



UNIVERSITY OF
**NORTHERN
COLORADO**

SENATE ACTION FORM

Senate Action Number: 1277

Subject: 4 + 1 Accelerated Master's programs

Reference to Senate Minutes Dated: 3/2/2026

Senate Action

MOTION: Motion to adopt these changes to the Accelerated Master or 4+1 Degree program in the graduate catalog.

VOTE: Motion approved unanimously

Response Requested:

- ☒ Approval for placement in University Catalog, Undergraduate and Graduate
- ☐ Approval for placement in University Regulations
- ☐ Recommendation to Board for placement in Board Policy Manual
- ☐ None (sent as information item)
- ☐ Other action requested/comments: _____

Harmony Newman

Digitally signed by Harmony
Newman
Date: 2026.03.05 14:25:41 -07'00'

3/5/2026

Faculty Senate Chair

Date

Administrative Review of Senate Action (unnecessary for information items):

- ☒ Reviewed by VPAA/Provost. Check ☐ if comments are attached.
- ☒ Reviewed by General Counsel. Check ☐ if comments are attached.

Presidential Action:

- ☒ Approve
- ☐ Reject
- ☐ Return to Senate for discussion/modification (comments attached)

04/10/2026

President/Designated Administrative Officer

Date

Date of Board approval (if applicable): _____

**PLEASE RETURN SIGNED ORIGINAL AND ATTACHMENT TO THE FACULTY SENATE OFFICE:
CARTER HALL 2004, CAMPUS BOX 75.**

Faculty.Senate@unco.edu

FACULTY SENATE POLICY PROPOSAL/MOTION

Subject: 4 + 1 Accelerated Master's programs

Originator/Date: Graduate School 2/16/26

APC Approved 2/16/26

Motion: Motion to adopt these changes to the Accelerated Master or 4+1 Degree program in the graduate catalog.

Purpose/Rationale: The University of Northern Colorado currently offers nine accelerated BA to MA programs, and more are under development for future catalogs. These programs allow qualified undergraduate students who wish to combine their undergraduate degree with a master's degree to begin taking graduate credits that will count towards both degrees. The current UNC graduate school policy allows these programs to count nine credits towards both undergraduate and graduate degrees. Accelerated master's programs at UNC must designate which courses may be applied to both undergraduate and graduate degrees.

Given that other Colorado universities permit up to 12 credits in such programs, and to maintain competitiveness, this proposal requests to increase the number of credits from 9 to 12. The increased graduate credits will not water down the curriculum for the relevant graduate programs since all the graduate courses to be taken by undergraduate students in the accelerated programs are designed for existing high-quality graduate programs. Faculty and programs are to ensure that the courses selected are carefully chosen, and the first one or two courses should serve as a transition between undergraduate and graduate-level expectations for students enrolled in the accelerated program.

HLC guidance allows for this change. The specific HLC guidance ([Assumed Practices B.1.c](#)) is as follows:

The institution's policy and practice assure that at least 50% of courses applied to a graduate program are courses designed for graduate work, rather than undergraduate courses credited toward a graduate degree. (Cf. Criterion 3.A.) (An institution may allow well-prepared advanced students to substitute its graduate courses for required or elective courses in an undergraduate degree program and then subsequently count those same courses as fulfilling graduate requirements in a related graduate program that the institution offers. In "4+1" or "2+3" programs, at least 50% of the credits allocated for the master's degree – usually 15 of 30 – must be for courses designed for graduate work.)

Placement(s): Throughout the graduate school catalog

Proposed Language:

Accelerated Master or 4+1 Degree program

All 4+1 programs require students to submit an application for admission to the accelerated master's program when they have:

- junior or senior standing,
- 3.0 cumulative undergraduate GPA and,
- have been officially accepted into a UNC graduate program for a term after their bachelor's degree has been awarded.

Upon admission to the graduate program, the undergraduate student works with a graduate advisor to identify up to ~~nine (9)~~ twelve (12) credit hours at the 500 level in the graduate program to which the student was admitted. The student must:

- Complete and submit the Petition to Count Work Toward the Next Higher Degree form to the Graduate School prior to completion of the undergraduate degree. No exceptions or appeals.
- Students must satisfy all requirements for both degrees.
- The 500-level courses, designated for shared credit (UG and Grad) within accelerated master's degree, apply only to the accelerated master's degree, do not automatically transfer to another UNC graduate degree, and are approved for internal transfer by Graduate School.
- The aforementioned Petition confirms the ~~nine (9)~~ twelve (12) 500 level graduate credits count towards the student's undergraduate and master's degree.
- No more than ~~9~~ 12 credits may be completed while the student is an undergraduate,
- The credits identified on the Petition are at undergraduate tuition rates. Graduate tuition rates apply to the remaining program credits.
- Students are eligible for graduate scholarships or assistantships and may enroll in 600 level courses once they hold graduate student status.

Clean Language:

Accelerated Master or 4+1 Degree program

All 4+1 programs require students to submit an application for admission to the accelerated master's program when they have:

- junior or senior standing,
- 3.0 cumulative undergraduate GPA and,
- have been officially accepted into a UNC graduate program for a term after their bachelor's degree has been awarded.

Upon admission to the graduate program, the undergraduate student works with a graduate advisor to identify up to twelve (12) credit hours at the 500 level in the graduate program to which the student was admitted. The student must:

- Complete and submit the Petition to Count Work Toward the Next Higher Degree form to the Graduate School prior to completion of the undergraduate degree. No exceptions or appeals.
- Students must satisfy all requirements for both degrees.
- The 500-level courses, designated for shared credit (UG and Grad) within accelerated master's degree, apply only to the accelerated master's degree, do not automatically transfer to another UNC graduate degree, and are approved for internal transfer by Graduate School.
- The aforementioned Petition confirms the twelve (12) 500 level graduate credits count towards the student's undergraduate and master's degree.
- No more than 12 credits may be completed while the student is an undergraduate,
- The credits identified on the Petition are at undergraduate tuition rates. Graduate tuition rates apply to the remaining program credits.
- Students are eligible for graduate scholarships or assistantships and may enroll in 600 level courses once they hold graduate student status.