

Combined Undergraduate/Graduate Degree Programs

A. Overview

Many degree programs offer Mines undergraduate students the opportunity to begin work on a Graduate Certificate, Professional Master's Degree, Master's Degree, or Doctoral Degree while completing the requirements for their Bachelor's Degree. These combined Bachelors-Masters/Doctoral programs have been created by Mines faculty in those situations where they have deemed it academically advantageous to treat undergraduate and graduate degree programs as a continuous and integrated process. These are accelerated programs that can be valuable in fields of engineering and applied science where advanced education in technology and/or management provides the opportunity to be on a fast track for advancement to leadership positions. These programs also can be valuable for students who want to get a head start on graduate education.

The combined programs at Mines offer several advantages to students who choose to enroll in them:

1. Students can earn a graduate degree in their undergraduate major or in a field that complements their undergraduate major.
2. Students who plan to go directly into industry leave Mines with additional specialized knowledge and skills which may allow them to enter their career path at a higher level and advance more rapidly. Alternatively, students planning on attending graduate school can get a head start on their graduate education.
3. Students can plan their undergraduate electives to satisfy prerequisites, thus ensuring adequate preparation for their graduate program.
4. Early assignment of graduate advisors permits students to plan optimum course selection and scheduling in order to complete their graduate program quickly.
5. Early acceptance into a Combined Degree Program leading to a Graduate Degree assures students of automatic acceptance into full graduate status if they maintain good standing while in early-acceptance status.
6. In many cases, students will be able to complete both a Bachelor's and a Master's Degrees in five years of total enrollment at Mines.

Certain graduate programs may allow Combined Degree Program students to fulfill part of the requirements of their graduate degree by including up to six hours of specified course credits which also were used in fulfilling the requirements of their undergraduate degree. These courses; referred to as double counted courses, may be applied toward fulfilling a Doctoral degree and many Master's degree requirements. Check the departmental section of the Catalog to determine which programs provide this opportunity and any limitations that might apply.

Double counted courses must:

- Meet all requirements for graduate credit, but their grades are not included in calculating the graduate GPA.

- Some degree programs only allow students to double count 500 level courses (not 400 level), so please check the degree program for details.
- Must have a grade of B- or better (as listed on the undergraduate transcript).

Some degree programs have stricter limitations, so please check the degree program for details.

B. Admission Process

A student interested in applying into a graduate degree program as a Combined Degree Program student should first contact the department or division hosting the graduate degree program into which he/she wishes to apply. Initial inquiries may be made at any time, but initial contacts made soon after completion of the first semester, Sophomore year are recommended. Following this initial inquiry, departments/divisions will provide initial counseling on degree application procedures, admissions standards and degree completion requirements.

Admission into a graduate degree program as a Combined Degree Program student can occur as early as the first semester, Junior year, and must be granted no later than the end of registration, last semester Senior year. Once admitted into a graduate degree program, students may enroll in 500-level courses and apply these directly to their graduate degree. To apply, students must submit the standard graduate application package for the graduate portion of their Combined Degree Program. Upon admission into a graduate degree program, students are assigned graduate advisors. Prior to registration for the next semester, students and their graduate advisors should meet and plan a strategy for completing both the undergraduate and graduate programs as efficiently as possible. Until their undergraduate degree requirements are completed, students continue to have undergraduate advisors in the home department or division of their Bachelor's Degrees.

C. Requirements

Combined Degree Program students are considered undergraduate students until such time as they complete their undergraduate degree requirements. Combined Degree Program students who are still considered undergraduates by this definition have all of the privileges and are subject to all expectations of both their undergraduate and graduate programs. These students may enroll in both undergraduate and graduate courses (see section D below), may have access to departmental assistance available through both programs, and may be eligible for undergraduate financial aid as determined by the Office of Financial Aid. Upon completion of their undergraduate degree requirements, a Combined Degree Program student is considered enrolled full-time in his/her graduate program. Once having done so, the student is no longer eligible for undergraduate financial aid, but may now be eligible for graduate financial aid. To complete their graduate degree, each Combined Degree Program student must register as a graduate student for at least one semester.

Once admitted into a graduate program, undergraduate Combined Degree Program students must maintain good standing in the Combined Degree Program by maintaining a minimum semester GPA of 3.0 in all courses taken. Students not meeting this requirement are deemed to be making unsatisfactory academic progress in the Combined Degree Program. Students for whom this is the case are subject to probation and, if occurring over two semesters, subject to discretionary dismissal from

the graduate portion of their program as defined in the Unsatisfactory Academic Performance section of this Catalog.

Upon completion of the undergraduate degree requirements, Combined Degree Program students are subject to all requirements (e.g., course requirements, departmental approval of transfer credits, research credits, minimum GPA, etc.) appropriate to the graduate program in which they are enrolled.

D. Enrolling in Graduate Courses as a Senior in a Combined Program

As described in the Undergraduate Catalog, seniors may enroll in 500-level courses. In addition, undergraduate seniors who have been granted admission through the Combined Degree Program into thesis-based degree programs (Masters or Doctoral) may, with graduate advisor approval, register for 700-level research credits appropriate to Masters-level degree programs. With this single exception, while a Combined Degree Program student is still completing his/her undergraduate degree, all of the conditions described in the Undergraduate Catalog for undergraduate enrollment in graduate-level courses apply. 700-level research credits are always applied to a student's graduate degree program.

If an undergraduate Combined Degree Program student would like to enroll in a 500-level course and apply this course directly to his/her graduate degree, he/she must submit the 500 Level Form to the Registrar's Office. On the form, the student will select the appropriate option for the course; use as undergraduate credit or use as graduate credit.

- Students who have been accepted into a graduate level program and have submitted the "intend to enroll" information by census day of the term in which the class is taken are eligible to have the credits listed on the graduate level transcripts. In this case, the grades will impact the graduate G.P.A. and the student may take an unlimited number of credits to use towards the graduate level degree. Students must remember that all students earning a graduate degree must register at least one semester as a graduate student.
- Students who have either not been admitted into a graduate program or those who have been admitted, but have not submitted the "intend to enroll" by census day of the term in which the class is taken are not eligible to have the credits listed on the graduate level transcripts, even if the student does not need the credits for the undergraduate degree. In this case, the credits will be listed on the undergraduate level transcripts and the grades will impact the undergraduate G.P.A. If these credits are not used towards an undergraduate degree requirement, they may, with departmental approval, be applied to a graduate program as transfer credits. All regular regulations and limitations regarding the use of transfer credit to a graduate degree program apply to these credits.

The Registrar will forward the registration information to Financial Aid for appropriate action. Be aware that courses taken as an undergraduate student but not used toward a bachelor's degree are not eligible for undergraduate financial aid or the Colorado Opportunity Fund.