

Approval Chart for Curriculum Changes

A = Approval I = Information*

Course Number _____ or Degree Plan(s) BA (DBMM majors)

State the requested change and reason. A memo may be attached if more space is necessary.

[We propose to create 3 + 3 and 3 + 2 degree plans that would allow students to spend 3 years in DBMM before entering the MDiv (3 years) or MACM (2 years) program in our GST, basically cutting one year from the overall time normally required to earn two degrees. This plan would create an option that would allow qualified DBMM undergraduate majors in their fourth year to take 21 hours of graduate-level courses, in place of specific courses in the normal undergraduate degree plan. Specifics of the plan, its rationale, precedents, and consideration of various governing policies are all outlined in the attachment. This attachment specifically envisions a major in the Biblical Text or Biblical Languages track to move to MDiv, but we envision a variation that would appeal to a major in, e.g., the Youth Ministry track to move to the MACM. Note that this proposal envisions no changes to the graduate degree programs, and we think that it preserves the integrity of the undergraduate programs in ways that are stronger than current rules allow.]

Circle the number that corresponds to the requested change. Degree plan changes are on the second page.

COUNCIL**

	Change to a Course	Dept./School	College Academic	Deans	TEC	UGEC	UUAC	GRAD	Provost	President
1.	Title (description unchanged)	A	A	A		I			I	I
2.	Description (not affecting content)	A	A	A		I			I	I
3.	Content (substantive change)	A	A	A		I			A	A
4.	Number of hours (lecture, lab, contact)	A	A	A		A			A	A
5.	Course number within the hundred	A	A	I		I			I	I
6.	Course number beyond the hundred	A	A	A		A			A	A
7.	Prerequisites	A	A	A		I			I	I
8.	Course fee(s)	A	--	A		--			A	I
9.	From U to G or G to U	A	A	A		A			A	A
10.	Cross list with another dept: U or G level	A	A	A		A			A	A
11.	Department of record	A	A	A		A			A	A
12.	Open or close a course	A	A	A		A			A	A
13.	New course — See Adams Center for packet. This change includes combining or splitting a course(s).	A	A	A		A			A	A

* Councils may request additional information about "Information" items. These items are approved as "Consent Agenda."

**Courses offered only to students seeking teacher certification must go through the Teacher Education Council.

Note: When an academic unit does not have a council, the UGEC and/or UUAC will serve as its academic council, depending on the nature of the issue.

Approval Chart for Curriculum Changes

A = Approval I = Information

	Change to a Degree Plan	Dept./School	College Academic	Deans	TEC	COUNCIL			Provost	Faculty	President
						UGEC	UUAC	GRAD			
1.	University Requirements — Change in approved course content**	A	A	A		A			A	--	A
2.	University Requirements — Add or drop a required course from the University Requirements chart**	A	A	A		A			A	A	A
3.	University Requirements — Add or drop a course from a menu within the University Requirements**	A	A	A		A			A	--	A
4.	University Requirements — Change hours within a menu on the University Requirements chart**	A	A	A		A			A	A	A
5.	Major — Revision of major ♦ ‡	A	A	A		A			A	--	A
6.	Major — Adopt or change admission requirements	A	A	A		A			A	--	A
7.	Major — Add or discontinue	A	A	A		A			A	A	A
8.	GPA — Revise major or cumulative requirement	A	A	A		A			A	A	A
9.	Minor — Revise course selection	A	A	A		I			I	--	I
	Minor — Add or discontinue	A	A	A		A			A	--	A
10.	Degree — Add or discontinue	A	A	A		A			A	A	A
11.	Any change to a graduate degree program*	A	A	A		A			A	--	A

♦ A minimum of 30 hours is required for a major. A maximum is specified for each degree (e.g., BA, BS). The university minimum for elective hours is 6, unless the requirements of external accrediting bodies make it impossible.

‡ Program or course changes applying to any major that includes Teacher Certification will be reviewed by the college, the Teacher Education Council (TEC), and then the UUAC.

* All graduate degree plan changes must go through the Graduate Council.

** Courses that satisfy ACU's University Requirements (General Education) will normally have lower-level numbering, be free of prerequisites and corequisites, appeal to more than one or two majors, and "not narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession" (SACS 2.7.3). Departments may request exceptions to the first three criteria.

Note: The Board of Trustees is informed when a major or degree is added or discontinued.

