

ACCEND Program Handbook, 2026-2027

Purpose of the ACCelerated ENgineering Degree (ACCEND) Programs

The Accelerated Engineering Degree program provides qualified students the opportunity to earn an undergraduate degree and a graduate degree in an accelerated time frame. The programs provide students opportunities to complete both degrees in a shorter time frame than the traditional path so that students can enter the workforce with qualifications that distinguish them from their peers, or enter a PhD program more quickly than is possible through the traditional path.

It is important that ACCEND students understand the requirements for successfully completing the program. If you have questions, please see your undergraduate program academic advisor, or the CEAS Graduate Studies Office in 895 Rhodes Hall-513-556-1582, engrgrad@uc.edu. For questions about specific graduate programs, please see the table below. However, students not yet approved for ACCEND should first contact Julie Steimle, prior to reaching out to contacts in Business, Pharmacy, or Law.

ACCEND Programs	Graduate Program Contact	Contact Information
MBA	Toni Perkins, LCB	perkinsat@ucmail.uc.edu
Engineering MS or MEng	Julie Steimle, CEAS	julie.steimle@uc.edu
MS, Cosmetic Science	Kavssery Ananthapadmanabhan, Pharmacy	ananthky@ucmail.uc.edu
Juris Doctor (JD)	Cassandra Jeter-Bailey	jeterbcb@ucmail.uc.edu

Graduate Program Options

1. **MS:** The ACCEND programs that offer an undergraduate degree in engineering along with the Master of Science in an engineering discipline will appeal to students who are interested in research and greater depth in a particular engineering field. These students often go on to PhD programs or work in fields that require more specialized knowledge. The MS ACCEND track culminates in a research experience and thesis. ACCEND students who pursue a Master of Science degree should identify a thesis advisor prior to the start of the 5th year. To complete the MS requirements in a timely fashion, students should be working with a graduate advisor on graduate course selection and research.
2. **MEng:** The ACCEND programs that offer an undergraduate degree in engineering along with the Master of Engineering will appeal to students who are interested in greater breadth in engineering and want to focus on the practice of engineering. These students often seek pragmatic skills and knowledge that will allow them to improve the contribution they make to a technical organization. The MEng provides a traditional coursework-based master's degree and does not include a thesis component.
3. **MBA:** The ACCEND programs that offer an undergraduate degree in engineering along with the Master of Business Administration will appeal to students who want to understand both the technical side of an organization and the business aspects of the organization. Students seek this program because it increases their value to an organization and prepares them to take on a

management role earlier in their careers.

4. **MS Cosmetic Science:** This program prepares students to work in fields such as skin and hair science, fragrance science and cosmetic pharmacology. Students use the technical background from their undergraduate degree combined with the specialized education of cosmetic science to develop, formulate and produce cosmetics and personal care products. Students who pursue this program will also be uniquely qualified to assess products' safety, performance and quality.
5. **JD:** The ACCEND programs that offer an undergraduate degree in engineering along with a Juris Doctorate (J.D.) in Law will appeal to students who want to enter the legal profession. Engineer-attorneys can sit for the patent bar and are also well-equipped to handle many other transactional or litigation matters that center upon technical issues.

ACCEND Program Opportunities

While other combinations are possible, completing these may require particular attention to elective courses taken during the undergraduate program.

