Accelerated Masters of Arts in Economics (BA/MA)

Accelerated undergraduate-graduate degree tracks are increasingly becoming more common. A Master’s in Economics provides not only professional skills but also deeper foundational knowledge. This combination attract employers and strengthens the profiles of students preparing for further study in doctoral programs. As a result, many students see a master’s degree as essential to their future success.

KU’s Accelerated MA program is available to KU undergraduates only. Please see Admissions to learn more.

Careful course selection and steady progression through the undergraduate career is necessary to ensure all requirements for both degrees may be completed within the 5-year time frame. All prospective students should discuss their interest in admission to the Accelerated Master’s program with their undergraduate advisor and the department’s graduate advisor no later than the student’s Junior year, the first semester of Year 3.

Admission’s checklist

• KU student earning Economics BA;
• on-track to complete all undergraduate degree requirements by the second semester of Senior year (Year 4);
• Major and cumulative GPA of at least 3.25; and
• has submitted an online application for the Accelerated MA program in the second semester of Junior year (Year 3)

After review of the application for admission, the Economics Department will notify the student on their eligibility to begin coursework in the program.

Final acceptance to the graduate program will occur following the completion of Year 4 and be contingent upon the following:

• Successful completion of all requirements for the bachelor’s degree;
• an undergraduate cumulative GPA of at least 3.25;
• a GPA of at least 3.25 in graduate-level coursework taken in Year 4; and
• grades of B or above in all graduate-level coursework taken in Year 4.

This accelerated program uses a carefully planned combination of prerequisite coursework, graduate-level courses taken for both undergraduate and graduate credit in Year 4, and graduate credit courses taken in Year 5. At initial enrollment in graduate coursework, each candidate must discuss a preliminary plan of study with his or her graduate advisor. This plan may be revised over time. The student must be approved to begin coursework toward the master’s prior to enrolling in any classes that are to count for both undergraduate and graduate credit.

BA Degree Requirements

Admission's checklist

• KU student earning Economics BA;
• on-track to complete all undergraduate degree requirements by the second semester of Senior year (Year 4);
• Major and cumulative GPA of at least 3.25; and
• has submitted an online application for the Accelerated MA program in the second semester of Junior year (Year 3)

After review of the application for admission, the Economics Department will notify the student on their eligibility to begin coursework in the program.

Final acceptance to the graduate program will occur following the completion of Year 4 and be contingent upon the following:

• Successful completion of all requirements for the bachelor's degree;
• an undergraduate cumulative GPA of at least 3.25;
• a GPA of at least 3.25 in graduate-level coursework taken in Year 4; and
• grades of B or above in all graduate-level coursework taken in Year 4.

This accelerated program uses a carefully planned combination

of prerequisite coursework, graduate-level courses taken for both undergraduate and graduate credit in Year 4, and graduate credit courses taken in Year 5. At initial enrollment in graduate coursework, each candidate must discuss a preliminary plan of study with his or her graduate advisor. This plan may be revised over time. The student must be approved to begin coursework toward the master's prior to enrolling in any classes that are to count for both undergraduate and graduate credit.

BA Degree Requirements

Admission's checklist

• KU student earning Economics BA;
• on-track to complete all undergraduate degree requirements by the second semester of Senior year (Year 4);
• Major and cumulative GPA of at least 3.25; and
• has submitted an online application for the Accelerated MA program in the second semester of Junior year (Year 3)

After review of the application for admission, the Economics Department will notify the student on their eligibility to begin coursework in the program.

Final acceptance to the graduate program will occur following the completion of Year 4 and be contingent upon the following:

• Successful completion of all requirements for the bachelor's degree;
• an undergraduate cumulative GPA of at least 3.25;
• a GPA of at least 3.25 in graduate-level coursework taken in Year 4; and
• grades of B or above in all graduate-level coursework taken in Year 4.

This accelerated program uses a carefully planned combination

of prerequisite coursework, graduate-level courses taken for both undergraduate and graduate credit in Year 4, and graduate credit courses taken in Year 5. At initial enrollment in graduate coursework, each candidate must discuss a preliminary plan of study with his or her graduate advisor. This plan may be revised over time. The student must be approved to begin coursework toward the master's prior to enrolling in any classes that are to count for both undergraduate and graduate credit.
MA Degree Requirements

Coursework

Upon completion of the bachelor’s degree, students must complete an additional 18 credit hours (6 courses) of graduate electives for a total of 30 graduate credit hours or 10 courses. At least 18 of the 30 hours, including the required core courses, must be in economics; but students may take up to 12 hours in related areas, such as business administration, computer science, political science, or mathematics, subject to the approval of the M.A. advisor. No more than 9 hours of economics classes may be taken at the 500 and 600 levels.

Thesis and Nonthesis Options

Candidates may pursue either a thesis or a nonthesis track.

Students electing the thesis track must complete 24 hours of formal coursework and 6 hours of thesis under the direction of a thesis supervisor. This work is to be devoted to the completion of a satisfactory thesis. An oral examination is held on completion of the thesis. Accelerated Master’s students electing the thesis option may take longer than 5 years to complete the full program.

Students electing the nonthesis track must complete 30 hours of formal coursework and demonstrate proficiency in the application of economic theory through a written examination taken during the last semester of enrollment.

Progression Requirements

Given the accelerated nature of this program, each student’s progress will be closely monitored at various points during the program:

1. Once authorized to begin coursework in the Accelerated Master’s, the student must meet with the DGS to plan the final year of undergraduate study.

2. In the final semester of undergraduate study (Year 4), the student must meet with the DGS to review the student’s performance in ECON courses. The student must earn a grade of “B” or better in each of these courses to be eligible for regular admission to the master’s degree.

3. Following completion and award of the undergraduate degree (end of final semester of undergraduate study), the admitted student will again meet with the DGS to review the course plan for the fifth year of study and update as needed. The student’s performance in the graduate-level courses taken as an undergraduate will be evaluated. To continue in the track, students must earn a combined minimum GPA of 3.25 for these courses, as well as a cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.25.

4. For those students who do not meet the minimum GPA requirement of 3.25, an alternative plan of study to address the student’s deficiencies may be developed, at the department’s sole discretion.

5. If the baccalaureate degree is not completed at the end of Year 4, the student will not be permitted to enroll in additional courses for graduate credit toward the master’s degree until the baccalaureate degree has been conferred.

Students should complete all requirements for the Accelerated Master’s within one year of receiving the bachelor’s degree. If unforeseen circumstances prevent the timely completion of the master’s degree, the student must consult with their graduate advisor to develop an alternative plan for completion.

To view sample degree plans, please visit economics.ku.edu/accelerated-masters.