

Guidelines for Five-Year Contiguous Bachelor's / Master's Proposals

Graduate Council, UCSC

Approved by Graduate Council: January 2016

Effective 2015-16 year

These guidelines describe how to propose for Graduate Council approval a five-year contiguous bachelor's/master's path that coordinates *existing* bachelor's and master's degrees. A contiguous bachelor's/master's is earned sequentially; students must complete the bachelor's degree before enrolling in the master's program. The guidelines below do not apply to proposed bachelor's/master's programs using a proposed *new* graduate degree program.

Overview

The five-year contiguous bachelor's/master's is a means by which an undergraduate may complete a bachelor's and master's degree in five years. The pathway enables well-prepared undergraduate students to complete specific upper division or graduate courses in the latter stages of their undergraduate degree and apply those courses toward a master's degree once admitted to the master's program.

A five-year bachelor's/master's path may benefit students by providing qualified undergraduates increased opportunities for career and/or future academic success. Students will be able to deepen their knowledge and experience in an academic field, complete both degree programs efficiently and often in a shorter time, obtain additional employment credentials, and improve their competitiveness for pursuing doctoral studies in top doctoral programs. Additionally, such pathways may benefit programs and departments by providing opportunities to retain qualified top undergraduates and recruit them into graduate studies, grow graduate programs, and provide additional flexible funding to programs through the master's incentive program.

Master's Requirements within the Proposed Five-year Contiguous Bachelor's/Master's

1. Matriculation as a master's student does not occur until after the student has completed the bachelor's degree program. Note that a student does not have to complete a particular bachelor's program; they may in principle complete any major as long as they satisfy the requirements for the bachelor's as an undergraduate and are admitted into the master's program.

2. Existing requirements of master's programs apply¹ (i.e., minimum 3 quarter enrollment, coursework requirements, residency, conformation to Plan I or Plan II for capstone, etc.). Also, the requirements for earning the master's degree in a five-year bachelor's/master's path must be equivalent to the requirements for students entering the master's program independent of the proposed five-year bachelor's/master's path.
 - a. For Plan I (Master's thesis) MS degrees: Minimum of 35 quarter units of graduate and upper division courses, of which no more than 15 units may be upper division undergraduate courses. Of the required graduate-level courses, a minimum of 20 units must be courses other than supervised research.
 - b. For Plan II (non-Master's thesis) MS degrees: Minimum of 35 quarter units of graduate and upper division courses, of which no more than 15 units may be upper division undergraduate courses. Supervised research classes may not count towards the satisfaction of minimum unit requirements for Plan II candidates.
3. Master's program faculty must identify which courses articulate, with the limitation that a minimum of 35 units must be completed as a master's student, after the student has completed the bachelor's degree.
 - a. Master's program faculty are encouraged, when appropriate, to establish memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with other department(s) hosting the bachelor's program(s) that may contribute undergraduates to a five-year contiguous bachelor's/master's path. The MOUs should articulate the possible coordination of undergraduate and graduate courses and units in the path.
4. Program faculty must determine student admissions eligibility for the bachelor's/master's path, the process and timeline for identifying qualified students as undergraduates, reviewing and approving student applications, and when acceptance to the master's occurs.
 - a. Existing admissions criteria into the master's program apply. However, the faculty have flexibility in determining admissions criteria and have the discretion to waive certain requirements, within the requirements set out in Appendix D, if justified.
5. The Graduate Division oversees the application and admissions to the master's program either through the usual admissions process, or an alternate (e.g., earlier) timeline if justified.
6. If a student completes their bachelor's degree and is admitted to the master's program, but does not successfully complete all requirements expected for the one-year master's path, then they would revert to the traditional master's track for the program instead of the one-year master's track.
7. Proposals should make clear that approval of an undergraduate student into a five-year bachelor's/master's path does not automatically guarantee admissions into the one-year master's program. Official admission into the master's program occurs via the program's established procedures.

¹ See [UCSC Senate Manual, Appendix D](#), for master's degree requirements.

- a. Undergraduates applying for the five-year contiguous bachelor's/master's path should undergo advising by the master's program faculty to discuss student qualifications and the ability to complete the five-year contiguous bachelor's/master's.