Graduate Programs	Undergraduate Programs Considered for ACCEND	Undergraduate Programs Considered for ACCEND with conditions (i.e. undergraduate prerequisites)
MS, Aerospace Engineering	Aerospace Engineering, Mechanical Engineering	
MS, Biomedical Engineering	Biomedical Engineering	
MS, Chemical Engineering	Chemical Engineering, Environmental Engineering	
MS, Civil Engineering	Architectural Engineering, Civil Engineering	Mechanical Engineering
MS, Computer Engineering	Computer Engineering, Cybersecurity, Electrical Engineering	
MS, Computer Science	Computer Engineering, Computer Science, Cybersecurity, Electrical Engineering	
MS, Electrical Engineering	Computer Engineering, Electrical Engineering	Electrical Engineering Technology
MS, Engineering Education	All programs	
MS, Environmental Engineering	Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Environmental Engineering	Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering
MS, Materials Science	Chemical Engineering	Mechanical Engineering, Biomedical Engineering
MS, Mechanical Engineering	Aerospace Engineering, Biomedical Engineering, Industrial Systems, Mechanical Engineering	Mechanical Engineering Technology
MEng, Aerospace Engineering	Aerospace Engineering, Mechanical Engineering	
MEng, Architectural Engineering	Architectural Engineering, Civil Engineering	
MEng, Artificial Intelligence	Computer Science, Aerospace Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Industrial Systems	All other programs
MEng, Biomedical Engineering	Biomedical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering	
MEng, Chemical Engineering	Chemical Engineering, Environmental Engineering	Biomedical Engineering

MEng, Civil Engineering	Architectural Engineering, Civil Engineering	Mechanical Engineering
MEng, Computer Engineering	Computer Engineering, Cybersecurity, Electrical Engineering	Computer Science
MEng, Computer Science	Computer Engineering, Computer Science, Cybersecurity, Electrical Engineering	Biomedical Engineering
MEng Electrical Engineering	Computer Engineering, Electrical Engineering	Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering Technology
MEng, Environmental Engineering	Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Environmental Engineering	Computer Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering
MEng, Industrial Systems & Engineering	Mechanical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering Technology, Industrial Systems	CS, Electrical Engineering, Computer Engineering
MEng, Materials Science	Chemical Engineering	Biomedical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering
MEng, Mechanical Engineering	Aerospace Engineering, Biomedical Engineering, Industrial Systems, Mechanical Engineering	Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering Technology
MEng, Robotics and Intelligent Autonomous Systems	Aerospace Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering	Electrical Engineering Technology, Mechanical Engineering Technology, Computer Science
MEng, Sustainable Energy	All programs (requires selection of area of emphasis)	
MBA	All programs	
MS, Cosmetic Science	Chemical Engineering, Biomedical Engineering, Environmental Engineering	
JD	All programs	

ACCEND Application Process

To be admitted, students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.2 or better after two academic terms as a student matriculated in a CEAS program. Students cannot be deficient in any academic area. Students may apply to ACCEND any time after completing two semesters in engineering through a student's fourth year. For students who are admitted immediately after the first year, it is very helpful if they are ahead in the curriculum by about one semester (typically through AP, Post-Secondary or College Credit Plus credits) but this is not a requirement.

With the exception of the JD program, students who seek admission later in the academic program (e.g., after the third year) should be far enough ahead in the undergraduate curriculum, so that half the engineering graduate program could be completed by the time one completes the bachelor's degree and the MBA program can be completed within one semester of completing the bachelor's degree.

Students begin the process by filling out an [online form](#) indicating their undergraduate degree program and their intended graduate program.

Students can apply through the 4th (junior) year. A determination should be made by both the Undergraduate Program Director/Academic Advisor and the Graduate Program Director that the ACCEND program is an appropriate option as compared to the traditional process (first completing the BS degree, then be admitted into a graduate program). Depending on undergraduate credits remaining, students' performance on program specific coursework, and professional goals, an ACCEND program may not be the best choice.

MBA

Prior to being accepted to MBA ACCEND, students will be asked to submit a plan detailing how they plan to complete the MBA coursework. Students will be expected to follow this plan and not make significant deviations. MBA ACCEND can take business foundations courses and a few approved elective courses prior to their final semester of their undergraduate program. However, the bulk of the coursework (24 credits) will be taken in the final semester of their undergraduate program (typically spring of 5th year) and in the semester following the completion of the undergraduate program (typically summer of 5th year). MBA ACCEND cannot complete their BS and MBA degrees in the same semester.

JD

JD ACCEND students are not formally admitted to the JD program until they apply to UC College of Law and are offered admission. Most students seeking to do JD ACCEND will apply to start the JD in fall of their fifth year. Students who are exceptionally ahead in their undergraduate degree may apply to start JD classes in fall of their fourth year. To maximize student success, the first JD classes need to be taken in fall semester, not spring semester.

