

Minnesota State Luoma Leadership Academy, 2015-2016

Action Learning Project Team 4:

The Jointly Conferred Degree and Program Collaboration

Team Charge: Research the processes and steps required to permit conferral of joint degrees by Minnesota State institutions. Explore the potential ramifications of adopting a joint degree policy, including whether this solution will increase program collaboration. Draft appropriate language for Board Policy and system procedure to implement the change.

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Minnesota
STATE COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES

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4. Aguirre, A., & Quemada, J. 2012. “E-learning Systems Support of Collaborative Agreements: A Theoretical Model.” *Journal of Educational Technology and Society* 15:279–295.
5. Egron-Polak, E. & Hudson, R. 2014. *IAU 4th Global Survey*. International Association of Universities (IAU).
6. Knight, J. 2011. “Doubts and Dilemmas with Double Degree Programs.” In *Globalization and Internationalization of Higher Education (Revista de Universidad y Sociedad del Conocimiento* 8(2):297-312.
7. McClelland, R. 1985. “Joint Degrees: Do They Strengthen or Weaken the Profession?” *Journal of Social Work Education*, 21(1):20-26.
8. “Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards: Policy and Procedures.” 2014. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools / Commission on Colleges.
9. “Guidelines: Degrees and Credits.” 2009. Middle States Commission on Higher Education.
10. “University of Massachusetts Procedures for University Approval of New Academic Degree Programs, Program Changes, and Program Termination.” 1997. University of Massachusetts.

11. *Nanoscience Technology AAS Degree Intra-Agency Consortium Agreement*. n.d.
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13. *Summit – Supporting Students: Complexities of Taking Courses from More than One Institution in a Semester*. n.d. The Agenda for “Summit – Supporting Students” on July 7, 2015.
14. *Summary of Options for Students*. n.d. Based on the conversation with Allison Alstrin (previously the consultant for collaboration and partnerships at Normandale Community College).
15. *From Institutional Cost Study to Allocation Framework: How State Resources are Allocated*. 2015. Presentation by Susan Anderson (Minnesota State System Office Finance Division) for a meeting with the Luoma Team on October 19, 2015.
16. *Data Feasibility for the MnSCU to Implement the (Multi-Institutional) Jointly Conferred Degree Program*. n.d. Based on the conversation with Craig Scheonecker (Minnesota State System Office IR Director) on March 17, 2016.
17. *Higher Learning Commission Policy Title: Institutional Change*. Last revised in February 2016.
18. *Luoma Leadership Academy 2013-2014 Project #9 Collaborative Academic Program Planning*. n.d.
19. *Proposed Changes to Minnesota State Procedure 3.36.1. for the Jointly Conferred Degree*. Team Recommendation.
20. *Framework for the Minnesota State Collaborative Degree Programs (Recommendation)*. Team Recommendation.

Executive Summary

Team Charge

This project stemmed from the Charting the Future strategic framework call for increased collaboration among Minnesota State institutions. Our team was charged to:

Research the processes and steps required to permit conferral of joint degrees by MnSCU [sic] institutions. Explore the potential ramifications of adopting a joint degree policy, including whether this solution will increase program collaboration. Draft appropriate language for Board Policy and system procedure to implement the change.

Given the competitive nature of the allocation framework, the project sponsor and advisors postulated that joint degrees might encourage collaboration by allowing multiple institutions to count the same student as graduates/completers.

Research and Findings

A jointly conferred degree is one in which students complete coursework at multiple institutions, each of which awards the final degree. Currently, two accrediting bodies in the United States allow their institutions to confer joint degrees: the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and Middle States Commission on Higher Education. While joint degrees exist in theory in the United States, our team found it difficult to find evidence of how such a program actually functions. A survey of the literature on jointly conferred degrees indicates that the model enjoyed initial popularity in Europe as part of the Bologna process but that its use has been waning in recent years.

Rather than limiting our research to the joint degree specifically, our team focused on collaborative degree programs more broadly, and we discovered that there is currently no clear process for developing a collaborative degree—joint or otherwise. Our findings indicate that the barriers to collaboration are primarily logistical and fiscal. Minnesota State’s current allocation framework emphasizes a “race to the bottom” mentality as schools compete to run programs for the lowest possible cost, and successful collaboration requires colleges and universities to devote more resources in order to achieve successful collaboration. Logistical issues run the gamut from difficulties with ISRS to questions about how student support services are provided. On the other hand, the collaborative nature of this degree format can be beneficial when institutions would like to create and share programs that are currently too cost prohibitive for a single institution to run. While we believe that there are programs that can benefit from jointly conferred degrees, we do not see it as a viable incentive to increase collaboration among Minnesota State institutions.

Recommendations

We recommend that Minnesota State adopt policy and procedure and work with the Higher Learning Commission to permit the conferral of joint degrees, recognizing that it will be of significant benefit to some programs, but will remain a niche degree. We also recommend that Minnesota State adopt a framework for institutions to follow when developing collaborative degree programs (whether the degree program is jointly conferred or not). Finally, if Minnesota State truly wishes to promote collaboration, the system must provide both logistical support and financial incentives. Therefore, we recommend revision to the allocation framework and the development of dedicated personnel at the System Office to support collaboration.

Introduction

The Charting the Future Strategic Framework calls for increased collaboration among the institutions of the Minnesota State (formerly known as MnSCU) system to increase efficiencies, and reduce costs, and to offer more students access to unique academic programs. However, each college and university is an independent and autonomous academic degree-granting institution that has its own academic program planning process with few incentives for inter-institutional collaboration. A jointly conferred degree, in which the transcript and diploma bear the names of both institutions, may serve to reduce the barriers to collaboration.

The Minnesota State Academic and Student Affairs division determined that the Jointly Conferred Degree and Program Collaboration would be an appropriate project for a Luoma Action Team. Specific charges for this team included the following:

- Research the processes and steps required to permit conferral of joint degrees by Minnesota State institutions
- Explore the potential ramifications of adopting a joint degree policy, including whether this solution will increase program collaboration
- Draft appropriate language for Board Policy and system procedures to implement the change

The current six-member team was assigned to this project. After an initial meeting with the project sponsors, the team identified areas for research, explored best practices, and developed recommendations. The sponsors were informed of this process through occasional meetings. This report culminates the results of the year-long efforts toward this project.

Research and Findings

The team identified several avenues for our initial research efforts. We began with the goal of better understanding the structure and benefits of jointly conferred degrees as they are offered at other institutions. From there, we turned to existing models within the Minnesota State system that could potentially act as models – both in terms of what works and what has been challenging – in developing jointly conferred degree programs that meet the needs of our students and institutions. As we learned more, the project team identified and pursued areas for additional research.

1. Background of the Jointly Conferred Degree

The jointly conferred degree as defined in the charge for this project is far more popular in Europe. It largely emerged as European countries attempted to create common environments for various processes, beginning with the formation of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951 and culminating with the successful implementation of a European-wide currency (the euro) in 2002. In the field of higher education, the main impetus for jointly conferred degrees stems from the Bologna declaration of 1999, which aims to create a European Higher Education Area. In 2004, the Higher Education Division of the Council of Europe adopted “the Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees” (Appendix 1); since then, the recommendation has been revised (Appendix 2). As part of the early implementation of jointly conferred degrees in the European higher education area, institutions worked to establish a common framework for workload associated with degree levels while simultaneously recognizing that different programs must accommodate a diversity of needs (Rauhvargers, 2004, Appendix 3). Within this environment, offering jointly conferred degrees was seen

as a useful approach to improve recognition of degrees across the member nations in the European Higher Education Area and to improve transparency and quality assurance of degrees across nations.

The general model for jointly conferred degrees tends to be based on international partnerships (as in the European Union) and among universities and colleges of differing status. Typically, a lower-status institution will partner with a higher-status institution. Students benefit from the ability to take courses abroad as well as in their home country, and students primarily enrolled in the lower-status institution gain association with the more prestigious institution whose name appears on the students' diplomas. As indicated in Rauhvargers (2004, Appendix 3), portability and recognition of the joint degree remains an issue in the present, even as these international collaborative programs continue to expand and proliferate. Other issues and challenges involve harmonizing accreditation processes, academic calendars, credit systems, tuition and funding schema, and degree requirements, to name only a few (Aguirre & Quemada, 2012, Appendix 4).

In the majority of cases cited in the literature, benefits are primarily intangible or unmeasured: provide students with opportunities to travel, experience different pedagogical styles, and perhaps increase employability. On the other hand, issues and challenges are very real and expensive to address, including who bears the cost of travel (for both students and guest faculty), curriculum alignment, accreditation, recognition of the degree, and quality control. According to the 2014 Global Survey by the International Association of Universities (IAU) (Appendix 5), joint degrees are currently losing momentum while dual degrees continue to expand.

In the U.S. the jointly conferred degree is still in its early stage of development. The term has been often used to refer to dual degree programs in which two different degrees are earned and conferred at the same time (Knight, 2011, Appendix 6). Dual degree programs are most notably found at the graduate level in social work (McClelland, 1985, Appendix 7) and public health. The term has also been used to refer to a combined degree of the Juris Doctor with the MBA or Master of Public Administration.

There are a few indications that the jointly conferred degree is considered as an innovative practice in the U.S. Two regional accreditation agencies of higher education have addressed the jointly conferred degree in their policies: the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and Middle States Commission on Higher Education. In 2012 the SACS Board approved the policy "Agreements Involving Dual and Joint Degree Programs" (Appendix 8) to guide SACS institutions' academic program collaboration with accredited or non-accredited institutions in the world. The "Degrees and Credits" guideline issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (effective on June 26, 2009; Appendix 9) also included a brief definition of jointly conferred degree. A few institutions have also developed procedures for establishing jointly conferred degree programs.

The University of Massachusetts, for example, includes a section on joint degree programs in "Document T 92-012: Procedures for University Approval of New Academic Degree Programs, Program Changes, and Program Termination" (Appendix 10). Interestingly, the university defines joint degree programs in this document as between two or more campuses of the University of Massachusetts, with a separate policy and procedure for these relationships. Joint degree programs between a campus of the University of Massachusetts and an external institution are specifically directed to follow the policy within the same document for creation of new academic degree programs. In both situations, institutions must first complete a preliminary application making a case for the program, followed by an in depth final application. This document appeared somewhat similar to Minnesota State Policy 3.36 and

Procedure 3.36.1 and was one source the project team used in identifying proposed changes to Minnesota State policy and procedure.

How these institutions implement jointly conferred degree programs continues to be a mystery. Neither accrediting organizations were available to provide additional information on their policies or examples of institutions that offer jointly conferred degrees. As with accrediting bodies, the institutions that we identified were not willing to discuss their processes with the project team.

2. Existing Practices of Collaborative/Consortium Degrees among Minnesota State Institutions

Since little evidence of efficacy of the jointly conferred degree was found from literature and policy research, we turned to current practices among Minnesota State institutions. While not offering jointly conferred degrees, a number of Minnesota State institutions have been collaborating to provide degrees that meet the needs of students.

Recent examples of academic program collaboration include a nanoscience technology AAS program involving Dakota County Technical College, Inver Hills Community College, Normandale Community College, and St. Paul College (Appendix 11) and a law enforcement professional licensing program involving Hennepin Technical College, Century College, Inver Hills Community College, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, Normandale Community College, and North Hennepin Community College (Appendix 12). A review of memoranda of understanding and interviews with key stakeholders for these programs provided an understanding of the workings as well as the challenges of these types of collaborative programs. The team noted the absence of any common framework for academic program collaboration. The project sponsors had indicated that the variety of approaches and interagency agreements governing those collaborative arrangements have not been standardized across the Minnesota State system. The project team determined that drafting a consistent process for collaboration (regardless of whether the collaboration offered joint degrees) that fully outlined the potential challenges and barriers would be a beneficial deliverable of the project.

Allison Alstrin, then the consultant for collaborations and partnerships at Normandale Community College, provided a review of the Common Market Passport, a report from a summit on supporting students taking courses from more than one institution in a semester, FY2014 data on the number of students enrolling in courses at more than one institution in a semester, and a summary of current and best practices for administering financial aid to students taking courses at multiple institutions (Appendix 13 & 14). While not completely analogous to the jointly conferred degree, they highlighted issues, policies, and procedures that would likely need to be addressed to successfully implement jointly conferred degrees among Minnesota State institutions.

3. Minnesota State System-Level Policies and Procedures

Minnesota State currently has no policy or procedure that specifically addresses jointly conferred degrees. However, our initial review of policies and procedures identified two key areas that could be modified to accommodate jointly conferred programs: Policy 3.29 and Procedure 3.29.1 (College and University Transcripts) and Policy 3.36 and Procedure 3.36.1 (Academic Programs). While there may be other policies and procedures that would need to be modified, these policies and procedures are of primary significance to jointly conferred degrees for obvious reasons.

The issue of resources was consistently cited by those involved in collaborative programs as a key obstacle. On the other hand, the potential increase in revenue could be a great incentive for institutions to adopt innovative collaborations, including jointly conferred degree programs. Unfortunately, the current Minnesota State Allocation Framework (presented by Susan Anderson from the Minnesota State system finance division in October 2015, Appendix 15) regards each institution's enrollment and instructional cost as the primary parameters to determine the allocation of the state appropriation. Thus, it promotes a "competitive race to the bottom" model of institutional behavior, but does not provide any incentive for collaboration. As long as this framework encourages competition among Minnesota State institutions by giving more money to institutions who can significantly drive down costs associated with programs, there is little incentive for institutions to increase program costs via collaboration, based on the expenses associated with logistical challenges.

Throughout our research, our contacts consistently mentioned financial aid as a critical issue to be addressed for collaborative programs to be successful and provide true benefits for students. An interview with a financial aid director provide us a better understanding of current financial aid policies and processes (e.g., joint billing, permission to release student confidential information) as well as obstacles when a student attends collaborative programs. Current practice requires students to understand their responsibility to disburse financial aid to each institution from which they are taking classes. The institutions themselves must determine their status (host or home school) and take additional steps based on that status (e.g. host school stops financial aid processing and uses a cohort code to stop student from being dropped for nonpayment, and home school processes financial aid and verifies code course applicability, etc.). There are, however, some examples of how collaborations are working within current policies and procedures, with Distance Minnesota cited as a potential model. While outside the scope of this project, an in-depth examination of ways to simplify financial aid for students taking courses at multiple institutions would be of significant benefit to Minnesota State institutions as well as the students themselves.

How a jointly conferred degree can appear on a transcript has emerged as a technical question. The current student record system at Minnesota State (ISRS) does not have a capacity to add a second institution to be listed on transcripts, but according to the IR director at the system office (Appendix 16), this can be resolved by investing time and resources to modify the data structure.