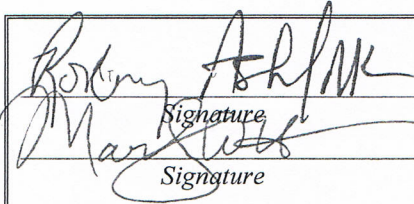
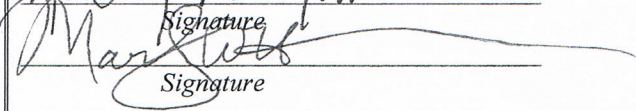
Revised 4-18-12

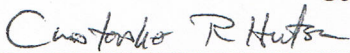
Approval Chart for Academic Information Changes

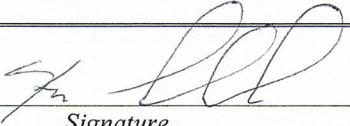
	Change to the Catalog	Dept./School	College Academic	Deans	UGEC	UUAC	GRAD	Provost	Faculty	President	Board of Trustees
1.	General requirements for graduation including course requirements that are common to all majors for all degrees*	--	--	--		A		A	A	A	--
2.	Admission requirements	--	--	--		A		A	A	A	--
3.	Policies governing academic probation and suspension	--	--	--		A		A	A	A	--
4.	Requirements for graduating with honors	--	--	--		A		A	A	A	--
5.	Other academic policy changes	--	--	--		A		A	--	A	

* The UUAC approved the clarification that "general requirements for graduation" means the seventeen items in the "General Requirements for Bachelor's Degrees" section of the catalog.

Revised 3-2-11

Department/School Chair(s)	
 Signature	2-6-13 Approval date
 Signature	3 April 2013 Approval date

College Academic Council(s)	
 Signature	4-4-13 Approval date
 Signature	 Approval date

Dean(s)	
 Signature	4-4-13 Approval date
 Signature	 Approval date

Teacher Education Council	
 Chair's signature	 Approval date

General Education Council	
 Chair's signature	 Approval date

Undergraduate Academic Council	
 Chair's signature	 Approval date

Graduate Council	
 Chair's signature	 Approval date

Provost	
 Signature	 Approval date

Faculty	
 Chair of faculty senate	 Approval date

President	
 Signature	 Approval date

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
Proposal for an Integrated Degree Plan
BA (Biblical Text/Languages) + MDiv

Proposal.

Proposed Catalog Description:

Students in the Biblical Text degree program may choose to apply for the Integrated Degree Program in order to earn both the BA (concentration in Text or Languages) and the MDiv degree in six years, rather than the usual seven years. In this plan, the BA degree consists of 130 hours, of which the final 21 hours are waived based on completion of 21 hours of graduate courses. The MDiv degree consists of 84 hours, of which a student could earn up to 12 hours of AP credit based on completion of undergraduate Greek and Hebrew and passing the GST Greek and Hebrew competency exams. Students who qualify can begin taking courses in the MDiv program in the GST.

To be admitted to the program, undergraduate students must meet the following requirements:

1. Must be admitted to candidacy as a major in Bible, which includes assessment of maturity and fitness for ministry based on diagnostic tools routinely administered in the sophomore year.
2. Must have completed at least 103 hours toward the BA degree by end of the junior year, following the recommended sequence specified in the Integrated Degree Plan.
3. Must hold a 3.2 GPA at the end of the junior year.
4. Must complete BGRK 212 with at least a "B" and pass the GST Greek Competency Exam in order to receive AP credit for the MDiv Greek requirement.
5. Must complete BHEB 472 with at least a "B" and pass the GST Hebrew Competency Exam in order to receive AP credit for the MDiv Hebrew requirement.
6. Must apply and be provisionally accepted to the MDiv program.

Students who are granted provisional admission to the MDiv Program with at least 103 undergraduate hours will be awarded the bachelor's degree upon the completion of 6 undergraduate hours (BIBM 329, BIBM 491, BIBH 651) and 21 graduate hours, following the recommended sequence specified in the Integrated Degree Plan. Students will normally complete those courses in their fourth year of study. For a typical schedule and further details, contact either the undergraduate chair of Bible, Missions and Ministry or the associate dean of the Graduate School of Theology.

Note: The GST expects that applicants will have spent at three years in undergraduate studies before admittance to the MDiv program. Therefore, a student who enters the bachelor's program

with more than 30 AP or dual credits, and who can finish the bachelor's program in three years will usually be able to follow the regular bachelor's degree plan. Students who apply to the integrated degree plan may not count more than six credit hours AP credit toward their English Gen Ed requirement.