Key Contacts in ACCEND

The ACCEND Program is highly individualized in that students have a variety of advanced standing credits coming into the program and numerous undergraduate and graduate combinations from which to choose. Academic advising is critical to student success. To gain admission, students need to obtain these approvals by obtaining the appropriate approvals on the [online form](#).

1. Undergraduate Academic Advisor, or Undergraduate Faculty ACCEND Adviser: The Advisor approves verifying that the student has a cumulative college GPA of 3.2 or higher and that the student is in good academic standing. The Advisor also assists students in developing the ACCEND schedule in consultation with the student's co-op advisor. The [list of Undergrad Advisors](#) is on the website.
2. Graduate Program Director for the student's intended graduate program: The Graduate Director approves and acknowledges that the student will receive academic advising relative to the graduate program and that the program can accommodate the student. The Graduate Director may request to first meet with the potential ACCEND student about the graduate curriculum, provide the departmental graduate handbook, and offer appropriate academic advice. (For Engineering MS & MEng programs, the Graduate Studies Office can provide academic support for most questions. See the [website](#) for the staff person assigned to each program.)
3. ACCEND Program Manager: Julie Steimle serves as the program manager approval. The Manager approves the form acknowledging that the student has been informed of the characteristics of the program, including good academic standing, requirements for completion of both degrees, variation in tuition between undergraduate and graduate programs and details of the transition from undergraduate to graduate status.

The application can be denied by any of the individuals required to approve, if the individual determines that the applicant does not or cannot meet the requirements of the ACCEND program.

Structure of the Program: How to Complete Both Degrees

ACCEND programs require all students to meet all the academic requirements of the undergraduate degree as well as the requirements of the graduate degree. There are several

means available to accelerate the completion of the undergraduate degree:

1. Many incoming freshmen are ahead due to Advanced Standing - credits obtained through successful completion of AP course tests while in high school and / or participation in a College Credit Plus Program while in high school.
2. Enroll in courses at UC the summer between freshmen and sophomore years. The courses to take will be recommended by the academic advisor.
3. Participate in Cooperative Education for 4 rather than 5 terms. This gives students one additional academic term to complete graduate requirements.
4. Register for an additional course (undergraduate or graduate level) during a regular academic term prior to senior year, with the approval of the undergraduate advisor. NOTE: An additional fee will be charged for registration of more than 18 hours in a given semester. CEAS does not provide additional scholarship support for students who choose to take more than 18 credit hours in a semester and are charged an overload fee.
5. If the work schedule allows, an evening or on-line course may be taken during a co-op term. NOTE: Tuition for part-time enrollment is connected to the level of course taken. If a student registers for a graduate class while on co-op, graduate tuition will be assessed. Students doing MBA ACCEND should discuss with Toni Perkins which courses can be taken online over co-op.
6. It is also possible to add an additional term (or terms) at the end of the program. While this will add some additional time to the program, this will be the best option for some students. In the case of the JD and MBA ACCEND opportunities, additional terms will always be required. MBA ACCEND requires an additional semester beyond the bachelor's degree; whereas the JD is a three-year program.

For MS, MEng, and Cosmetic Science ACCEND students, some will finish the undergraduate degree by the spring term of the 5th year. Depending on the graduate program, the amount of advanced credit a student has coming into the program, co-op schedules and other factors, a student might complete both the undergraduate and graduate degrees simultaneously; or finish the graduate degree at the end of summer or fall term following completion of the undergrad degree. There is no requirement or expectation that all ACCEND students will graduate with both the undergraduate and the graduate degrees during the same term.

A student should not wait to apply for graduation for the undergraduate degree until completion of the graduate degree. In most cases, a student should have the undergraduate degree certified as soon as they have completed undergraduate degree requirements.

Policy if Completing Both Degrees in Same Semester: MS and MEng Only

If students do complete both the undergraduate and graduate degrees in the same semester, the student is required to enroll in such a way that they pay graduate tuition and are therefore classified as a graduate student in the final semester (i.e., enroll in 7 or more graduate credits in full time semester).