Given that institutions affiliated as Minnesota State are independently accredited, transcripts should be issued from each institution that students attend. Each institution also awards a degree and transcripts it. In the case of a jointly conferred degree, however, all institutions involved should be able to award the degree and thus, every transcript from all the involving institutions would have a degree information along with the record of courses that were taken for the degree. If a student were to complete general education requirements in one institution and then to declare a jointly conferred degree program that involves another institution, the transcript from the second institution may list courses taken from another institution as "transferred." This may or may not make the degree legitimate. Some consideration needs to be in place.

4. Higher Learning Commission Policy Consideration

Unlike the SACS and the Middle State Commission of Higher Education, the accrediting agency for Minnesota State institutions, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), does not have any policy specific to jointly conferred degrees. However, HLC does not have any policy that would specifically prohibit jointly conferred degrees (an email message with Linnea Stenson, HLC Vice President for Accreditation Relations, April 13, 2015). A conversation with HLC Vice President and Chief of Staff Dr. Eric Martin in April 2016 indicated that a formal inquiry should be initiated by the Minnesota State system office to explore how the current consortial arrangement policy (HLC Policy Inst.F.20.040 Section 11; see Appendix 17) can accommodate the jointly conferred degree arrangement.

5. Challenges for Institutional Collaboration

The value of jointly conferred degrees must be weighed against the cost. Collaboration in general is often a challenging process. The 2014 Luoma Report on Collaborative Academic Planning (Appendix 18) recognized that fear is a significant barrier to collaboration. Our team concurs that fear, particularly fear of losing one's position or academic freedom, is a very real challenge that remains in the System.

In addition, collaboration is financially challenging. Collaboration is currently a very expensive process. Not only do individuals need to spend time developing collaborative agreements and then maintaining partner relationships over time, there are many hidden costs associated with collaboration. These costs include marketing expenses, developing billing processes that function across multiple institutions, student support services, allocation of student fees, etc. In many cases, effective collaboration requires more staff. For example, at North Hennepin Community College, administration created a full-time position that focuses purely on the logistics of collaboration, thus creating an additional expense. As another example of the expense of collaboration, the current initiative to co-locate Minnesota Community and Technical College (MCTC) and Metropolitan State University is raising specific issues about library support. The MCTC library is not equipped to provide materials necessary for upper-division and graduate level research, nor are the current librarians trained to provide assistance at the upper-division and graduate level. Successful collaboration will require resources to enhance library holdings, to retrain MCTC staff and faculty librarians, and to hire individuals to deal with enhanced demand. While the jointly conferred degree model has the potential to increase the amount of funding colleges and universities receive through the allocation framework, it is not enough to cover all of the expenses associated with collaboration.

Finally, successful collaboration requires careful consideration of many logistical issues that, in some cases, require new processes. Logistical issues range from the technical (e.g., coding of students in ISRS and managing "visiting" versus "home campus") to student services (e.g., where do students go for advising, tutoring, library, counseling, medical services, etc.) to the academic (e.g., who stores data on learner outcome assessment and how is the program effectively assessed across campuses to meet HLC criteria). Other logistical concerns include the fact that different campuses have different academic calendars, and while everyone has a common start date, not all campuses have the same non-instructional days, nor do terms end at consistent times. Different campuses have differing policies surrounding student code of conduct and satisfactory academic progress. Proper collaboration can only occur when all these differences are identified and negotiated before problems and issues arise.

Summary and Recommendations

We approached our analysis of joint degree programs with the benefit to students as the primary consideration. Collaborative degrees offer benefits to students by expanding an institution's program offerings. These partnerships also allow institutions to market and deliver additional offerings beyond their region. As a result, collaborative degrees remove logistical barriers which limit student access to programs not offered on their home campus. In addition, collaboration amongst Minnesota State institutions can prevent program closure by providing cost savings to each campus while continuing to offer high quality affordable education. The current nanoscience technology program involving three Minnesota State institutions (Appendix 11) is an example.

With this in mind, it is our recommendation that the development of a joint degree program would be appropriate only in rare and unique situations where scarce institutional resources are shared to allow development or continuation of a program that would otherwise fail to exist. Considering current Minnesota State structure, policies, and procedures, there are a number of potential or real barriers (financial aid, degree conferral, etc.) to practical implementation of joint degree programs. We were able to point to situations within Minnesota State where this type of collaborative model would fit very well.

After researching and analyzing available data on joint degree programs, we respectfully offer the following recommendations.

1. The jointly conferred degree is still an emergent practice in the U.S. higher education landscape, although it can offer an alternative model for collaboration among Minnesota State institutions. It is best to promote this option in limited contexts, such as the development of innovative but high-cost programs and high-demand but labor- and/or resource-intensive programs. The current partnership for the nanoscience program is a good example of a high-cost but innovative program. The development of a jointly conferred Master's program in Social Work could be a good candidate, for it requires more integration due to accreditation.
2. Should Minnesota State decide to move forward with the jointly conferred degree, modification of Minnesota State Policy 3.36 and Procedure 3.36.1 is recommended as the first step (see Appendix 19 for the proposed changes to the current Procedure 3.36.1), followed by the modification of the Minnesota State Policy 3.29 and Procedure 3.29.1 by individuals with greater knowledge of the requirements and limitations of current transcribing processes. Rolling out these policy changes should be accompanied by a coordinated communication plan that includes appropriate messages for different audiences (e.g. faculty, chief academic affairs officers, registrars, etc.).
3. All communications with the Higher Learning Commission regarding joint degree programs, including formal approval, should come from the Minnesota State system office. Any outcomes, including implications or specific HLC requirements for maintaining accreditation when adding joint degree programs, should be communicated broadly with all Minnesota State institutions.
4. To facilitate collaborative academic programming including jointly conferred degrees, the Minnesota State system office needs to provide a common framework that guides academic program collaboration among Minnesota State institutions. It should promote the use of

common language and processes between different institutions and help build a collaborative culture. A sample of such a framework is “Framework for Minnesota State Collaborative Degree Programs” (Appendix 20) that the team developed by modifying the currently available Minnesota State inter-agency consortial agreements for academic program collaboration and by integrating best practices emergent from the research process. The team recommends that the Minnesota State system office adopt this type of framework.

5. Successful institutional collaborations require resources including but not limited to appropriate personnel, time, funding, communication infrastructure, record keeping mechanisms, and information. The team recommend providing financial incentives through the Minnesota State Allocation Framework as well as creating a single point of contact in the Minnesota State system office to provide information, coordination, promotion, and advocacy for academic program collaboration across Minnesota State institutions.

Appendix

List of Documents Included

1. The Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region. 2004. *Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees*. UNESCO & Higher Education Division of the Council of Europe.
2. The Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region. 2016. *Revised Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees*. UNESCO & Higher Education Division of the Council of Europe.
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17. *Higher Learning Commission Policy Title: Institutional Change*. Last revised in February 2016.
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**THE COMMITTEE OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RECOGNITION OF
QUALIFICATIONS CONCERNING HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE
EUROPEAN REGION**

THIRD SESSION

Strasbourg, 9 June 2004

**RECOMMENDATION ON THE
RECOGNITION OF JOINT
DEGREES**

*Adopted by the Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications
concerning Higher Education in the European Region on 9 June 2004*

RECOMMENDATION ON THE RECOGNITION OF JOINT DEGREES

Adopted by the Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region on 9 June 2004

Preamble

The Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe and UNESCO is to achieve greater unity between their members, and that this aim can be pursued notably by common action in cultural matters;

Having regard to the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (ETS no. 165);

Having regard to the European Cultural Convention (ETS no. 18);

Having regard to the process towards the establishment of a European higher Education Area, and in particular to the Declaration of the European Ministers of Education adopted in Bologna on 19 June 1999 as well as to their Communiqués adopted in Prague on 19 May 2001 and Berlin on 19 September 2003;

Having regard to the Diploma Supplement elaborated jointly by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO, to the UNESCO/Council of Europe Code of Good Practice in the provision of transnational education, to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and to the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications;

Having regard to the practical action in favour of improving the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education carried out by the Council of Europe/UNESCO European Network of national information centres on academic recognition and mobility ("the ENIC Network");

Considering that the Council of Europe and UNESCO have always encouraged academic mobility as a means for better understanding of the various cultures and languages, and without any form of racial, religious, political or sexual discrimination;

Considering that studying or working in a foreign country is likely to contribute to an individual's cultural and academic enrichment, as well as to improve the individual's career prospects;

Considering that the recognition of qualifications is an essential precondition for both academic and professional mobility;

Convinced that the joint development of curricula between higher education institutions in different countries and the award of joint degrees contribute to academic and professional mobility and to the creation of a European Higher Education Area;

Convinced that the development and improved recognition of joint degrees will contribute to developing the European dimension of higher education and entail important benefits for individuals as well as for European society as a whole;

Aware that the recognition of qualifications originating in such joint arrangements is currently encountering difficulties of a legal as well as of a practical nature;

Conscious of the need to facilitate the recognition of joint degrees;

Recommends the governments of States party to the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (hereinafter referred to as “the Lisbon Recognition Convention”):

- i. to take into account, in the establishment of their recognition policies, the principles set out in the appendix hereto which forms part of this Recommendation;
- ii. to draw these principles to the attention of the competent bodies concerned, so that they can be considered and taken into account;
- iii. to promote implementation of these principles by government agencies and local and regional authorities, and by higher education institutions within the limits imposed by the autonomy of higher education institutions;
- iv. to ensure that this Recommendation is distributed as widely as possible among all persons and bodies concerned with the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education;

Invites the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Director-General of UNESCO, as appropriate, to transmit this Recommendation to the governments of those States which were invited to the Diplomatic Conference entrusted with the adoption of the Lisbon Recognition Convention but which have not become parties to that Convention.

APPENDIX TO THE RECOMMENDATION ON THE RECOGNITION OF JOINT DEGREES

General considerations

1. The present Recommendation is adopted within the framework of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and applies to the Parties to this Convention. The principles and practices described in this Recommendation can, however, equally well be applied to the recognition of qualifications in countries other than those party to the Lisbon Recognition Convention or to qualifications issued between or among national education systems.
2. The purpose of the present Recommendation is to improve the recognition of joint degrees. While degrees that are considered as belonging to the education system of a Party to the Lisbon Recognition Convention even where parts of the degree have been earned in other education systems fall under the provisions of the Convention, the present Recommendation concerns joint degrees.
3. While the scope of the Lisbon Recognition Convention as well as of subsidiary texts adopted under the provisions of Article X.2.5 of the Convention concern the recognition of qualifications in countries other than that in which they have been earned, the provisions of the present recommendation may equally well be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to joint degrees issued by two or more institutions belonging to the same national higher education system.

Definitions

4. Terms defined in the Lisbon Recognition Convention are used in the same sense in the present Recommendation, and reference is made to the definition of these terms in Section I of the Convention.
5. A joint degree should, for the purposes of this Recommendation, be understood as referring to a higher education qualification issued jointly by at least two or more higher education institutions or jointly by one or more higher education institutions and other awarding bodies, on the basis of a study programme developed and/or provided jointly by the higher education institutions, possibly also in cooperation with other institutions. A joint degree may be issued as
 - a. a joint diploma in addition to one or more national diplomas,
 - b. a joint diploma issued by the institutions offering the study programme in question without being accompanied by any national diploma
 - c. one or more national diplomas issued officially as the only attestation of the joint qualification in question.

General principles

6. Holders of joint degrees should have adequate access, upon request, to a fair assessment of their qualifications
7. Competent recognition authorities should recognize foreign joint degrees unless they can demonstrate that there is a substantial difference between the joint

degree for which recognition is sought and the comparable qualification within their own national higher education system. Competent recognition authorities of Parties whose higher education institutions confer joint degrees should recognize these degrees with the greatest flexibility possible.

Legislation

8. Governments of States party to the Lisbon Recognition Convention should, where appropriate, therefore review their legislation with a view to removing any legal obstacles to the recognition of joint degrees and introduce legal provisions that would facilitate such recognition.

Quality assurance and institutional recognition

9. Competent recognition authorities may make the recognition of joint degrees conditional on all parts of the study programme leading to the degree and/or the institutions providing the programme being subject to transparent quality assessment or being considered as belonging to the education system of one or more Parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention.
10. Where the joint degree is issued on the basis of a curriculum developed by a group or consortium consisting of a number of recognized higher education institutions, recognition of the degree may be made contingent on all member institutions or programmes of the group or consortium being subject to transparent quality assessment, or being considered as belonging to the education system of one or more Parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention, even if only some of these institutions provide courses for any given degree.

Information

11. Institutions providing joint degrees should be encouraged to inform the competent recognition authorities of programmes giving rise to such degrees.
12. As appropriate, in order to facilitate recognition, candidates earning joint degrees should be provided with a Diploma Supplement, and study programmes leading to joint degrees should make use of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).
13. The Diploma Supplement issued with a joint degree should clearly describe all parts of the degree, and it should clearly indicate the institutions and/or study programmes at which the different parts of the degree have been earned.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO THE RECOMMENDATION ON THE RECOGNITION OF JOINT DEGREES

Adopted by the Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region on 9 June 2004

INTRODUCTION

The Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region is the main international legal text concerning the recognition of qualifications. It was adopted on 11 April 1997 and entered into force on 1 February 1999. A list of ratifications and signatures may be found at <http://conventions.coe.int> by searching for ETS 165.

The Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention is also one of the key standards for the Bologna Process aiming to establish a European Higher Education Area by 2010, the main goals of which include improving the mobility of students, staff and graduates, facilitating the recognition of qualifications and increasing the transparency of higher education systems in Europe.

The Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention has a double function. In legal terms, it is a treaty between states, and as such it is valid as a legal standard for the recognition of qualifications belonging to the higher education systems of the parties to the Convention as well as the qualifications covered by its subsidiary texts. In a broader sense, the Convention also serves as a guide to good practice, and in this sense, its provisions may, *mutatis mutandis*, be applied to all higher education qualifications, regardless of their origin. In this sense, the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention is in fact used as a standard well beyond its strictly legal function.

In article X.2.5, the Convention foresees that the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention Committee may adopt subsidiary texts to the Convention. So far, three such texts have been adopted:

- (i) a Recommendation on International Access Qualifications (1999);
- (ii) a Recommendation on Criteria and procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications (2001);
- (iii) a Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education (2001).

As will be seen, two of the three subsidiary texts adopted so far concern qualifications that are not a part of national education systems. This is partly because the Convention itself in a legal sense only covers qualifications belonging to the education system of Parties, and partly because the importance of qualifications not belonging to any national education system have increased vastly in importance since the Convention was adopted in 1997. This development is, with the increased emphasis on quality assurance, the most significant development in the recognition field since 1997.

Joint degrees

The increased importance of joint degrees is a part of this overall development towards qualifications not formally recognized as belonging to any – or any single – national education system, although it is a phenomenon of a different nature than transnational education.

While qualifications arising from transnational arrangements often fully stand outside national qualifications systems, in the case of joint degrees each component most often belongs to a national system and it is the combination of these elements that make competent recognition authorities (and others) consider joint degrees either as belonging to more than one national system or not fully belonging to any single national system.

