JOINT, DUAL AND COLLABORATIVE DEGREE PROGRAMS

This document outlines and defines the three types of graduate degrees that can be earned in collaboration with other universities/colleges and may coincide with a degree from Virginia Tech. These programs include joint, dual and collaborative degrees. The following is intended to provide clarification.

The **Joint Degree** option includes one degree with one set of requirements and only one dissertation or thesis, and consists of a single diploma with the names of both universities. However, in order to include Virginia Tech’s name on the diploma, at least fifty-one percent (current policy; possible change in SACS policy) of the course offerings must be provided through Virginia Tech. This model is currently in effect with the School of Biomedical Engineering and Sciences (SBES), which is a joint venture between Wake Forest University and Virginia Tech. This model is also used with the Georgetown University’s Biotechnology Development and Management degree that is offered. Approval for this type of degree takes approximately two years and approval is required by the respective engineering department, the College of Engineering, the Curriculum Committee at both the college and university levels, the Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies (CGS&P, University Council, the Board of Visitors, SCHEV and SACS).

The **Dual Degree** option is two separate degrees from two universities. The student must complete two sets of degree requirements and complete two dissertations or theses; however, the coursework can be transferred between the universities. Approval to offer a dual degree involves college level approvals and submission to the Graduate School and review by CGS&P. If the degrees already exist and because the integrity and autonomy of each degree is maintained, no further internal review is currently needed. Current SACS policy requires substantive change procedures. If the dual degrees are new, then full approval process is needed.

When the program is neither a joint nor a dual degree, it is termed a **Collaborative Degree**. Collaborative Degrees can include student and faculty exchanges and research collaborations, but Virginia Tech is not responsible for ensuring degrees from partner schools are provided, or for whether or not other universities will accept original dissertations or theses published for Virginia Tech. In Collaborative Degree programs, Virginia Tech is solely responsible for administering a Virginia Tech degree.

In all situations, proposed degrees should be submitted to the Graduate School for inclusion on the Institutional Plan for Graduate Degrees (IPGD). Full proposals can be submitted after “pre-approval” and listing on the IPGD. In most if not all cases, a MOU and MOA will be developed and signed by appropriate offices.

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