

# Graduate School Dual Degree Policy Statement

*(Adopted 09/14/16)*

The Board of Regents of the University of Georgia System and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges define dual degree programs as cooperative ventures between two institutions. The University of Georgia has broadened this definition to also include cooperative ventures between two programs within the University. The purpose of this policy statement is to provide official guidance on development and implementation of individual dual degree programs of study and formal dual degree programs that include at least one graduate degree at the University of Georgia. This policy statement adheres to the relevant policies of the University of Georgia, the University System of Georgia Board of Regents and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges and which are referenced below.

## 1. References

- a. Degrees, Policy Manual, Board of Regents, University System of Georgia ([http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section3/C343/#p3.8.1\\_general](http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section3/C343/#p3.8.1_general))
- b. Program Length, Core Requirement 2.7.1 and Federal Requirement 4.4, Resource Manual, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/Resource%20Manual.pdf>);
- c. Dual Degree Programs, Academic Affairs Policy Statement No.16, University of Georgia (<https://curriculumsystems.uga.edu/curriculum/majors/dual-degree-programs>)
- d. Dual Degrees, Academic Affairs Handbook, Board of Regents, University System of Georgia ([http://www.usg.edu/academic\\_affairs\\_handbook/section2/handbook/C731/#p2.3.9\\_dual\\_degrees](http://www.usg.edu/academic_affairs_handbook/section2/handbook/C731/#p2.3.9_dual_degrees))
- e. Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/JointDualAwards.pdf>), 2012
- f. Program Coherence, Core requirement 2.7.2, Resource Manual, Southern Association of College and Schools Commission on Colleges (<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/Resource%20Manual.pdf>)
- g. Integrity of Undergraduate Programs, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Policy Statement (<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/Quality%20and%20Integrity%20of%20Undergraduate%20Degrees.pdf>)
- h. Post-baccalaureate degree rigor, Comprehensive Standard 3.6.1, Southern Association of Schools and Colleges Commission on Colleges (<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/Resource%20Manual.pdf>)

## 2. Applicability

The provisions outlined in this document apply to all individual dual degrees and formal dual degree programs in which at least one of the degrees is a graduate (doctoral, master's, education specialist, but not professional) degree. Individual dual degrees and formal dual degree programs may be pursued in combinations of undergraduate/graduate, graduate/graduate, and graduate/professional degrees.

These provisions apply both to dual degrees within the University of Georgia and to agreements between the University of Georgia and another accredited or non-accredited degree granting institution of higher education. When an agreement exists to offer a dual degree program between the University of Georgia and another institution, each institution will award a separate program completion credential that bears only its name, seal and signature. Eligibility for federal student aid is impacted by courses taken from a non-accredited degree granting institution. Programs will inform the Director of Student Financial Aid regarding agreements with non-accredited institutions.

These policies are not intended to conflict with the Bylaws of the Graduate Faculty, the University of Georgia or the Academic Affairs Handbook of the University System of Georgia Board of Regents.

### **3. Definitions**

- a. Individual Dual Degree Programs: Dual degrees may be conferred for individual programs of study, tailored to meet the needs of specific students. In these programs, requirements for two different academic programs are completed independently and two separate degree credentials are awarded.
- b. Formal Dual Degree Programs: Dual degrees may be conferred through formalized linkages of two complementary approved degree programs that are established to fill an academic need identified by faculty. In these programs, requirements for the two linked programs are completed and two separate degree credentials are awarded.

### **4. Responsibility**

#### **a. Faculty**

##### **1. Formal Dual Degree Programs**

The responsibility for developing proposals for new formal dual degree programs resides with the faculty in an academic unit. Such proposals should be submitted when faculty identifies an academic need is best served by linking two degree programs in a formal dual degree program. Faculty within the academic units that comprise a formal dual degree program are responsible for advising students in the program and assessing student outcomes and program effectiveness.

##### **2. Individual Dual Degree Programs of Study**

For individual dual degree programs of study, faculty will work with students to design curricula that are both pedagogically sound and meet the needs of the student.

#### **b. Administrative**

##### **1. Individual Dual Degree Programs of Study**

The Graduate School shall be responsible for reviewing/ approving individual dual degree bachelor's/ master's programs of study, that have been approved at the program, school, or college level.

