Joint BA/MA in Divinity

Department Website: https://divinity.uchicago.edu/MAprogram (https://divinity.uchicago.edu/MAprogram/)

The two-year MA program is recommended for students who are aiming for a doctorate or an academic career or who want to improve their professional competitiveness through an extended course of study.

In the two-year MA program, students acquire foundational knowledge in the study of religion and its adjacent fields. Students have the opportunity to study the cultures, languages, thought, practices, and institutions of religious traditions, both ancient and modern. The two-year MA program prepares students for doctoral study in religion or related fields. Our MA students have been accepted into our own PhD program and competitive programs elsewhere. MA students can also apply their knowledge in a variety of professional contexts requiring a graduate degree. Graduates of our master's programs have gone on to successful careers in consulting, non-profit administration, secondary education, community engagement, journalism, and advocacy.

The five-year joint bachelor's/master's program permits undergraduate students to begin the Divinity School's two-year MA program during their fourth year in the College. Successful students earn a bachelor's degree at the end of their fourth year and a master of arts in divinity (MA) degree at the end of their fifth year.

Undergraduate students who wish to complete both degrees in five years should begin by discussing this option in the Autumn Quarter of their third year with their College adviser and with the BA adviser in their major, followed by a conversation with the Director of MA Studies in the Divinity School.

Undergraduate students pursuing this option are in "concurrent residence" beginning in the Autumn Quarter of their fourth year at the University and remain in this status for three contiguous quarters. Upon completion of the BA at the end of the fourth year, the students continue to be registered as graduate students for three contiguous quarters in the second year of the Divinity School's MA program.

Students pursuing joint degrees should be aware that they will be charged at the graduate tuition rate in their fourth year of study. College aid can be applied toward tuition charges in the fourth year of study but will not extend into the fifth year. Students should check with the Divinity School to pursue the possibility of supplemental aid.

Eligibility

Students who are given permission to enroll in the joint program must have demonstrated a record of uncommon excellence and be sufficiently advanced in the completion of their undergraduate degree requirements. The academic demands on students enrolled in the joint program are significant. In order to assess their promise to succeed in this program, the Divinity School carefully reviews all MA applicants based on their academic achievements in the College, as well as on the quality of their submitted application materials.

Applicants should have a minimum GPA for their undergraduate work comparable to that required for honors in their major. By the time they enter concurrent residence status, applicants should have completed 39 of the required 42 courses, including their general education requirements. Furthermore, applicants are encouraged to have completed by the end of their third year in the College several courses that are relevant to the academic study of religion. Graduate courses taken by a student prior to their fourth year of study cannot be counted towards the MA degree.

Students pursuing a BA project are typically expected to register for a BA workshop in their fourth year. This workshop counts as a course in the undergraduate program and is in addition to the graduate courses associated with the MA curriculum. Joint degree candidates should be aware that registration for a fourth course in any term may result in higher tuition.

Registration, Tuition, and Financial Aid

To graduate with both the BA degree and the MA degree, students are required to spend at least three quarters of the undergraduate course of study in full-time registration status in the Divinity School's MA program (at least three courses per quarter) and an additional three quarters of full-time registration in the Divinity School's MA program.

Students pursuing the joint degree program should be aware that they will be charged at the graduate tuition rate in their fourth year of study. College aid can be applied toward tuition charges in the fourth year of study but will not extend into the fifth year. Students are strongly encouraged to check with the College's Financial Aid office to see if their financial aid will be affected during their fourth year. Students should also check with the Divinity School to pursue the possibility of supplemental aid.

In the second year of the MA program, students are eligible for financial aid from the Divinity School on the same terms as any other second-year graduate student in the Divinity School's MA program.

Program Requirements

The Divinity School's two-year MA course of study prolongs registration at the University to five years. Students are expected to complete the BA requirements at the end of the fourth year in the College to be allowed to continue into the second year of the MA program and receive their BA at the end of the fourth year in the College.

Three graduate-level courses may be double counted (i.e., applied to the requirements for both the BA and MA degrees). Students may petition their Director of Undergraduate Studies to apply the three graduate-level courses to their undergraduate major, or the courses will be applied to general electives.

Graduate courses taken during the second or third year in the College may not be counted toward the BA/MA in the Divinity School.

Students enrolled in the second year of the Divinity School's MA program as part of this joint BA/MA program will need to fulfill the same requirements as graduate students who have been admitted to the MA program through the Divinity School's regular admissions process. Information on the program requirements of the MA can be found on the MA Program website (https://divinity.uchicago.edu/admissions/MAprogram/).

How to Apply

Students apply to the five-year joint BA/MA program during their third year in the College. See the Divinity School website (https://divinity.uchicago.edu/jointBAMA/) for deadlines.

- Divinity School Application for Graduate Admission (https://apply-divinity.uchicago.edu/apply/)
- Candidate Statement reflecting intellectual influences and professional goals
- Academic Transcripts
- Three Letters of Recommendation
- Current Resume or CV
- Writing Sample, between 15 and 25 pages
- Application Fee: $75 (waiver available)