This problem of typology should, however, not overshadow the considerable potential of joint degrees as an excellent means of stimulating academic mobility and cooperation between higher education institutions. As such, joint degrees have the potential to play an important role in helping establish the European Higher Education Area, as was underlined by the Prague Higher Education Summit:

In order to further strengthen the important European dimensions of higher education and graduate employability Ministers called upon the higher education sector to increase the development of modules, courses and curricula at all levels with "European" content, orientation or organisation. This concerns particularly modules, courses and degree curricula offered in partnership by institutions from different countries and leading to a recognized joint degree.

(Prague Communiqué, adopted by the Ministers of the Bologna Process)

However, this role can only be fulfilled if joint degrees are given adequate recognition. The purpose of the present Recommendation is therefore to help ensure fair recognition for a kind of qualification that has considerable potential, but that is in a strict legal sense not covered by the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention.

Within the Bologna Process, joint degrees have been the subject of a major study carried out by the European University Association and financed by the European Commission¹. The present Recommendation is indebted to the study and seeks, as appropriate, to translate its main recommendations into legal provisions applicable in the context of the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention. In so doing, it also takes account of the round table debate of the Council of Europe's Higher Education and Research Committee (CDESR) on the European Higher Education Area at the 2002 plenary session of the CDESR (Strasbourg, 2 – 3 October 2002).

Preamble

The Preamble places the Recommendation in the context of the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention and the European Higher Education Area and points to the main developments that call for improved provisions for the recognition of joint degrees.

¹ See Andrejs Rauhvargers "Joint Degree Study" in Christian Tauch and Andrejs Rauhvargers: *Survey on Master Degrees and Joint Degrees in Europe* (Bruxelles 2001: European University Association).

General considerations

The general considerations place the present Recommendation in the context of the Convention and points to the double function of the Convention as an international legal instrument and as a guide to good practice. Attention is also drawn to the fact that while joint degrees are most commonly issued as a result of cooperation between higher education institutions located in different countries and issuing their degrees within different higher education systems, joint degrees may in principle also be issued by higher education institutions located in the same country and issuing degrees within the same higher education system. With appropriate adjustments, the provisions of the present Recommendation may equally well be applied to such cases.

Definitions

This part of the Recommendation seeks to define joint degree as a generic term and to explore the main types of joint degrees. It is worth noting that the EUA study on joint degrees found that there is no common definition in use today, whether explicitly or implicitly, but a joint degree can be said to have all or some of the following characteristics:

- the programmes are developed and/or approved jointly by several institutions;
- students from each participating institution physically take part in the study programme at other institutions (but they do not necessarily study at *all* cooperating institutions);
- students' stay at the participating institutions should constitute a substantial part of the programme;
- periods of study and examinations passed at the partner institutions are recognized fully and automatically;
- the partner institutions work out the curriculum jointly and cooperate on admission and examinations. In addition, staff of participating institutions should be encouraged to teach at other institutions contributing to the joint degree;
- after completing the full programme, students either obtain the national degree of each participating institution or awarding body or a degree (usually an unofficial "certificate" or "diploma") awarded jointly by the partner institutions².

The main kinds of joint degrees may be illustrated by a number of examples, which may include very different levels of actual cooperation in curriculum development and mobility of staff and students.

Thus, joint doctoral degrees may range from joint supervision of thesis by professors from different countries to actual joint doctoral programmes where parts of the research towards the doctoral degree are carried out at different universities in different countries. At first and second degree level at one end of the spectrum there are examples of (virtual) universities established in cooperation between two or several countries with a view to offering joint curricula leading to joint degrees, such as the Transnational University of Limburg between the Flemish community of Belgium and the Netherlands, the Öresund University between Sweden and Denmark or the Interuniversity Europe Centre established in Bulgaria and Romania with the assistance of Germany. At the other end of the spectrum one will find cooperation on joint degrees which is rather a franchise of one country's degrees in another country (e.g. several cases where British degrees are awarded at Dutch *hogescholen*).

² Cf. Andrejs Rauhvargers, op. cit., p. 29

Several broader joint degrees consortia are known that have a curriculum jointly approved by all consortium members, organize studies for each student at two or more partner institutions and issue unofficial joint degree certificates on top of a national qualification (e.g. a joint degree consortium in construction engineering). However, most commonly, due to legal difficulties and formal regulations, the joint curriculum with study periods at several institutions still lead to just one national degree.

While this relatively wide definition is aimed at allowing and facilitating the recognition of degrees from past as well as current and future arrangements, it should be emphasized that the further development of joint degrees as powerful instruments to further the European dimension of higher education and the establishment of the European Higher Education Area will depend on basing joint degrees on a high level of institutional cooperation, including the development of integrated curricula, and the review of national funding systems for higher education.

The term “joint degree” is used as the established term for the qualifications covered by the present Recommendation. The term “diploma” designates the official document attesting the qualifications.

General principles

This part of the Recommendation outlines the main principles on which it builds. These conform to the main principles of the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention (see in particular Articles IV.1, V.1 and VI.1 of the Convention).

The point is also made that joint degrees should be recognized at least as favourably as other qualifications from the education system from which they originate. This is a particularly important provision in view of the findings of the EUA study referred to above, in that in current practice, it often seems more difficult to obtain recognition of a joint degree than of a “pure” foreign national degree. This is unjustified in view of the overall policy goal of stimulating international and inter-institutional cooperation and academic mobility.

It is also paradoxical and unjustified from another point of view, and to fully appreciate the paradox, it may be useful to bear in mind that recognition of joint degrees may concern three different situations:

- (a) recognition of the joint degree in a country one of whose institutions has provided a part of the study programme giving rise to the qualification;
- (b) recognition in a country one of whose institutions participates in the consortium having issued the degree, but this institution has not provided any part of the degree in question, i.e. the applicant has studied at other institutions participating in the consortium;
- (c) recognition in a third country, i.e. a country that has not in any way been involved in the study programme and/or consortium granting the qualification.
- (d) recognition of a degree, in any country, all or a part of which has not been subject to transparent quality assurance.

It should further be kept in mind that while recognition of all parts of the study programmes giving rise to a joint degree is automatic among the partner institutions, such recognition is not necessarily granted outside of this consortium.

In situations (a) and (b) described above, recognition of a joint degree should in fact be easier than recognition of a “pure” foreign qualification since in a joint degree, the study programme leading to the degree has been elaborated jointly by one or more institutions belonging to the education system of the country in which recognition is sought and one or more foreign institutions. A recognized institution in the country in which recognition is sought will therefore already have assessed the profile, level and quality of the foreign components of the joint degree, and it would seem paradoxical if this assessment were not to be accepted by (other) competent recognition authorities in the country in which recognition is sought.

If recognition of a joint degree is sought in a third country (situation (c)), it is at least difficult to see why recognition of the joint degree should be more difficult than the recognition of a national qualification from any of the countries whose institutions have contributed to the joint degree.

It would therefore seem reasonable that the only justifiably difficult situation would arise if significant parts of a joint degree were delivered by an institution or higher education programme that does not belong to a national education system and/or that has not been the subject of transparent quality assessment (d), cf. also paragraph 11 of the Recommendation.

So far, there is no evidence of cases where the joint degree would have been given on the basis of many short periods of study at a large number of institutions. Rather, in the case of large joint degree consortia, it is the joint programme that has been jointly elaborated and approved by a dozen or more institutions, but students actually spend study periods at a limited number of consortium partners – e.g. two or three institutions. The principles of the Recommendation can well be applied also to such (so far hypothetical) cases, bearing in mind that when assessing a qualification awarded after studies of relatively short periods at a greater number of institutions, attention has to be paid to the integrity of the programme

Legislation

Paragraph 9 makes the case for reviewing national legislation with a view to removing any remaining legal obstacles to the recognition of joint degrees and/or introducing legal provisions that would facilitate such recognition.

This is also an important provision in the light of the findings of the study. For example, it still seems legally difficult in many countries to issue one single qualification in the name of several institutions, especially when at least one of these institutions is foreign.

Another example is that it is not uncommon that higher education institutions have rules requiring that at least one half of the credits toward any given degree be taken at the institution in question for the degree to be issued by this institution. If a student seeks a joint degree from two or more institutions practicing this rule, the results are predictable. This is an obvious case where rules and regulations prevent a laudable initiative, but legislation may also impede fair recognition in less obvious ways. The call for a review of national legislation in this sense was made by the 2002 plenary session of the CDESR, and it is important to include the point in the present Recommendation.

Finally, it should be noted that the fact that national legislation does not specifically prevent joint degrees from being established or recognized is not a sufficient measure. In many cases, an absence of legal provision positively recognizing the concept of joint degrees may in itself constitute an impediment to the recognition of such qualification. Any review of national

legislation should therefore consider positive provision for the recognition of joint degrees rather than just abolishing any explicit impediments to such recognition.

Quality assurance and institutional recognition

The increased importance of quality assurance and the acceptance of close link between the quality assurance and recognition of institutions and study programmes on the one hand and individual qualifications on the other hand is one of the major development since the adoption of the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention in 1997. Whereas in 1997, there was still discussion of *whether* quality assurance was needed as general norm, the discussion now focuses on *what kind* of quality assurance is needed.

The close link between quality assurance and recognition was underlined by the Prague Higher Education Summit (May 2001), where the Ministers of the Bologna Process in their communiqué “called upon the universities and other higher education institutions, national agencies and the European Network of Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), in cooperation with corresponding bodies from countries which are not members of ENQA, to collaborate in establishing a common framework of reference and to disseminate best practice”. Cf. also the comments to the General principles, above.

The Recommendation indicates that where a part of the study programme giving rise to a joint degree has not been the subject of quality assessment or is not considered as belonging to the education system of one or more parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention, this may be a valid reason not to recognize the degree. In such cases, recognition authorities should, however, consider whether partial recognition may be granted, in keeping with the provisions of the Recommendation on Criteria and procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications³.

It is important to note that in these cases where the studies for the joint degree have actually taken place in a limited number of institutions, but the joint degree is awarded in the name of a larger consortium, it seems rightly to require that all the consortium members are recognized institutions and that at least the institutions in which the student has actually studied for the joint degree, have been quality assessed.

Information

Information on education systems as well as on individual institutions, programmes and qualifications is one of the key challenges facing those working with the recognition of qualifications. As identified by the conference on Recognition Issues in the Bologna Process, organized in Lisbon on 11 – 12 April 2002 by the Council of Europe and the Portuguese authorities⁴, the problem is not one of a lack of information, but rather of a lack of pertinent and focused information. The Diploma Supplement (cf. also Article IX.3 of the Convention) and the European Credit Transfer System are important information instruments that help facilitate the recognition of qualifications. In the case of joint degrees, it is particularly important that a Diploma Supplement be issued with the degree that would clearly describe the various components of the degrees in relation to the education systems within which they have been earned.

³ Cf. paragraph 8 of this Recommendation, adopted by the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee at its second meeting (Rīga, 6 June 2001).

⁴ See Sjur Bergan (ed.): *Recognition Issues in the Bologna Process* (Strasbourg, to appear in 2003: Council of Europe Publishing), in particular the articles by Stephen Adam and Chantal Kaufmann and the report by the General Rapporteur, Lewis Purser.



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THE COMMITTEE OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS CONCERNING HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE EUROPEAN REGION

Seventh session

29 February 2016, 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

UNESCO House

Paris

REVISED RECOMMENDATION ON THE RECOGNITION OF JOINT DEGREES

Directorate General II (Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation – Education Policy and Rights Division) of the Council of Europe and the UNESCO Division for Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems

Distribution: LRC Committee

Revised Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees

(Adopted by the Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region on 29 February 2016 at its Seventh meeting in Paris, France)

Preamble

The Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe and UNESCO is to achieve greater unity between their members, and that this aim can be pursued notably by undertaking common action in cultural matters and supporting reforms in higher education;

Having regard to the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (CETS No. 165, hereafter “the Lisbon Recognition Convention”);

Having regard to the European Cultural Convention (ETS No. 18);

Having regard to the Joint Declaration of the European Ministers of Education in Bologna on 19 June 1999 (Bologna Declaration), and the establishment of the European Higher Education Area, as well as to the subsequent communiqués of the ministerial conferences within the Bologna Process;

Having regard to the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes adopted by the ministers at the Bologna Ministerial Conference in Yerevan in 2015;

Having regard to the Diploma Supplement which facilitates the recognition of joint degrees, developed jointly by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO;

Having regard to the subsidiary texts adopted under the Lisbon Recognition Convention: the Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education, the Revised Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications and the Recommendation on the Use of Qualifications Frameworks in the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications;

Having regard to the development of credit systems, in particular the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and its Users’ Guide;

Having regard to the practical action in favour of improving the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education carried out by the Council of Europe/UNESCO European Network of National Information Centres (ENIC) on academic recognition and mobility;

Having regard to the European Area of Recognition (EAR) manual which offers practical implementation guidelines on the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention;

Considering that the Council of Europe and UNESCO have always encouraged academic mobility as a means for better understanding various cultures and languages, and without any form of discrimination;

Considering that studying or working in a foreign country is likely to contribute to an individual's personal, cultural and academic enrichment, as well as to improving their career prospects;

Considering that the recognition of qualifications is an essential precondition for both academic and professional mobility;

Considering that qualifications frameworks should be used to facilitate the assessment of foreign qualifications by the competent recognition authorities;

Convinced that the joint development of study programmes between higher education institutions in different higher education systems and the award of joint degrees contribute to academic and professional mobility, and to the further development within and between the regions of the world;

Convinced that the improved recognition of joint degrees will contribute to developing the European dimension of higher education and entail important benefits for individuals, as well as for European society as a whole;

Aware that recognition of qualifications originating in joint arrangements is still encountering difficulties of a legal and practical nature;

Conscious of the need to facilitate the recognition of joint degrees;

Recommends that governments of States Parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention:

- i. take into account, in the establishment of their recognition policies, the principles set out in the appendix hereto, which forms part of this Recommendation;
- ii. draw these principles to the attention of the competent bodies concerned, so that they can be considered and taken into account;
- iii. review national legislation with a view to removing any legal obstacles to the recognition of joint degrees and/or introducing transparent legal provisions that would facilitate such recognition;
- iv. ensure that this Recommendation is distributed as widely as possible among all stakeholders concerned with the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education,

Invites the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Director-General of UNESCO, as appropriate, to transmit this Recommendation to the governments of those States which were invited to the diplomatic conference entrusted with the adoption of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, but which have not become parties to that convention.

Appendix to the Revised Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees

General considerations

The present Recommendation is adopted within the framework of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and applies to the parties to this convention. The principles and practices described in this Recommendation can, however, be applied equally well to the recognition of qualifications in countries other than those party to the Lisbon Recognition Convention or to qualifications issued between or among national or subnational education systems (hereinafter referred to as “national”).

The purpose of the present Recommendation is to improve the recognition of joint degrees that are considered as belonging to education systems of the States Parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention. Moreover, the Recommendation may also apply to cases when part of a study programme has been completed in an education system of a country not party to the convention.

