Faculty Senate Routing Form
(action/proposal attached)

I. Item Title: Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's (ABM) Framework

a) Brief Description: Approved a framework for Departments to use in proposing ABM programs

b) Initiated by: APRC

II. Faculty Senate Action: ☑ approved ☐ not approved ☐ other date: 4/20/2016

Comments: ____________________________

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Vote: ☑ Vote by Ballot: 28 Ayes; 3 Nays; 0 Absentions
FS Secretary signature: ____________________________ date: 5/6/16

III. Provost: ☐ for information ☐ Recognition of Receipt ☑ for action.............. ☑ approved ☐ not approved

Comments: ____________________________

__________________________

Person responsible for Implementation: ____________________________
Provost signature: ____________________________ date: 5/6/16

IV. Chancellor: ☐ for information ☑ Recognition of Receipt ☐ for action.............. ☑ approved ☐ not approved

Comments: ____________________________

__________________________

Chancellor signature: ____________________________ date: 6/30/16

Once finalized copies will be returned to the Provost Office’s representative who will scan and distribute electronically to:
Chancellor
Provost
Chair of Faculty Senate
Secretary of the Faculty Senate
Associate Provost (for catalog and handbook)
Associate Dean of Graduate School (for catalog)
Others (i.e. person responsible for implementation)
Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's (ABM) Framework

Western Carolina University (WCU) offers an Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's (ABM) Framework. The ABM Framework allows qualified undergraduate students to complete the requirements for both a bachelor's and master's degree at an accelerated pace, in approved, participating programs, by double-counting up to 12 graduate-level credit hours taken after admission into the ABM track.

ABM Student Eligibility Requirements
1. Undergraduate students must have completed a minimum of sixty (60) credit hours in their undergraduate degree program.
2. Transfer students must have earned a minimum of 24 credit hours at Western Carolina University.
3. Students must have a minimum cumulative WCU grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 at the time of application to the ABM track, and must maintain the 3.00 GPA through completion of their bachelor's degree.
4. Individual departments may impose stricter eligibility requirements for their ABM track.

Application to the Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's (ABM) Track
1. A prospective ABM student that meets the eligibility requirements above should schedule a meeting with her/his undergraduate and graduate program directors to develop a tentative plan of study for her/his bachelor's and master's degree programs, and to discuss the ABM requirements.
2. The prospective ABM-track student should be given a copy of the program-specific ABM guidelines at that meeting.
3. The student must submit, while still an undergraduate, the standard application for admission to the Graduate School including an application, application fee, and all required admission materials.
4. Upon review of the submitted application materials, the graduate program director, in consultation with the appropriate undergraduate advisor, department head or school director for the student's program, will make a recommendation to the Graduate School to accept or deny a student admission to the master's program, contingent on meeting the ABM eligibility and participation requirements.

Requirements for ABM Participation and Graduation
1. Students must complete their bachelor's degree prior to entering the associated master's degree program. Consequently, ABM students may not elect to by-pass the bachelor's degree.
2. Students must receive a grade of B or higher in the double-counted graduate-level courses. Graduate courses with a grade below a B can count toward the bachelor's degree but cannot be double-counted between the two degrees.
3. No more than 12 credit hours of graduate-level work may be counted towards the requirements of both degrees, and no more than 12 graduate-level credit hours may be taken before conferral of the bachelor's degree.

Continuing ABM Eligibility

1. It is the responsibility of the student to recognize her/his eligibility requirements.

2. If a student completes the bachelor's degree requirements with a cumulative GPA of less than 3.000/4.000, then she/he needs program approval to continue to pursue the master's degree. Individual departments may have higher requirements and a failure to meet these requirements will make a student ineligible to participate in the ABM track.

3. If a student becomes ineligible to participate in the ABM track, the program director must inform the student in writing of her/his ABM ineligibility. A copy of this letter to the student must be sent to the Graduate School.

4. A student who is ineligible to participate in or withdraws from the ABM cannot double-count any courses for both the bachelor's and master's degrees.

Withdrawal from the ABM Program

A student may withdraw at any time from an approved ABM program by informing the graduate program director in writing. A copy of this request must be sent to the Graduate School.

After being admitted into Graduate School and upon conferral of the student's bachelor's degree with a 3.000 GPA or higher, the student's records will be updated to reflect graduate-level enrollment. At that time, the student will be officially considered to be a graduate student at WCU and may be eligible for fellowships, assistantships, scholarships, and financial assistance available for graduate students.