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COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

## **Accelerated Programs and Pathways Policy**

### **Policy Number 1-04**

Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania

Approved by University Senate, 4/10/2025

Issued by President Bashar W. Hanna as Policy 1-04 on 4/21/2025

Responsible Office: Office of Graduate Education

Previous Policy: PRP 3449

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for instances in which an undergraduate student may enroll in a graduate course or program at Commonwealth University (CU) of Pennsylvania as part of an effort to complete an undergraduate and graduate degree with maximum efficiency.

### **2. Scope**

The policy governs processes surrounding undergraduate and graduate students and courses and may impact students, faculty, the Office of Graduate Admissions, the Office of the Registrar, the Financial Aid Office, and the Office of Graduate Education.

### **3. Definitions, Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **3.1. Definitions**

3.1.1. University: shall mean Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania

3.1.2. Accelerated Pathway: A course plan that allows qualified undergraduate students to take graduate coursework that apply to both their undergraduate and graduate degrees, thereby reducing the number of courses required to complete both degrees. A pathway does not alter either the undergraduate or graduate program requirements.

3.1.3. Accelerated Program: A program that allows qualified undergraduate students to complete a specialized curriculum that combines their undergraduate and graduate



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course work to reduce the total number of courses required to complete both degrees. An accelerated program differs from a pathway in that it offers a specialized curriculum that differs from the full undergraduate and/or graduate program.

### **3.2. Roles and Responsibilities**

3.2.1. Procedures surrounding accelerated programs will be developed and updated by the Office of Graduate Studies in collaboration with the Graduate Council and Academic Affairs leadership.

3.2.2. The curriculum for an accelerated program must be approved through the full University and PASSHE curricular process.

## **4. Policy**

4.1. Admission to an accelerated pathway or program does not guarantee admission to the graduate program.

4.2. Students may earn up to 40% of the credits required in a Master's program and count these credits toward both their undergraduate and graduate degrees.

4.3. Any graduate coursework taken beyond the 40%, while still an undergraduate student, must be identified by the student as being applied toward their undergraduate or graduate program, and may not be used to simultaneously complete the requirements of both degrees. In no case, can undergraduate credits be applied to satisfy the requirements for the graduate degree.

4.4. Commonwealth University undergraduates who are taking graduate courses as part of an accelerated program or pathway may take their first 9 graduate credits at the undergraduate tuition and fee rate. After these 9 credits the graduate tuition and fee rates will apply. If an undergraduate student wishes to register for more than 18 credits in one semester, any overload credits (those beyond the 18 credits) will be assessed at the graduate rate.

## **5 Compliance and Enforcement**

5.1 Every Exceptions to this policy may be proposed to the dean of graduate studies.

## **6 Additional Information**

### **6.1 Supporting Documents**



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6.2 Board of Governors' Policy 1990-06-A: Academic Degrees; PASSHE Procedure/Standard 2016-25-A Guidelines for Accelerated Bachelor to Master's Degree Programs and Early/Dual Admission to First Professional Master's Degree Programs

6.3 **Related Policies** – Replaces Bloomsburg University PRP 3449 Graduate Courses in Senior Year

**6.4 Contacts for Additional Information and Reporting**

Office of the Graduate Education, Dean of Graduate Studies, Dr. Heather S. Feldhaus, hfeldhaus@commonwealthu.edu 570-389-4214