



# Accelerated Bachelor's-Master's Track Student Guide

The University of North Florida provides exceptional undergraduate students with the opportunity to complete both the bachelor's and master's degrees at an accelerated pace. An accelerated track allows you to get a head start on your graduate education by allowing you to take graduate courses while still an undergraduate student. In most programs, this graduate coursework will also count towards your baccalaureate degree.

## Advantages

An accelerated bachelor's-master's track provides a number of benefits:

- You can save up to one year in tuition and time compared to the traditional track of enrolling in graduate coursework only after completing the baccalaureate degree.
- Many programs reduce the graduate admission requirements for accelerated-track students. For example, you might not need to take the GREs, saving time and money.
- An accelerated track allows you to enter the job market more quickly and with the graduate-level knowledge and skills desired by many employers.
- You may be able to use some forms of undergraduate financial aid to pay for graduate courses, especially if you entered UNF with Advancement Placement and/or dual credit towards your baccalaureate degree.

## How Does It Work?

The core element of an accelerated track is the ability for undergraduates to enroll in up to 12 credit hours of graduate coursework that counts towards fulfilling both the graduate and baccalaureate degrees. (Note that the exact number of credit hours that can be shared depends on the program.) The following illustrates how the track works:

		Undergraduate Credits (120 credits)	<b>Freshman</b> 30 credits	
			<b>Sophomore</b> 30 Credits	
Apply to participate in Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains undergraduate status, but creates accelerated pathway.</li> <li>• Still can access undergraduate financial aid for coursework that counts towards undergraduate degree completion</li> <li>• Still need to apply to Graduate School and meet admission standards.</li> <li>• Once BA/BS awarded, become graduate students.</li> </ul>	Graduate Credits (up to 12 hours of graduate coursework count for both)		<b>Junior</b> 30 Credits	
			<b>Senior</b> 30 Credits	BA/BS Degree Awarded
Graduate School "transfers" up to 12 credit hours of graduate courses (at least a B grade) taken as undergrad to also count toward grad degree				<b>Graduate</b>

## **Student Eligibility**

Once you have attained junior status (at least 60 credit hours), you are eligible to apply for an accelerated track, as long as you meet the following requirements:

1. Completion of at least 15 undergraduate hours in their major.
2. Attainment of a minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.00 in their major.
3. Attainment of a minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.00 overall.

Specific programs may have more rigorous academic requirements for participation in an accelerated track. Eligibility for participation on an accelerated track does not guarantee admission into the graduate program (see section below).

## **Accelerated Track Application**

Prior to submitting the Accelerated Track Undergraduate Application, you are required to meet with the undergraduate and graduate program advisors regarding program requirements and procedures. You are also required to consult with Financial Aid to determine any potential ramifications during the change from undergraduate to graduate standing (see section below).

The Accelerated Track Undergraduate Application form requires you to identify the bachelor's-to-master's track that you intend to complete and specify the graduate courses that will count towards fulfilling both the undergraduate and graduate requirements.

## **Bachelor's-to-Master's Transition**

Until the baccalaureate degree requirements are completed, you are still an undergraduate student. Formal entry into the graduate program requires separate application using the Accelerated Graduate Program Admission form when you are in your final undergraduate semester and have registered to graduate. The Accelerated Graduate Program Admission form must be approved by program advisors, the college dean(s), and the Graduate School, at which point you are accepted into the graduate program

Graduate student status is only conferred once you have completed the baccalaureate degree. At this point, the graduate courses identified on the accelerated track application and successfully taken as an undergraduate with a course grade of at least 3.0 will be applied towards the graduate degree requirements.

## **Tuition, Fees, and Financial Aid**

Financial aid is regulated by a variety of institutional, state, and federal regulations, all of which vary depending on a student's need, enrollment, course level, and program level. It is therefore required that you consult with Financial Aid before applying to participate in this program. Some important considerations are listed below, but are meant only as a general guide and not as definitive policy since each student's situation is unique and the regulations change often.

