

Our recommendations are as follows:

Accelerated Masters Program

In order to provide time for a thorough vetting by Departments, the UFC, and the administration, while keeping an expeditious schedule, the Committee makes the following recommendations:

1. The AMP framework proposal should be distributed to all Units for review over summer.
2. The Vice President for Enrollment should develop an initial marketing plan based on the AMP structure to be presented to the UFC and Provost.
3. The Office of Academic Affairs should work with at least one representative from the UFC Committee on Advising and one representative from this Committee to determine what infrastructure investment would be needed to implement a simple and effective advising structure. This will be reported to both the UFC and Provost.
4. The UGSC and GSC should be asked to provide a list of programs that could be converted to the AMP framework, and a separate list of programs that would be considered Listed Co-terminal Programs due to changes in a base program.
5. It should be agreed now that in late August (or early September):
  - a) A proposal based on modifications suggested by the Units, UFC, and the administration be circulated for further discussion and brought to the UFC no later than October.
  - b) The proposal should be sent to the Student Council for their input.
  - c) At least two town hall meetings should be scheduled to collect feedback and address any concerns.

Streamlined co-terminal approval processes

We recommend the UFC consider for adoption the streamlined co-terminal approval process and graduate directed co-terminals outlined below to simplify the existing process of creating co-terminal pairings when there are few or no changes to existing degree requirements.

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## Overview

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Co-terminal program overview: The co-terminal program is rapidly growing with over 200 students currently active, and soon nearly 100 pairings of programs on the books. Students and faculty appreciate the program (though not the challenges of navigating it). Co-terminal students remain undergraduates throughout and receive their Masters degree at the same time as the BS. The time to graduation may be shortened by allowing up to 9 credit hours double counted between degrees in some programs.

In Spring 2017, the Faculty Council and Provost's office agreed to form a committee composed of faculty, staff, and administration to address the burgeoning problems of the co-terminal program. The Committee conducted an extensive survey, and identified several areas of concern involving the structure, admissions, governance, communication, marketing, and administrative burden. This Committee was empaneled in November 2017 to address these concerns.

The four most pressing issues identified were:

1. The lack of a strategic vision or mission to guide the program
2. The incredible overhead to create co-terminal degrees in cases where there were no programmatic changes
3. The lack of a coherent marketing and recruitment strategy
4. A problematic admissions process

In eight meetings since November, the Committee has met with several members of the administration, including Provost Betts, addressed the first two questions, uncovered several more related issues, and has developed a proposal to address all of the issues raised. In February the Committee submitted a proposal to streamline the existing approval process for certain co-terminal degrees. With this report, the Committee is submitting a proposal to the UFC to restructure the existing co-terminal process and advanced graduate standing program into a coherent framework for an Accelerated Masters Program (AMP).

## Strategic vision and mission

After careful study of the original motivations and misconceptions surrounding the purpose and structure of the co-terminal program, the Committee has adopted the following as the working definition of the program mission:

The purpose of a co-terminal program at Illinois Tech is two-fold:

- a. to provide an accelerated path to a Masters Degree for Illinois Tech students;
- b. and to provide additional access points to enter a Masters program.

These are the sole guiding principles that we recommend should define whatever “Accelerated Masters” program model the University settles on moving forward.

It is important to understand what does not appear in this mission, but which at various points has been used to justify the co-terminal program.

1. The program does not exist to make money for the University.
  - We attempted to acquire an estimate of income attributable to the co-terminal program from the COO, but simple estimates would suggest this is largely breaking even. What we hope the UFC finance committee can follow up to confirm is that it is not money losing.
2. There is no clear financial aid benefit to co-mingling undergraduate and graduate classes for all students for the duration of both degrees.
  - Elizabeth Wahlstrom Helgren walked us through detailed considerations in financial aid. The conclusion is every student has a unique scheduling requirement to maintain federal financial aid; some want to take 6 UG credit hours every semester, some need to finish the UG degree requirements as fast as possible. Hence, programs should not be designed around this consideration.
  - NOTE: With 9 shared credit hours, and an undergraduate tuition rate, students are already receiving a Masters degree for about 1/4 the cost, regardless of aid considerations. The Committee feels this is enough incentive.
3. The co-terminal program is not designed to lead to better employment opportunities beyond the inherent advantages of a Masters degree.
  - While students are expected to benefit from their continued education, it is not necessary or realistic to design all pairings to meet an employment target.
4. The co-terminal degrees are not a “co-terminal degree.”
  - The degrees are independent of the program. This is merely a mechanism that allows students to simultaneous earn two degrees. This is a subtle, but critical distinction with implications for how we should think about governance, marketing, and legal documents, such as formal listing in the Bulletins.