Timeline of MBA Completion

As stated previously, MBA ACCEND students cannot finish their BS and MBA degrees in the same semester. MBA ACCEND students will need to finish their MBA degrees in the semester following the completion of their BS degrees, typically summer semester of their fifth year.

Timeline of JD Completion

Likewise, it typically takes three years to complete the JD; it is a 90-credit hour program. Students may be able to complete one to two semesters of their JD (15-30 credits) prior to graduation with their bachelor's degree.

Registration and Tuition Costs

Except for MBA ACCEND, students must [apply to the Graduate College](#) prior to taking any graduate level courses. JD ACCEND students may not apply to the JD program until they have completed 90 undergraduate credit hours while maintaining a 3.2 GPA. Both the undergraduate and the graduate programs will be open from this point forward – students will register for graduate classes in the graduate shopping cart/career, and undergraduate classes in the undergraduate shopping cart/career.

MBA ACCEND students will not apply to the Graduate College until their fifth year and will matriculate into the MBA program the final semester of their BS degree, although they will be permitted to take business foundation courses and limited electives prior to their final semester. The MBA advisor will instruct students on how to register for graduate level business classes prior to their matriculation into the MBA program.

Important Billing Information

- When a student registers for 6 or fewer graduate level semester hours and at least 6 undergraduate credits in a full-time semester, tuition and fees will be at the undergraduate level.
- When a student registers for 7 or more graduate level semester hours in a full-time semester (10 or more credits), tuition and fees will be at the graduate level.
 - Starting Fall 2026, the Lindner College of Business is moving to a [per credit hour billing model for all graduate programs](#). MBA ACCEND students enrolled in 7 or more graduate credits will pay per credit hour, even if enrolled full time.
- Part time course registration is billed according to level of course – undergraduate or graduate.

Please visit the [Bursar's Office](#) website for billing information at the graduate level. Tabs direct you to the costs by college. MS or MEng students are encouraged not to take more than 6 graduate credits any semester prior to the fifth year, unless a co-op is waived in year 4.

Please note the [cost of graduate tuition](#) in the MBA and JD programs is significantly higher than the cost of graduate tuition in CEAS (MS or MEng). Course planning is of critical importance. For MBA ACCEND students, the Lindner College of Business requires participants to enroll in a minimum of seven (7) graduate hours and thus pay the higher MBA tuition rate in two full-time semesters: the final semester of their BS degree and the semester immediately following the completion of their BS degree.

In fall 2026, the Lindner College of Business moved all graduate programs to a [per credit hour](#)

[model](#). This will have an impact on the bills of MBA ACCEND students.

- For MBA ACCEND students, there will be no maximum flat rate once a student reaches full time enrollment at the graduate level.
- In other words, MBA students enrolled in 16 graduate credits will pay more than students enrolled in 14 graduate credits.
- Additionally, if an MBA ACCEND student is enrolled in both undergraduate and graduate credits in the same semester and at least 7 credits are graduate, they will pay the per credit hour rate for both the undergraduate and graduate classes enrolled. For example, if enrolled in 8 graduate credits and 9 undergraduate credits, the MBA ACCEND student will pay for 8 graduate credits charged at the graduate per credit hour rate and 9 undergraduate credits charged at the undergraduate per credit hour rate.
- If a student is enrolled in 6 or fewer graduate credits and 6 or more undergraduate credits, they will still only pay the flat undergraduate rate.

Out of state and international students also need to consider the [out of state surcharge](#) rates. Some scholarships, such as the International Outreach Award, the National Outreach Award, and the Cincinnati Out of State Award are designed to only cover the out of state surcharge. Graduate programs often have higher tuition, but lower out of state surcharges, as compared to undergraduate tuition. The scholarships mentioned in this paragraph cannot exceed the amount of the out of state surcharge on the bill. Therefore, in semesters when the student is charged graduate tuition, these awards may be reduced.