While the scope of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, as well as of subsidiary texts adopted under the provisions of Article X.2.5 of the convention, concern the recognition of qualifications in countries other than that in which they have been earned, the provisions of the present Recommendation may be applied equally well, *mutatis mutandis*, to joint degrees issued by two or more institutions belonging to the same national higher education system.

Definitions

The terms defined in the Lisbon Recognition Convention are used in the same sense in the present Recommendation, and reference is made to the definition of these terms in Section I of the convention.

For the purpose of this Recommendation a joint degree is understood as referring to a higher education qualification awarded jointly by at least two higher education institutions, on the basis of a joint programme. A joint degree is issued on a single document.

A joint programme refers to a study programme developed, co-ordinated and provided jointly by at least two higher education institutions and leading to the awarding of a joint degree.

General principles

Holders of joint degrees should have adequate access, upon request, to a fair assessment of their qualifications.

In assessment of joint degrees the competent recognition authorities should follow the same assessment procedure and criteria as stipulated in the provisions of the Revised Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications (adopted by the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee in 2010).

The competent recognition authorities should recognise joint degrees unless substantial difference can be shown between the joint degree for which recognition is sought and the comparable qualification within their own national higher education system. Joint degrees

should be treated in the same way as any other qualifications from the higher education systems to which they belong.

Legislation

Governments of States Parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention should, where appropriate, review their legislation with a view to removing any legal obstacles to the recognition of joint degrees and introduce transparent provisions that would facilitate such recognition.

National authorities should establish legal provisions enabling higher education institutions to offer joint programmes and award joint degrees. Joint degrees should be awarded in accordance with national legal provisions.

Quality assurance and recognition

The competent recognition authorities should consider recognising joint degrees, which are quality assured in a single cross-border process and by a quality assurance agency, provided that the outcomes are officially recognised in the countries to which the providing institutions belong.

In the absence of a single cross-border quality assurance process, the competent recognition authorities may make the recognition of joint degrees conditional on all parts of the study programme leading to the degree and/or the institutions providing the programme being subject to transparent quality assurance mechanisms in line with the rules and legislation of the countries to which the providing institutions belong, as well as to European guiding principles.

Governments of States Parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention should establish legal provisions concerning quality assurance of joint programmes.

Information

Higher education institutions awarding joint degrees should make available the information related to their joint programmes and joint degrees.

As appropriate, in order to facilitate the recognition of joint degrees, graduates should be provided with a diploma supplement or some other comparable document, and study programmes leading to joint degrees should make use of the ECTS or other credit systems, basing the award of credits on learning outcomes.

A diploma supplement issued with a joint degree should clearly describe all parts of the degree, and it should clearly indicate at which institutions and/or in which study programmes the different parts of the degree have been earned.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO THE REVISED RECOMMENDATION ON THE RECOGNITION OF JOINT DEGREES

Introduction

The Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as “the Lisbon Recognition Convention”) is the main international legal text concerning the recognition of qualifications in the European region. The convention was adopted on 11 April 1997 and entered into force on 1 February 1999.

The Lisbon Recognition Convention is also one of the key standards for the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), the main goals of which include improving the mobility of students, staff and graduates, facilitating the recognition of qualifications and increasing the transparency of higher education systems in Europe.

The Lisbon Recognition Convention has a double function. In legal terms, it is a treaty between States, and as such it is valid as a legal standard for the recognition of qualifications belonging to the higher education systems of the parties to the convention as well as the qualifications covered by its subsidiary texts. In a broader sense, the convention also serves as a guide to good practice, and in this sense its provisions may, *mutatis mutandis*, be applied to all higher education qualifications, regardless of their origin. The convention is in fact used as a standard well beyond its strictly legal function.

In Article X.2.5, the convention foresees that the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee may adopt subsidiary texts to the convention. The convention itself, in a legal sense, only covers qualifications belonging to the education systems of parties. But the importance of qualifications not belonging to any national or subnational (hereinafter referred to as “national”) education system has increased vastly in importance since the convention was adopted. There has been a need to adopt subsidiary texts concerning qualifications that may or may not be a part of national education systems. The development of joint degrees and joint programmes has increased emphasis on quality assurance of joint programmes and recognition of joint degrees.

Joint degrees

The increased importance of joint degrees is part of the overall development of qualifications often not formally recognised as belonging to any – or any single – national education system.

This problem of typology should, however, not overshadow the considerable potential of joint degrees as an excellent means of stimulating mobility, co-operation between higher education institutions and the internationalisation of higher education.

The purpose of the present recommendation is to help ensure fair recognition for qualifications that have considerable potential, but that are in a legal sense not fully covered by the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Preamble

The preamble builds on the existing legal framework for the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education, as elaborated by the Council of Europe and UNESCO. It places the recommendation in the context of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the EHEA and points to the main developments that call for improved provisions for the recognition of joint degrees.

Regarding the EHEA, the recommendation recalls references to joint degrees and joint programmes in Bologna Process ministerial communiqués. In the communiqués adopted in 2001 (Prague Communiqué), 2003 (Berlin Communiqué), 2005 (Bergen Communiqué) and 2007 (London Communiqué), the ministers stress the importance of the European dimension of higher education and graduate employability, and call for an increase in the development of joint programmes at first, second and third cycles offered in partnership by institutions from different countries and leading to recognised joint degrees. The ministers also stress the importance of removing legal obstacles to the establishment and recognition of joint degrees, as well as of actively support quality assurance of joint programmes.

Regarding the EHEA, the recommendation also recalls references to joint degrees and joint programmes in other more recent communiqués, including:

The Leuven/Louvain la Neuve Communiqué in 2009:

“Within each of the three cycles, opportunities for mobility shall be created in the structure of degree programmes. Joint degrees and programmes as well as mobility windows shall become more common practice.”

The Bucharest Communiqué in 2012:

“We encourage higher education institutions to further develop joint programmes and degrees as part of a wider EHEA approach. We will examine national rules and practices relating to joint programmes and degrees as a way to dismantle obstacles to co-operation and mobility embedded in national contexts.”

The Yerevan Communiqué in 2015:

“A common degree structure and credit system, common quality assurance standards and guidelines, co-operation for mobility and joint programmes and degrees are the foundations of the EHEA.”

Definitions

This part of the recommendation seeks to define “joint degree” as a generic term. There is no common definition for a joint degree in use today, whether explicitly or implicitly, but a joint degree will often be characterised by the following:

- the programmes are developed jointly by at least two higher education institutions;
- students from each participating institution take part in the study programme at other institutions (but they do not necessary study at all co-operating institutions);

- students' stay at the participating institutions should constitute a substantial part of the programme;
- periods of study and examinations passed at the partner institutions are recognised fully and automatically;
- the partner institutions work out the study programme jointly and co-operate on admission and examinations;
- after completing the study programme, students are awarded a joint degree in the form of a single (joint) document.

The main kinds of joint degrees may be illustrated by a number of examples, which may include very different levels of actual co-operation in study programme development and mobility of staff and students.

The Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees, adopted in 2004, provides different definitions of a joint degree. Current developments and concepts are focused on the principle that a joint degree is a joint qualification awarded jointly by the partners and issued jointly as a single document.

Therefore, the main scope of this recommendation is to focus on the recognition of joint degrees, awarded jointly and issued as a single document. The term “joint degree” is used as the established term for the qualification covered by the present recommendation. The term “document” designates the document attesting the qualification.

This subsidiary text concerns the recognition of joint degrees as the title clearly states. However, joint programmes may also lead to the award of double or multiple degrees. Double or multiple degrees are issued as single documents in a national context in each participating country, and should be recognised according to the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the subsidiary text on the recommendations on criteria and procedures for the assessment of foreign qualifications when the programme is offered in accordance with national legislation in each participating country. However, provisions of the subsidiary text may also apply to the assessment and recognition of double or multiple degrees, in terms of general principles, legislation, quality assurance and information provision.

While qualifications arising from transnational arrangements often differ substantially from national qualifications, in the case of joint degrees each of the components normally belongs to a national system. It is the combination of these elements that leads the competent recognition authorities (and others) consider joint degrees either as belonging to more than one national education system or not fully belonging to any single national system.

General principles

This part of the recommendation outlines the main principles on which it builds. These conform to the main principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention (see in particular Articles IV.1, V.1 and VI.1 of the convention).

The point is also made that joint degrees should be recognised in the same way as any other qualification from the education system from which they originate. It often seems more difficult to obtain recognition of a joint degree than of a national qualification. This is in contradiction with the overall policy goal of fostering mobility and institutional and international co-operation.

It should further be kept in mind that while recognition of all parts of the study programmes leading to a joint degree is automatic among the partner institutions, such recognition is not necessarily granted outside this consortium.

In the framework of this recommendation, in the countries where institutions provide a part of the study programme, recognition of a joint degree may be easier than recognition of a foreign qualification, as the study programme leading to the degree has been developed jointly by one or more institutions belonging to the higher education system of the country in which recognition is sought. A recognised institution in the country in which recognition is sought will therefore already have assessed the profile, level, workload, learning outcomes and quality of the foreign components of the joint degree.

The point is also made that the assessment criteria and procedures stipulated in the Revised Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications (2010) apply also to the assessment of joint degrees. It is important in particular that the holders of a joint degree are regarded as equals with holders of foreign qualifications, and that there are no discriminative differences made or additional administrative obstacles foreseen. Articles IV, V and VI of the Revised Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications are also relevant in the assessment of joint degrees.

Article IV of the revised recommendation applies to the assessment procedure of joint degrees in terms of:

- information to the applicant;
- information on the qualification for which recognition is sought;
- fees;
- translation;
- verification of the authenticity of the document.

Article V of the revised recommendation applies to the assessment criteria of joint degrees in terms of:

- status of the institution(s);
- assessment of individual qualifications.

Article VI of the revised recommendation applies to the outcome of the assessment of a foreign qualification. It should also apply to the outcome of the assessment of a joint degree.

In relation to the subsidiary text Recommendation on the Use of Qualifications Frameworks in the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications, national qualification authorities should guarantee a joint degree wherever referenced in their own national qualifications frameworks. This must correspond to the same level on an overarching qualifications framework, if relevant.

Legislation

It is still often legally difficult in many countries to issue a single document in the name of two or more institutions from different higher education systems.

It is not uncommon for higher education institutions to have rules requiring that at least one half of the credits toward any given degree be taken at the institution in question for the degree to be issued by that institution. If a student seeks a joint degree from more than two institutions practising this rule, the results are predictable. This is an obvious case where rules and regulations prevent a laudable initiative, but legislation may also impede fair recognition in less obvious ways.

In some countries only national standard diplomas can be issued, so some institutions are unable to issue a joint document with a foreign partner institution.

Finally, it should be noted that national legislation does not specifically prevent joint degrees from being established or recognised. In many cases, an absence of legal provision positively recognising the concept of joint degrees may in itself constitute an impediment to the recognition of such qualifications. Any review of national legislation should therefore consider positive provision for the recognition of joint degrees rather than just abolishing any explicit impediments to such recognition.

Quality assurance and recognition

The increased importance of quality assurance and the acceptance of close links between quality assurance and recognition of institutions and study programmes on the one hand and individual qualifications on the other hand is one of the major developments since the adoption of the Lisbon Recognition Convention in 1997.

Joint programmes have been challenged by the fact that legislation in the countries of the providing institutions requires that the same programme be subject to quality assurance in all countries. The consequence is that a joint programme of a larger consortium may constantly be in the process of being quality assured in the different countries. In the European region more and more countries have adopted legal provisions allowing cross-border quality assurance of national programmes. This legal development is based on agreed common standards and guidelines on quality assurance. The recognition of joint degrees that are quality assured in one single cross-border process by one single quality assurance agency should be considered provided that the quality assessment is recognised in the respective participating countries.

The recommendation indicates that where a part of the study programme giving rise to a joint degree has not been the subject of quality assurance mechanisms or is not considered as belonging to the education system of one or more parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention, this may be a valid reason not to recognise the joint degree. In such cases, recognition authorities should, however, consider whether partial recognition may be granted, in keeping with the provisions of the Revised Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications.

Information

Information on education systems/qualifications frameworks (where applicable) as well as on individual institutions, study programmes and qualifications is one of the key challenges faced by those working with the recognition of qualifications.

Information about joint programmes and joint degrees should be as easily available as information on any other study programme or national qualification. It is important and relevant for the competent recognition authorities that information provided by the national authorities and higher education institutions is available for students, the competent recognition authorities and other stakeholders, and that the information is accurate, adequate, relevant and reliable.

Higher education institutions are strongly encouraged to issue a Diploma Supplement or other comparable document to facilitate the assessment of the joint degree concerned. The Diploma Supplement is an important instrument that helps to facilitate the recognition of qualifications. In the case of joint degrees, it is particularly important that a Diploma Supplement clearly describing the different components of the study programme and education systems within which they have been earned be issued with the degree.

For better transparency it is recommended that a Diploma Supplement issued with a joint degree include the following information:

- the programme details include information about the individual study pathway of the graduate, which includes the programme components (with full name, credits and grades), learning outcomes and the institution that offered that part of the joint programme;
- if there are other partners in the joint programme consortium which are not involved in awarding the joint degree, their full name, status and role in the programme is included;
- the Diploma Supplement should contain information about the co-ordinating institution or a contact point for further information about the joint programme;
- if the joint programme has been quality assured, reference to the responsible quality assurance agency should be included;
- the information on the higher education system should at least include the systems from which the graduate has obtained a joint degree.