5. The co-terminal degrees do not generally combine distinct disciplines and colleges.
  - All but a handful of co-terminal degrees that actually have students are intra-Departmental, or are in very closely related fields. With a few successful exceptions that have very distinct requirements and marketing potential, most of the co-terminal programs could be converted to a much lower overhead model with more options for access.
6. Not every co-terminal pairing is appropriate for individual marketing.
  - Both from a resource and a practical perspective, we cannot successfully market order 50-100 individual co-terminal programs.
  - We should look to target certain degrees for concentrated promotion, as is already done in the promotional literature, and consider a different strategy for the bulk of the programs. A simplified model could aid in this effort.

## **Framework for an Accelerated Masters Program (AMP)**

The Accelerated Masters Program (AMP) unifies the co-terminal and graduate advanced standing programs into coherent structure. It is designed to provide maximal access and flexibility for students, degree granting units, and administration, and solves a long list of issues with the existing co-terminal structure. This program differs from the existing programs in three key ways:

1. Students may become associated with the AMP at any point in their association with Illinois Tech – from just after undergraduate admissions through three years after graduation – after a Declaration of Intent to pursue a Masters (MS, MAS, ME [others]) degree is provisionally accepted by a Masters granting unit.
2. There are no explicit degree pairings. Instead, starting in the Junior year a student may apply to be fully admitted to a co-terminal Masters degree subject to admissions policies of that unit and University guidelines, and with admission administered by the Office of Enrollment Management.
3. Students who do not meet the admissions criteria of the co-terminal, or who wish to pursue a Masters degree within three years of bachelors degree conferral, may apply to a Masters program with advanced standing which may accept up to nine credit hours toward the Masters degree according to Unit policy.

This program is designed to largely replace the existing co-terminal program. It is anticipated that most current co-terminal programs could be converted to this structure without substantive change. The few programs with material changes in degree requirements would be renamed to Listed Co-terminal Programs, and undergo periodic review for Program Conversion.

### **Declaration of Intent**

Beginning any time after acceptance to a Bachelors degree, a student may sign a formal Declaration of Intent to pursue an accelerated Masters (MS, ME, MAS [others]) degree with any Unit as a co-terminal student. At this time the Unit may accept or reject this Declaration based on its Unit policy. If accepted, the student gains provisional admission to the Masters program and is assigned a Masters advisor. It is the responsibility of the advisor to convey to the student at that time what academic background is required for full admission into the program beginning in their Junior year or later.

## Admission to a co-terminal program

Students may apply for full admission to a co-terminal Masters program once at least 60 credit hours of undergraduate study are completed, and have spent at least one full semester at the university. Students must have at least 12 credit hours remaining in the undergraduate degree in order to apply for a co-terminal option. Admission considerations will be conducted through the normal graduate admissions process, and are at the discretion of the Unit. If students do not meet the minimum co-terminal criteria for a Unit they remain eligible for the Graduate Advanced Standing option below.

## Co-terminal Credit Hours

Up to nine credit hours may applied to both the Bachelors and Masters degrees in a co-terminal program subject to Transfer Credit restrictions. These shared credits must be identified in Degree Works (or its future equivalent) and approved by both undergraduate and graduate advisors, with review by the relevant Unit Chairs, and audited by Undergraduate Academic Affairs and Graduate Academic Affairs for compliance with degree requirements.

Each academic Unit is responsible for identifying and documenting which BS and Masters requirements are fulfilled by the shared credits to ensure degree compliance. A possible format is provided in Appendix A.

## Shared Credit Course Lists

In order to aid the advising process, Units may choose to identify a list of courses acceptable for shared credit in their BS or Masters degree. Units may choose to limit shared credit to courses on this list or make it purely advisory; however, credits marked as approved for shared credit in Degree Works (or its future equivalent) may not be retroactively removed.

## Graduate Co-terminal Advising

Once provisionally or fully accepted to the co-terminal option of the AMP, students will be assigned a graduate advisor. In addition to providing academic advice for preparation for the Masters degree, graduate advisors will convey to provisional students any requirements specific to the Unit for full admission. The graduate advisor has primary responsibility for advising the student on requirements for completion of the graduate

degree. In addition, the graduate advisor must approve classes used for shared credit as described above.

