



University Curriculum Committee, October 15, 2019
Introduction of New Draft Policy: Combination, Joint, and Dual Degrees

Specific Problems to Be Addressed

- SACSCOC Standards for Combination, Joint, and Dual Degrees
 - Justify “overlap” in credits in intellectual and pedagogical terms
 - Lack of alignment with SACSCOC definitions and internally among our programs
- UF does not have a single depository for combination, joint, and dual degrees.
- UF has not had a campus-wide conversation about the process involved in maintaining the quality and integrity of these programs.

History of Draft Policy to Date

- **May 2019:** Tim Brophy raised concerns about our lack of alignment with SACSCOC standards.
- **July 2019:** Internal discussions among Undergraduate Affairs, Academic Affairs, Graduate School, OIPR
- **August 2019:** Tim Brophy drafts first version of policy.
- **September-October 2019:**
 - Meeting represented by Graduate School, UFIC, Office of General Council, OIPR
 - Two meetings of a task force composed of David Julian (CLAS), Jason Nance (Law), Youssef Haddad (UCC, CLAS), Deb Mayhew (UAC, APC, HWCOE), Judy Traveis (Grad School), Tim Brophy, Angela Lindner, Toby Shorey, Casey Griffith
 - Consultations with the Graduate School, Academic Assessment Committee, College of Law, selected Associate Deans, and others

Definitions

- **Combination Degree:** A combination degree program, sometimes referred to as a combined degree program, is one where the University of Florida awards more than one degree from an overlapping course of study. Combination degrees often allow a shorter time for completion due to the sharing of some coursework between the degree programs (these result in *double-counted credits*). At the University of Florida, this type of program includes any combination of undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree programs.

Definitions

- **Dual Degree:** A dual degree program (also called a *dual academic award*) is one whereby students study at the University of Florida *and* at another institutions, and each institution awards a separate program completion credential bearing its own name, seal, and signature.



Definitions

- **Joint Degree:** A joint degree program (or joint academic award) is one whereby students study at the University of Florida and one or more participant institutions and are awarded a single program completion credential bearing the names, seals, and signatures of each of the participant institutions.

Definitions

- **Justification for Double-Counted Credits:** Academic programs must provide a clear academic justification for the use of double-counted credits that **provides evidence that the integrity and quality of each program is not compromised**. The justification should address (a) how the shared credits meet the requirements of both degrees, (b) how the combination, joint, or dual degree program present a coherent course of study, and (c) the process used to determine this.

Justifications typically include program-defined admissions requirements, evidence that the student will be able to meet student learning outcomes for both programs successfully with no loss of fidelity, the relevance of the combination, joint, or dual-degree program to the student's desired outcomes, and any other evidence that the student will succeed in and benefit from the combination program.

Additional Definitions in Draft Policy

- Academically Qualified Student
- Approved Student
- Admitted Student
- Double-counted Credits
- Participant Institution
- Coherent Course of Study

Double-Counted Credit Hours by Program Type

- **Baccalaureate/Baccalaureate:** general education credits of 36 hours and up to 12 additional double-counted credit hours without justification
- **Baccalaureate/Masters:** up to 12 double-counted credit hours of graduate coursework without additional justification
- **Graduate/Graduate, Graduate/Professional, and Professional/Professional:** combinations must total 60 unduplicated graduate or professional credit hours; justification is required if one degree is fewer than 30 credit hours; double-counting of credit must be justified.
- **Dual:** Double-counted credits must be justified; transfer credits, if applicable, must be clearly explicated

Key Points: Double-Counted Credits of Baccalaureate-Masters Programs

- Undergraduate coursework may not be double counted toward the graduate degree.
- At least 50% of the credits required for completion of the graduate degree in the combination must be earned after the student has been formally admitted to the graduate degree program.
- Graduate courses counted toward the undergraduate degree must be appropriate for that degree program, consistent with the SACSCOC requirement that degree programs embody a coherent course of study, as well as all other principles contained in the SACSCOC Policy on Quality and Integrity of Undergraduate Degrees.
- Program faculty will set appropriate admissions standards to ensure that students are academically qualified and prepared for graduate-level coursework.
- The Baccalaureate degree will be conferred upon completion of the undergraduate program(s), and master's and/or professional degree upon completion of the graduate/professional program.

Focus of This Year: Submission of Existing and New Combination Baccalaureate-Masters Plans

- Current activity: development of new approval questions to align with SACSCOC focus
- Goal: have first approved combination Baccalaureate-Masters plans by February 2020



Approval Timeline

- **October 15-November 19:** Campus-wide comment period. UCC special task force if needed.
- **November 19:** UCC discussion and vote
- **November 19:** Academic Policy Council discussion and vote
- **December 2019:** Comment reception and piloting of new approval form
- **January 2020:** First submissions of Combined Bachelor's/Master's Proposals
- **February 2020:** UCC approval of first submissions
- **March 2020:** SACSCOC Institutional Report is due

Requests

- If it is the desire of the UCC to convene a separate task force prior to the November meeting, please indicate your interest in serving to Angela Lindner by **Friday, October 19**.
- **Review draft policy document.** Please submit comments and suggestions for revisions to Angela Lindner no later than November 5, 2019. The revised document will be included in the November 19 UCC agenda. Please be prepared to approve the final draft policy in the November UCC meeting.
- **Engage your college in a conversation about this new policy.**
 - Make sure to catalog the process for admissions and conferral of degrees in every program that administers a combination degree program.
 - Also, please catalog the names that your programs and college use for these programs.
 - Identify what specific web sites and other communication resources will need to be revised to reflect these shared names and definitions.





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