##### **2. Formal Dual Degree Programs**

It is the responsibility of each school or college to ensure that all new formal dual degree program proposals receive appropriate faculty review prior to submission for the next level of administrative review. Both the head of the academic unit and the dean of the school or college must approve the proposal before it is submitted for review by the Dean of the Graduate School and subsequently the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost is responsible for reviewing proposals and providing any needed internal and external coordination of procedures. This will include making appropriate recommendations to the President of the University on program proposals which are transmitted to the Board of Regents for information. The Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost will keep unit (institute, department, school, or college) heads informed of the current status of proposals as they move through the review stages required by governance procedures.

c. Student

For both formal dual degree programs and individual programs of study, the student must apply to and be accepted to the Graduate School. Students interested in individual dual degree programs must have the approval of their undergraduate program/ advisor. All dual degree students must complete at least 90 credits of undergraduate coursework before they are admitted to the Graduate School. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of all degree requirements for both individual dual degree programs of study and formal dual degree programs. For individual dual degree bachelor's/ master's programs of study, students will develop their curricula, together with faculty in their units and the Graduate School.

**5. Development, Review and Approval of Dual Degree Programs**

a. Formal Dual Degree Programs

Development of a formal dual degree program proposal should begin with the academic units offering the majors included in the dual degree program proposal. Formal dual degree program proposals that include at least one graduate program must first be reviewed by the Dean of the Graduate School who will then forward them for review by the University Council and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. A detailed flowchart of the routing process for formalized dual degree proposals can be viewed at the following link: [https://curriculumsystems.uga.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs-and-docs/dualdegrees\\_programapproval\\_flowchart.pdf](https://curriculumsystems.uga.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs-and-docs/dualdegrees_programapproval_flowchart.pdf). After approval by the President of the University of Georgia, formalized dual degree program proposals will be forwarded to the Office of the Chancellor, Board of Regents, for information.

b. Individual Bachelor's/Master's Dual Degree Programs of Study

The opportunity to pursue dual bachelor's/master's degrees is open to all undergraduate students at the University of Georgia beginning in their junior year. Enrollment in the master's degree requires admission to the Graduate School. Interested undergraduates must develop a preliminary plan of study that is approved by the student's undergraduate advisor, the departmental graduate coordinator and the dean of the Graduate School. These programs of study are subject to the regulations of the department, the college or school, and the Graduate School.

c. Individual Graduate/Graduate or Graduate/Professional Dual Degree Programs of Study

Graduate students may pursue a second graduate or professional degree, following application and admission to both programs. No additional approval process is required.

## 6. Program Length Requirements

Consistent with SACSCOC Core Requirement 2.7.1 and Federal Requirement 4.4 a minimum of 120 credit hours are required to complete a baccalaureate in a bachelor's/master's dual degree program. A minimum of 30 graduate credit hours is required to complete each master's, doctoral or professional degree program of study in a dual degree program. Approval for deviation from minimum credit hour requirements at any degree level will require strong academic justification that explains how program integrity is maintained or enhanced through the proposed deviation.

## 7. Enrollment and Coursework

Students must have approval of both programs before they can enroll as dual degree students. Dual degree students pay tuition at the rate of the more costly program.

### a. Classification as Undergraduate vs Graduate Student

A dual degree student must be enrolled as either an undergraduate or graduate student and cannot be enrolled as both undergraduate and graduate student at the same time. Dual degree students must complete at least 90 hours of undergraduate credit before they can enroll as graduate students. Students cannot switch back and forth between the two classifications. Dual degree students will be considered to be graduate students once they have met the following three criteria:

- Been admitted to the Graduate School and;
- Completed at least 90 undergraduate credits; and
- Take greater than 50% of semester credits at the graduate level.

The Graduate School will be responsible for informing the Registrar, Financial Aid, and other entities when a student moves from the undergraduate to the graduate classification and the student's classification will updated to graduate level in Banner (SGASTDN).

### b. Completion of Graduate Coursework during the Undergraduate Phase

An undergraduate student can take graduate level coursework, with an override from his/ her undergraduate advisor. *Undergraduate students can take no more than 50% of coursework at the graduate level and any graduate coursework must count as a required or elective course toward an undergraduate program of study to maintain federal student aid eligibility as an undergraduate.* Graduate coursework completed as an undergraduate may be counted towards both the bachelors and master's degrees (see below). However, if the student's application to the Graduate School is declined, the credits are only listed as non-degree seeking on a graduate transcript.

### c. Graduate/ Professional Enrollment

Students can be dually enrolled as graduate and professional students simultaneously. However, such students must pay the tuition rate of the higher cost program.