### Undergraduate Co-terminal Advising

The primary degree for which an undergraduate student is eligible is a Bachelors degree. As such, the undergraduate Unit has primary responsibility for ensuring the student will be eligible to receive a Bachelors degree during the co-terminal program. In addition to advising for the undergraduate degree, the undergraduate advisor must approve any shared credits as described above.

### Graduate Advanced Standing

A student who has, or will, receive a Bachelors degree from the Illinois Institute of Technology may apply to a Masters program (MS, ME, MAS [others]) in any Masters granting unit. If accepted for admission, the student may request that up to nine credit hours of work with a grade of B or better from their Bachelors degree be applied toward the Masters credit hour requirements subject to the following restrictions:

1. The shared credit hours must satisfy the Transfer Credit policy in force at the time of matriculation, and must correspond to credits normally accepted by the Masters program toward the degree.
2. Each Masters granting Unit will set a policy regarding the number and type of transferred credit hours that may be applied to the Masters that may be more restrictive than that allowed by the Accelerated Master Program.
3. The student must begin the Masters program within three years after conferral of the Bachelors degree.

### Program Conversion

The Ad hoc Committee on Co-terminal Degrees has determined that most existing co-terminal programs may be converted to the AMP framework without significant change. Conversion means that:

1. The existing program will cease to exist as a listed co-terminal program. Students in a co-terminal program at the time of conversion will continue under the rules of their co-terminal admission. New students will make use of the AMP framework.
2. The current co-terminal admissions criteria will form the initial basis of admissions criteria for an AMP co-terminal student.
3. Restrictions on credits accepted for both degrees will be provided to undergraduate



and graduate advisors to inform their advising decisions.

The criteria for program conversion should rest solely on whether degree requirements were changed in order to accommodate the pairing. If they were, then the units should reconsider whether it is still necessary to modify a degree for a student to earn both degrees, and if not, dissolve the existing co-terminal program. If it is determined that it is necessary, then the program should be identified as a Listed Co-terminal Program as defined below.

#### Listed Co-terminal Program

There are a small number of current co-terminal programs for which a modification of the requirements of one or both degrees has occurred. This is, and should be considered, an exceptional circumstance. A handful of programs may be maintained or created through the existing rigorous co-terminal approval process. Such programs should have both a clear distinct educational objective and marketing plan. A program should be identified as a Listed Co-terminal program to identify its modified requirements, and should undergo periodic review for its relevance and success.

## **Narrative description of the AMP proposal**

The Committee recommends the Units, UFC, and administration consider replacing the existing co-terminal and graduate advanced standing programs with an Accelerated Masters Program. The Accelerated Masters Program (AMP) encompasses three accelerated paths to a Masters Degree for Illinois Tech students.

- The main path is a simplified student-elected co-terminal program in which existing approved degrees are pursued without any change of requirements. Decisions are made at the advising level, with appropriate oversight, and may include up to nine shared credits.
- A limited number of Listed Co-terminal Programs that include changes to degree requirements follow a rigorous review process by the UGSC and GSC, Faculty Council and Provost. These programs are justified based on clear educational objective and marketing plan, and are subject to periodic review.
- Graduate Advanced Standing provides returning students an opportunity to continue their Illinois Tech education at an accelerated pace with up to nine credit hours of relevant courses transferred to their Masters degree.

This section explains the reasoning behind the sections of the Accelerated Masters program (AMP) proposal. The proposal is designed to expand on the best aspects of the current co-terminal program and approved graduate advanced standing and combine them in a coherent structure. The AMP provides students more educational and financial aid options, reduces program proposal and revision requirements, and simplifies marketing. The AMP is based on the mission adopted by the Ad hoc Committee on Co-terminal Degrees that:

“The purpose of a co-terminal (or any accelerated) program at Illinois Tech is two-fold:

- a) to provide an accelerated path to a Masters Degree for Illinois Tech students;
- b) and to provide additional access points to enter a Masters program.”

The most significant change between current programs and the AMP is that students may pursue any two degrees that the respective Departments deem reasonable as long as they are admitted to the Masters degree, and it does not require a change of degree requirements.

### **Declaration of Intent**

This Declaration of Intent serves several purposes in a co-terminal program. It is intended to provide an early point of connection between students and a future Masters program. An accepted Declaration is not a promise of admission, but this allows Masters advisors an opportunity to convey at the earliest stage what is required to prepare for

that degree so that students can plan ahead. It also provides an early opportunity for Departments to determine that the proposed combination may not be appropriate for a particular student, and hence may be declined. Finally, it creates a marketing opportunity to engage our strongest incoming students who have an interest in the program.

