

**Western Michigan University
Faculty Senate
Memorandum of Action**

MOA – 21/04

Revision of Accelerated Graduate Degree Program

Name of Council(s)/Committee(s):

Undergraduate Studies Council
Graduate Studies Council

Approval Meeting Date

June 8, 2021

May 26, 2022

Approval Meeting Date**Implementation Date:**

Upon Administrative Approval

Responsible Office(s) and Responsible Enforcement Official(s):

Registrar's Office, Registrar

RECOMMENDATION:

Revise the "accelerated graduate degree program" (AGDP) policy and Graduate Catalog language to retain the minimum 3.0 grade point average (GPA) while allowing individual programs the ability to establish a higher GPA requirement

Clifton Ealy Jr.

June 8, 2021

Clifton Ealy, Undergraduate Studies Council

Date

Gene Freudenburg

May 26, 2022

Gene Freudenburg, Graduate Studies Council

Date

Sarah Summy

June 9, 2023

Sarah Summy, WMU Faculty Senate President

Date

☒ Approve ☐ Disapprove ☐ Other Action

Comments:

Julian Vasquez Heilig

7/6/23

Julian Vasquez Heilig, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Date

☒ Approve ☐ Disapprove ☐ Other Action

Comments:

Edward B. Montgomery

7/17/23

Edward B. Montgomery, WMU President

Date

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RECOMMENDATION

Revise the "accelerated graduate degree program" (AGDP) policy and Graduate Catalog language to retain the minimum 3.0 grade point average (GPA) while allowing individual programs the ability to establish a higher GPA requirement upon approval through the curriculum review process.

RATIONALE/PURPOSE

Creation of the AGDP program language stated that moving from the undergraduate stage to the graduate stage in a program would be automatic if the undergraduate student retained a minimum 3.0 GPA; whereas some graduate programs have a higher admission threshold and have been hampered from using it when the AGDP is utilized. This straightforward change would allow a program to follow the usual curricular review process to establish a GPA above the 3.0 minimum while continuing the requirement that an undergraduate student would need to earn a B or better in any courses that would be applied toward the graduate degree.

STAKEHOLDERS

Undergraduate students, Graduate Faculty

HISTORY:

- a) Effective date of current version: Fall 2013, MOA 13/04
- b) Date first adopted: unknown
- c) Revision history: unknown
- d) Proposed date of next review: USC and GSC review this policy on an ongoing basis

CURRENT POLICY MODIFICATION (additions in bold and deletions with strikethrough):

**Graduate Catalog Language 2021-22
Accelerated Graduate Degree Program**

The Accelerated Graduate Degree Program (AGDP) allows students to begin accumulating credits towards completion of a master's, specialist or doctoral degree while still enrolled as undergraduates. Undergraduate students admitted to an AGDP, with senior standing, could take 5000 and 6000 level courses for graduate credit. Up to 12 hours of designated 5000 and/or 6000 level courses could be used in both the bachelor's degree and the master's, or doctoral degree. All departmental programs must be approved in advance through the regular curricular process, i.e. departmental curriculum committee, college curriculum committee, dean, Undergraduate Studies Council and Graduate Studies Council.

Admission Procedure

Participation in the AGDP by any department is optional. Each department will develop admission criteria based on the following guidelines:

1. Minimal criteria for admission will include: a cumulative undergraduate GPA of at least 3.0 based on at least 45 earned hours, 15 of which shall be earned at Western Michigan University, and additional criteria as determined by the department.
2. The student completes the online graduate application (www.wmich.edu/apply) and within the application selects the appropriate accelerated graduate degree program.

3. International students must clarify their visa status with the Office of International Student and Scholar Services before submitting an application for AGDP.
4. **Students enrolled in an AGDP program must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 throughout their baccalaureate degree, or maintain a higher GPA if required by the department. Admission to the AGDP will be revoked by the Registrar if the GPA falls below the required minimum.** ~~Students intending to enroll in an AGDP must maintain a 3.0 GPA throughout their baccalaureate degree, or their admission to the AGDP will be revoked.~~

Registration

Upon admission into the AGDP, the department advisor will meet with the student to complete the AGDP Course Approval Form.

Academic Advising, Records and Program Requirements

Departments that want to participate in the AGDP will develop a clear admissions and advising process for the AGDP. The department will send the student and the registrar an Accelerated Graduate Degree Program Course Approval form stating which graduate courses may be counted in both degrees. A copy of this form will be placed with the student's record, and the change will be incorporated into the student's undergraduate and Master's, Specialist or Doctoral program as outlined below. Graduate courses substituting for required courses within the undergraduate degree must be designated by the program as equivalent in content but delivered with graduate level rigor. Current 5000 level courses (required or elective) in the bachelor's degree must be taken at the graduate level to be double counted. The courses for the AGDP may be used to complete the undergraduate degree credit hour requirements. Those students completing an AGDP related to a master's or doctoral degree must meet the minimum number of required credits for that degree under the graduation requirements in the graduate catalog.

Administration of the program will include the following:

1. Students with senior standing who have been accepted into an AGDP could take 6000-level courses for graduate credit while undergraduates. This registration will be done by the Registrar's Office, with permission of the department and the student. This will occur in the same way that dually enrolled students are registered as undergraduates and graduates under current policy.
2. Students will pay undergraduate tuition for these 6000-level courses as long as they are undergraduates. The 6000-level courses will be included in the flat rate for tuition purposes.
3. Students will be considered undergraduates for financial aid purposes until they receive the baccalaureate degree.
4. The 6000-level courses, taken while the student is still an undergraduate, will appear on the student's graduate transcript. The grades earned in these courses will be reflected in the graduate GPA.
5. At the time when a student completes his/her bachelor's degree, the Registrar's Office staff will manually add the hours earned in the 6000-level courses to the student's undergraduate transcript. The undergraduate GPA will also be adjusted to include the grades earned in these courses.
6. The department will clearly identify for the Registrar's Office on the original proposal which 5000 and 6000 level courses are available to be double counted. Individual students will have specific courses identified to be double counted when they are admitted into the AGDP.
7. The 5000 and 6000 level courses which are double counted will be identified as such on the graduate transcript.
8. The transcript key, which is on the back of the transcript paper, will explain the double counting.

9. Both the undergraduate and graduate transcript will show that the student completed an accelerated graduate degree program.
10. If a student completes his/her bachelor's degree and then stops attending the AGDP, the graduate transcript will show the graduate courses completed.
11. It is expected that the baccalaureate degree will be awarded within one calendar year after initial enrollment in the AGDP or as determined by the department.
12. In order to progress automatically into the graduate program, a student must achieve a grade of "B" or above in each of the graduate courses being counted for the undergraduate degree, as well as maintain **the required overall GPA a 3.0 GPA overall**. Students who do not meet this criterion will have the earned grade applied to their undergraduate program only, and must apply for readmission into the graduate program. If the student is admitted to the graduate program, the department and graduate dean will determine if any credit from the bachelor's degree will be carried forward for the graduate degree. Students who complete the undergraduate degree including a "B" or above in the specified graduate courses will be admitted as graduate students (with the relevant graduate credit) in the next semester or session after receiving the bachelor's degree.

RELATED PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

The Registrar's Office already enforces a minimum GPA requirement for AGDP students and so adjusting the requirement for any programs that choose a higher GPA threshold would need to be included in their ongoing processes.

ACCOUNTABILITY

No known financial, disciplinary, or other consequences would exist for failing to adhere to the revised policy as it simply creates a new option for academic deans to assist undergraduate students.