Strasbourg/București, 9 June 2004
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**THE COMMITTEE OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RECOGNITION OF
QUALIFICATIONS CONCERNING HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE
EUROPEAN REGION**

THIRD SESSION

Strasbourg, 9 June 2004

**RECOMMENDATION ON THE
RECOGNITION OF JOINT
DEGREES**

*Adopted by the Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications
concerning Higher Education in the European Region on 9 June 2004*

RECOMMENDATION ON THE RECOGNITION OF JOINT DEGREES

Adopted by the Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region on 9 June 2004

Preamble

The Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe and UNESCO is to achieve greater unity between their members, and that this aim can be pursued notably by common action in cultural matters;

Having regard to the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (ETS no. 165);

Having regard to the European Cultural Convention (ETS no. 18);

Having regard to the process towards the establishment of a European higher Education Area, and in particular to the Declaration of the European Ministers of Education adopted in Bologna on 19 June 1999 as well as to their Communiqués adopted in Prague on 19 May 2001 and Berlin on 19 September 2003;

Having regard to the Diploma Supplement elaborated jointly by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO, to the UNESCO/Council of Europe Code of Good Practice in the provision of transnational education, to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and to the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications;

Having regard to the practical action in favour of improving the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education carried out by the Council of Europe/UNESCO European Network of national information centres on academic recognition and mobility ("the ENIC Network");

Considering that the Council of Europe and UNESCO have always encouraged academic mobility as a means for better understanding of the various cultures and languages, and without any form of racial, religious, political or sexual discrimination;

Considering that studying or working in a foreign country is likely to contribute to an individual's cultural and academic enrichment, as well as to improve the individual's career prospects;

Considering that the recognition of qualifications is an essential precondition for both academic and professional mobility;

Convinced that the joint development of curricula between higher education institutions in different countries and the award of joint degrees contribute to academic and professional mobility and to the creation of a European Higher Education Area;

Convinced that the development and improved recognition of joint degrees will contribute to developing the European dimension of higher education and entail important benefits for individuals as well as for European society as a whole;

Aware that the recognition of qualifications originating in such joint arrangements is currently encountering difficulties of a legal as well as of a practical nature;

Conscious of the need to facilitate the recognition of joint degrees;

Recommends the governments of States party to the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (hereinafter referred to as “the Lisbon Recognition Convention”):

- i. to take into account, in the establishment of their recognition policies, the principles set out in the appendix hereto which forms part of this Recommendation;
- ii. to draw these principles to the attention of the competent bodies concerned, so that they can be considered and taken into account;
- iii. to promote implementation of these principles by government agencies and local and regional authorities, and by higher education institutions within the limits imposed by the autonomy of higher education institutions;
- iv. to ensure that this Recommendation is distributed as widely as possible among all persons and bodies concerned with the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education;

Invites the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Director-General of UNESCO, as appropriate, to transmit this Recommendation to the governments of those States which were invited to the Diplomatic Conference entrusted with the adoption of the Lisbon Recognition Convention but which have not become parties to that Convention.

APPENDIX TO THE RECOMMENDATION ON THE RECOGNITION OF JOINT DEGREES

General considerations

1. The present Recommendation is adopted within the framework of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and applies to the Parties to this Convention. The principles and practices described in this Recommendation can, however, equally well be applied to the recognition of qualifications in countries other than those party to the Lisbon Recognition Convention or to qualifications issued between or among national education systems.
2. The purpose of the present Recommendation is to improve the recognition of joint degrees. While degrees that are considered as belonging to the education system of a Party to the Lisbon Recognition Convention even where parts of the degree have been earned in other education systems fall under the provisions of the Convention, the present Recommendation concerns joint degrees.
3. While the scope of the Lisbon Recognition Convention as well as of subsidiary texts adopted under the provisions of Article X.2.5 of the Convention concern the recognition of qualifications in countries other than that in which they have been earned, the provisions of the present recommendation may equally well be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to joint degrees issued by two or more institutions belonging to the same national higher education system.

Definitions

4. Terms defined in the Lisbon Recognition Convention are used in the same sense in the present Recommendation, and reference is made to the definition of these terms in Section I of the Convention.
5. A joint degree should, for the purposes of this Recommendation, be understood as referring to a higher education qualification issued jointly by at least two or more higher education institutions or jointly by one or more higher education institutions and other awarding bodies, on the basis of a study programme developed and/or provided jointly by the higher education institutions, possibly also in cooperation with other institutions. A joint degree may be issued as
 - a. a joint diploma in addition to one or more national diplomas,
 - b. a joint diploma issued by the institutions offering the study programme in question without being accompanied by any national diploma
 - c. one or more national diplomas issued officially as the only attestation of the joint qualification in question.

General principles

6. Holders of joint degrees should have adequate access, upon request, to a fair assessment of their qualifications
7. Competent recognition authorities should recognize foreign joint degrees unless they can demonstrate that there is a substantial difference between the joint

degree for which recognition is sought and the comparable qualification within their own national higher education system. Competent recognition authorities of Parties whose higher education institutions confer joint degrees should recognize these degrees with the greatest flexibility possible.

Legislation

8. Governments of States party to the Lisbon Recognition Convention should, where appropriate, therefore review their legislation with a view to removing any legal obstacles to the recognition of joint degrees and introduce legal provisions that would facilitate such recognition.

Quality assurance and institutional recognition

9. Competent recognition authorities may make the recognition of joint degrees conditional on all parts of the study programme leading to the degree and/or the institutions providing the programme being subject to transparent quality assessment or being considered as belonging to the education system of one or more Parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention.
10. Where the joint degree is issued on the basis of a curriculum developed by a group or consortium consisting of a number of recognized higher education institutions, recognition of the degree may be made contingent on all member institutions or programmes of the group or consortium being subject to transparent quality assessment, or being considered as belonging to the education system of one or more Parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention, even if only some of these institutions provide courses for any given degree.

Information

11. Institutions providing joint degrees should be encouraged to inform the competent recognition authorities of programmes giving rise to such degrees.
12. As appropriate, in order to facilitate recognition, candidates earning joint degrees should be provided with a Diploma Supplement, and study programmes leading to joint degrees should make use of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).
13. The Diploma Supplement issued with a joint degree should clearly describe all parts of the degree, and it should clearly indicate the institutions and/or study programmes at which the different parts of the degree have been earned.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO THE RECOMMENDATION ON THE RECOGNITION OF JOINT DEGREES

Adopted by the Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region on 9 June 2004

INTRODUCTION

The Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region is the main international legal text concerning the recognition of qualifications. It was adopted on 11 April 1997 and entered into force on 1 February 1999. A list of ratifications and signatures may be found at <http://conventions.coe.int> by searching for ETS 165.

The Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention is also one of the key standards for the Bologna Process aiming to establish a European Higher Education Area by 2010, the main goals of which include improving the mobility of students, staff and graduates, facilitating the recognition of qualifications and increasing the transparency of higher education systems in Europe.

The Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention has a double function. In legal terms, it is a treaty between states, and as such it is valid as a legal standard for the recognition of qualifications belonging to the higher education systems of the parties to the Convention as well as the qualifications covered by its subsidiary texts. In a broader sense, the Convention also serves as a guide to good practice, and in this sense, its provisions may, *mutatis mutandis*, be applied to all higher education qualifications, regardless of their origin. In this sense, the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention is in fact used as a standard well beyond its strictly legal function.

In article X.2.5, the Convention foresees that the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention Committee may adopt subsidiary texts to the Convention. So far, three such texts have been adopted:

- (i) a Recommendation on International Access Qualifications (1999);
- (ii) a Recommendation on Criteria and procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications (2001);
- (iii) a Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education (2001).

As will be seen, two of the three subsidiary texts adopted so far concern qualifications that are not a part of national education systems. This is partly because the Convention itself in a legal sense only covers qualifications belonging to the education system of Parties, and partly because the importance of qualifications not belonging to any national education system have increased vastly in importance since the Convention was adopted in 1997. This development is, with the increased emphasis on quality assurance, the most significant development in the recognition field since 1997.

Joint degrees

The increased importance of joint degrees is a part of this overall development towards qualifications not formally recognized as belonging to any – or any single – national education system, although it is a phenomenon of a different nature than transnational education.

While qualifications arising from transnational arrangements often fully stand outside national qualifications systems, in the case of joint degrees each component most often belongs to a national system and it is the combination of these elements that make competent recognition authorities (and others) consider joint degrees either as belonging to more than one national system or not fully belonging to any single national system.

This problem of typology should, however, not overshadow the considerable potential of joint degrees as an excellent means of stimulating academic mobility and cooperation between higher education institutions. As such, joint degrees have the potential to play an important role in helping establish the European Higher Education Area, as was underlined by the Prague Higher Education Summit:

In order to further strengthen the important European dimensions of higher education and graduate employability Ministers called upon the higher education sector to increase the development of modules, courses and curricula at all levels with "European" content, orientation or organisation. This concerns particularly modules, courses and degree curricula offered in partnership by institutions from different countries and leading to a recognized joint degree.

(Prague Communiqué, adopted by the Ministers of the Bologna Process)

However, this role can only be fulfilled if joint degrees are given adequate recognition. The purpose of the present Recommendation is therefore to help ensure fair recognition for a kind of qualification that has considerable potential, but that is in a strict legal sense not covered by the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention.

Within the Bologna Process, joint degrees have been the subject of a major study carried out by the European University Association and financed by the European Commission¹. The present Recommendation is indebted to the study and seeks, as appropriate, to translate its main recommendations into legal provisions applicable in the context of the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention. In so doing, it also takes account of the round table debate of the Council of Europe's Higher Education and Research Committee (CDESR) on the European Higher Education Area at the 2002 plenary session of the CDESR (Strasbourg, 2 – 3 October 2002).

Preamble

The Preamble places the Recommendation in the context of the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention and the European Higher Education Area and points to the main developments that call for improved provisions for the recognition of joint degrees.

¹ See Andrejs Rauhvargers "Joint Degree Study" in Christian Tauch and Andrejs Rauhvargers: *Survey on Master Degrees and Joint Degrees in Europe* (Bruxelles 2001: European University Association).

General considerations

The general considerations place the present Recommendation in the context of the Convention and points to the double function of the Convention as an international legal instrument and as a guide to good practice. Attention is also drawn to the fact that while joint degrees are most commonly issued as a result of cooperation between higher education institutions located in different countries and issuing their degrees within different higher education systems, joint degrees may in principle also be issued by higher education institutions located in the same country and issuing degrees within the same higher education system. With appropriate adjustments, the provisions of the present Recommendation may equally well be applied to such cases.

Definitions

This part of the Recommendation seeks to define joint degree as a generic term and to explore the main types of joint degrees. It is worth noting that the EUA study on joint degrees found that there is no common definition in use today, whether explicitly or implicitly, but a joint degree can be said to have all or some of the following characteristics:

- the programmes are developed and/or approved jointly by several institutions;
- students from each participating institution physically take part in the study programme at other institutions (but they do not necessarily study at *all* cooperating institutions);
- students' stay at the participating institutions should constitute a substantial part of the programme;
- periods of study and examinations passed at the partner institutions are recognized fully and automatically;
- the partner institutions work out the curriculum jointly and cooperate on admission and examinations. In addition, staff of participating institutions should be encouraged to teach at other institutions contributing to the joint degree;
- after completing the full programme, students either obtain the national degree of each participating institution or awarding body or a degree (usually an unofficial "certificate" or "diploma") awarded jointly by the partner institutions².

The main kinds of joint degrees may be illustrated by a number of examples, which may include very different levels of actual cooperation in curriculum development and mobility of staff and students.

Thus, joint doctoral degrees may range from joint supervision of thesis by professors from different countries to actual joint doctoral programmes where parts of the research towards the doctoral degree are carried out at different universities in different countries. At first and second degree level at one end of the spectrum there are examples of (virtual) universities established in cooperation between two or several countries with a view to offering joint curricula leading to joint degrees, such as the Transnational University of Limburg between the Flemish community of Belgium and the Netherlands, the Öresund University between Sweden and Denmark or the Interuniversity Europe Centre established in Bulgaria and Romania with the assistance of Germany. At the other end of the spectrum one will find cooperation on joint degrees which is rather a franchise of one country's degrees in another country (e.g. several cases where British degrees are awarded at Dutch *hogescholen*).

² Cf. Andrejs Rauhvargers, op. cit., p. 29

Several broader joint degrees consortia are known that have a curriculum jointly approved by all consortium members, organize studies for each student at two or more partner institutions and issue unofficial joint degree certificates on top of a national qualification (e.g. a joint degree consortium in construction engineering). However, most commonly, due to legal difficulties and formal regulations, the joint curriculum with study periods at several institutions still lead to just one national degree.

While this relatively wide definition is aimed at allowing and facilitating the recognition of degrees from past as well as current and future arrangements, it should be emphasized that the further development of joint degrees as powerful instruments to further the European dimension of higher education and the establishment of the European Higher Education Area will depend on basing joint degrees on a high level of institutional cooperation, including the development of integrated curricula, and the review of national funding systems for higher education.

The term “joint degree” is used as the established term for the qualifications covered by the present Recommendation. The term “diploma” designates the official document attesting the qualifications.

General principles

This part of the Recommendation outlines the main principles on which it builds. These conform to the main principles of the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention (see in particular Articles IV.1, V.1 and VI.1 of the Convention).

The point is also made that joint degrees should be recognized at least as favourably as other qualifications from the education system from which they originate. This is a particularly important provision in view of the findings of the EUA study referred to above, in that in current practice, it often seems more difficult to obtain recognition of a joint degree than of a “pure” foreign national degree. This is unjustified in view of the overall policy goal of stimulating international and inter-institutional cooperation and academic mobility.

It is also paradoxical and unjustified from another point of view, and to fully appreciate the paradox, it may be useful to bear in mind that recognition of joint degrees may concern three different situations:

- (a) recognition of the joint degree in a country one of whose institutions has provided a part of the study programme giving rise to the qualification;
- (b) recognition in a country one of whose institutions participates in the consortium having issued the degree, but this institution has not provided any part of the degree in question, i.e. the applicant has studied at other institutions participating in the consortium;
- (c) recognition in a third country, i.e. a country that has not in any way been involved in the study programme and/or consortium granting the qualification.
- (d) recognition of a degree, in any country, all or a part of which has not been subject to transparent quality assurance.

It should further be kept in mind that while recognition of all parts of the study programmes giving rise to a joint degree is automatic among the partner institutions, such recognition is not necessarily granted outside of this consortium.

In situations (a) and (b) described above, recognition of a joint degree should in fact be easier than recognition of a “pure” foreign qualification since in a joint degree, the study programme leading to the degree has been elaborated jointly by one or more institutions belonging to the education system of the country in which recognition is sought and one or more foreign institutions. A recognized institution in the country in which recognition is sought will therefore already have assessed the profile, level and quality of the foreign components of the joint degree, and it would seem paradoxical if this assessment were not to be accepted by (other) competent recognition authorities in the country in which recognition is sought.

If recognition of a joint degree is sought in a third country (situation (c)), it is at least difficult to see why recognition of the joint degree should be more difficult than the recognition of a national qualification from any of the countries whose institutions have contributed to the joint degree.

It would therefore seem reasonable that the only justifiably difficult situation would arise if significant parts of a joint degree were delivered by an institution or higher education programme that does not belong to a national education system and/or that has not been the subject of transparent quality assessment (d), cf. also paragraph 11 of the Recommendation.

So far, there is no evidence of cases where the joint degree would have been given on the basis of many short periods of study at a large number of institutions. Rather, in the case of large joint degree consortia, it is the joint programme that has been jointly elaborated and approved by a dozen or more institutions, but students actually spend study periods at a limited number of consortium partners – e.g. two or three institutions. The principles of the Recommendation can well be applied also to such (so far hypothetical) cases, bearing in mind that when assessing a qualification awarded after studies of relatively short periods at a greater number of institutions, attention has to be paid to the integrity of the programme

Legislation

Paragraph 9 makes the case for reviewing national legislation with a view to removing any remaining legal obstacles to the recognition of joint degrees and/or introducing legal provisions that would facilitate such recognition.

This is also an important provision in the light of the findings of the study. For example, it still seems legally difficult in many countries to issue one single qualification in the name of several institutions, especially when at least one of these institutions is foreign.