### Admission to a co-terminal program

This is designed to mirror the existing co-terminal admissions process. Admissions are made by the Masters program under their admissions criteria subject to University minimums.

### Co-terminal Credit Hours

Under current co-terminal guidelines, up to nine credit hours may be shared between the B.S. and Masters degree. The mechanism of transfer to the Masters Degree is specified in the rules on Transfer Credits, and should remain there so that this program does not need to be modified if that mechanism changes.

The key provision of this section is that the shared credits must be identified in Degree Works (or its future equivalent – in case the system changes). This is intended to be the single place where decisions are made for several reasons:

- It makes clear to the students and advisors what is allowable for shared credits.
- It makes clear during degree audits what classes may be double counted.
- It makes a clear promise to the student that these credits will be accepted (if they meet the graduate criteria – currently a B or better at the university level, some Departments may have more restrictive criteria).
- When the inevitable problems occur that one of the classes is not offered, it allows a change to be made by consent of the advisors, rather than being an exception to a programmatic rule (as it currently is in the co-terminal program).
- It has a review process through the Department Chairs to ensure it is consistent with Department policy; and a further check by Academic Affairs to ensure compliance with the written rules.

### Technical notes:

A simple and clear method of documenting these decisions is critical. Academic Affairs should work with UFC Advising and a representative of the Ad hoc Committee on Co-terminal Degrees to develop a plan of implementation. It is recognized this may require a material change to the software. The cost incurred to make the necessary change should be weighed against the significant cost if a new mechanism is not developed.

eForms has been modified to record all graduate courses, both shared and non-shared that are identified by the co-terminal student and approved by the adviser and academic unit. This process will facilitate the addition of the graduate level on the student record, required due to concurrent undergraduate program enrollment, and to automate the calculation of the graduate GPA in Banner (at the conclusion of each semester). It will also allow the student to request course substitutions, but will flag shared courses or repeated courses.

The API developed by Ellucian (advised at Degree Works Forum April 7, 2018) that would allow data from a custom form to be PUSHED into DegreeWorks does not work—there is no timeline for when the API might be functional in the future. Further, the CIM application has limited capability for integration with Degree Works for curricular updates at this time.

### Shared Credit Course Lists

A significant amount of work has gone into the development of the existing co-terminal programs. Some of this includes reasonable lists of classes that a student could take that would be acceptable to both the B.S. and Masters degree programs. We should make use of this pre-existing effort to, at a minimum, aid in the advising process. Departments should be encouraged to post in a centralized location any classes they would deem acceptable for their degree:

- For Masters programs this might include any of their requirements, or classes they have already deemed acceptable to count toward their degree at the 400+ level.
- For B.S. programs this might include requirements or Masters-level classes they have already determined fit within their accredited requirements.

As described in the proposal, the list of courses a Unit may wish to produce is intended to be an aid to academic advising only. While some Units may choose to limit advising choices to this list, it is left to the Unit to determine whether other possibilities will be allowed subject to the review process described under the section on Co-terminal Credit Hours. The sole auditable document is the approved list of Shared Credits for the student entered into Degree Works (or its equivalent).

This decoupling of advising from approvals was designed as a central key to simplifying the academic monitoring and advising process for the following reasons:

- It maintains the clear point of decision at the documented level of the entry into Degree Works. This introduces an intentionality into the decision process, and ensures everyone is on the same page.
- It is based on the current MS advising process in which advisors confirm that the

class fits the degree requirements and is relevant to the degree, and the Chair confirms that decision.

- It prevents a current (subtle) flaw in the existing co-terminal program of creating a parallel Bulletin system, where a student enters under a current accepted list of classes that can change during their tenure at the University. This is an advising problem, because it requires advisor tracking of which set of rules to apply. It also makes it difficult to present to students what their options are, as there needs to be easy and clearly defined access for the student to know which rules apply in the later years.
- It has already proven to be too difficult to propagate small changes of class offerings into all of the existing co-terminal programs – something is always missed. Having lists be the official record of what is allowed creates a maintenance nightmare for Unit graduate program directors.
- Some Departments may choose to impose limits to the *current* list at advising time, but that is the end of the coupling. Once the classes are chosen and approved it is irrelevant what was on the list. The decision is made and confirmed in real time. There is no need to continue tracking what could have been, as no other promise was given.
- Some Departments may choose to make the list a recommendation, but allow for alternative choices – this means we do not have to constantly update (and correct) our lists, and allows for logical additions.
- Making these lists authoritative is both too limiting and overreaching:
  - There are students for whom not all options on a list are sensible; there will be specializations with specific needs. It is unlikely that all subcases can be addressed ahead of time.
  - In contrast, there will be classes not on the list that are sensible; e.g., there are clearly Engineering graduate classes that would be accepted toward a MS in Physics (and have been for individual MS students in the past through the normal advising process), but there is no way any Unit we can keep up with changes in offerings in all other Units.
  - Making the lists that are attached to a student authoritative promises too much, and removes the impetus for having the intentionally chosen classes.
  - Anything that does not appear on the list in the Bulletin year applied to the student, but which the Unit wishes to allow becomes an exception. Having the list be the definitive authority would enshrine the exception mechanism as the standard mode business, rather than the direct advising process. Exceptions should be exceptional, not typical.
- An advantage of this decoupling is that it eliminates the need for a special co-terminal advisor in this program – instead regular graduate advisors may be used. The graduate advisor can see the current options (or if allowed sensible alternates) and make an informed choice. If the list becomes attached to a Bulletin

