Coterminal Bachelor's and Master's Degrees

Coterminal Degrees

The coterminal degree program allows undergraduates to study for a master’s degree while completing their bachelor’s degree(s) in the same or a different department. Undergraduates with strong academic records may apply for admission to a coterminal master’s program upon completion of 120 units, but no later than the quarter prior to the expected completion of the undergraduate degree. Full-time enrollment during Summer Quarters, as well as allowable undergraduate transfer credit, are also counted toward quarters of undergraduate study. Students who wish to apply for a master’s program after these deadlines must apply through the regular graduate admissions process.

The specific University residency, unit requirement, and additional policies for a bachelor's/master’s program are described under the Graduate Degrees section of this bulletin. For University application forms, see the Coterminal Forms (http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/registrar/forms/coterm) web page.

Coterminal Programs

Residency Requirement

The University minimum requirements for the coterminal bachelor’s/master’s program are as follows:

1. 180 units for the bachelor’s degree plus 45 (or higher departmental requirement, as determined by each graduate department) unduplicated units for the master’s degree.

2. The requirements for the coterminal program with dual undergraduate degrees are 225 units for the two bachelor’s degrees, and 45 units for the master’s degree.

For the 45-unit University minimum for the master’s degree, all courses must be at or above the 100 level and 50 percent must be courses designated primarily for graduate students (typically at least at the 200 level). Department requirements may be higher. Units for a given course may not be double-counted. No courses taken more than two quarters prior to admission to the coterminal master’s program may be used to meet the 45-unit University minimum requirement for the master’s degree.

Application and Admission

Application

Applications for admission to a coterminal program must fulfill the following conditions:

- Applicants must have earned a minimum of 120 units toward graduation (UTG) as shown on the undergraduate unofficial transcript. This includes allowable Advanced Placement (AP) and transfer credit.

- Applicants must submit their application and, if admitted, respond to the offer of admission no later than the quarter prior to the expected completion of their undergraduate degree. This is normally the Winter quarter prior to Spring quarter graduation.

- Applicants must meet the requirements and deadlines established by the department or program to which they are applying.

- Applicants are only permitted to apply to one coterminal program per term.

- Coterminal students must have the bachelor’s degree conferred before adding a second advanced degree program.

To apply for admission to a coterminal master’s program, students must submit to the prospective graduate department the following:

- Application for Admission to Coterminal Masters’ Program (http://registrar.stanford.edu/pdf/CotermApplic.pdf),

- statement of purpose,

- preliminary program proposal,

- two letters of recommendation from Stanford professors,

- and a current Stanford transcript.

Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores or other requirements may be specified by the prospective department.

Admission

Each master’s department is responsible for admissions/acceptance decisions for coterminal applicants. Departments or programs must admit coterminal applicants and submit the completed and approved application for admission to the Office of the Registrar no later than the quarter prior to the expected completion of the undergraduate degree. This is normally the last day of classes in Winter quarter prior to Spring quarter graduation. Students may defer admission to the coterminal program to a later quarter as long as they still meet all University and departmental requirements for coterminal admission, and the coterminal application has not yet been processed. This may require postponement of conferral of the undergraduate degree.

Admitted students must have one quarter of overlap in the undergraduate and graduate career prior to conferring their undergraduate degree. For example, if the admit term for the coterminal program is Autumn quarter then the earliest that the undergraduate degree can be conferred is Autumn quarter.

Tuition

For coterminal students, the quarter following completion of 12 full-tuition undergraduate quarters is identified as the first quarter for tuition assessment. Beginning with this quarter (13th quarter), coterminal students are subject to graduate student policies and procedures (including those described in the “Graduate Degrees” section of this bulletin) in addition to undergraduate minimum progress standards. These policies include continuous registration or leaves of absence for quarters not enrolled and minimum progress guidelines. Tuition and Fee information for 2012-13 (http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/registrar/students/tuition-fees_12-13) is available on The Office of the University Registrar web site.

Undergraduate Tuition Assessment

Students will normally remain in the undergraduate coterminal student group until the completion of 12 undergraduate quarters.

- Students in the undergraduate coterminal student group are assessed the undergraduate tuition rate, and are subject to the 20-unit maximum enrollment per quarter.
Students in the undergraduate coterminal group who have fewer than 12 quarters at Stanford but who want to enroll at the 8, 9, 10 unit graduate or graduate Engineering tuition rate may request to be moved to the graduate coterminal student group under the following conditions:

- They must have completed 180 undergraduate units. This includes transfer credit but not AP and other external test credit.
- Once students have moved to the graduate coterminal student group, they may not move back to the undergraduate coterminal student group.

