Combined Degree Programs

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During the last decade the Colorado School of Mines Department of Physics has awarded 50 to 60 B.S. degrees per year, making it one of the largest undergraduate programs in the U.S. Two-thirds of our graduates pursue advanced degrees, many of them at CSM. These internal advanced degrees, mostly at the M.S. level, are completed through our Combined Degree Program. In addition to the M.S. in Applied Physics, we have scripted agreements with Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Materials Engineering, Nuclear Engineering, and Mathematics and Statistics. Qualified students must declare their affiliation with the program by the second semester of their junior year. By that time they are already taking classes (in elective slots) that prepare them for the appropriate advanced degree. During the senior year several graduate-level courses are also included. Students are allowed to apply up to six credit hours toward the advanced degree, which were also used to satisfy the B.S. degree. These efficiencies make it possible to complete two degrees in five years. The graduate program application fee and the GRE are waived for Combined Program students. For thesis-based M.S. programs, as is the case in Applied Physics, students need to start their research during the senior year. This is possible through synchronization with the year-long Senior Design course, which is required for all B.S. recipients. The Combined Program has created a meaningful terminal master's program in physics at CSM and has been a contributing factor in our strong undergraduate enrollment.