year, it now requires a much deeper understanding of what year applies to what student. You will need specially trained advisors. There are already complaints it is too hard as it is, with more combinations it will just get harder.

- When formulated, there was no compelling need seen for year-based (or any other) tracking once the Degree Works entry is made. Adding another layer introduces room for error, limits our options to what we were able to think of ahead of time, makes routine changes into exceptions, and effectively eliminates the capacity for organically grown combinations.

There is a contrasting point of view expressed by members of the committee that authoritative lists are a necessity, and should be the determining factor. Reasons given are:

- Authoritative lists in a Bulletin-like system are seen as the only way students can know ahead of time what may be allowed. It presumes that posted recommended lists are not sufficient.
- There is an exception mechanism that can accommodate approvals outside of the approved list.
- This encourages a periodic review of the approved list of classes for co-terminal degrees.
- This may discourage Units from changing their lists too often, thereby reducing complaints.
- If the list is advisory, then UGAA and GAA cannot enforce the list within current software constraints.

### Graduate Co-terminal Advising

This section lays out the responsibility of the Graduate Advisor assigned to the student at the time of the Declaration of Intent (or later at acceptance). It is clarified that the advisor will both inform the student of requirements, and help guide the student toward making the right decisions to prepare for the Masters program. It makes clear the Graduate Advisor is only responsible for advising on graduate matters. It informs the graduate advisors they must approve the shared credit proposal and intended non-shared graduate courses.

### Undergraduate Co-terminal Advising

This section lays out the primary responsibility for the Undergraduate Advisor in that the B.S. is the primary degree a student may receive. As such, they are to instruct the student on what is required to attain the B.S. while pursuing an accelerated Masters. It informs undergraduate advisors they must approve the shared credit proposal.

## Graduate Advanced Standing

This section copies the current policy on Graduate Advanced Standing with one critical exception: it allows for nine credit hours to be shared instead of the current six. There are several reasons for the proposed change to nine credit hours – the main one being it creates a smooth transition between the co-terminal sub-option of the AMP and the advanced standing option:

- The university has decided to end its policy of allowing a free credit hour for IIT graduates. Hence there is no additional benefit available above the proposed nine here.
- There is a financial aid situation where students who are not eligible for undergraduate financial aid because of their circumstances, would be eligible for graduate financial aid, but *only* once they receive their B.S. Currently those students are left out of the co-terminal process. This provides a new avenue for students to pursue an accelerated Masters without the penalty the current co-terminal system imposes.
- This allows for circumstances where a student may not meet a particular eligibility requirement for the co-terminal degree at the time, but may later be accepted to the Masters program. This student can continue their association with Illinois Tech.
- This continues the current Graduate Advanced Standing principles of encouraging the students to return after the first few years of graduation, where their place of business may help pay for their continuing education.

## Program Conversion

Ideally all current co-terminal programs would convert to the structure proposed; if they cannot do so, there is a Listed Co-terminal section later. The vast majority of existing co-terminal programs combine a B.S. and Masters in the same or closely-related department. Even those that do not mostly use “free electives” or “technical electives” for their shared credits. These programs may be converted without further consideration.

For program that wish to restrict what they allow, there are provisions through the listing above in which they can maintain those restrictions.

The only programs that cannot be immediately converted are those which change specific degree requirements. Those programs should be encouraged to re-examine their existing program to determine whether it is really necessary for the two degrees to be modified, or whether it was merely expedient. If there is a real need, then they can remain Listed Co-terminals.

A critical point to understand is that conversion to the AMP framework has zero impact on marketing. Current marketing literature quotes 5-6 explicit programs and says “and many more.”