Preparing a Proposal for a Five-Year Contiguous Bachelor's/Master's

Proposals for a five-year contiguous bachelor's/master's path should be submitted to Graduate Council for approval and include the following documents:

- Cover Letter** stating the rationale for offering the contiguous bachelor's/master's path and summarizing key aspects of the proposal, including academic objectives and resource needs.
- Proposal** (see Appendix).
- Divisional Dean's comments on resources**, confirming resource-neutrality or a commitment of resources to sustainably support the contiguous bachelor's/master's path.
- MOUs or letters of support** with/from cooperating programs (if available).

The completed proposal should be addressed and sent electronically to the Graduate Council, with a copy to the Vice Provost of Academic Affairs (VPAA). Graduate Council will consider the VPAA's comments, if any, in its review of the proposal. If approved, the VPAA announces approval of the contiguous bachelor's/master's to the campus.

Note: Please ensure that your Bachelor's/Master's proposal does not also propose changes to undergraduate program requirements. Any changes proposed to **undergraduate** program requirements will need to be reviewed by the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP), which follows a separate submission process.

Please direct any questions, comments, or requests to add a five-year contiguous bachelor's/master's to the Graduate Council Analyst, Esthela Bañuelos (esthela@ucsc.edu), 459-1317).

APPENDIX

Format and Content for the Contiguous Five-Year Bachelor's/Master's Degree Proposal

Please include the following topics:

Section 1. Introduction

1. Rationale for making the proposal.
2. Aims and objective of the proposed path, and any distinctive features.
3. Relationship to the department's or program's regularly offered bachelor's and master's programs.
4. The types of students to be served.
5. Proposed date of implementation.
6. The vote of the initiating program faculty.

Section 2. Program

1. A general description of the proposed plan of study for the degree(s), including graduate coursework and/or research to be undertaken as an undergraduate and completed as a graduate student.
2. List any specific undergraduate majors and/or emphases/specializations that are likely pathways towards the five-year path.
3. Indicate the nature of the Master's Plan(s): Master's Plan I (thesis) and/or Master's Plan II (non-thesis options: comprehensive examination and/or project as applicable).
4. Description of any proposed changes to the master's program that will allow the bachelor's and master's degrees to be accomplished in five years.² These may be:
 - a. Procedural changes that do not involve a change in program requirements, such as timing of admissions, frequency of course offerings, etc, which do not require Graduate Council approval.
 - b. Requirement changes, such as course requirements, thesis or capstone requirements, etc, which do require Graduate Council approval. Proposed program requirement changes will be considered for approval by GC for the master's program as a whole.
5. Specific processes and timelines for undergraduate application to the path, including:
 - a. When undergraduates may apply to enter the path,
 - b. When each of the application milestones needs to be accomplished,
 - c. How and when applications will be reviewed.
 - d. Proposed timelines should allow students to be informed about the path early enough in their undergraduate career so as to seek faculty advising, prepare an application, and if accepted into the

² If any changes are proposed to any bachelor's programs, then CEP approval is required.

- path, accomplish pathway milestones as undergraduate seniors.
6. Minimum requirements to be admitted to the path.
 7. Course planners, sample programs, and explanation of the proposed policy guiding the coordination of courses and course units between the bachelor's and master's degrees. Pay particular attention to the double-counting of units (*see note below).
 8. Provisions in case a student is not able to complete the path in five years.
 9. Projected enrollment. Indicate whether this will be in addition to enrollment in the regularly offered degree programs.
 10. Impact on existing programs. Indicate the impacts, if any, that the proposed path will have on existing undergraduate, master's, or Ph.D. programs.

Section 3. Projected Need

1. Expected student demand for the path.

Section 4. Resource Requirements

1. Indicate if any additional faculty, staff, or space resources are needed for the path, and if so how they will be met.

Section 5. Catalog Copy

1. Include a proposed description of the path to be included in the UCSC program statement catalog.

Section 6. Discontinuance of the Path

1. Describe the process for path discontinuance if recommended and approved by the program faculty.

*Note for Course Planners/Sample Programs: Please include a sample course planner showing how a student could complete all of the undergraduate major and graduate requirements, explicitly noting which undergraduate courses may be applied to the master's requirements (if any), and which master's coursework requirements may be completed prior to enrollment as a master's student. *Please pay particular attention to the double counting of courses and units, considering that courses used to satisfy the requirements for a bachelor's major must include a minimum of 40 upper-division credits (as per UCSC Senate Manual 10.4.3) that are not used to satisfy the required courses or minimum credits for the master's degree. Courses used to satisfy the requirements for the master's degree cannot be used to satisfy the minimum 40 upper-division credits for the bachelor's degree.*