- Tuition and fees for graduate courses taken while the student is enrolled as an undergraduate are charged at the graduate rates.
- Residency for tuition purposes is determined according to the student's level; all graduate students are classified as independent, regardless of age. Upon moving to graduate-level status, all students must re-establish residency as an independent for tuition purposes.
- Bright Futures aid can be used to fund graduate courses that count towards the baccalaureate degree, but only at the undergraduate credit hour rate. The student is therefore responsible for the difference in tuition for the higher graduate credit hour cost, although other forms of financial aid might cover this.
- Florida Prepaid can pay for both undergraduate and graduate coursework.
- Pell Grant, FESOG, and FSAG funding is still available for students pursuing an accelerated bachelor's-master's track, but eligibility ends once the baccalaureate degree is *eligible* to be awarded, even if the student has not yet received the baccalaureate degree.
- Students on an accelerated track are not eligible for graduate program support (e.g., graduate scholarships, graduate assistantships) until they have completed their baccalaureate degree and are formally enrolled in the graduate program.
- Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid is measured at the end of each semester and is based on the requirements of the level the student is classified—i.e., whether they are officially an undergraduate or graduate student, not the level of the coursework taken.
- For Institutional Scholarships, students are allowed up to maximum of 100% of the number of credit hours required for the completion of a bachelor's degree or the number of semesters specified in the scholarship contract.
- For Foundation Scholarships, exceptions to enrollment and other requirements/criteria must be coordinated with the Associate Director of Foundation Scholarships on a case-by-case basis
- Graduate courses are included in Excess Hours calculations when they are used to fulfill baccalaureate degree requirements.

To reiterate, each student's exact situation is different. You must consult with Financial Aid before applying for an accelerated bachelor's-master's track or making any other change in your student status.

### **International Students**

International students interested in participating in an accelerated bachelor's-master's track must consult with the International Center to determine the possible impact of participation on your student visa.

## Frequently Asked Questions

*At what point in the undergraduate program should I apply?*

You can apply as early as the first semester of your junior year or as late as the first semester of your senior year. You must have completed at least 15 credit hours in the undergraduate major.

*I am a first-year interested in participating in the Accelerated Bachelor's-Master's Track program. With whom should I discuss this program?*

Students interested in this opportunity are best served to meet with their undergraduate advisor in the Fall of their second year. Before meeting, you should read through the application materials. In the meantime, you should aggressively pursue meeting the requirements for your undergraduate degree.

*What is required for approval?*

As an undergraduate applying for entry to an Accelerated Bachelor's-Master's Track, you must have a minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA and a minimum 3.0 GPA and at least 15 hours in your major. Specific tracks may have more rigorous requirements. Later, when you apply for formal admission into the Graduate School, you must meet the additional minimum GPA requirement and any test scores (e.g., GRE, GMAT) that the program requires.

*How many graduate credits can I count toward the Bachelor's and the Master's degrees?*

No more than 12 credit hours can be used to satisfy requirements for both the Bachelor's and the Master's. However, the exact number allowed depends on the specific Accelerated Bachelor's-Master's Track. Note too that only courses for which you earned a "B" grade or better can be applied to the requirements of a graduate program at UNF.

*Will the Accelerated Bachelor's-Master's Track affect my tuition cost?*

It will. Even while still an undergraduate student, you will pay graduate tuition for your Master's coursework, and that tuition is higher than undergraduate tuition. The difference in these pay schedules can be found on the UNF website.

*What about my financial aid?*

Bright Futures and/or the Florida Prepaid Tuition Program will pay the undergraduate tuition rate for the graduate courses you take; you will have to pay the difference between undergraduate and graduate course costs.

*Why would I want to pay additional tuition to enroll in graduate courses?*

If you continue to graduate school you will save on the tuition costs for the up to 12 graduate credits (depending on your major) you take while you are still classified as an undergraduate. Remember that graduate course costs will be partially paid by your undergraduate financial aid.

*Can I still complete study abroad experiences if I intend to complete the Combined Degree?*

Yes. As with all things, better planning leads to a completion time that is in the 4-year range. Students are also better served to participate in travel study experiences that offer courses that satisfy requirements for one or both degrees.

*Can I also do an additional major and/or a minor?*

Yes, but most students serious about a Master's degree will pair these goals down as they approach their third and fourth year. The Accelerated Bachelor's-Master's Track program is best suited to students who have focused, specific goals that require a graduate degree.

*At what point do I enroll in graduate courses?*

If approved, you can take graduate courses during your junior and senior years as specified by the particular Accelerated Bachelor's-Master's Track.

*Does acceptance into a Accelerated Bachelor's-Master's Track guarantee my acceptance into graduate school?*

No. Graduate school admission is separate from acceptance into the Accelerated Bachelor's-Master's Track program, and being admitted to a Accelerated Bachelor's-Master's Track does not guarantee admission into the graduate program. During the last semester of your senior year, you will need to complete a separate Accelerated Bachelor's-Master's Track Graduate Admissions Application to be considered for formal Graduate School admission.