- Marketing the nearly 100 current co-terminals as individual programs is impossible; marketing that you can create the personalized combination that you need to be successful in your future career is easy.
- There is nothing in this proposal that discourages the marketing of a particular combination of degrees. Instead it decouples the mechanism for managing the program from the marketing so that marketing decisions can be made based on clear marketing goals. If a particular degree combination is seen to be successful, then that should be marketed: “at Illinois Tech you can earn a B.S. in Computer Science and an M.S. in Finance.”

### Listed Co-terminal Program

There are a small number of co-terminal programs which, for total credit reasons, or inflexible pre-requisite reasons, required modifications to the degree requirements. These are exceptional and special circumstances and require a much higher level of review. The AMP proposes that this special level of review undergo the same rigorous process as the current co-terminal programs with enforcement of two additional requirements that, while technically a part of the co-terminal review process, have not been rigorously applied:

- There should be a clearly identified need in the marketplace that is being filled.
- There should be a clear marketing plan for attracting students.
- There should be a periodic review that ensures the modified degrees still meet the identified needs. If not, the program may be decommissioned.

Some of our current co-terminal programs meet all of these requirements, and should be maintained as Listed Co-terminal Programs. They are currently attracting students and are the ones most emphasized in the marketing literature precisely because they were designed to meet these criteria. The only addition above is an allowance for these programs to shut down should the marketplace change.

It is important to emphasize that there is a significant administrative burden for this category of programs that makes the category unsuitable for general use.

- There is a higher level of scrutiny required for modifying degree requirements, than is needed for someone to pursue what are in effect two independent degrees.
- There is a geometric growth problem under this category to implement reasonable variations. For example, in Physics just to allow the 3 listed B.S. degrees to be combined with the 3 Masters degrees requires 9 listed co-terminal programs. If we continued just with the 2 Computer Science Masters degrees, that would require 6



more listings, etc. In other words, to allow just the programs we would encourage under the (current) listed system would require:  $u \times g$  degrees to be voted on, coded, and maintained; where  $u$ ,  $g$  are the number of undergraduate and graduate degrees, respectively.

- The maintenance of these programs is exceptionally difficult and error-prone. For example, one B.S. requirement was changed in the B.S. for Physics. This required not only the B.S. degree to be changed, but a separate entry made for the 3 existing co-terminal degrees. Some were missed. One course number was changed in one of the Master of Health Physics courses. This required a separate entry to be made in the co-terminal listings. All of these changes are manual corrections, and highly prone to error.
- The proscriptive nature of sending the allowed courses up through UGSC and GSC approval, then encoded as a requirement creates multiple problems:
  - Frequently a course on the list is not offered, and so manual exceptions have to be made.
  - Frequently changes are made to course offerings, and a full review process is imposed and manually recoded on a delayed schedule.
  - Frequently a reasonable class is identified for a co-terminal program that makes sense for one student, but might not be suggested to all students as their degree specialization is different. Moving this to the advising stage (with review) allows for a flexible personalized experience that does not overgeneralize.
  - Under the current model of the restricted list, students are caught in financial aid scheduling quandries where they need to take the proscribed class from the list, but would lose some aid eligibility if they do so. This lead them to ask financial aid for academic advising help – which they cannot provide.
    - The Letter of Intent mechanism moves the process to an earlier planning stage that simplifies the Financial Aid discussion; make sure you plan ahead under your particular Financial Aid constraints.
    - Moving this to the advising stage provides an avenue for sensible individually tailored substitutions that can be documented for consideration in future years advising. That builds an expert database to continually improve advising.

## **Streamlining the existing co-terminal approval process**

The Committee was presented with two alternative mechanisms to simplify the process by which co-terminal programs are recommended and approved. These alternatives differ substantially in concept, and are listed in the next two sections. This section points out the differences between the two proposals that follow.

The first proposal was passed by the Committee and forwarded to the UFC for review on 2/19/2018. It was written with the observation that most of the existing co-terminal programs are either intra-departmental or in closely-related departments, and often have no changes to any of the requirements of either degree beyond the acceptance of up to nine shared credit hours. This proposal would create a form that identifies exactly which BS and Masters degree requirements are satisfied by a given list of courses. The form is approved by both degree granting Units, their Deans, the UGSC/GSC Chairs, UFC, and the Provost. The main difference between this form and the current process is if there are no changes to a given degree program it is reported to the relevant studies committee, but not voted on (as nothing has changed). Only if there are changes to degree requirements would a full review proceed.