**Graduate Tuition Assessment**

For coterminal students, the quarter following completion of 12 full-tuition undergraduate quarters is identified as the first graduate quarter for tuition assessment. Thus, coterminal students are changed from the undergraduate to the graduate coterminal student group in the 13th quarter and are then assessed either the regular graduate tuition rate or the graduate Engineering tuition rate.

- Students in the graduate coterminal student group are assessed the graduate tuition rate, and are subject to the 24-unit maximum enrollment per quarter.
- For coterminal students with two undergraduate degrees, the quarter following completion of 15 full-tuition undergraduate quarters is identified as the first graduate quarter for tuition assessment. Thus, coterminal students are changed from the undergraduate to the graduate coterminal student group in the 16th quarter and are then assessed either the regular graduate tuition rate or the graduate Engineering tuition rate.
- Beginning with the first graduate coterminal student group quarter, coterminal students are subject to graduate student policies and procedures (including those described in the “Graduate Degrees” section of the Stanford Bulletin) in addition to undergraduate minimum progress standards. These policies include continuous registration or leaves of absence for quarters not enrolled and minimum progress guidelines.
- Once students have moved to the graduate coterminal student group, they may not move back to the undergraduate student group.
- Coterminal students are not eligible for reduced graduate tuition rates below 8 units prior to conferral of the undergraduate degree.
- Students in the graduate coterminal student group are assessed additional graduate or Engineering tuition on a per-unit basis beginning with the 19th unit.

**Assistantships**

Students who receive Research Assistant (RA) or Teaching Assistant (CA/TA) appointments from the department prior to the 13th quarter (or 16th quarter for students completing two undergraduate degrees) are changed to the graduate coterminal student group and assessed the applicable graduate tuition rate for the quarter in which they hold the assistantship appointment. Student or department must notify Student Services Center through a HelpSU ticket to change to graduate or graduate Engineering tuition. The following conditions must apply:

- Students must have completed 180 undergraduate units (or 225 for students completing two undergraduate degrees) to be eligible for research or teaching assistantships. Advanced placement and transfer units may be used towards the 180 units (or 225 for students completing two undergraduate degrees), subject to university policies regarding the acceptance of external credit.
- Once students have moved to the graduate coterminal student group, they may not move back to the undergraduate coterminal student group even if they no longer hold an assistantship appointment.

**Graduate Tuition Option**

Students who have fewer than 12 quarters at Stanford but who want to enroll at the 8, 9, 10 unit graduate or graduate Engineering tuition rate may request to the Student Services Center to be moved to the graduate coterminal student group under the following conditions:

- They must have completed 180 units. This includes transfer credit but not AP and other external test credit.
- Once students have moved to the graduate coterminal student group, they may not move back to the undergraduate coterminal student group.
- Coterminal students should submit a HelpSU ticket to request to be moved to graduate billing.

**Degree Progress**

**Academic Progress**

Once the student is in the Graduate Coterminal Student Group (for tuition purposes), coterminal students are subject to graduate student policies and procedures, as described in the “Graduate Degrees” section of the Stanford Bulletin, in addition to undergraduate minimum progress standards.

Up until the conferral of the undergraduate degree(s), coterminal students’ academic progress is monitored by the Undergraduate Advising & Research Office (http://www.stanford.edu/dept/undergrad/cgi-bin/drupal_ual/NBY_Coterm.html) (UAR, part of the office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education) in conjunction with the graduate department. After the conferral of the undergraduate degree, the students’ degree progress is evaluated using the graduate degree progress standards and monitored by the advisor and graduate department.

Once the coterminal student is subject to graduate degree progress standards, all courses taken during a quarter, whether enrolled in the undergraduate or graduate career, are used to evaluate graduate minimum progress.

**Coterminal Course Transfer**

Coterminal students are permitted to count coursework taken in the two quarters immediately prior to their first graduate quarter toward their graduate degree (Summer quarter is not included in the two quarter back count). However, if a student is on an approved leave of absence in the two quarters prior to the admit term, the course transfer option may not be applicable. All course transfer requests should be submitted no later than the quarter prior to intended conferral quarter as course work cannot be transferred once the undergraduate degree is conferred.

**Advising and Time Limit**

In the first graduate quarter, a coterminal student is assigned an advisor in the master’s department. In planning a program of study, the student must meet the requirements for the master’s degree. The Plan is outlined on the Program Proposal for a Master’s Degree, which is approved by the master’s department by the end of the first graduate quarter. Authorizations for master’s programs expire three calendar years from the first graduate
quarter. An extension requires review of academic performance by the department.

Degree Conferral

Conferral of each degree is applied for separately by the deadlines given in the Academic Calendar (http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/registraracademic-calendar) web site. The master’s degree must be conferred simultaneously with, or after, the bachelor’s degree.

Coterminal students must have the bachelor’s degree conferred before adding a second advanced degree program. Courses may not be transferred between undergraduate and graduate careers once the undergraduate degree is conferred.