To Apply to the Graduate College

1. Go to the [Graduate College website](#) and create an account
2. Once you have the account login, go to the program choice tab
3. Search for the program by college
4. Select the proper College for your graduate degree program
5. Select the proper graduate program
 - For Engineering programs, select the term in which you plan to take your first graduate class (fall or spring term only) and contact Julie Steimle when the application is submitted. If the deadline for the term you wish to start has already passed, please contact Julie Steimle and she will explain how to proceed.
 - For the JD program, please note students with a 3.6 or higher are higher GPA are exempt from taking the LSAT. Students with a lower than 3.6 GPA are required to take the LSAT and submit scores to the Graduate College.
 - For MBA, select the online MBA option
6. Select Full-time
7. **For the question, “Are you a current UC undergraduate student who is applying for an Accelerated Integrated Masters (AIM) Program?” select - YES (AIM is what the Graduate College calls ACCEND). This will prevent you from paying the application fee. It will also make the application much shorter to complete.**
8. Click Continue

Academic History section

1. You are filling in information related to your undergraduate degree. Indicate level of study as undergraduate, degree as baccalaureate, and dates from when you started through the current date. You will also need to indicate the expected date of the conferral of your bachelor’s degree.

2. Provide your electronic signature - Confirm - Review - Click Submit
3. ACCEND students do not need to provide official transcripts. When prompted for an unofficial transcript, upload a PDF of your degree audit or unofficial transcripts from Catalyst and attach it to the application. When you receive your confirmation email, it will ask you to send official transcripts. You do not have to complete this step.

For information on the application process contact the following people:

- Engineering MS or MEng: Julie Steimle (julie.steimle@uc.edu)
- MBA: Toni Perkins (perkinat@ucmail.uc.edu)
- MS Cosmetic Science: Erin Smith (smith4e7@ucmail.uc.edu)
- JD: Cassandra Jeter-Bailey (jeterbcb@ucmail.uc.edu)

Note on Admission

- MBA ACCEND students will likely receive admission to the MBA program if they complete the application and have a 3.0 or higher undergraduate GPA and have completed at least 3 co-op rotations at the time of application (typically fall semester of final/5th year).
- Students applying to JD need to apply on the [Law College application](#). Please consult with the College of Law advisor regarding deadlines for applying and to understand what document needs to be uploaded to the application to demonstrate you are approved for ACCEND.

Financial Aid

Changes to federal financial aid went into effect on July 1, 2026, due to the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. As a result, Enrollment Services will scrutinize ACCEND students' financial aid closely each semester and may make program adjustments to allow students to keep undergraduate federal financial aid as long as possible.

ACCEND students who take more than 6 credit hours of graduate coursework prior to the fifth year are in jeopardy of losing federal financial aid (this is not a UC decision; it is dictated by the federal government).

- Once you are in your fifth year you have accumulated sufficient credits so that you can be eligible for federal aid for graduate students
 - Federal aid for graduate students is significantly less than federal aid for undergraduate students. Please work closely with Enrollment Services if you rely on federal financial aid.
- If a student does not need federal financial aid, there may be exceptions to this rule
- Students enrolled in less than 12 undergraduate credit hours in an academic semester may have their undergraduate federal aid reduced
- Please note that students in AIM programs such as ACCEND have their aid re-checked multiple times throughout a semester. Sometimes aid is not correct initially but will be corrected or adjusted later.

Scholarships

CEAS MS and MENG programs

- Graduate Incentive Scholarships (GIA) may be given to CEAS MS or MEng ACCEND students for the last one or two terms of the program, but only if enrolling in such a way that they are charged graduate tuition which results in higher costs.