The second proposal passed by the Committee, is a Masters granting unit directed program that would allow a Masters program to specify a list of courses acceptable to its co-terminal program without consulting any particular Bachelors program. This would be a possible alternative to the AMP should that not be approved, and could be seen as operating closer to how Masters programs accept outside transfer credits. The main addition to the transfer credit policy would be that the graduate program would accept up to nine credits earned at Illinois Tech toward the Masters degree that would also count toward a Bachelors degree. The listed courses would be identified on a form that would be approved by the Graduate Program Committee Chairperson, Department Chair, Dean, GSC Chair, UFC and Provost. This could reduce the need for a matrix that maps all possible degree pairings, and would reduce the challenge of attempting to integrate programs with every Unit. Unlike the AMP, it would remove the undergraduate advising aspect of the co-terminal degree, and co-terminal credit sharing would only be allowed if the student could apply classes from the proscribed list to the BS degree.

## **Proposal to streamline the co-terminal approval process**

[Submitted to UFC 2/19/2018]

### **Purpose**

In order to expedite the approval process for most co-terminal programs, we recommend the following modification of the rules for co-terminal approval. Note, only programs that comply with all of the following provisions will be eligible for expedited approval. Any program that does not fully comply with these provisions must follow the existing more rigorous full approval process. It is hoped that this will encourage streamlined co-terminal programs that are easier to create and administer.

### **Rules**

1. The undergraduate program must be identical to an existing BS or BAC program, with the possible exception that certain specific requirements may be fulfilled by up to 9 shared credit hours.
2. The graduate program must be identical to an existing MS, ME or MAS program, with the possible exception that certain specific requirements may be fulfilled by up to 9 shared credit hours.
3. The graduate degree controlling unit shall determine which undergraduate programs will provide sufficient background preparation and prerequisite education to ensure likely success in the graduate program. In doing so, it may:
  - a) limit eligible undergraduate programs to a specific list
  - b) or may require additional coursework for certain programs, as fit to justify graduate admission.
    1. It is recommended that required prerequisites be identified prior to the student's admission to co-terminal study.
    2. Prerequisites will be enforced by the admitting academic unit.
4. With regard to shared credit hours:
  - a) A list of eligible courses shall be developed specifying which courses count for shared credit hours, by co-terminal program pairing. All must be existing courses that normally satisfy requirements in either the graduate or undergraduate program, and there must be an explicit mapping to how each also satisfies the requirement in the other program. These requirements may be free or technical electives in either or both programs, or may be defined course requirements in either or both.

- b) Each new co-terminal program pairing will require approval of the units, and will require reporting to college deans and report of the proposed course mapping (articulations) to UGAA and GAA.
- c) If the courses in this mapping are normally part of the degree requirements of the undergraduate program, no further approvals are needed by the UGSC, and the pairing will be considered a reporting item to UGSC. On the other hand, if any substitutions are made (for instance to double count courses in the graduate program, that are not by default compliant with the undergraduate program) then the undergraduate program controlling department and the UGSC shall also be required to approve.
- d) If the courses in this mapping are normally part of the degree requirements of the graduate program, no further approvals are needed by the GSC, and the pairing will be considered a reporting item to the GSC. On the other hand, if any substitutions are made (for instance to double count courses in the undergraduate program, that are not by default compliant with the graduate program) then the graduate program controlling department and GSC shall be required to approve.

## **Features**

A sample form that identifies the requirements and approvals may be found in Appendix B.

In cases where additional approvals are not necessary it will be because the program is fully compliant with an existing program. By structuring programs to take advantage of 4a-4d, necessary approvals may be streamlined. Approvals can thus focus on agreed program pairings, and the specific changes in the course mapping, as the rest of the program is identical. Furthermore, this mapping is explicitly described in provision 4a, facilitating review in 4b, and with provisions for course exception approval by program in 4c and 4d. No new market or feasibility, or resource analysis will be necessary, since only existing coursework and existing programs can be used. Since these will not be new programs, but simply a combination of existing programs, it is hoped that UFC and Provost review and approval will be pro forma.

By providing the direct mapping in provisions 4a-c, as well as the full compliance in provision 1, the BS program will be fully compliant and can easily be audited by UGAA.

By providing the direct mapping in provisions 4a-b and 4d, as well as the full compliance in provision 2, the MS program will be fully compliant and can easily be audited by GAA.

By controlling prerequisite coursework, provision 3a-b, the MS program can control the quality and flow of students into the graduate programs.

