

# DUAL UNDERGRADUATE-GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAM

## Dual Undergraduate-Graduate Degree Programs

A Dual Undergraduate-Graduate Degree Program is an institutionally approved program in which a DU undergraduate student begins taking classes toward a graduate degree program prior to earning a baccalaureate degree. Both degrees must be earned within five years of matriculation into the undergraduate degree program. Students pursuing a dual degree with a Juris Doctorate must earn both degrees within six years.

The programs may reduce a limited number of both undergraduate and graduate credit hours toward both degrees.

The amount of the credit hour reduction is variable across programs. To be admitted, a student's academic progress must demonstrate that the requirements of the program can be completed within the set time-frame.

Undergraduates still need to meet all normal core, major, minor and total credit hour requirements of their respective majors and minors before receiving the undergraduate degree. Graduate coursework is usually taken during the undergraduate "senior" year. Students should be admitted to the dual undergraduate-graduate program *before* taking graduate courses since undergraduate students generally may not take graduate courses. Usually, no more than 30 hours of electives may be used in the senior year to begin the graduate/professional program. Only graduate credit may be counted for the graduate degree. The total number of credit hours required varies by department. All requirements of the graduate or professional program need to be completed before receiving the advanced degree.

- For students enrolled in a dual degree program, the University will award the undergraduate degree at the time it is earned.
- A student who chooses not to continue on for the graduate degree may count the graduate courses, if approved as relevant by the advisor, toward the undergraduate degree (Students should visit the appropriate college or school for opt-out options and requirements).
- Students enrolled in the dual undergraduate-graduate program who have been awarded the BA/BS degree, completed all required coursework and are working on a thesis may be eligible to enroll in graduate continuous enrollment.

## Dual Undergraduate-Graduate Financial Aid

Eligibility for financial aid differs for undergraduate and graduate students and it differs for institutional aid and federal aid. Students enrolled in dual degree programs are considered graduate students for federal financial aid purposes after attaining 198 credit hours even if the student has not met the undergraduate degree requirements. Federal regulations do not allow students in dual degree programs who have completed four academic years (defined as 198 credit hours) to continue to receive undergraduate aid. Students in the law school dual degree program are aided as graduate students after three undergraduate academic years (149 hours for federal aid purposes). While undergraduate merit or need-based institutional grant aid are not available for fifth-year dual-degree students, each graduate department may offer graduate students grant or scholarship funds at their discretion. Students should contact their graduate program for details on available funding for the fifth year.

### Institutional Aid Eligibility Differs From Federal Aid Eligibility

#### *Institutional Aid*

The Financial Aid office expects first-time, first-year undergraduate students to be eligible for consideration for institutional merit or need-based undergraduate financial aid for a maximum of four academic years from the point of initial enrollment (excluding summer and interterm periods), or until the student earns the bachelor's degree, whichever comes first. For institutional aid eligibility for dual degree students the university defines four academic years as up to 12 quarters of fall, winter, spring enrollment. Students who receive any amount of credit in a quarter are considered to be enrolled. If a student is not receiving aid in one or more of those enrolled quarters, the timeline for 12 quarters of aid eligibility continues. For example, a student may not continue to receive undergraduate aid into a 13<sup>th</sup> quarter of enrollment due to not receiving aid or not accepting aid in one or more of the prior 12 quarters of enrollment. It is not the intent of this policy to cut off students from twelve quarters of fall, winter, spring institutional aid consideration, but it also is not the intent to allow students who are enrolled in dual degree programs to continue into their fifth year of enrollment as undergraduate students. Any student who has taken the undergraduate degree is no longer eligible for undergraduate institutional aid regardless of the number of quarters of aid already received.

#### *Federal Aid*

For federal aid purposes dual degree students automatically become graduate students in the next enrollment period after attaining 198 hours of earned or accepted credit. Any dual degree student who has completed their undergraduate degree requirements is considered a graduate student regardless of the number of quarters of prior enrollment. For example, a student who has accelerated their program with outside credits or additional credits during prior academic years (overload enrollment, interterms, summer, AP or IB) and completes their baccalaureate degree or reaches the credit threshold stated above is automatically treated as a graduate student for federal aid purposes regardless of the number of quarters of prior enrollment or prior aid consideration.

## Dual Undergraduate-Graduate Admission and Records Procedures

The following must be followed consistently and accurately:

- Students are admitted to dual undergraduate-graduate degree programs by the graduate admission unit. The graduate unit follows all normal admission procedures and the student must meet all admission criteria for the graduate program other than receipt of the baccalaureate degree. Students should be admitted to the dual undergraduate-graduate program as early as practical for financial aid and other reasons. They must be admitted to the dual undergraduate-graduate program by the start of the first term that the student reaches senior standing (135 earned credits).
- The effective term for admission should be the term in which the student is permitted to take graduate courses. For example, if the student's senior year begins in the fall and the student meets admission criteria and may begin taking graduate courses in the subsequent spring term, the admission term should be that spring.
- Graduate units are responsible for assuring that the student information is accurate.

**Note:** *A student who receives a bachelor's degree and was not previously enrolled in a dual undergraduate-graduate program is **not** eligible to return and enroll in a graduate program and reduce the number of credit hours for the graduate degree.*