- For example, international/out of state students may pay lower overall costs when enrolled as a graduate student. As a result, they will not need a GIA award when charged graduate tuition.
- Students must be enrolled full-time and in 7 or more graduate credits each term to qualify. You can apply for the award using this [link](#). Please apply for the scholarship after your graduate enrollment for an upcoming semester is complete.
- Starting in fall 2026, GIA scholarships will vary by cohort. Please see the chart below for suggested award amounts, which are based on the difference between undergraduate and graduation tuition amounts:

Cohort	Suggested award starting 26-27
Class of 2029 (24-25)	\$500
Class of 2028 (23-24)	\$700
Class of 2027 (22-23)	\$1,000
Class of 2026 (21-22)	\$1,200
Class of 2029 (24-25)-international/out of state-outreach award less than \$5800 per sem	\$0
Class of 2028 (23-24)-international/out of state-outreach award less than \$5800 per semester	\$0
Class of 2027 (22-23)-international/out of state-outreach award less than \$5800 per semester	\$0
Class of 2026 (21-22)-international/out of state-outreach award less than \$5800 per semester	\$0
Class of 2029 (24-25)-international/out of state-outreach award of \$7500 per sem	\$1,700
Class of 2028 (23-24)-international/out of state-outreach award of \$7500 per sem	\$1,700
Class of 2027 (22-23)-international/out of state-outreach award of \$7500 per sem	\$1,700
Class of 2026 (21-22)-international/out of state-outreach award of \$7500 per sem	\$1,700
Class of 2029 (24-25)-metro rates	\$550

Class of 2028 (23-24)-metro rates	\$750
Class of 2027 (22-23)-metro rates	\$1,000
Class of 2026 (21-22)-metro rates	\$1,250

MBA, JD, MS Cosmetic Science

- There are **no scholarships** for MBA, JD, or MS Cosmetic Science ACCEND students.
- MBA ACCEND students will pay higher tuition in their two MBA semesters (typically spring of fifth year and summer following BS graduation).

Some undergraduate scholarships may carry over after a student becomes a graduate student. ACCEND students should discuss this with Enrollment Services.

Academic Good Standing

To be in academic good standing, students must meet the criteria listed below. While a 3.2 cumulative GPA is required for admission to ACCEND, students are required to maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 in both their undergraduate and graduate programs. A GPA of 3.0 or better is required to graduate with a master's degree.

- Any academic term after admission, a student will receive a probation letter the first time their GPA is below 3.0. If a student has been warned once and their GPA is below 3.0 for a second academic term, they will be dismissed from ACCEND and transitioned to their traditional undergraduate program.
- If students do not make appropriate progress on their undergraduate degree program, they will be advised to pursue the traditional method of obtaining the graduate degree and be dismissed from ACCEND.

Advising

The major challenge in the ACCEND programs is course scheduling. Because students often come with a range of advanced standing credit, schedules can vary substantially from that of students in the traditional programs. It is ultimately the students' responsibility to ensure that all academic criteria, including all course requirements, are met. It is particularly important for ACCEND students to meet with their academic advisor frequently to stay on track with the curriculum. In general, students should meet with the individuals listed below for help with the items indicated:

- Undergraduate Program Advisor: undergraduate course scheduling, overall program schedule (academic terms and co-op terms), selection and scheduling of electives, undergraduate degree requirements.
- ACCEND Manager: advice on options within ACCEND – MS, MEng, MBA, etc., transition issues between undergraduate and graduate status, help on identifying points of contact (e.g., Graduate Program Advisor), financial considerations (e.g., courses taken on co-op, transition from undergrad to grad, scholarship issues).
- Co-op Advisor: scheduling of co-op terms (in coordination with the

undergraduate program advisor) and opportunities for international co-op.

- Graduate Program Director: advice on selection and scheduling of graduate courses; for MS students in CEAS programs, assistance in identifying a thesis advisor; for MEng students, assistance in identifying a capstone advisor.

Graduation Requirements

Students are required to meet all the requirements of both traditional undergraduate programs, and of the graduate programs.

Students will need to apply to graduate from both programs and will pay the graduation fee for both.

Students cannot graduate from the graduate program before graduation from the undergraduate program.

Credit hour requirement & applying graduate coursework toward bachelors

Students are required to complete a minimum number of graduate credit hours established by the program. The number of required credit hours differs from program to program. For MS and MEng CEAS ACCEND, up to 9 credits can count for both the graduate and the undergraduate degree, provided the courses are taken at the graduate level (6000 level or above) and students are designated as ACCEND students. Students need to check with their undergraduate advisors to make sure the graduate level courses can count for their undergraduate programs. Students should refer to their programs' Graduate Student Handbooks for specific course requirements. CEAS (MS and MEng) graduate degrees require the completion of 30-34 credit hours. Degrees from other colleges, such as JD or MBA, require a greater number of credit hours.