## **Proposal to create a Graduate directed co-terminal program**

### **Purpose**

In order to expedite the approval process for most co-terminal programs, this proposal modifies the rules for co-terminal approval. Note, only programs that comply with all of the following provisions will be eligible for approval under this addition. Any program that does not fully comply with these provisions must follow the existing more rigorous full approval process. It is hoped that this will encourage streamlined co-terminal programs that are easier to create and administer. The rules below encompass mapping multiple undergraduate programs to a graduate program, as admission and prerequisites are primarily driven by the graduate program.

### **Rules**

1. The undergraduate program(s) must be identical to an existing BS or BAC program, with the possible exception that certain specific requirements may be fulfilled by up to 9 shared credit hours.
2. The graduate program must be identical to an existing MS, ME or MAS program, with the possible exception that certain specific requirements may be fulfilled by up to 9 shared credit hours.
3. The graduate degree controlling unit shall determine which undergraduate programs/courses will provide sufficient background preparation and prerequisite education to ensure likely success in the graduate program. In doing so, it may:
  - a) limit eligible undergraduate programs to a specific list of programs.
  - b) or may require additional coursework for certain programs, as fit to justify graduate admission.
    - i. It is recommended that required prerequisites be identified prior to the student's admission to co-terminal study.
    - ii. Prerequisites will be enforced by the admitting academic unit.
4. With regard to shared credit hours: A list of eligible courses shall be developed specifying which courses count for shared credit hours. All must be existing courses that normally satisfy requirements in either a graduate or undergraduate program. These requirements may be free or technical electives in either or both programs, or may be defined course requirements in either or both. Exceptions will require approval of advisors as appropriate.
5. Each new co-terminal graduate program that allows undergraduates programs to be co-terminal under the above framework, will be approved by the unit and require reporting to college deans, UGSC and GSC, and UFC for onward transmission to Provost for approval.

## **Features**

A sample form for approval of a graduate directed co-terminal program may be found in Appendix C.

In the above specification, there is no change to the undergraduate curriculum. In special cases co-terminal programs may require specification of additional requirements or course-work or specifications. These programs will be approved as per the current rules.

By imposing no changes, the BS program will be fully compliant and can easily be audited by UGAA.

By providing a list of requirements as in 3a-b and 4, approved by the graduate studies, UFC and Provost, the MS program will be fully compliant and can easily be audited by GAA.

By controlling prerequisite coursework, provision 3a-b, the MS program can control the quality and flow of students into the graduate programs.

## Appendix A: Sample AMP CO-TERMINAL SHARED CREDIT APPROVAL FORM

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

		BS program	Masters program
Shared course	cr.h.	Slot filled in BS program requirements • specify category or list (e.g. “free elective” or MATH 300+)	Slot filled in Masters program requirements • specify category or list (e.g. “required” or any PHYS 500+)

## Sample filled AMP CO-TERMINAL SHARED CREDIT APPROVAL FORM

Student Name Jane Doe

		BS program B.S. Physics	Masters program Master of Health Physics
Shared course	cr.h.	Slot filled in BS program requirements • specify category or list (e.g. “free elective” or MATH 300+)	Slot filled in Masters program requirements • specify category or list (e.g. “required” or any PHYS 500+)
PHYS 561 Radiation Biophysics	3	Free elective	Required
PHYS 571 Radiation Physics	3	Free elective	Required
MATH 525 Statistical Models & Methods	3	Any MATH 300+	MATH 525 required

## Appendix B: Streamlined Co-terminal Creation and Approval Form

		BS program	Masters program
Shared courses	cr.h.	Slot filled in BS program requirements specify category or list (e.g. "free elective" or MATH 300+)	Slot filled in Masters program requirements specify category or list (e.g. "required" or any PHYS 500+)
Total allowed shared credits			

Dept. Chair _____	Dept. Chair _____
Dean _____	Dean _____
UGSC Chair _____	GSC Chair _____
UFC Chair _____	
Provost _____	



**Appendix C: Sample form for approval of Graduate directed co-terminal programs**

Co-Terminal Masters PROGRAM NAME:

Undergraduate Program Names: <LIST BY PROGRAM NAME/DEPARTMENT NAME/  
COLLEGE NAME>

Admission Requirements into co-terminal program:

Program Requirements of Masters Program, including Prerequisites:

Requirements and LIST of courses that may be shared from UG Program  
Department/College for the Masters degree

<Composite List by Department or Program Name>

Approved By

- (1) Program Graduate Committee Chair
- (2) Department Chair
- (3) Dean of College
- (4) Graduate Studies Chair
- (5) UFC Chair
- (6) Provost