Another example is that it is not uncommon that higher education institutions have rules requiring that at least one half of the credits toward any given degree be taken at the institution in question for the degree to be issued by this institution. If a student seeks a joint degree from two or more institutions practicing this rule, the results are predictable. This is an obvious case where rules and regulations prevent a laudable initiative, but legislation may also impede fair recognition in less obvious ways. The call for a review of national legislation in this sense was made by the 2002 plenary session of the CDESR, and it is important to include the point in the present Recommendation.

Finally, it should be noted that the fact that national legislation does not specifically prevent joint degrees from being established or recognized is not a sufficient measure. In many cases, an absence of legal provision positively recognizing the concept of joint degrees may in itself constitute an impediment to the recognition of such qualification. Any review of national

legislation should therefore consider positive provision for the recognition of joint degrees rather than just abolishing any explicit impediments to such recognition.

Quality assurance and institutional recognition

The increased importance of quality assurance and the acceptance of close link between the quality assurance and recognition of institutions and study programmes on the one hand and individual qualifications on the other hand is one of the major development since the adoption of the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention in 1997. Whereas in 1997, there was still discussion of *whether* quality assurance was needed as general norm, the discussion now focuses on *what kind* of quality assurance is needed.

The close link between quality assurance and recognition was underlined by the Prague Higher Education Summit (May 2001), where the Ministers of the Bologna Process in their communiqué “called upon the universities and other higher education institutions, national agencies and the European Network of Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), in cooperation with corresponding bodies from countries which are not members of ENQA, to collaborate in establishing a common framework of reference and to disseminate best practice”. Cf. also the comments to the General principles, above.

The Recommendation indicates that where a part of the study programme giving rise to a joint degree has not been the subject of quality assessment or is not considered as belonging to the education system of one or more parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention, this may be a valid reason not to recognize the degree. In such cases, recognition authorities should, however, consider whether partial recognition may be granted, in keeping with the provisions of the Recommendation on Criteria and procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications³.

It is important to note that in these cases where the studies for the joint degree have actually taken place in a limited number of institutions, but the joint degree is awarded in the name of a larger consortium, it seems rightly to require that all the consortium members are recognized institutions and that at least the institutions in which the student has actually studied for the joint degree, have been quality assessed.

Information

Information on education systems as well as on individual institutions, programmes and qualifications is one of the key challenges facing those working with the recognition of qualifications. As identified by the conference on Recognition Issues in the Bologna Process, organized in Lisbon on 11 – 12 April 2002 by the Council of Europe and the Portuguese authorities⁴, the problem is not one of a lack of information, but rather of a lack of pertinent and focused information. The Diploma Supplement (cf. also Article IX.3 of the Convention) and the European Credit Transfer System are important information instruments that help facilitate the recognition of qualifications. In the case of joint degrees, it is particularly important that a Diploma Supplement be issued with the degree that would clearly describe the various components of the degrees in relation to the education systems within which they have been earned.

³ Cf. paragraph 8 of this Recommendation, adopted by the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee at its second meeting (Rīga, 6 June 2001).

⁴ See Sjur Bergan (ed.): *Recognition Issues in the Bologna Process* (Strasbourg, to appear in 2003: Council of Europe Publishing), in particular the articles by Stephen Adam and Chantal Kaufmann and the report by the General Rapporteur, Lewis Purser.



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THE COMMITTEE OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS CONCERNING HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE EUROPEAN REGION

Seventh session

29 February 2016, 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

UNESCO House

Paris

REVISED RECOMMENDATION ON THE RECOGNITION OF JOINT DEGREES

Directorate General II (Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation – Education Policy and Rights Division) of the Council of Europe and the UNESCO Division for Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems

Distribution: LRC Committee

Revised Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees

(Adopted by the Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region on 29 February 2016 at its Seventh meeting in Paris, France)

Preamble

The Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe and UNESCO is to achieve greater unity between their members, and that this aim can be pursued notably by undertaking common action in cultural matters and supporting reforms in higher education;

Having regard to the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (CETS No. 165, hereafter “the Lisbon Recognition Convention”);

Having regard to the European Cultural Convention (ETS No. 18);

Having regard to the Joint Declaration of the European Ministers of Education in Bologna on 19 June 1999 (Bologna Declaration), and the establishment of the European Higher Education Area, as well as to the subsequent communiqués of the ministerial conferences within the Bologna Process;

Having regard to the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes adopted by the ministers at the Bologna Ministerial Conference in Yerevan in 2015;

Having regard to the Diploma Supplement which facilitates the recognition of joint degrees, developed jointly by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO;

Having regard to the subsidiary texts adopted under the Lisbon Recognition Convention: the Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education, the Revised Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications and the Recommendation on the Use of Qualifications Frameworks in the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications;

Having regard to the development of credit systems, in particular the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and its Users’ Guide;

Having regard to the practical action in favour of improving the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education carried out by the Council of Europe/UNESCO European Network of National Information Centres (ENIC) on academic recognition and mobility;

Having regard to the European Area of Recognition (EAR) manual which offers practical implementation guidelines on the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention;

Considering that the Council of Europe and UNESCO have always encouraged academic mobility as a means for better understanding various cultures and languages, and without any form of discrimination;

Considering that studying or working in a foreign country is likely to contribute to an individual's personal, cultural and academic enrichment, as well as to improving their career prospects;

Considering that the recognition of qualifications is an essential precondition for both academic and professional mobility;

Considering that qualifications frameworks should be used to facilitate the assessment of foreign qualifications by the competent recognition authorities;

Convinced that the joint development of study programmes between higher education institutions in different higher education systems and the award of joint degrees contribute to academic and professional mobility, and to the further development within and between the regions of the world;

Convinced that the improved recognition of joint degrees will contribute to developing the European dimension of higher education and entail important benefits for individuals, as well as for European society as a whole;

Aware that recognition of qualifications originating in joint arrangements is still encountering difficulties of a legal and practical nature;

Conscious of the need to facilitate the recognition of joint degrees;

Recommends that governments of States Parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention:

- i. take into account, in the establishment of their recognition policies, the principles set out in the appendix hereto, which forms part of this Recommendation;
- ii. draw these principles to the attention of the competent bodies concerned, so that they can be considered and taken into account;
- iii. review national legislation with a view to removing any legal obstacles to the recognition of joint degrees and/or introducing transparent legal provisions that would facilitate such recognition;
- iv. ensure that this Recommendation is distributed as widely as possible among all stakeholders concerned with the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education,

Invites the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Director-General of UNESCO, as appropriate, to transmit this Recommendation to the governments of those States which were invited to the diplomatic conference entrusted with the adoption of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, but which have not become parties to that convention.

Appendix to the Revised Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees

General considerations

The present Recommendation is adopted within the framework of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and applies to the parties to this convention. The principles and practices described in this Recommendation can, however, be applied equally well to the recognition of qualifications in countries other than those party to the Lisbon Recognition Convention or to qualifications issued between or among national or subnational education systems (hereinafter referred to as “national”).

The purpose of the present Recommendation is to improve the recognition of joint degrees that are considered as belonging to education systems of the States Parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention. Moreover, the Recommendation may also apply to cases when part of a study programme has been completed in an education system of a country not party to the convention.

While the scope of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, as well as of subsidiary texts adopted under the provisions of Article X.2.5 of the convention, concern the recognition of qualifications in countries other than that in which they have been earned, the provisions of the present Recommendation may be applied equally well, *mutatis mutandis*, to joint degrees issued by two or more institutions belonging to the same national higher education system.

Definitions

The terms defined in the Lisbon Recognition Convention are used in the same sense in the present Recommendation, and reference is made to the definition of these terms in Section I of the convention.

For the purpose of this Recommendation a joint degree is understood as referring to a higher education qualification awarded jointly by at least two higher education institutions, on the basis of a joint programme. A joint degree is issued on a single document.

A joint programme refers to a study programme developed, co-ordinated and provided jointly by at least two higher education institutions and leading to the awarding of a joint degree.

General principles

Holders of joint degrees should have adequate access, upon request, to a fair assessment of their qualifications.

In assessment of joint degrees the competent recognition authorities should follow the same assessment procedure and criteria as stipulated in the provisions of the Revised Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications (adopted by the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee in 2010).

The competent recognition authorities should recognise joint degrees unless substantial difference can be shown between the joint degree for which recognition is sought and the comparable qualification within their own national higher education system. Joint degrees

should be treated in the same way as any other qualifications from the higher education systems to which they belong.

Legislation

Governments of States Parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention should, where appropriate, review their legislation with a view to removing any legal obstacles to the recognition of joint degrees and introduce transparent provisions that would facilitate such recognition.

National authorities should establish legal provisions enabling higher education institutions to offer joint programmes and award joint degrees. Joint degrees should be awarded in accordance with national legal provisions.

Quality assurance and recognition

The competent recognition authorities should consider recognising joint degrees, which are quality assured in a single cross-border process and by a quality assurance agency, provided that the outcomes are officially recognised in the countries to which the providing institutions belong.

In the absence of a single cross-border quality assurance process, the competent recognition authorities may make the recognition of joint degrees conditional on all parts of the study programme leading to the degree and/or the institutions providing the programme being subject to transparent quality assurance mechanisms in line with the rules and legislation of the countries to which the providing institutions belong, as well as to European guiding principles.

Governments of States Parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention should establish legal provisions concerning quality assurance of joint programmes.

Information

Higher education institutions awarding joint degrees should make available the information related to their joint programmes and joint degrees.

As appropriate, in order to facilitate the recognition of joint degrees, graduates should be provided with a diploma supplement or some other comparable document, and study programmes leading to joint degrees should make use of the ECTS or other credit systems, basing the award of credits on learning outcomes.

A diploma supplement issued with a joint degree should clearly describe all parts of the degree, and it should clearly indicate at which institutions and/or in which study programmes the different parts of the degree have been earned.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO THE REVISED RECOMMENDATION ON THE RECOGNITION OF JOINT DEGREES

Introduction

The Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as “the Lisbon Recognition Convention”) is the main international legal text concerning the recognition of qualifications in the European region. The convention was adopted on 11 April 1997 and entered into force on 1 February 1999.

The Lisbon Recognition Convention is also one of the key standards for the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), the main goals of which include improving the mobility of students, staff and graduates, facilitating the recognition of qualifications and increasing the transparency of higher education systems in Europe.

The Lisbon Recognition Convention has a double function. In legal terms, it is a treaty between States, and as such it is valid as a legal standard for the recognition of qualifications belonging to the higher education systems of the parties to the convention as well as the qualifications covered by its subsidiary texts. In a broader sense, the convention also serves as a guide to good practice, and in this sense its provisions may, *mutatis mutandis*, be applied to all higher education qualifications, regardless of their origin. The convention is in fact used as a standard well beyond its strictly legal function.

In Article X.2.5, the convention foresees that the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee may adopt subsidiary texts to the convention. The convention itself, in a legal sense, only covers qualifications belonging to the education systems of parties. But the importance of qualifications not belonging to any national or subnational (hereinafter referred to as “national”) education system has increased vastly in importance since the convention was adopted. There has been a need to adopt subsidiary texts concerning qualifications that may or may not be a part of national education systems. The development of joint degrees and joint programmes has increased emphasis on quality assurance of joint programmes and recognition of joint degrees.

Joint degrees

The increased importance of joint degrees is part of the overall development of qualifications often not formally recognised as belonging to any – or any single – national education system.

This problem of typology should, however, not overshadow the considerable potential of joint degrees as an excellent means of stimulating mobility, co-operation between higher education institutions and the internationalisation of higher education.

The purpose of the present recommendation is to help ensure fair recognition for qualifications that have considerable potential, but that are in a legal sense not fully covered by the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Preamble

The preamble builds on the existing legal framework for the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education, as elaborated by the Council of Europe and UNESCO. It places the recommendation in the context of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the EHEA and points to the main developments that call for improved provisions for the recognition of joint degrees.

Regarding the EHEA, the recommendation recalls references to joint degrees and joint programmes in Bologna Process ministerial communiqués. In the communiqués adopted in 2001 (Prague Communiqué), 2003 (Berlin Communiqué), 2005 (Bergen Communiqué) and 2007 (London Communiqué), the ministers stress the importance of the European dimension of higher education and graduate employability, and call for an increase in the development of joint programmes at first, second and third cycles offered in partnership by institutions from different countries and leading to recognised joint degrees. The ministers also stress the importance of removing legal obstacles to the establishment and recognition of joint degrees, as well as of actively support quality assurance of joint programmes.

Regarding the EHEA, the recommendation also recalls references to joint degrees and joint programmes in other more recent communiqués, including:

The Leuven/Louvain la Neuve Communiqué in 2009:

“Within each of the three cycles, opportunities for mobility shall be created in the structure of degree programmes. Joint degrees and programmes as well as mobility windows shall become more common practice.”

The Bucharest Communiqué in 2012:

“We encourage higher education institutions to further develop joint programmes and degrees as part of a wider EHEA approach. We will examine national rules and practices relating to joint programmes and degrees as a way to dismantle obstacles to co-operation and mobility embedded in national contexts.”

The Yerevan Communiqué in 2015:

“A common degree structure and credit system, common quality assurance standards and guidelines, co-operation for mobility and joint programmes and degrees are the foundations of the EHEA.”

Definitions

This part of the recommendation seeks to define “joint degree” as a generic term. There is no common definition for a joint degree in use today, whether explicitly or implicitly, but a joint degree will often be characterised by the following:

- the programmes are developed jointly by at least two higher education institutions;
- students from each participating institution take part in the study programme at other institutions (but they do not necessary study at all co-operating institutions);

- students' stay at the participating institutions should constitute a substantial part of the programme;
- periods of study and examinations passed at the partner institutions are recognised fully and automatically;
- the partner institutions work out the study programme jointly and co-operate on admission and examinations;
- after completing the study programme, students are awarded a joint degree in the form of a single (joint) document.

The main kinds of joint degrees may be illustrated by a number of examples, which may include very different levels of actual co-operation in study programme development and mobility of staff and students.

The Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees, adopted in 2004, provides different definitions of a joint degree. Current developments and concepts are focused on the principle that a joint degree is a joint qualification awarded jointly by the partners and issued jointly as a single document.

Therefore, the main scope of this recommendation is to focus on the recognition of joint degrees, awarded jointly and issued as a single document. The term “joint degree” is used as the established term for the qualification covered by the present recommendation. The term “document” designates the document attesting the qualification.

This subsidiary text concerns the recognition of joint degrees as the title clearly states. However, joint programmes may also lead to the award of double or multiple degrees. Double or multiple degrees are issued as single documents in a national context in each participating country, and should be recognised according to the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the subsidiary text on the recommendations on criteria and procedures for the assessment of foreign qualifications when the programme is offered in accordance with national legislation in each participating country. However, provisions of the subsidiary text may also apply to the assessment and recognition of double or multiple degrees, in terms of general principles, legislation, quality assurance and information provision.

