Accelerated Bachelor’s – Master’s (ABM) Programs at KSU

Charles Amlaner, D.Phil.
Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate College
Kennesaw State University
KSU’s Profile Today

• Located 20 miles North of Atlanta, GA
• Part of University System of Georgia (35)
• 3rd largest university in Georgia (UGA, GSU)
• Fastest growing university in Georgia (4-5%/y)
• 22,200 undergraduates + 2,100 graduates
• 78 academic programs
  – 47 Bachelor’s
  – 27 Master’s
  – 4 Doctoral
Early Evolution of KSU’s ABM

- **1986** - “Graduate Credit for Undergraduates”
  - Graduate credit **NOT USED** in Bachelor’s degree
  - 3.0 GPA minimum in UG Major
  - Up to 6 graduate credit hours allowed
  - Within 6 semester hours of degree completion

- **1999** - “Bachelor’s – Master’s Degree Option”
  - Credit applied to Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees
  - 3.5 GPA minimum in UG Major
  - Up to 9 graduate credit hours allowed
  - Within 30 semester hours of degree completion
Modern Version of Our ABM

• 2002: Renamed “Accelerated Bachelor’s – Masters Program” (ABM)

• ABM program was formalized
  — Approved by Graduate College governance process
  — Approved by the USG - Board of Regents
  — Approved by SACS

University System of Georgia
Creating A More Educated Georgia

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
ABM Admission Characteristics

• 3.5 GPA overall at entry
• Within 21 semester hours of BA/BS graduation
• Permission of undergraduate program Chairperson for up to 9 credit hours of graduate courses in Bachelor’s degree program
• Individual Program of Study required
• Meet all graduate admission degree requirements including required standardized tests (e.g., GRE)
• Approval of the Graduate Dean
• ABM’s pay undergraduate tuition rates on graduate credit hours
Bachelor’s Demographics

• 45% start in Fall Semester, 55% start in Spring
• 85% stay with major; **15% pick new program** *
• Most popular undergraduate majors:
  – Accounting
  – Information Systems
  – Mathematics
  – Psychology *

* Source: University data.
Master’s Demographics

• 9 Master’s degrees currently approved:
  – Business Administration*
  – Public Administration
  – Information Systems*
  – Conflict Management
  – Professional Writing
  – Teaching (Math, Science, English, Art Education, Foreign Language, TESOL)
  – Applied Statistics*
  – American Studies
  – Accounting

*most popular ABM degrees
Last 4 Year ABM Outcomes

• 41 ABM undergraduates admitted

• 20 ABM students have graduated

• 9 ABM students stopped out and transferred their graduate credits to another university

• 12 ABM students are scheduled to graduate this year
Challenges To Be Resolved

- **Streamlining** undergraduate program level review and Chairperson’s approval process
- **Time intensive tracking** required for each ABM student’s Program of Study
- **Manual entry** of graduate courses (Banner Registration Override presently required)
- Address issues of ABM students **stopping out** once undergraduate degree is completed
- **Greater awareness** of ABM benefits and availability to UG’s and departmental advisers
Future Plans for the ABM Track

• Broaden ABM’s to all (27) master’s degrees
• Increase ABM’s 9 credit hours up to 15 hours
• Reopen ABM to last 30 semester hours
• Automate student progress tracking
• Permit year-round enrollment
• Strategic marketing of ABM program benefits