

# Revised Accelerated Master's Program

Spring 2026

## Background:

Illinois Tech implemented its highly successful co-terminal master's program in 2012. The program is designed to provide two primary benefits to students:

- 1) Via course sharing between a bachelor's and master's degree of up to nine credit hours, students are able to complete both degrees in as little as five years.
- 2) Because students maintain undergraduate status until both degree requirements are completed simultaneously, they are eligible to continue institutional scholarships and other financial aid available to undergraduate students.

While the co-terminal program has numerous benefits for students and the university, the second "feature" requires an individualized plan for each student in order to maintain undergraduate eligibility throughout the duration of the program. These considerations place a significant administrative burden on the Financial Aid Office to review each student's case, and these financial aid considerations then lead to complex academic advising discussions to select a course sequence that satisfies both sets of degree requirements, AND specifies which courses will be shared between the degrees, AND conforms to individualized financial aid requirements.

In addition to the unwieldy administrative burden, the co-terminal program is detrimental to the university in two important ways. 1) Insofar as the co-terminal program delays completion of the bachelor's degree, it has a negative impact on our four-year graduation rates, which impacts program rankings. 2) Because students maintain undergraduate status for the duration of both degrees, with the associated heavily discounted tuition, the program is not financially sustainable for the university.

The co-terminal program was later supplemented with an "Advanced Standing" option that provides the course-sharing benefits to students that graduated with a bachelor's degree from Illinois Tech within the previous three years. At that time, the two options were also rebranded under an Accelerated Master's Program (AMP) umbrella.

## Revised Accelerated Master's Program (AMP):

In order to accentuate the positives and mitigate the negatives of the current co-terminal program, the following changes are proposed. Because the bachelor's and master's programs will no longer be awarded simultaneously, the existing "co-terminal" program will be retired. In addition, because the "Advanced Standing" option will be subsumed into the

proposed program, the revised program will simply be referred to as the AMP. The provisions of the proposed AMP are as follows:

- Students may apply through an expedited application process to the AMP in any semester after completion of 60 credit hours and prior to that for which they have 12 remaining credit hours of courses to complete toward the bachelor's degree. Nominally, students should apply in the second semester of their third year of undergraduate study. Students are provisionally admitted on the basis of satisfactory progress toward completion of the bachelor's degree as indicated by a minimum 3.0 overall GPA (specific master's programs may require higher GPA limits for admission) and academic progress consistent with on-time degree completion.
- Alumni with bachelor's degrees from Illinois Tech completed within the previous three years may apply to the AMP subject to the same admissions requirements and transfer credit provisions described later.
- Once provisionally admitted, students are eligible to take graduate courses that will satisfy bachelor's degree requirements. Such courses are taken while the student is an undergraduate, with its associated tuition and financial aid. Students may not take graduate courses beyond those that satisfy the requirements of the bachelor's degree while an undergraduate.
- Once a student completes the requirements for the bachelor's degree, they are awarded the degree and fully admitted to the master's program. At this time, students will indicate the up to 15 credit hours of undergraduate and graduate courses taken to satisfy bachelor's degree requirements that will then be transferred to the master's degree to satisfy its requirements. This transfer of credits is subject to all policies with respect to courses and credit hours that can satisfy requirements of the graduate degree, for example limits on the number of 400-level credit hours that may count toward the master's degree.
- As graduate students, they now pay graduate tuition and are subject to all policies and provisions for graduate students. Only after full admission to the master's degree can students take graduate courses that will only count toward the master's degree.

Notes:

- Because of the financial aid and academic provisions of the current co-terminal program it was necessary to pre-approve bachelor's and master's pairings or have academic units approve other proposed pairings from students. The revised AMP program can accommodate any sequence of bachelor's and master's degrees as long as all degree requirements are satisfied for both degrees. This may require

completion of additional undergraduate prerequisite courses that do not satisfy the requirements of either degree.

- Whereas the current framework allows students to continue their highly advantaged undergraduate tuition rates through to completion of a master's degree, the revised AMP will allow the institution to adjust the discount rate for AMP graduate students such that financial incentives are aligned with the institutional need to maintain a financially sustainable program. Subject to financial aid and budgetary approval, the following programmatic considerations are recommended: Create reciprocal graduate scholarships that undergraduate students on scholarship can apply to and/or automatically receive, so that the fiscal benefits of pursuing an AMP remain, thereby motivating enrollment in AMP.
- Those undergraduate students who are eligible for the 2026 admissions cycle of the existing co-terminal program may apply by the August 1, 2026 deadline. After this date, no students will be admitted to the co-terminal program.

## Proposed Catalog Changes, which are to be voted on by UGSC/GSC/UFC:

- **Remove the co-terminal program**<sup>1</sup>. This change would be implemented through catalog revisions that retire the co-terminal designation while preserving, where appropriate, existing residency and credit-sharing constructs under the Accelerated Master's Program (AMP)
- **Keep the AMP**<sup>2</sup>, **implementing it as our “plus one” program.**
- Change the catalog wording regarding AMP – specifically its most basic description that begins with 'Alumni who wish to pursue an Illinois Tech master's degree after attaining their Illinois Tech bachelor's degree (within three years of conferral) may apply to a master's degree with advanced standing.' It is not clear to undergrads they can do it in a “plus one” manner and that they should plan/apply for it during their undergrad degree.” Change it to (changes highlighted): "**The Accelerated Master's Program (AMP) is available to both undergraduate students seeking a "plus one" program and Illinois Tech alumni (within three years of degree conferral). Both populations may apply to the master's degree with advanced standing in accordance with published graduate program and transfer-credit policies.** 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."
- Maintain, though replace references to 'co-terminal' with 'Accelerated Master's Program (AMP)': "All **AMP** degree requirements must be completed within six years of undergraduate matriculation (or seven if the undergraduate degree is a five-year program)..." The addition of the parenthetical note is to make room for programs that are inherently five-year programs to participate in the “plus one” AMP.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://catalog.iit.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-education/coterminal-degree-programs/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.iit.edu/academics/undergraduate-programs/accelerated-masters-program>