Summary (and see chart at end of this document):

BA: 130 hours, of which 21 hours are graduate courses that will count also toward the MDiv.

The senior level course which meets the Gen Ed capstone and writing intensive requirements, BIBM 491, *Senior Capstone Experience*, will be taken simultaneously with BIBM 603, *Foundations of Theological Ministry*. Upper level elective courses from senior year will be replaced by graduate courses in similar areas

MDiv: 84 hours with no changes from the standard curriculum, except that a student can potentially receive up to 12 AP credit for Greek and/or Hebrew. In those cases the MDiv will be 72 hours.

Rationale for the Proposal.

1. Most seminaries, including our GST, normally admit a number of students who did not major in Religious Studies as undergraduates and need to get up to speed for graduate work. Many students begin the MDiv program without Greek or Hebrew and with little background in Bible, Christian History, Theology or related disciplines. Undergraduate majors at ACU, however, have a solid grounding in these areas, so that by the end of their junior year some of them are already competitive with many first-year MDiv students who majored in disciplines other than Religion or Theology.
2. Standard practice allows a graduate program to reduce the total number of hours required for a master's degree by giving AP credit based on competencies achieved through undergraduate courses. The practical effect of this system is that an undergraduate course may count double for both a bachelor's and a master's program. We propose to turn that system on its head, allowing advanced students to reduce the number of hours in their undergraduate program by receiving credit for graduate courses. The practical effect would be to allow a *graduate* course to count double for both a bachelor's and a master's program. This would make both the undergraduate and the graduate programs stronger, and it would push students to reach higher earlier in their educational careers.
3. The proposed plan would help us **recruit strong undergraduate students** who know they want careers in ministry or in academics and are highly motivated.
4. The proposed plan would help us **capture our best and brightest** undergraduate majors who otherwise might be tempted to apply to high profile seminaries elsewhere.
5. The proposed plan would help our students **reduce debt load**. Currently, ACU is not competing favorably with some sister institutions that have lower tuition and offer higher scholarships to undergraduate majors. But the possibility of saving a year's worth of student loans would help students achieve a more manageable debt load.

Compliance Issues.

Association of Theological Schools (ATS).

1. Beginning in Fall 2013, ATS will allow AP credit for 25% of a degree or 21 of the 84 hours required for the MDiv. The proposed Integrated Degree Plan would allow AP credit for students who complete undergraduate Greek and Hebrew courses and pass the GST Greek and Hebrew competency exams. This proposal is more rigorous than the ATS standards in that it allows only up to 12 hours of AP credit within the MDiv degree plan
2. The **ATS allows** a seminary to develop a 3+3 plan, whereby advanced undergraduate students are provisionally admitted to the MDiv program after only three years of undergraduate study, and the university waives the fourth year of undergraduate study based on successful completion of the first year of graduate courses. This plan preserves the **integrity of the MDiv** by keeping all 84 hours of that program intact, and it strengthens the **integrity of the BA** by granting undergraduate credit for graduate courses.
3. The 3+3 plan was fairly common in the 1950s and 60s but disappeared in the 1970s and 80s. Recently, however, several seminaries have begun exploring this plan again with the approval of the ATS.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

1. **SACS standards** allow for this sort of integrated plan.
SACS Standard 3.4.4 “The institution has a defined and published policy for evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit for transfer, experiential learning, advanced placement, and professional certificates that is consistent with its mission and ensures that course work and learning outcomes are at the collegiate level and comparable to the institution’s own degree programs. The institution assumes responsibility for the academic quality of any course work or credit recorded on the institution’s transcript. (See Commission policy “The Transfer or Transcribing of Academic Credit.”) (Acceptance of academic credit)”

SACS Standard 3.5.2. “At least 25 percent of the credit hours required for the degree are earned through instruction offered by the institution awarding the degree. In the case of undergraduate degree programs offered through joint, cooperative, or consortia arrangements, the student earns 25 percent of the credits required for the degree through instruction offered by the participating institutions. (See Commission policy “The Transfer or Transcribing of Academic Credit.”) (Institutional credits for a degree)”

2. **SACS Policy Statement: “Collaborative Academic Arrangements.”**
“Institutions describe collaborative academic arrangements in many different ways, most commonly identifying them as dual or joint educational programs, affiliations, partnerships, consortial agreements, and other similar terms. Dual enrollments—high school students taking college courses for concurrent credit—are not included in this policy.”
→Our “Integrated Degree Plan” would be an “other similar term.” The idea of “Dual enrollment” mentioned here is similar to what we are contemplating. “A dual educational program is one whereby students study at two or more institutions, and each institution awards a separate program completion credential bearing only its own name, seal and signature.”

