

Academic Policy (Revision) (Action)

Date: April 6, 2023

College: Graduate Council

Department: Policy Committee

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1. **Policy Name:** Joint Undergraduate-Master's Degree Programs (JUMP) (Graduate Catalog)
2. **Description:** Policy to standardize JUMP program parameters university-wide. A standard policy will allow for JUMP programs to go through the curriculum process, align with accreditation expectations from Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), and ensure programs provide the highest quality of both the undergraduate and graduate degree experience."

2.1 Existing

Joint Undergraduate-Master's Degree Programs (JUMP)

JUMP programs provide academically outstanding students the opportunity to complete both an undergraduate and graduate degree in approximately five years. Qualified students who have been admitted to a JUMP program may complete a maximum of 18 graduate hours as an undergraduate student and count a maximum of 12 hours on both the undergraduate and graduate transcript as prescribed by the program. Students will apply to Graduate School upon or before earning more than 18 graduate hours. Each JUMP program has individualized admission criteria. Search "JUMP" in this catalog for a complete list of programs and contact the academic department for additional information.

2.2 Proposed

Joint Undergraduate-Master's Degree Program (JUMP)

JUMP provides academically outstanding students the opportunity to complete both an undergraduate and graduate degree in an accelerated time period. Qualified students will apply directly to an individual Joint Undergraduate Master's Program, which will make a recommendation to the Graduate School for acceptance to JUMP. JUMP students may complete a maximum of twelve (12) graduate hours as undergraduate students. For undergraduate candidates pursuing a first baccalaureate degree in combination with a Master's degree, nine (9) graduate hours may be counted on both the undergraduate and graduate transcript as prescribed by the approved program curriculum. JUMP students in graduate programs requiring thirty-three (33) or more hours may complete a maximum of fifteen (15) hours as undergraduate students. For undergraduate candidates pursuing a first baccalaureate degree in combination with a Master's degree in a graduate program requiring thirty-three (33) or more hours, twelve (12) graduate hours may be counted on both the undergraduate and graduate transcript.

JUMP students should apply for admission to the Graduate School for the corresponding Master's Program upon or before earning the maximum allowed graduate hours or upon earning the Bachelor's

degree, whichever occurs first. Students who reach the maximum number of graduate hours may continue their Bachelor's degree by taking only undergraduate courses and delaying admission to the graduate school.

Program admission criteria for the Master's degree may be waived for JUMP students at the discretion of individual program Directors and/or Committees.

All new JUMP programs require approval through the established university curriculum approval process.

Each Joint Undergraduate-Master's Degree Program may have more stringent and/or additional eligibility for acceptance and continuance requirements, including for matriculation into the Master's program. These criteria will be published in the undergraduate and/or graduate catalog. However, minimum requirements for admission and continuance in JUMP include:

For JUMP acceptance eligibility:

- A minimum of 60 credit hours earned and 15 or more credit hours remaining to complete the undergraduate degree
- A minimum of 24 undergraduate hours earned at WKU
- A minimum cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.25 for individuals earning their first baccalaureate degree
- A minimum cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.00 for individuals earning their second baccalaureate degree

For Continuance:

- Continuous enrollment (excluding winter and summer terms and extenuating circumstances, including, but not limited to, military service, parental leave, and medical leave)
- Undergraduate JUMP students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher in graduate courses
- Once admitted to the Graduate School, JUMP students must adhere to the Graduate Academic Standing policy

Failure to meet continuance requirements will result in dismissal from JUMP. Upon dismissal, graduate coursework may not be double-counted. Graduate coursework will be recorded according to the undergraduate catalog.

Graduate credits earned through JUMP may only be applied toward one undergraduate and one graduate degree. These credits may not be applied to any additional WKU programs.

Once admitted to the Graduate School, students are classified as graduate students and no longer qualify for undergraduate classification for any purpose, including financial aid. Likewise, students who have been admitted to the Graduate School and have completed their Bachelor's degree requirements are eligible for all graduate student privileges, including graduate assistantships and graduate student research grants.

Once accepted into a particular JUMP program, students may not switch programs. JUMP students at both the undergraduate or graduate level may appeal aspects of this policy to the Graduate School.

3. Rationale for Proposed Policy:

In the Academic Year, 2019-2020, the Policy Committee of the Graduate Council began to develop a university-wide Joint Undergraduate-Master's Degree Program (JUMP) policy at the request of the Graduate School. JUMP have developed without the oversight of the curriculum process. A university-wide Joint Undergraduate Master's Degree Program policy ensures minimum standards for admission and matriculation of outstanding students while maintaining rigor and integrity of the undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Utilizing the curriculum review process ensures student learning objectives at both levels are satisfactorily met. A university-wide JUMP policy is intended to provide standardization of JUMP program policy university-wide, while allowing individual programs to apply stricter standards. The maximum number of graduate hours that a JUMP student can take as an undergraduate and the maximum number of hours that can appear on both the undergraduate and graduate transcripts are better aligned with expectations for assuring that both undergraduate and graduate student learning outcomes and credit expectations associated with SACSCOC-accredited Joint Undergraduate-Graduate Programs are met. Greater flexibility for graduate credit hour maximum is provided for programs with 33 or more hours.

4. Impact on Existing Academic or Non – Academic Policies:

- 4.1 Impact on policies: Minimal impact is expected on the majority of JUMP programs. Programs that currently allow for more graduate hours than described in this policy will be required to adjust to the policy (or have a stricter standard).

Per the policy on policies 0.0003 section II D "1. Responsible Officers must ensure that the division's University Policies are up to date and revised when necessary to reflect current practice and/or procedures. Each University Policy will be reviewed by the originating unit at least every five years, and revised as necessary." Faculty responsible for JUMP programs are encouraged to monitor their programs and bring concerns to the Graduate Council.

- 4.2 Impact on populations that may be affected: The Policy Committee has consulted with associate deans, program directors, and other interested parties to assess the potential impact. Furthermore, an ad hoc committee was previously formed to also consider the creation of a policy and potential impact. As a result, adjustments to previously proposed policies were made to address as many concerns as possible, while creating a policy that best serves students, programs, and the University. Faculty responsible for JUMP programs are encouraged to monitor their programs and bring concerns to the Graduate Council.

5. Term of Implementation: Fall 2023

6. Dates of committee approvals:

Graduate Council Policy Committee

4/7/2023 (5/0)

Graduate Council

Faculty Senate

4/13/2023 (12/3/1)
