The AB-AM Degree Program
(2020-2021)

The Department offers the AB-AM degree, which allow students who are primary mathematics concentrators to obtain a Master's degree (AM) in Mathematics, in addition to their Bachelor's degree (AB) during their four years at Harvard. Note that the program requires additional courses in mathematics. In most cares, the Department recommends that students should instead take advantage of the many other academic opportunities that the University offers.

The Department will only accept Math concentrators who have demonstrated sufficient mastery of undergraduate material. The formal requirements for the AM are a minimum academic residence of one year, eight half-courses in mathematics at 100 or 200 level, with at least four at the 200 level, and a reading knowledge of one of three languages—French, German, or Russian. Undergraduates taking graduate courses in their third year may bracket four of the graduate courses that they wish to apply toward their graduate degree. These bracketed courses will not count for their Harvard College degree (nor will they count for their Mathematics Concentration requirements). Candidates for the AB/AM degree must bracket courses by the beginning of the final term before graduation. Students seeking admission to the AB/AM program in Mathematics must submit to the Mathematics Department by December 31 of their third year a detailed, coherent plan for courses of study covering a broad swath of mathematics that goes significantly beyond the level required for the undergraduate Concentration in Mathematics. This plan must be approved by the Directors of Graduate Studies and Undergraduate Studies in Mathematics before admission to the AB/AM program can be approved.

  Note that a student considering going on to graduate school in mathematics should bear in mind that the Master's degree will not offer an advantage.

Timeline and Deadlines

Students interested in pursuing the AB-AM degree should follow this timeline:

1. Students in the fall of their junior year, students should apply for admission to the AB/AM program through the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences by the Graduate School's stated deadline (which is typically in the middle of December). Note that this application is just like a graduate school application, and requires reference letters amongst other things. Details on the application can be found here: https://gsas.harvard.edu/admissions/apply

2. Students must also submit to the Mathematics Department by December 31 of their third year a detailed, coherent plan for courses of study covering a broad swath of mathematics that goes significantly beyond the level required for the undergraduate Concentration in Mathematics. This plan must be approved by the Directors of Graduate Studies and Undergraduate Studies in Mathematics before admission to the AB/AM program can be approved.

3. Acceptance notices are given in the winter by the GSAS admissions office. If accepted, students can take the language exam in the spring of their junior year, or during their senior year.

For More Information

Further details on the requirements and the application process are available at the GSAS website at http://gsas.harvard.edu/programs-of-study/all/mathematics and from the Graduate Studies Coordinator Marjorie Bell (mbell@math.harvard.edu). For questions on bracketing courses and whether it makes sense for you to apply, please contact the Director of Undergraduate Studies, Professor Cliff Taubes (chtaubes@math.harvard.edu)