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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION Senate

DATE October 8, 2024

FROM Mary O'Brien,
Chair of Senate Graduate Studies
Committee (SGSC)



RE: Graduate General Regulation 1.3.6c Admissions to an Accelerated Master's

For Approval: At its meeting on October 8, 2024, SGSC reviewed and approved the revision Graduate General Regulations 1.3.6c Admissions to an Accelerated Master's. This gives rise to the following motion, effective **Summer 2025**:

Motion 1:

That Senate approve the revisions to Graduate General Regulation 1.3.6c Admissions to an Accelerated Master's, effective Summer 2025

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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION Mary O'Brien, Chair of Senate **DATE** 27 September 2024
Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC) 
FROM Pamela Stern, Graduate Studies
Associate Dean, Curriculum
and Policy
RE: Graduate General Regulation Change:
1.3.6c Admission to an Accelerated
Master's

Motion:

That SGSC approve the modification to GGR 1.3.6c Admission to an Accelerated Master's.

Summary and Rationale:

An accelerated admission to a master's degree program is an existing pathway for highly qualified undergraduates to take graduate courses that would apply to a future master's degree as well as to their undergraduate degree. The current Graduate General Regulations incorrectly omit the term "pathway" and instead describe the process as formal admission to master's study. Rather than admission to master's study, it is permission for an undergraduate student to enroll in up to 10 units of graduate coursework that can be applied to both the undergraduate degree and a subsequent master's degree.

The current policy requires a very high minimum cumulative grade point average (CGPA) for accelerated master's applicants, higher than is currently required for applicants with a bachelor's degree to enroll in a doctoral program. The high minimum CGPA eliminates many deserving applicants from consideration for the accelerated pathway. In particular, it discriminates against students who took difficult courses early in their undergraduate careers or who enrolled in courses outside their comfort zone. Individual academic units are the bodies best positioned to determine whether a student is an appropriate candidate for the accelerated master's pathway.

It is proposed that the minimum CGPA be reduced from 3.67/4.33 to 3.33/4.33; or 3.5/4.33 for the last 60 units of course credits. Academic units would continue to be able to require higher minimums.

For comparison, the minimum GPA requirements for admission to graduate study through the regular pathway are as follows:

Applicant to master's study with a bachelor's degree: CGPA of at least 3.0/4.33 (B), or a grade point average of at least 3.33/4.33 (B+) based on the last 60 units of undergraduate courses.

Applicant to doctoral study with a bachelor's degree: a bachelor's degree, with a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.5/4.33, or a grade point average of at least 3.67/4.33 (A-) based on the last 60 units of undergraduate courses.

As requested by SGSC, mean CGPAs for the most recent undergraduate graduands are provided below.

Year	Faculty	average GPA	+/- 1 std. dev.
2023/24	APSC	3.16	2.74 - 3.58
	ARTS	3.07	2.64 - 3.50
	BUS	3.13	2.78 - 3.49
	CAT	3.18	2.79 - 3.57
	EDUC	3.73	3.37 - 4.09
	ENV	3.12	2.63 - 3.62
	HSCI	3.10	2.71 - 3.49
	SCI	3.17	2.68 - 3.65
	SFU	3.18	2.72 - 3.64

Recommendations:

That SGSC approve this modification to align with existing and pending Graduate General Regulations.

General Graduate Regulations Change 1.3.6c Admission to an Accelerated Master's

Summary of change:

An accelerated admission to a master's degree program is an existing pathway for highly qualified undergraduates to take graduate courses that would apply to a future master's degree as well as to their undergraduate degree. The current Graduate General Regulations incorrectly omit the term "pathway" and instead describe the process as formal admission to master's study. Additionally, the current policy requires a very high minimum cumulative grade point average (CGPA) for accelerated master's applicants; higher than is currently required for applicants with a bachelor's degree to enroll in a doctoral program.

Rationale for change:

The high minimum CGPA eliminates many deserving applicants from consideration for the accelerated pathway. This discriminates against students who took difficult courses early in their undergraduate careers or who enrolled in course outside their comfort zone.

It is proposed that the minimum CGPA be reduced from 3.67/4.33 to 3.33/4.33; or 3.5/4.33 for the last 60 units of course credits. Academic units would continue to be able to require higher minimums.

For comparison, the minimum GPA requirements for admission to graduate study through the regular pathway are as follows:

Applicant to master's study with a bachelor's degree: CGPA of at least 3.0/4.33 (B), or a grade point average of at least 3.33/4.33 (B+) based on the last 60 units of undergraduate courses.

Applicant to doctoral study with a bachelor's degree: a bachelor's degree, with a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.5/4.33, or a grade point average of at least 3.67/4.33 (A-) based on the last 60 units of undergraduate courses.

Effective term and year: Summer 2025

Will this change impact current students? If yes, what is the plan for current students?
No.

FROM	TO
1.3.6c <u>Admission to an Accelerated Master's</u>	1.3.6c Admission to a Master's program through the Accelerated Pathway

<p>The minimum university requirements for eligibility for an accelerated master's are as follows:</p> <p>a) Enrollment in a Simon Fraser University undergraduate bachelor's program and the completion of 90 undergraduate credits with a minimum CGPA of 3.67/4.33;</p> <p>b) Submitted evidence from qualified referees of the student's ability to undertake advanced work in the area of interest.</p> <p>Students must satisfy any additional requirements set by the graduate program committee.</p> <p>A maximum of 10 graduate course units, used either as electives or upper division required courses at the bachelor's level, can be applied to the requirements for the master's degree.</p>	<p>In certain circumstances, advanced undergraduate students may take graduate courses while in their final year of undergraduate study.</p> <p>The minimum university requirements for eligibility for an accelerated master's pathway are as follows:</p> <p>a) Enrollment in a Simon Fraser University undergraduate bachelor's program and the completion of 90 undergraduate credits with a minimum CGPA of 3.33/4.33; or a grade point average of at least 3.5/4.33 based on the most recent 60 units of undergraduate and graduate courses. Admission to a graduate program is not guaranteed, and academic units may set higher grade point minimums.</p> <p>b) Submitted evidence from qualified referees of the student's ability to undertake advanced work in the area of interest.</p> <p>Students must satisfy any additional requirements set by the admitting academic unit's graduate program committee.</p> <p>A maximum of 10 graduate course units, used either as electives or upper division required courses at the bachelor's level, can be applied to the requirements for the master's degree.</p>
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