## 8. Credit Hours

### a. Bachelors/ Masters Dual Degree Programs

A maximum of 12 credit hours of graduate coursework may be counted towards an undergraduate degree and also used to satisfy requirements for a graduate degree program of study. The resulting dual degrees will consist of 120 credit hours counted towards the undergraduate degree and 30 credit hours counted towards the graduate degree, with up to 12 credit hours of overlapping graduate coursework. To be eligible, a student must be accepted to the Graduate School with the stated intention to register for up to 12 credit hours of graduate level courses in a specific degree program, documented in his/ her program of study. Once the student has been admitted to the Graduate School, he/she may petition the Graduate School to double count up to 12 credits of graduate level coursework to the same specified graduated degree program. If the petition is approved by the Graduate School, then up to 12 credit hours will be listed on the student's undergraduate and graduate transcripts and will meet the requirements of both degree programs. However, if the student pursues a different degree program, the up to 12 credit hours may not apply.

Allowing for credit in graduate courses to satisfy requirements for both an undergraduate and graduate degree program is subject to approval by the undergraduate degree program and Graduate School and strong academic justification must be provided as described below. This stipulation applies to both individual dual degree programs of study and formal dual degree programs. Graduate courses counted towards the undergraduate degree must be appropriate for that degree program, consistent with SACSCOC core requirement 2.7.2 requirement that degree programs embody a coherent course of study and the SACSCOC Policy on Quality and Integrity of Undergraduate Degrees. Conversely, the integrity of the graduate program must be maintained, despite inclusion of dual bachelors/ masters students in graduate courses, per SACSCOC Comprehensive Standard 3.6.1 (Post-baccalaureate Program Rigor). Programs will set appropriate admissions standards to ensure that dual bachelors/ masters students are adequately prepared for graduate-level coursework.

### b. Graduate/ Graduate and Graduate/ Professional Dual Degree Programs

Graduate courses in excess of the 30-hour minimums may be dually counted for two graduate degrees in a dual degree program. This stipulation applies to both individual dual degree programs of study and formal dual degree programs.

## 9. Conferral of Degrees

### a. Bachelors/Masters Dual Degree Programs

Students in a dual Bachelor's/Master's program must meet course and credit hour requirements for each degree program before the degrees can be conferred. The Bachelor's degree may be conferred before the student completes requirements for the Master's degree. The student's expected undergraduate graduation date must be recorded and programs must monitor progress and document when the student completes requirements for the undergraduate degree. Programs will inform the Graduate School and Registrar when a dual degree student has completed requirements for the undergraduate degree and the Registrar will update SHADEGR in Banner when the student has met requirements for the undergraduate degree.

Dual Degree Programs should be designed to ensure that the Bachelor's degree component can be completed within four years. For dual Bachelor's/ Master's degree programs, the Master's degree cannot be conferred before completion of the Bachelor's degree. These stipulations apply to both individual dual degree programs of study and formal dual degree programs.

b. Graduate/Graduate and Graduate Professional Dual Degree Programs

Graduate students enrolled in two different graduate or graduate/professional degree programs must meet course and credit hour requirements for each degree program before each degree can be conferred, but one degree can be conferred before the student completes requirements for the other. This stipulation applies to both individual dual degree programs of study and formal dual degree programs.

## **10. Tuition for Dual Degree programs**

a. Bachelors/Masters Dual Degree Programs

The HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarships fund a maximum of 127 hours for students who have not completed a bachelor's degree and can be used to cover tuition for both undergraduate and graduate coursework. HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarships will only pay tuition at the lower rate, whether it is the graduate or undergraduate rate. The student is responsible for tuition not covered by HOPE or Zell Miller Scholarships. However, these students can apply for graduate level federal loans to pay the difference between tuition covered by HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarships and the total tuition bill. These students are required to register for a minimum of 5 hours per semester. Both undergraduate and graduate courses count toward this requirement.

Once students meet the requirements for graduation from the undergraduate program, they are no longer eligible for HOPE or Zell Miller Scholarships or for federal funding at the undergraduate level (including the Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, and Federal Subsidized Direct Loans). These students can apply for graduate level federal loans.

These stipulations apply to both individual dual degree programs of study and formal dual degree programs.

b. Graduate/Graduate and Graduate/Professional Dual Degree Programs

Students enrolled in dual graduate degree or graduate/ professional degree programs will pay tuition at the primary (higher) degree rate. This stipulation applies to both individual dual degree programs of study and formal dual degree programs.