

Dual Bachelor's/Master's Degree Program

Available through the
Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering
Gillings School of Global Public Health
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

What: Opportunity for qualified students to combine a UNC-CH Bachelor's degree with a Master's degree through the Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering (ESE). The program is designed to allow students with appropriate preparation to complete the master's degree in one year beyond completion of the bachelor's degree.

Who: Students earning a Bachelor's degree in science or public health at UNC-CH wishing to combine this degree with a master's program.

How: Students entering the dual degree program must satisfy the following conditions:

- a. At the time of undergraduate graduation, the student must have completed graduate coursework in excess of minimum undergraduate credit-hour requirements in courses that are not counted toward the Bachelor's degree but are acceptable to the Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering toward the Master's degree. For a student pursuing the MS, the student must have completed nine (9) credit hours of graduate coursework beyond the Bachelor's degree requirements. For a student pursuing the MSPH, the student must have completed twelve (12) credits of graduate coursework beyond the Bachelor's degree requirements.
- b. The student must obtain the endorsement of an ESE faculty member for admission into the dual degree program. This endorsement includes willingness to advise the student in completing his/her research and a statement that the student is expected to be able to complete degree requirements based on a continuation of the observed level of effort and performance in research. This endorsement should be contained in a letter of recommendation submitted as part of the application. A list of ESE faculty and their research interests is provided here: <http://sph.unc.edu/envr/envr-our-faculty-and-staff/> .
- c. The student should complete at least one year of research experience in the laboratory or research group of his/her ESE faculty advisor for the dual degree while an undergraduate. This provides the initial portion of the Master's degree research.
- d. Students applying for this program must complete a standard Graduate School application, including the GRE exam, and meet normal ESE requirements for graduate admission.

- e. The student must be admitted into the dual degree graduate program by the ESE Admissions Committee.

When: A student should complete an application for admission to this program at the beginning of the next-to-last semester of matriculation as an undergraduate student (for a traditional four-year Bachelor's program, this would be the beginning of fall semester of senior year). A completed application will be evaluated within 30 days with the outcome being one of the following:

- a. Admission to the dual degree program (assessment that the student can, with continuing effort, complete a Master's degree in one year following graduation)
- b. Postponement of the decision until the end of the semester (assessment that the student is admissible for a standard Master's program but data are inadequate to determine if the student should be a dual degree student)
- c. Declination of admission to the dual degree program with encouragement that the application will be considered as an application to a standard Master's program (assessment that the student has satisfactory credentials for graduate admission but will not have the requisite course and research experience to be a dual degree student)
- d. Declination of admission to the dual degree program with assessment that admission to a standard master's program will be considered but is unlikely (assessment that indicators of success as a Master's student are inadequate)

Comments

- Degree requirements for dual degree students are the same as those for students admitted into the regular Master's program. None of the credits are double-counted towards the requirements for both the Bachelor's and Master's degrees. Research done while an undergraduate for credit cannot be counted towards Master's credit.
- Students admitted to the dual degree program are not required to complete degree requirements within 1 year.
- Admission into the dual degree program is not a guarantee that the student will complete degree requirements. This program requires an agreement of good will between the advisor and the student that, based on the student's academic record and demonstrated research ability, a continuing level of dedication will result in completion of degree requirements within a year.

Timing issues for students considering the dual degree program

- Three to four semesters before anticipated completion of Bachelor's program: plan coursework to accommodate all Bachelor's degree requirements and the transferable graduate credits; meet with dual degree Program Coordinator to verify program requirements; begin to identify a research advisor in ESE. Begin to complete the +1 Course Check Sheet and Contract (<https://sph.unc.edu/files/2013/08/Plus-1-Masters->

[Courseform and Contract 2016.09.20.pdf](#)) and submit it to the Student Services Office.

- One semester or summer before final year of Bachelor's program: take GRE.
- First semester of final year of Bachelor's program: apply to dual degree program; finalize identification of research advisor in ESE.
- After you have completed the contract for admission to the dual degree program (see link above) you should request that Jack or Wake send your name and PID to Dr. Weinberg to enroll you in ENVR 400. Once you have been assured that your name has been forwarded to Dr. Weinberg, begin attending ENVR 400 seminars (<http://www.unc.edu/~weinberg/400/>). If your name has not been moved forward, **your attendance at ENVR 400 seminars will not be recorded.**
- Plan coursework for dual degree year.

Summary of MS requirements

- Minimum credits required for degree: 30
- Credits completed while holding undergraduate status: 9 (these credits must not be used to fulfill undergraduate degree requirements and must be approved by the Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering as satisfying graduate degree requirements)
- Minimum credits to be completed while holding graduate status: 21
- The 30 total credits must be composed of at least 24 credits of formal course work (with a minimum of 15 of these credits from ENVR courses), at least 3 credits of research (ENVR 991) and at least 3 credits of Master's Thesis (ENVR 993).
- All MS students are required to take ENVR 400, Seminar Series (1 credit, pass/fail), which is **not counted** towards the minimum 30-credit requirement. Attendance at ENVR 400 seminars will be allocated toward the attendance requirement after the student has been admitted to the dual degree program. Students register for ENVR 400 in the semester during which the minimum cumulative attendance requirement (15 seminars) will be achieved.
- All MS students are required to take at least three credits of coursework in epidemiology and a three-credit course on an introduction to public health. ENVR 601 (Epidemiology for Environmental Scientists and Engineers) fulfills the epidemiology requirement. The introduction to public health requirement can be fulfilled by SPHG 600 (Introduction to Public Health) or PUBH 680 (Public Health Practice).

Summary of MSPH requirements

- Minimum credits required for degree: 42

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- Credits completed while holding undergraduate status: 12 (these credits must not be used to fulfill undergraduate degree requirements and must be approved by the Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering as satisfying graduate degree requirements)
- Minimum credits to be completed while holding graduate status: 30
- The 42 total credits must be composed of at least 24 credits of formal course work (with a minimum of 15 of these credits from ENVR courses), at least 3 credits of research (ENVR 991) and at least 3 credits of Master's Technical Report (ENVR 992).
- All MSPH students are required to take four core courses in public health: BIOS 600, EPID 600, HBHE 600 and HPM 600, or their approved substitutes. Students who enrolled in BIOS 600 and EPID 600 for the BSPH degree may not count the course credits towards fulfillment of the minimum graduate credit requirement.
- All MSPH students are required to take ENVR 400, Seminar Series (1 credit, pass/fail), which is not counted towards the minimum 42-credit requirement. Attendance at ENVR 400 seminars will be allocated toward the attendance requirement after the student has been admitted to the dual degree program. Students register for ENVR 400 in the semester during which the minimum cumulative attendance requirement (15 seminars) will be achieved.
- All MSPH students are required to take at least one credit of ENVR 981, Practicum, which does not count as formal coursework.