- Thesis: Students in Master of Science programs are required to complete a thesis. Students in Master of Engineering programs are not required to complete a thesis, but do need to complete a capstone (project, paper, or internship).
- Minimum Academic Performance: Students must maintain a cumulative college GPA of 3.0 for their graduate course work.

Program Transitions

Students can elect to transition from an ACCEND program to the traditional program by completing the [online form](#) again and selecting the "withdrawal" option in question #6.

Students can also request to change their graduate degree program from one area to another (e.g., from MEng in Mechanical Engineering to MBA). The student would submit the [online form](#) again, requesting to join the new program in question 7, answering "yes" to question #8, and indicating the ACCEND program they wish to drop in question #9.

Due to new Office of Homeland Security rules going into effect on September 15, 2026, international students may not be able to change their ACCEND program once they apply to the graduate program, are offered formal admission, and matriculate into the graduate program.

Special Notes for International Students

As of August 2026, UC International believes the new DHS rules that go into effect on September 15, 2026 will still allow international students to pursue ACCEND, as ACCEND combines two educational levels into a single academic program. Guidance could change in this area.

Even prior to the new rules, international students on F-1 visas who participate in the Accelerated Engineering Degree (ACCEND) program have several issues to consider and understand. International students have federal regulations about enrollment and practical training that can affect your decision to participate in ACCEND, what immigration benefits students are entitled to, or what actions students must take if admitted to ACCEND. Students with questions about any of these issues should contact UC International Services at 513-556-4278 or international.students@uc.edu.

I-20 Form

Typically, international students are not admitted to the ACCEND program upon initial admission to UC. This means that your I-20 is reflective of the bachelor's program to which you were initially admitted. When admitted to the ACCEND program, it means you are simultaneously completing both an undergraduate and a graduate degree program. Upon admission to the graduate degree portion of your ACCEND program, please obtain a new I-20 from UC International Services that indicates in writing that you are enrolled in two different majors. Your undergraduate program will remain your primary major of study on your I-20 form and your graduate degree will be listed on your I-20 as the second major. If at any point during your program you graduate from the bachelor's degree before you complete the graduate degree, you would need to obtain a change in degree level I-20 reflecting your graduate degree as the only program of study.

Enrollment Requirements

International students are required to be enrolled full-time each semester of study. Full-time enrollment means 12 credit hours at the undergraduate level and 10 credit hours at the graduate level. When enrolled in an ACCEND program, there will be some terms that a student enrolls in both undergraduate and graduate level courses. Your primary program of study during those terms will be established by the program in which you are enrolled for the most credit hours. That means that some terms your primary program of study in Catalyst may reflect your undergraduate program as your primary program of study, while in others it may be your graduate program that is reflected as the primary program study. Regardless, you must be enrolled for at least 12 credit hours each term with at least 9 of those hours being in-person courses to maintain proper F-1 status.

Optional Practical Training

International students on F-1 visas are eligible for 12 months of Optional Practical Training (OPT). Those in STEM fields may become eligible for a 24-month STEM OPT extension (36 total months of OPT). Based on the new policies going into effect on September 15, 2026, ACCEND students will generally apply for OPT based on their bachelor's degree.

Scholarship Considerations for International Students

International students need to consider how participation in ACCEND may impact their scholarship eligibility. For example, many international students receive international outreach

awards. These awards can only cover the out of state surcharge for international students. Graduate programs tend to have higher tuition rates than undergraduate programs but have lower out of state surcharges than undergraduate programs. As a result, when an ACCEND student enrolls in 7 or more graduate credits in a full-time semester and is charged graduate tuition rates, their international outreach award might be reduced significantly because their out of state surcharge is lower. This may result in tuition bills being higher than expected. This is particularly true if international students pursue MBA ACCEND.