

Registration of Undergraduates in Graduate Courses

Policy

From the Undergraduate Catalog:

Registration in Graduate Courses for Undergraduate Credit

All undergraduate students who wish to take a graduate course for undergraduate credit should see the department in which the course is offered for the appropriate petition and procedures. The credit level will be changed to undergraduate after the course is graded. Prerequisites are:

1. Junior or senior standing and acceptance into an academic major or approved special major;
2. A minimum GPA of 3.0 overall, including transfer credit and completion of prerequisites required for the graduate course; and
3. Written recommendation from the course instructor to clearly show the academic necessity and rationale for taking the course, and the endorsement of the department chair.

Registration in Graduate Courses for Graduate Credit

Undergraduate students with senior standing and a minimum GPA of 3.0 are eligible to take graduate courses for graduate credit with the permission of the academic department. Undergraduate students may take no more than two graduate courses (not to exceed 8 credit hours). **Note: This 8-credit-hour limit does not apply to students currently enrolled in an SED-registered combined degree program.** These courses may not be applied to the minimum of 120 undergraduate credit hours required for the bachelor's degree; however, these courses may later be applied toward a UB post-baccalaureate degree program.

Guiding Principles

It is important to note that undergraduates taking graduate courses are paying undergraduate tuition. SUNY guidelines are clear that campuses must establish and consistently apply policies limiting the opportunity for an undergraduate student to enroll in graduate courses.

Since graduate credit may eventually be applied to meeting degree requirements in a graduate program, the syllabus and requirements of the course should not be modified because the student is an undergraduate. The course grade will appear on the student's transcript, which the institution certifies is an accurate reflection of the student's work.

Students who do not meet the minimum requirements for taking graduate courses as set forth in the policy are less likely to succeed, and should only be approved to register for courses in rare circumstances. In addition, students with unresolved Incomplete grades are unlikely to succeed in graduate level courses. Students should be guided to complete Incomplete courses prior to seeking rigorous graduate coursework.

The suitability of undergraduate enrollment in graduate courses is an academic decision appropriately monitored at the decanal level. UB relies on decanal review of the registration of undergraduates in graduate courses in order to insure that criteria are being met and that instructional resources are being properly managed.

Process

Academic departments have the authority and ability to force-register an undergraduate into a graduate course. When doing so, the following procedure should be followed:

- 1) Undergraduate students considering a graduate course should consult with the instructor well in advance of the semester and be prepared to confirm that they are qualified and would benefit from the course.
- 2) The student should complete the “Form for Undergraduate Registration in a Graduate Course” and submit it to the instructor. If the instructor believes that the student is qualified to take the course, he or she should complete and sign the form and forward it to the department chair or designee.
- 3) The department chair or designee should confirm that the student meets the minimum criteria for registration in graduate coursework, including minimum 3.0 GPA (required), acceptance to major (required), Junior/Senior status (required), and no Incompletes (recommended).
- 4) The department chair or designee should notify the student and the instructor regarding the determination on the student’s petition.
- 5) **If the student wishes to have the graduate course count as undergraduate credit**, the form must be forwarded to Academic Processing Services so that appropriate conversion of credit can be recorded on the student’s transcript.
- 6) All forms should be copied to the cognizant dean or designee.

FAQs

Question: How does registration in graduate courses affect a student’s financial aid?

Answer: Students who receive grants and/or scholarships from New York State (i.e. TAP, Academic Excellence Scholarships) should be informed that they must be enrolled in a minimum full-time credit-hour load (12 credit hours) of undergraduate courses that apply to their approved degree program in addition to the graduate course(s). Graduate courses that students take for undergraduate credit are counted in this minimum 12 credit hours, but graduate courses that students take for graduate credit are not. **In other words, in order to**

maintain New York State financial aid, students must register for 12 undergraduate credit hours in addition to any graduate courses taken for graduate credit. If this regulation is not followed, students may lose financial aid or UB may incur a financial penalty during state audits.

Question: What if the semester is over and a student notices that a course which should have been for undergraduate credit is showing on his or her record as graduate credit, or vice versa?

Answer: Students who have an incorrect listing of course level on their records should submit a Petition for Change of Course Level and/or Student Division. See the document, "Student Withdrawal from a Combined Degree Program and/or Retroactive Conversion of Graduate to Undergraduate Credit" for the appropriate process.

Question: There used to be a due date for undergraduate registration in graduate courses. Is there still a due date for these forms?

Answer: Like all registration, undergraduates must be registered in graduate courses within the time period for adding courses for a given semester. Since the form must be completed prior to the student being force registered into the class by the department, it is expected that this form will be completed prior to the end of the add period for that semester. In order for graduate credit to be converted to undergraduate credit, the form must be submitted to Student Processing Services no later than the last day of the semester. Late submissions should use the "Form for Student Withdrawal from a Combined Degree Program and/or Retroactive Conversion of Graduate to Undergraduate Credit."