→ This policy statement comes close to describing what we want to do, except that we contemplate a collaboration between two departments within our University and not a collaboration between two different institutions.

3. SACS standards establish a minimum of 120 semester hours for a bachelor's degree. Our proposed Integrated Degree Plan would **exceed SACS standards** with a 130-hour BA degree.

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

1. The proposed plan would violate Rule 13.103 (c):
“(c) Institutions shall not consider any hours for which a student has enrolled as part of a master's or professional degree program without first completing a bachelor's degree in the calculation of the number of hours required for a bachelor's degree or the equivalent until the student has completed a minimum of **120 hours** required for the bachelor's degree or equivalent.”
2. The THECB governs public institutions in the state of Texas and does not have jurisdiction over private institutions such as ACU. Although ACU generally complies with THECB standards on a voluntary basis, this proposal could be construed as an exception.

Precedents.

Abilene Christian University.

1. ACU policy establishes a **minimum of 128 semester hours** for a bachelor's degree. Our proposed Integrated Degree Plan would exceed ACU standards with a 130-hour BA degree, of which 21 hours would be graduate-level courses.
2. ACU has an **established precedent** of a Health Professions Cooperative Degree plan in the Biology and Chemistry departments. In this plan, ACU has awarded bachelors degrees to certain qualified students who satisfactorily completed three years of prescribed work at ACU (a minimum of 104 hours) plus one year at a recognized professional school (see *ACU 2010-2011 Catalog*, pp. 48, 52, and 125). In other words, for a 128-hour bachelor's degree in biology or chemistry, ACU has agreed to waive 24 hours (the senior year) upon satisfactory completion of the first year of graduate study in a medical school or similar health professions school.
3. The proposed BA/MDiv Integrated Degree Plan would be **comparable** to the existing Health Professions Cooperative Degree plan in that it would require 107 (instead of 104) hours of undergraduate courses and then waive the final 21 undergraduate based upon satisfactory completion of 21 hours of graduate study.
4. The proposed BA/MDiv Integrated Degree Plan would bear a **stronger ACU stamp** than the existing Health Professions Cooperative Degree plan in that all 21 hours of graduate courses in the overlapping year would be taught by ACU faculty and would bear a clear ACU imprint.

Precedents at other Institutions:

1. Sioux Falls Seminary in South Dakota offers a 3+3 degree plan in cooperation with two local undergraduate institutions. This program, approved by the ATS and the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, is essentially the format we are proposing.
(<http://www.sfseminary.edu/about/index.php?id=179&rootid=173&parentid=173>)
2. Reportedly ATS is aware of at least four other seminaries around the country that are currently exploring 3+3 plans similar to the one proposed here.
3. SMU Lyle School of Engineering offers a “4+1 Accelerated Master’s Degree Program” that allows students to apply during their junior year of undergraduate studies to begin taking up to 9 hours of graduate courses that will count toward both bachelor’s and master’s degrees.
(<http://www.smu.edu/Lyle/Undergrad/ProspectiveStudents/Academics/UndergradAcceleratedProgram.aspx>)
4. UT Austin McCombs School of Business offers an “Integrated MPA Degree Plan” that allows students to earn BBA and MPA simultaneously.
(<http://new.mcombs.utexas.edu/MPA/Integrated-MPA/Curriculum/Degree-Requirements.aspx>)

Final Considerations.

The following elements will also help make the proposed Integrated Degree in Biblical Text a good choice for participating students:

1. Students will still meet all Gen Ed requirements including the Capstone course and Writing Intensive requirement.
2. Students who choose this route will still participate in the DBMM Senior Blessing.
3. DBMM scholarships will be applied the first 3 years of the Integrated Degree and GST scholarships for the last 3 years.
4. Students who qualify for admittance into the DBMM will have the tests administered at that time used, with additional profiles, for their admittance into the GST.
5. Students will have at least 9 free elective hours to be taken in other graduate programs at ACU.
6. Students who will begin GST mentoring in year four (first year in the GST).

Draft Integrated Degree: BA Biblical Text Fast Track MDIV

This is a sample schedule to illustrate how long it will take to complete this degree plan. Additional semesters may be necessary if you are required to complete courses listed in the right-hand column or if you repeat courses. Consult with your academic advisor before changing the sequence of courses. Some courses are not offered every semester and **some courses have prerequisites**. Check the course description in the current catalog for details. Failure to complete courses in the recommended sequence may delay graduation.