While qualifications arising from transnational arrangements often differ substantially from national qualifications, in the case of joint degrees each of the components normally belongs to a national system. It is the combination of these elements that leads the competent recognition authorities (and others) consider joint degrees either as belonging to more than one national education system or not fully belonging to any single national system.

General principles

This part of the recommendation outlines the main principles on which it builds. These conform to the main principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention (see in particular Articles IV.1, V.1 and VI.1 of the convention).

The point is also made that joint degrees should be recognised in the same way as any other qualification from the education system from which they originate. It often seems more difficult to obtain recognition of a joint degree than of a national qualification. This is in contradiction with the overall policy goal of fostering mobility and institutional and international co-operation.

It should further be kept in mind that while recognition of all parts of the study programmes leading to a joint degree is automatic among the partner institutions, such recognition is not necessarily granted outside this consortium.

In the framework of this recommendation, in the countries where institutions provide a part of the study programme, recognition of a joint degree may be easier than recognition of a foreign qualification, as the study programme leading to the degree has been developed jointly by one or more institutions belonging to the higher education system of the country in which recognition is sought. A recognised institution in the country in which recognition is sought will therefore already have assessed the profile, level, workload, learning outcomes and quality of the foreign components of the joint degree.

The point is also made that the assessment criteria and procedures stipulated in the Revised Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications (2010) apply also to the assessment of joint degrees. It is important in particular that the holders of a joint degree are regarded as equals with holders of foreign qualifications, and that there are no discriminative differences made or additional administrative obstacles foreseen. Articles IV, V and VI of the Revised Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications are also relevant in the assessment of joint degrees.

Article IV of the revised recommendation applies to the assessment procedure of joint degrees in terms of:

- information to the applicant;
- information on the qualification for which recognition is sought;
- fees;
- translation;
- verification of the authenticity of the document.

Article V of the revised recommendation applies to the assessment criteria of joint degrees in terms of:

- status of the institution(s);
- assessment of individual qualifications.

Article VI of the revised recommendation applies to the outcome of the assessment of a foreign qualification. It should also apply to the outcome of the assessment of a joint degree.

In relation to the subsidiary text Recommendation on the Use of Qualifications Frameworks in the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications, national qualification authorities should guarantee a joint degree wherever referenced in their own national qualifications frameworks. This must correspond to the same level on an overarching qualifications framework, if relevant.

Legislation

It is still often legally difficult in many countries to issue a single document in the name of two or more institutions from different higher education systems.

It is not uncommon for higher education institutions to have rules requiring that at least one half of the credits toward any given degree be taken at the institution in question for the degree to be issued by that institution. If a student seeks a joint degree from more than two institutions practising this rule, the results are predictable. This is an obvious case where rules and regulations prevent a laudable initiative, but legislation may also impede fair recognition in less obvious ways.

In some countries only national standard diplomas can be issued, so some institutions are unable to issue a joint document with a foreign partner institution.

Finally, it should be noted that national legislation does not specifically prevent joint degrees from being established or recognised. In many cases, an absence of legal provision positively recognising the concept of joint degrees may in itself constitute an impediment to the recognition of such qualifications. Any review of national legislation should therefore consider positive provision for the recognition of joint degrees rather than just abolishing any explicit impediments to such recognition.

Quality assurance and recognition

The increased importance of quality assurance and the acceptance of close links between quality assurance and recognition of institutions and study programmes on the one hand and individual qualifications on the other hand is one of the major developments since the adoption of the Lisbon Recognition Convention in 1997.

Joint programmes have been challenged by the fact that legislation in the countries of the providing institutions requires that the same programme be subject to quality assurance in all countries. The consequence is that a joint programme of a larger consortium may constantly be in the process of being quality assured in the different countries. In the European region more and more countries have adopted legal provisions allowing cross-border quality assurance of national programmes. This legal development is based on agreed common standards and guidelines on quality assurance. The recognition of joint degrees that are quality assured in one single cross-border process by one single quality assurance agency should be considered provided that the quality assessment is recognised in the respective participating countries.

The recommendation indicates that where a part of the study programme giving rise to a joint degree has not been the subject of quality assurance mechanisms or is not considered as belonging to the education system of one or more parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention, this may be a valid reason not to recognise the joint degree. In such cases, recognition authorities should, however, consider whether partial recognition may be granted, in keeping with the provisions of the Revised Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications.

Information

Information on education systems/qualifications frameworks (where applicable) as well as on individual institutions, study programmes and qualifications is one of the key challenges faced by those working with the recognition of qualifications.

Information about joint programmes and joint degrees should be as easily available as information on any other study programme or national qualification. It is important and relevant for the competent recognition authorities that information provided by the national authorities and higher education institutions is available for students, the competent recognition authorities and other stakeholders, and that the information is accurate, adequate, relevant and reliable.

Higher education institutions are strongly encouraged to issue a Diploma Supplement or other comparable document to facilitate the assessment of the joint degree concerned. The Diploma Supplement is an important instrument that helps to facilitate the recognition of qualifications. In the case of joint degrees, it is particularly important that a Diploma Supplement clearly describing the different components of the study programme and education systems within which they have been earned be issued with the degree.

For better transparency it is recommended that a Diploma Supplement issued with a joint degree include the following information:

- the programme details include information about the individual study pathway of the graduate, which includes the programme components (with full name, credits and grades), learning outcomes and the institution that offered that part of the joint programme;
- if there are other partners in the joint programme consortium which are not involved in awarding the joint degree, their full name, status and role in the programme is included;
- the Diploma Supplement should contain information about the co-ordinating institution or a contact point for further information about the joint programme;
- if the joint programme has been quality assured, reference to the responsible quality assurance agency should be included;
- the information on the higher education system should at least include the systems from which the graduate has obtained a joint degree.

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Improving the Recognition of Qualifications in the Framework of the Bologna Process

ANDREJS RAUHVARERS

Setting the Scene: Recognition of Qualifications with a View to Creating a European Higher Education Area

Recognition of qualifications¹ is an important component of the development towards the European Higher Education Area. One can argue that improving recognition of qualifications obtained in one of the Bologna process countries across all other Bologna process countries is a necessary precondition for establishing the European Higher Education Area. Several goals can only be reached if proper recognition of qualifications between States is ensured. This is a precondition to ensure free movement of persons, including the labour force. The goal of increasing competitiveness of European higher education on a world scale can also only be reached if qualifications awarded by European higher education institutions are recognised outside Europe — and this is hardly possible if they are not recognised in other European countries.

The adoption of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, as acknowledged in the Sorbonne declaration of 1998 on the harmonisation of the architecture of the European higher education systems, was an achievement on which to build: 'The [Lisbon Recognition] Convention set a number of basic requirements and acknowledged that individual countries could engage in an even more constructive scheme. Standing by these conclusions, one can build on them and go further'. The relevance of recognition for the main action lines of the Bologna declaration 'On the European Higher Education Area' in 1999 (<http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no>) was discussed at the seminar on Recognition issues in Bologna process, Lisbon, 2002] and summarised as follows (Purser, 2002):

- Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees. Without better recognition procedures, citizens will not be able to use their qualifications, competences and skills throughout the European Higher Education Area, and this system will not bring the expected benefits;
- Adoption of a system based on two main cycles. Given the diversity of the academic offer currently available across Europe, recognition issues will be essential in helping to clarify the adaptation of undergraduate/postgraduate structures and facilitating different orientations and profiles of study programmes;
- Promotion of mobility. Ministers consider this to be of utmost importance and the full application of the provisions of the Lisbon Recognition Convention would be a significant step forward in pursuing the removal of all

obstacles to the free movement of students, teachers, researchers and administrative staff;

- Promotion of European cooperation in quality assurance. The seminar stressed the necessary links between quality assurance and recognition and the need for closer cooperation between actors in these two fields at institutional, national and European levels;
- Promotion of the European dimension in higher education. The correct application of recognition issues can play an important role in the development of partnerships and joint degrees;
- Lifelong learning. Prior learning assessment and recognition and the assessment of non-traditional qualifications are essential in facilitating lifelong learning opportunities and strategies;
- Promotion of the attractiveness of the European higher education area. Recognition can ensure greater attractiveness of European higher education for students from Europe and other parts of the world.

In their Berlin Communiqué of 19 September 2003 'Realizing the European Higher Education Area' (<http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/Communique1.pdf>), the European Ministers responsible for higher education 'committed themselves to intermediate priorities for the next two years: to promote effective quality assurance systems, to step up effective use of the system based on two cycles and to improve the recognition system of degrees and periods of studies'. The ministers therefore asked the intergovernmental Bologna Follow-up Group to organise a stocktaking process and prepare reports on the progress in these three priority areas for their summit in 2005. They also stressed the importance of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, which should be ratified by all countries participating in the Bologna Process and called on the Council of Europe/UNESCO European Network of Information Centres for recognition and mobility (ENIC) and the EU network of National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC) and the competent national authorities to further the implementation of the Convention.

Acknowledging that more transparency and relevant information are needed, they also set the objective that every student graduating as from 2005 should automatically obtain the Joint European Diploma Supplement free of charge.

The Berlin Communiqué also addressed two more recognition issues. First, to engage at the national level to remove legal obstacles to the establishment and recognition of joint degrees and to support adequate quality assurance of curricula leading to joint degrees. Second, it urged higher education institutions and all concerned to enhance the possibilities for lifelong learning at higher education level, including the recognition of prior learning.

Definitions of Recognition

Recognition issues have come into focus in the Bologna process discussions with a wide range of stakeholders: policy makers, higher education staff, students, employers, different higher education related institutions, and society at large. These discussions were sometimes confusing because partners gave a different meaning to 'recognition'.

While the term 'recognition' can have several more meanings², for the purposes of this article the most important are the following:

Recognition of a higher education institution. As a precondition to international recognition, an institution should first be recognised nationally. National systems for quality assurance are just emerging. Thus, when countries were asked to supply information on the nationally recognised institutions, compiling these lists could be a rather arbitrary procedure. The new types of higher education provision have changed the situation. Lists of nationally recognised institutions are often compiled on the basis of quality assessment, ranging from relatively ‘soft’ procedures to national accreditation.

Recognition of a higher education programme — National recognition of the institution does not automatically imply national recognition of all its programmes and qualifications. In a number of European countries, some programmes offered by recognised institutions may not lead to nationally recognised qualifications. In such cases, institutions often issue credentials ‘in their own name’ which usually have a different status from the ‘national’ qualifications. This makes recognition more difficult.

National recognition of an individual qualification. If both institution and programme are recognised nationally, the qualification awarded is also nationally recognised. It will also mean eligibility for jobs in non-regulated professions or jobs for which one must hold qualifications of a certain level.

Recognition of an individual qualification abroad. Ensuring that qualifications obtained in one part of the European Higher Education Area are valid for further studies and employment in other parts of the Area is crucial for European cooperation and the goals of Bologna process. Taking into account the wide European diversity and the aim of cross-border mobility for both study and employment purposes, a formal acknowledgement of a foreign credential is not sufficient. Credential evaluators must also assess the foreign qualification with a view to finding the right path for further studies or employment in the host country.

For the reasons discussed above, ‘recognition’ in this article will be understood as *the assessment of a foreign qualification with a view of finding ways for its application for further studies and/or employment in the host country.*

The International Legal Framework

Recognition is divided into two types — academic recognition for further studies and professional recognition.

Professional recognition which deals with regulated professions has its specific legislation in the EU and EEA — the directives for professional recognition. Starting with the EU enlargement on May 1, 2004, these directives will cover 29 out of the 40 countries involved in the Bologna process. So far, the EU system consisted of sectoral directives dealing specifically with the recognition in particular professions, such as e.g. several medical professions, and of General systems directives, dealing with all other regulated professions. Sectoral directives stipulate harmonisation of education for the particular profession across EU/EEA and

further automatic recognition between the Member States. The principle of the General system is that a qualification of a professional³ from another Member State is recognised unless there are *substantial differences* in the education and training. A proposal for a new directive that will merge both systems and all the existing professional recognition directives into a single text, but will not change the basic principles is being adopted by the European Parliament.

The main legal instrument for academic recognition in the European Region is the Council of Europe/UNESCO *Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education* adopted in Lisbon on April 11, 1997 (the Lisbon Recognition Convention). Although formally covering academic recognition only, it can be and increasingly is also used for the recognition for the non-regulated sector of the labour market. In these cases, no official recognition is formally required. However, when considering a candidate with a foreign qualification, employers often wish to know to which qualification of their country the foreign one corresponds. In these cases, applicants seek a statement of academic recognition. The same applies when access to a profession requires a certain level of education without specifying the field.

The most important principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention are the following:

Right for a fair assessment of foreign qualification. The Lisbon Convention was the first international legal act to stipulate this right. Before its adoption, holders of foreign qualifications sometimes found that their credentials were not accepted for evaluation.

Recognition if no substantial differences are evident. The Lisbon Recognition Convention replaced seeking of a full equivalence of the foreign qualification to that of the host country's to which the foreign qualification is compared by recognition of the foreign qualification if there are no substantial differences with the host country's qualification. The Convention also established that, should the host country authorities consider non-recognition, they must demonstrate that the differences are substantial.

Mutual trust and information provision. Recognition under the Lisbon Convention is based upon mutual trust and provision of information between the higher education systems of the States that are parties to it. Hence, they must compile and publish lists of their recognised institutions and programmes and provide information on the qualifications, programmes and institutions.

The Council of Europe/UNESCO *Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for Recognition* was adopted by the Intergovernmental Committee of the Lisbon Recognition Convention on June 4, 2001. It was originally planned to help to ensure that similar recognition cases would be considered in similar ways throughout the European region. Drafting of the Recommendation was in progress when the Bologna declaration was signed, which allowed to also draw on the analysis of the recognition issues raised by the Bologna process (Bergan *et al.* 2000) and to adapt the implementation of the Convention accordingly:

- The Recommendation shows that the principles of the Convention can also be applied to recognition for the non-regulated sector of the labour market;
- The Recommendation extends recognition to qualifications awarded after completion of transnational education that complies with the Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education;
- The Recommendation shifts the focus of credential evaluation from input characteristics of the programmes to the learning outcomes and competencies;
- it is stressed that, when analysing the differences, one should bear in mind the purpose for which recognition is sought. Given the wide diversity of programmes and qualifications in Europe, any foreign qualification will always differ from the one with which it is compared. The Recommendation calls for a positive attitude, asking whether the differences are so great that they cannot be used for the purpose for which recognition is sought and, if they are, whether an alternative or partial recognition can nevertheless be granted.
- by shifting focus from input characteristics to learning outcomes, the Recommendation also facilitates recognition of lifelong learning or other non-traditional qualifications.

The Recommendation does not say that recognition should always be granted. Rather, it codifies the established best practice amongst credential evaluators and builds on this in suggesting further improvements.

The Council of Europe/UNESCO *Recommendations for the Recognition of International Access Qualifications*⁴ were adopted in 1999. This document addresses international secondary school leaving certificates such as the International Baccalaureate, the European Baccalaureate, etc. The *Code of Good Practice for the Provision of Transnational Education* was adopted in 2001.

