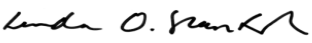


MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

December 23, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans, Directors and Chairpersons

FROM: Linda O. Stanford 
Associate Provost for Academic Services

RE: **New Policy - Allow a maximum of 9 approved credits from the Undergraduate Level to be applied to a Linked Bachelor's-Master's degree program.**

The University Committee on Curriculum (UCC) made and approved a recommendation to allow a maximum of 9 approved credits from the Undergraduate Level to be applied to a Linked Bachelor's/Master's degree program. The recommendation was reviewed by the University Graduate Council (UGC) and approved at its May 5, 2008 meeting. The UGC submitted the following motion for consideration by Academic Council on November 18, 2008, which was approved.

Motion for Academic Council:

Allow a maximum of 9 approved credits from the Undergraduate Level to be applied to a Linked Bachelor's/Master's degree program.

Proposal:

Benefits

MSU negates the competitive recruiting advantage currently held by other peer institutions. The proposal creates the opportunity for undergraduate students to engage with faculty research opportunities that begin in an undergraduate setting and continue through to a graduate program while reducing the time to complete the graduate degree.

MSU now provides an opportunity for academically strong, motivated students to complete a master's degree in less time.

Impact

Adoption of this proposal required changing the long-standing policy of requiring 30 credits beyond the bachelor's degree for a master's degree. Students accepted into linked Bachelor's-Master's degree programs are not allowed to transfer additional credits from other institutions or from the Lifelong Education enrollment status. Only a maximum of 9 credits from the undergraduate degree program, either an MSU undergraduate degree or an external accredited institution's bachelor's degree, will be accepted toward the



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graduate degree program. Students must complete the undergraduate degree program prior to beginning the graduate degree program.

Previous

“The minimum number of credits required for a master’s degree program is 30 beyond the bachelor’s degree. Some programs, however, have higher minimum credit requirements.”

- *Academic Programs, Master’s Programs – Credit Requirements*

Rationale for Change

MSU’s ability to compete with peer institutions nationally and internationally has been hampered by the University’s inability to waive credits in order to allow linked Bachelor’s/Master’s programs to exist for highly qualified students in specific, approved programs. At least four schools in the CIC offer qualified students the ability to count approved undergraduate coursework in both the BA or BS degree program and the linked MA or MS degree program, reducing the number of unique credits required for the master’s program. MSU is losing desired master’s candidates to peer institutions that offer these programs, specifically in Engineering.

This does not affect current approved master’s degree programs. A specific request must be made by the administering unit and approved through academic governance for a new Linked Bachelor’s/Master’s degree program.

View Academic Programs:

You may view *Academic Programs* for the updated language with regard to the approved changes.

Academic Program Terminology –

<http://www.reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Text.asp?Section=112#s507>

Master’s Programs –

<http://www.reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Text.asp?Section=111#s373>

Specific questions regarding applicability of credits to master’s programs may be directed to Doug McKenna, Associate Registrar for Certification Services, mckenn62@msu.edu or 3-7283.

cc: Kim Wilcox, Provost
Karen Klomparens, Associate Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of The Graduate School
Doug Estry, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and Dean of Undergraduate Studies
Dugald McMillan, Acting University Registrar
Linda Good, Chairperson, University Committee on Curriculum
Doug McKenna, Associate Registrar for Certification Services
Traci Gulick, Associate Registrar for Academic Records
Joy Speas, University Curriculum Administrator