

Proposal: Accelerated Master's Program Policy Update

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Current Illinois Tech Policy

- Through the Accelerated Master's Program (AMP-AS), students may share up to nine credit hours of applicable undergraduate coursework with their Illinois Tech master's degree, pending the approval of the graduate program.

Rationale for Revision

- Our policy is focused on sharing undergraduate coursework up with an M.S., but advanced undergraduate students can also take graduate-level courses in lieu of technical or general electives. As written, our policy does not address such graduate coursework, and so we have been holding students to a hard limit of 9 credits, whether the classes are actually graduate or undergraduate level courses.
- A more permissive policy is appropriate based on accreditor standards and peer benchmarking. Our policy is relatively conservative compared to HLC guidelines; while some peer institutions have similar or more restrictive policies, a number have significantly more permissive policies.
- Currently, most AMP programs take longer than 5 years due to the limits on shared credit. We have an opportunity to improve time to degree for AMP students and to make these programs more appealing to current and prospective students.

Policies at Peer Institutions: AITUs

- Lawrence Technological: 15 credits of 33-credit M.S. integrated into undergraduate
- WPI Policy: 12 credits may be shared
- Kettering: 12 credits can double count; undergraduate may also take up to 9 additional graduate credits while still an undergrad
- Embry-Riddle: 9 credit “transition” courses, but M.S. and B.S. combined total credits 144-150
- Case Western: 9 credits
- Stevens: 9 credits
- NYIT: 9 credits
- RIT Policy: 6 or 9 credits in general, but MBA offers up to 18 waived credits (6 courses) and M.Arch pathways offer up to 30 waived credits.
- RPI: Up to 6 credits
- NYU Tandon: No shared credits

Policies at Peer Institutions: Chicago Area

- DePaul: 3 bridge classes (9 credits) from grad counted to undergraduate and some number of undergraduate classes matriculated up (number varies by degree program, no fixed total limit past HLC limit)
- Loyola: Up to 50% of the total graduate-level credit hours may count towards both undergraduate and graduate degrees, assuming class is taken at the graduate level
- Northwestern: A maximum of 3 graduate courses may be shared
- Roosevelt: 9 credits
- Purdue: 9-18 (graduate classes counted towards undergraduate electives), depending on total graduate credit hours required

Policies at Peer Institutions: Leaders in Online Education

- Arizona State University: 15 credits graduate-level courses taken as undergraduate can be shared
- Northeastern: 6 or 12 credits of graduate-level courses shared with undergraduate degree
- Southern New Hampshire University: Up to 12 credits of graduate-level courses shared with undergraduate degree (varies by degree field)

HLC Guidelines

- The institution's policy and practice assure that at least 50% of courses applied to a graduate program are courses designed for graduate work, rather than undergraduate courses credited toward a graduate degree. (Cf. Criterion 3.A.)
(An institution may allow well-prepared advanced students to substitute its graduate courses for required or elective courses in an undergraduate degree program and then subsequently count those same courses as fulfilling graduate requirements in a related graduate program that the institution offers. In "4+1" or "2+3" programs, at least 50% of the credits allocated for the master's degree – usually 15 of 30 – must be for courses designed for graduate work.)

Proposed Illinois Tech Policy

- Through the Accelerated Master's Program (AMP-AS), students may share up to nine credit hours of applicable undergraduate coursework with their Illinois Tech master's degree, pending the approval of the graduate program.
- Undergraduate students who take graduate courses (500-level or higher) as part of their undergraduate degree may share credit hours with their Illinois Tech master's degree, pending the approval of the graduate program. Credit sharing of any kind is capped at 50% of the total credit hours of the master's program, regardless of graduate program. Some programs may have a lower allowance of shared credit, and students should carefully review program requirements.