FR Fall (18 hours)	BIBL 101 Jesus: Life & Teachings (Majors)	ENGL 111 Composition & Rhetoric	CORE 110 Cornerstone	BGRK 221 NT Greek Begin I	Science (Courses in different areas- see ACU catalog)	Social Science/Humanities/ Fine Arts (See ACU catalog)	Required if condition of Admission:
FR Spring (18 hours)	BIBL 102 Early Christians: Life, Lit & Comm (Majors)	ENGL 112 Composition & Literature	Math 120 or higher Quantitative Reasoning	BGRK 222 NT Greek Begin II	Social Science/Humanities/ Fine Arts (See ACU catalog)	ENGL 200 - 299 Literature	UNIV 011 Learning Strategies
SO Fall (16 hours)	BIBL 211 Message of OT (Majors)	COMS 211 Speech & Rhetoric (pre-req ENGL 111/112)	CORE 210 Identity & Community (pre-req ENGL 112/CORE 110)	BGRK 331 Elem. Greek Readings I	PEAC 100 Lifetime Wellness (1hr)	Science (Courses in different areas- see ACU catalog)	May be required based on ACT or SAT scores: MATH: MATW 019 MATW020 MATW 030
SO Spring (16 hours)	BIBL 320 Intro to Biblical Interpretation	ENGL 200 - 299 Literature (BA requirement)	BIBL 460, 453, 460, or 461 (non-duplicative)	BGRK 332 Elem. Greek Readings II	PEAC Exercise Activity (1 hr)	Track: BIBL 451 The Pentateuch	ENGLISH: ENGL 003 ENGL 004 ENGL 106 ENGL 006 ENGL 107 ENGL 007
JR Fall (18 hours)	BIBL 439 Teaching for Spiritual Formation	BCOR 310 God & the Good Life (pre-req junior standing)	BIBM 493 Preaching	Elective BHEB 471 Intro to Hebrew I	PEAC Exercise Activity (1 hr)	Track: BIBL 365 General Epistles	
JR Spring (17 hours)	BIBT 379 The Church or BIBT 491 Theology (Theology)	BMIS 420 Gospel in a Multi-Cultural World (Cultural Competency)	BIBM 391 Ministry in Context (pre-intern)	Elective BHEB 472 Intro to Hebrew II	General Education Elective (2 hours)	Track: BIBL 452, 453 or 454 (non-duplicative)	
SR Fall (15 hours)	Elective BIBM 603 Found Theol Ministry	BIBM 602 GST Orientation (0 credit)	BIBM 329 Field (2 hr) BIBM 491 Sr Capstone (Writing Intensive) 1 hr	** Grad Elective AP Greek (6 hours)	BIBH 380, 383, or 432 (Church History) BIBH 651 History of Christianity I	Track: BIBL 458 The Synoptic Gospels	Required only if unsatisfactory in High School: SCIENCE: 3 hrs FOREIGN LANGUAGE: 6 hrs
SR Spring (12 hours) (18 hours)	Elective BIBM 657 Contexts of Ministry	**Grad Elective (January)	Elective BIBH 652 History of Christianity II	Elective AP Hebrew (6 hours)	Elective BIBL 620 Adv Intro NT		
Year 5 Fall (15 hours)	(BIBM 629 or 609) = Context Immersion, summer and/or Year 5	BIBL 610 Adv Intro OT	BGRK or BHEB Elective	BIBM 648 Chr Spirit Form	**Grad Elective	21 hours of undergraduate courses waived on completion of designated 21 graduate hours.	
Year 5 Spr (12 hours)	**Grad Elective	**Grad Elective (January)	**Grad Elective	**Grad Elective		BA awarded on completion of 130 hours, of which 21 are graduate hours.	
Year 6 Fall (12 hours)	BIBM 658 Leading in Contexts	BIBH 664 Adv Restoration Hist	BIBD 660 Systematic Theology I	BIBL 621 NT Theology or elective		MDiv awarded on completion of 84 hours in the MDiv degree plan, of which 12 may be granted as AP credit for undergraduate language courses.	
Year 6 Spr (12 hours)	BIBM 679 Theological Reflection in Practice	BIBL 611 OT Theology or elective	**Grad Elective	**Grad Elective (January)			

Each course is 3 hours unless otherwise noted.

** The 33 hours of electives must include 9 hours text, 3 theology, 3 additional history or theology, 3 mission, 6 ministry or mission, and 9 hours of free electives.