

Combined BS and MA Program in Economics

Overview of the combined program

The combined B.S. plus M.A. program in economics is designed to allow B.S. students the opportunity to earn a high quality STEM designated M.A. in economics with two additional semesters of study beyond the B.S. degree. Students who arrive at Syracuse with AP credit may be able to complete both degrees on a more accelerated timetable. High-level industry positions, as with opportunities in the financial sector, are placing increasing emphasis on advanced analytic and data skills. Ph.D. programs in economics also increasingly favor applicants with prior M.A. degrees. The combined B.S. and M.A. program in economics will provide students with sought after skills and credentials.

Application process

Applications to enter the M.A. portion of the combined degree program will normally be submitted at the end of the spring semester of the junior year. Applications are invited once all of the following requirements are met:

1. Completed at least five semesters at Syracuse University or equivalent.
2. Declared the B.S. major in Economics at Syracuse University.
3. Completed the five upper-level mandatory courses for the B.S. degree in Economics including:
 - ECN 302, Intermediate Macroeconomics
 - ECN 311, Intermediate Microeconomics for B.S. majors (requiring advanced math skills)
 - ECN 505, Mathematical Economics
 - ECN 521, Economics Statistics for B.S. majors (requiring advanced math skills)
 - ECN 522, Undergraduate Econometrics

Interested students are encouraged to meet with the director of the M.A. program before applying. The application package typically requires at least one letter of recommendation from a Syracuse University Economics faculty member, the student's C.V., a Statement of Purpose, and the student's transcript. GRE and the TOEFL scores will be waived for Syracuse economics majors.

Students accepted for graduate study as part of the combined BS-MA program will typically begin the M.A. portion of the program following completion of their third year of study (six semesters) but are not fully matriculated as graduate students until all requirements for the B.S. degree have been met. The student would normally be certified for the bachelor's degree at the end of the fourth year and for the master's degree at the end of the fifth year.

Degree Requirements

All regular requirements for the B.S. in Economics must be satisfied to obtain the B.S. degree in economics. This includes earning a minimum of 33 credit hours in economics along with the minimum 120 credit hours necessary to meet College of Arts and Sciences requirements.

The M.A. degree requires 30 credits (ten courses). However, up to four courses (12 credit hours) can be counted towards both the bachelor's and the master's degrees. Courses eligible for dual credit include ECN 505 and ECN 522, which are required for the B.S. degree, and any additional 600-level or higher courses that meet the requirements for the M.A. as described below. Allowing for dual credit courses, the typical student pursuing the combined degree will need to take 18 credit hours (six courses) in their fifth year to complete the master's degree.

A further feature of the M.A. is that up to 15 credit hours (five courses) can be at the 500 level including ECN 505 and ECN 522. All other courses must be at the 600 level or higher. Graduate school guidelines require that the cumulative grade point average for courses taken for credit towards the M.A. degree in Economics (including ECN 505 and ECN 522) must be 3.0 or higher.

Courses taken to complete the M.A. in economics must be approved by the director of the M.A. program. In addition to ECN 505 and ECN 522, these will typically include the courses below or equivalent substitutes:

1. Theory and econometrics courses (12 credits)
 - a. ECN 601, Microeconomic Theory (M.A. level), with minimum grade B
 - b. ECN 602, Macroeconomic Theory (M.A. level), with minimum grade B
 - c. ECN 621, Econometric Theory (Ph.D. level)
 - d. ECN 623, Program Evaluation – Applied Econometric Methods (Ph.D. level) or ECN 622 (Ph.D. level) for a more theoretical course in econometrics.
2. Elective Courses (12 credits) at the 500 level or higher level, including PhD courses.

Differences relative to the stand-alone M.A. degree in economics

Relative to the stand-alone M.A. the M.A. earned through the combined program has the following key features.

- Up to four courses provide dual credit towards completion of the B.S. and M.A. degrees. This includes ECN 505 (Mathematical Economics) and ECN 522 (Undergraduate Econometrics), and typically two additional 600-level courses.
- Four 600-level graduate courses would be taken in the senior (fourth) year as described in the sample plan of study below. This ensures that necessary prerequisites are in place prior to the fifth year, while also earning additional course credit towards completion of the M.A. degree.
- All elective courses for the M.A. portion of the combined program must be approved by the M.A. director who serves as the student's faculty advisor.
- All other features of the M.A. portion of the combined program are as for the stand-alone M.A. degree.

Sample Plan of Study

Below is a sample plan of study that would allow a student to complete the B.S. and M.A. degrees in five years. The plan assumes the following:

- By end of the fourth year, the student will have earned 12 credit hours (four courses) that would count towards completion of the M.A. degree, including courses that count for both the B.S. and M.A. in economics as described above.
- The student takes three courses in both the fall and spring of the fifth year to complete the 30 credit hour requirement for the M.A.
- The credit hours accumulated for the M.A. portion of the combined degree under the plan below are:
 - 3 credits for ECN 505 (which also counts towards the B.S.)
 - 3 credits for ECN 522 (which also counts towards the B.S.)
 - 6 credits for two 600-level courses taken in the senior year (which also count towards the B.S.)
 - 9 credits in the fall of the fifth year
 - 9 credits in the spring of the fifth year

It is necessary to complete ECN 522 (undergraduate econometrics) or an equivalent substitute before enrolling in ECN 621 (PhD level econometrics). It is also necessary to complete two PhD level courses in econometrics (ECN 621 and 622/623) and the two M.A. level courses in micro and macro theory (ECN 601/602) before enrolling in economics PhD level elective courses. Taking the sequencing of these courses into account, a sample plan of study that would allow a student to complete the M.A. portion of the combined degree in their fifth year is as follows:

Junior Year

Fall semester: ECN 505 and ECN 521

Spring semester: ECN 522

Senior Year

Fall semester: ECN 601 and ECN 621

Spring semester: ECN 602 and either ECN 622 or ECN 623

Fifth Year

Fall semester: Three elective courses at the Ph.D. and 500 level.

Spring semester: Three elective courses at the Ph.D. and 500 level.