

Applying to Participate in the Joint A.B./A.M. Degree Program

If you are an exceptional student who brings to the University a definite commitment to a field of study in the College of Arts & Sciences and a demonstrated capacity for intensive work, you may be able to complete simultaneously the Bachelor of Arts and the Master of Arts degrees within a four-year period. The joint A.B./A.M. program is open to students approved by their departments, after completing 9 or more units of 300-level work with high attainment. Eligible students usually enter the College with some college credits already earned and/or carry more than the normal course load in regular semesters and, as appropriate, in summer school. Some departments may choose not to participate in this program. Masters' programs administered by University College, the evening division, are not eligible for the A.B./A.M. program.

The program is designed for students able to work in their chosen fields at a serious, professional level. Consequently, applicants should exhibit academic performance represented by a clear B (3.00) average throughout their programs of study, and in courses within the major field or their prerequisites no grade lower than B-. A student in the College who has achieved these academic standards and completed 9 or more units of advanced (300 level or above) course work should consult with the chair of the major department as early as possible in the junior year. Only in exceptional cases will candidates be admitted to the A.B./A.M. program after their fifth semester of study. If the department encourages candidacy, the student should confer with the Assistant Registrar of Graduate Arts & Sciences to assure completion of necessary procedures.

Once the projected course work and other requirements stipulated in the statement of intent have been approved by the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, the student may embark upon the requirements described below:

Requirements for the joint A.B./A.M. are the following:

1. At least 135 units of college and/or graduate school course work, including all academic and residency requirements for the A.B.
2. At least 30 units of graduate (400+ and 500+ level) course work in the major field beyond the minimum required for the A.B. by that department. All courses offered toward the graduate degree must be passed with a grade of B or better and may not be counted toward the major.
3. No more than 9 of the 30 graduate units should be earned in independent study, thesis preparation, or research.
4. Completion of a thesis and/or special examination such that the department can certify that the student has achieved the level of competence normally expected of candidates for the A.M. Departments may, at their discretion, add requirements such as proficiency in foreign languages.

As in all cases, actual award of each degree will be contingent on successful completion of all requirements for that degree. It is expected that A.B./A.M. students will receive both degrees on the same date. On rare occasions, a student who needs only to finish incomplete course work or final preparation of a Master's thesis in order to complete the A.M. requirements may be permitted to receive the A.B. degree one semester prior to the A.M. degree. If the outstanding Master's work is not completed within one semester, the student will no longer be part of the A.B./A.M. program, but will become subject to the requirements in force for other Master's students in the discipline in question. Extensions of this nature will be granted only with the concurrence of the major department and the Dean of the Graduate School.

Registration and Financial Assistance

A.B./A.M. students are formally admitted into the Graduate School upon completion of the approval process but continue to register for this semester as undergraduates. (They thus assure access to government aid and loan programs available only to undergraduates who have not been certified for completion of the A.B.)

As undergraduate registrants, candidates remain eligible for all of the usual conditions of undergraduate study, including consideration for financial assistance by the Student Financial Services office in accordance with rules and practices adopted by that office for all undergraduates. They are not eligible for various forms of financial aid administered by the Graduate School: University Fellowships, University Scholarships (tuition remission), Teaching Fellowships. However, they may be employed by their major departments on a part-time basis to perform duties, whether classroom-related or other, assigned by that department. Since employment by a department may have a bearing on the amount of financial aid awarded, departments should consult with the Student Financial Services office prior to hiring an A.B./A.M. student.

Exceptions to the policy of awarding no Graduate School support to A.B./A.M. students will be contemplated only if all the following conditions are met:

1. For sound reasons attested to by the major department, students are unable to complete both degrees within four years but can complete them during all or part of a fifth year and
2. Students' financial resources are insufficient to allow them to attend Washington University during the fifth year without financial aid, and
3. In view of the major department and of the Graduate School, the students' academic performance is equal or superior to that of other Master's students currently receiving financial assistance.

If a decision is made to grant aid in these circumstances, students will be admitted into the Graduate School at the beginning of the fifth year. Departments are strongly urged to submit requests for such exceptions to the Dean of the Graduate School in the spring of the preceding academic year, simultaneously with aid requests for all graduate students.