Implementation of the Legal Framework for Recognition

A relevant legal framework is necessary to solve recognition problems across the European Higher Education Area and to a large extent the existing international framework for recognition is sufficient. Yet, another precondition is its proper implementation — both nationally and internationally.

The International Level

Signatures and ratifications of the Convention. The signature and ratification of the Convention by all the countries concerned are the first steps to improve recognition in the European Higher Education Area. This was stressed in the Berlin communiqué of ministers. The ministerial call has been heard — five more Bologna process countries ratified the Convention after September 2003. The total number of ratifications as of May 1, 2004 is 38 countries, 32 of which are participating in the Bologna process.

The covering of the Lisbon Recognition Convention is wider than the 'Bologna' group of countries and than geographical Europe. Belonging to the European

region as defined by UNESCO, Australia, Canada, USA, Israel and some other countries have also signed the Convention. This is very important because it stimulates the recognition between European countries and other parts of the world.

Four out of the 40 'Bologna' countries (Germany, Italy, Malta, and The Netherlands) have signed the Convention and are in the process of ratification, but another four (Belgium, Greece, Spain and Turkey) have so far neither signed nor ratified it. Some of these countries are trying to implement its principles. As recognition is a priority issue of the Bologna process for the period until May 2005, more signatures and ratifications may follow before the Bergen ministerial conference.

European Recognition Networks

The ENIC and NARIC networks serve as the main agents for the implementation of the Lisbon Convention and, more generally, for better recognition within Europe (Reichert & Tauch, 2003). The Lisbon Recognition Convention stipulates that each State party to the convention shall establish an information centre for academic recognition and that the national centres shall together form the ENIC network. A narrower group of national centres of the EU/EEA forms the NARIC network which covers the specific tasks within the EU, including contact points in the framework of professional recognition. Thus, the national centres of the enlarged EU plus EEA countries participate in both networks.

Analysing Recognition Issues and Preparing New International Legislation

The ENIC and NARIC networks have established *ad-hoc* working groups which suggested measures to develop recognition system in Europe, e.g. the working group that developed the format of the joint European Diploma supplement, the one on Transnational Education, Recognition criteria and procedures and the group on Recognition issues in the Bologna process. The latter published a final report, *Recognition Issues in the Bologna Process*, in 2001 that serves as a guideline for further improvement of the recognition system.

The networks have drafted international legal documents⁴ that supplement the Lisbon Convention: the *Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications* and the *Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education* (both adopted June, 2001). Following the need to improve recognition of joint degrees, the networks prepared a draft *Recommendation for the Recognition of Joint Degrees* that was adopted in June 2004.

International Information Exchange

The networks' centres supply recognition-related information upon the request of other centres. ENIC/NARIC centres supply each other with information on a particular qualification or status of a higher education institution/programme through the ENIC/NARIC listserver. The ENIC/NARIC website (<http://www.enic-naric.net>) contains descriptions of their countries' higher education systems and other relevant information for recognition.

The National Level

One very positive aspect is that more and more countries have introduced the Diploma Supplement. Issuing Diploma Supplements is also helping national qualifications to be recognised abroad. The development is not equally quick when it comes to amending national legislation with view to ensure fair recognition of foreign qualifications.

National Legal Issues

The Ratification of the Lisbon Convention is not enough if its principles are not transposed to the national legislation and national procedures. Several countries in Europe that have signed and ratified the Lisbon Convention use a national procedure of 'nostrification'. Analysis of the results of a Council of Europe survey on the implementation of the Lisbon recognition convention (Bergan, 2003) shows that (op.cit.): '... answers deal with recognition practice and attitudes toward recognition. They reveal a difference between those [countries] who primarily consider formal recognition criteria and seek to establish as close a resemblance as possible between foreign qualifications and those of the home country and those that move in the direction of seeking to assess learning outcomes. In shorthand, and at the risk of oversimplification, these different approaches may be termed 'equivalence' vs. 'recognition'. It also leads to the conclusion that 'some countries have yet to implement the main principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, which point in the direction of an overall assessment of the level and profile of a qualification rather than a detailed comparison of contents'.

National Setting and Procedures for Recognition

At the national level, the recognition decision is usually taken either by higher education institutions (for academic purposes), by employers (for employment purposes in the non-regulated sector of the labour market) and by professional bodies or other nationally appointed competent authorities (for pursuit of regulated professions). The survey also showed that the national situation of the ENIC/NARIC centres can differ. In most countries, the expertise and knowledge of foreign educational systems are concentrated at the ENIC/NARIC centres, which evaluate the credentials and give advice to the different decision-making bodies. Cooperation may be organised in different ways — in some countries the higher education institutions only apply to the ENIC/NARIC centres for advice in more complicated cases, in others, every holder of a foreign qualification must receive a statement from an ENIC/NARIC centre.

While this is the situation in many European countries in which the ENIC/NARIC centres are well equipped and staffed and are capable of fulfilling all the tasks (international and national information exchange, evaluation of individual credentials, consultancy to all stakeholders etc.), in others the 'recognition information centre' may be a single ministry employee appointed as a national contact who may have several other duties. In the latter case, the ENIC/NARIC usually serves as an information provider, but does not deal with the recognition of individual qualifications or individual information requests — which would also mean that the assessment of foreign qualifications by numerous individual higher education institutions takes place in an uncoordinated way.

Institutional Recognition Procedures — Are They Sufficiently Developed?

Given that higher education institutions are the final instances which decide upon recognition for further studies, their awareness of the principles of international legislation for recognition and the existence of institutional policies and procedures for recognition are of crucial importance for the implementation of the international legal framework. What is the situation? To quote the *Trends 2003 report* 'it is clear that there is room for improvement, in particular in certain countries' (Reichert & Tauch, 2003).

According to the *Trends 2003 report*, when asked about the awareness of the provisions of the Lisbon Convention within their countries, almost 60% of the heads of higher education institutions thought that their staff was either *not very aware* or *almost completely unaware*. About half the student organisations thought the same about their institutions. As regards institutional procedures for recognition, 'The answers to the questionnaire demonstrated, that the weakest point seems to be institutional procedures for recognition of foreign degrees: only 58% of higher education institutions declared they had an institution-wide procedure for this issue, ranging from as many as 83% down to 13% in different countries. As for the students, more than a third thought their institutions had no institution-wide recognition policy but were taking decisions on a case-by-case basis'.

Concerning the recognition of study periods abroad, the situation is better — some 82% institutions have procedures. This is probably related to the use of ECTS in the framework of the Socrates-Erasmus programme. Still, there seems to be evidence of cases where, even after a study period abroad in the Erasmus programme, the credits earned are assessed looking for full coincidence with the home courses to be replaced.

In the vast majority of countries, higher education institutions can receive qualified consultancy and assistance in recognition matters from their national ENIC/NARIC centres — but are they seeking that assistance? The *Trends 2003 report* shows that 'only 20% of the higher education institutions (27.5% of universities) report a *close* cooperation with their NARIC/ENIC. 24% regard their cooperation as *limited* and almost one quarter indicated that there was *no cooperation at all*'.

Recognition Issues and Solutions in the Bologna Process

A study carried out by an ENIC/NARIC working group sought to identify the recognition issues that were essential for the Bologna process and the steps to be taken to solve them (Bergan, 2003). Progress in the Bologna process in the last few years has clarified some of the issues, some achievements are visible and some new problems have been identified.

Recognition and the Reform of Degree Structures

The reform of degree structures and the movement towards a two-tier structure across the European Higher Education Area have an impact on recognition. The harmonisation of degree structures will benefit transparency and comparability. But the introduction of a flexible bachelor/master structure will also lead to more diversity (Divis, 2003). In January 2001, the Bologna seminar on bachelor degrees established a common framework for their workload and level. But it also con-

cluded that ‘programmes leading to the [bachelor] degree may, and indeed should have different orientations and various profiles in order to accommodate a diversity of individual, academic and labour market needs’ (http://www.aic.lv/ace/bologna/hels_bac.html).

As regards the master degrees, *the Trends II report* (Haug & Tauch, 2001, page 28–29) indicated that, in Europe, they had at least seven different purposes and that the introduction of two-tier structures in the non-university/professional stream of higher education was increasing this diversity. The European University Association (EUA) report on Master degrees in Europe (Tauch, 2001) confirmed this. The Helsinki seminar on master degrees in March 2003 concluded that ‘diversification of contents and profile of degree programmes calls for a common framework of reference of European higher education qualifications in order to increase transparency’ (<http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/Results.pdf>).

This means that there may be huge differences between degrees that bear the same name in terms of admission requirements, content, learning objectives and function, as well as in the rights they confer. Thus, the harmonisation of degree structures will lead to greater transparency, but not to ‘automatic recognition’ (Divis, 2003). The need for individual recognition will still be there: while, in an ideal case, the *level* of the foreign qualification could be recognised more or less ‘automatically’, the main emphasis in the credential evaluation will be on interpretation of the foreign qualification in the context of the host country’s higher education system and/or labour market.

Quality Assurance — a Necessary Precondition for Recognition

The acceptance of close links between quality assurance and the recognition of institutions and study programmes on the one hand and individual qualifications on the other have a major importance in improving recognition of qualifications across the European Higher Education Area. At the time of adoption of the Lisbon Recognition Convention in 1997 the discussion was still ongoing in Europe as to *whether* quality assurance was needed as a general norm. Not all countries that were parties to the Convention had established quality assurance systems at that time. Thus, while the notion of the importance of quality and quality assurance in the recognition of qualifications appears several times in the Convention text, it was not yet possible to link recognition of individual qualifications to quality assurance of the awarding institutions/programme as a necessary precondition.

Politically, the close link between quality assurance and recognition was underlined in the Prague communiqué of ministers (May 2001). Since spring 2002 common issues of recognition and quality assurance have been analysed by a joint ENIC/ NARIC working group with the European Network of National Quality Assurance Agency (ENQA) (<http://www.enqa.net>). In their statement on the European Higher Education Area (Vaduz statement) adopted at their joint meeting May 18–2003, the ENIC and NARIC networks fully supported the principle that the recognition of qualifications be made contingent on the provider of education having been subjected to transparent quality assessment.

Should the recognition of individual qualifications be directly linked to quality assurance of the institutions/ programmes in question, it must also be ensured that the education providers have adequate access to quality assessment, regardless of whether they are public or private, part of a national higher education system

or not, leading to a full qualification or not. Having access to assessment is especially important for serious transnational education providers and 'international' institutions that do not belong to any of the educational systems of the countries in which they operate. Here one should also consider the providers of 'non-degree programmes' or modules for the needs of lifelong learners, i.e. the learning that does not lead to higher education final qualification, but which is of a level and quality that give one the possibility to claim credits for higher education. Another issue that is still awaiting solution is that of non-accredited/non-quality assessed programmes provided (in many cases legally) by recognised higher education institutions. The above means that accredited/non-accredited does not necessarily mean good/bad (Divis, 2003). There are too many students in Europe today who study in valuable but non-accredited/ not officially recognized programmes to simply declare them 'outlaws' when it comes to recognition.

In the case of recognition of individual qualifications abroad, the outcomes of quality assessments must be made public, whenever possible, in a widely-spoken European language so that international evaluators can easily access and use them.

There is also evidence that information on quality assurance outcomes is provided in a structured way, especially for the needs of recognition for the labour market, information on quality from other countries needs to be properly channelled or 'translated' (Divis, 2003).

Knowledge about the standard of institutions and the programmes they offer is of utmost importance for credential evaluation. Yet one must bear in mind that, while quality assurance is a *necessary* precondition for the recognition of individual qualifications, it is *not enough* in itself (Divis, 2003). To position a credential correctly in the education system or labour market of the host country, one needs a thorough knowledge of the system that conferred it (Rauhvargers, 2003a). As shown in the previous section, this will not change with the introduction of the two-cycle system.

Progress in Transnational Education, Joint Degrees and Lifelong Learning

Transnational Education

The growing phenomenon of transnational education globally and in Europe has raised a number of issues. One is the recognition of its qualifications. Recognition problems are often caused by the fact that its programmes are not quality-checked by the host country and are concealed from the quality assurance system of the sending country. The main concerns reported by the host countries are the following: doubts about the proficiency of the staff involved in the provision of transnational education, evidence that the transnational programmes are sometimes very different from those provided in the awarding institution and their qualifications are sometimes 'easy' — i.e. either the study time is shorter or the admission/ graduation requirements are lower (Rauhvargers, 2002). A detailed study on transnational education was funded by the EU and administered by the EUA (Adam, 2001).

All outcomes confirmed that the main recognition problems of transnational education qualifications were rooted in lack of transparency and proper quality assurance, especially that of the education provision in the host country, often obscured by the lack of clarity of the division of responsibilities between the

mother institution, the providers abroad and the agents acting between both above parties and the officials of the host country.

The UNESCO/Council of Europe Working Group studied the specific recognition issues of transnational education and elaborated a Code of Good Practice for the Provision of Transnational Education⁴ that was adopted in June 2001. It established that the awarding institution was responsible for the provision of transnational education, including the quality of programme delivery at the providing institution, the requirements for admission and graduation as well as the actions of the agents and the information they give to the students or the host country's officials. The provision of transnational education should comply with the national legislation in both host and sending countries. Academic quality and standards, as well as requirements regarding staff proficiency should be comparable to those of the awarding institution as well as to those of the host country. The admission of students, the teaching/learning activities, the examination and assessment requirements, academic workload for transnational study programmes should be equivalent to those of the same or comparable programmes delivered by the awarding institution. Special attention is paid to transparency of the delivery of transnational education and provision of full and reliable information upon request of the host country's authorities. The qualifications issued through transnational programmes, complying with the provisions of the Code, should be assessed in accordance with the stipulations of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Thus, the international legislation for the recognition of transnational higher education qualifications from *bona fide* providers is in place. The transnational education providers, as well as those who receive transnational education qualifications for assessment (especially the credential evaluators based in higher education institutions), are not always aware of the existence of the Code. Transnational education providers are reluctant to submit information about the education they provide⁵, while national authorities sometimes still attempt — directly or indirectly — to outlaw the phenomenon as such, or who simply avoid a dialogue with transnational education providers active in their countries. While some transnational education providers deliberately stay in the 'grey zone' and are not willing to undergo the quality assurance of the host country, it is not sure that a transnational education provider who seeks to be legally established in the host country will easily have access to quality assurance.

A joint OECD/UNESCO project was launched in spring 2004 to establish guidelines for quality provision in cross-border higher education.

Joint Degrees

Establishing programmes leading to joint degrees is seen as a useful tool on the way to the European Higher Education Area. A seminar on joint degrees was held in Stockholm in May 2002. It indicated some problems that pointed to the need to amend national legislations in order to make joint degrees a reality (http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/Stockholm_results.pdf). As demonstrated by the EUA Joint degrees survey published in September 2002 (Rauhvargers, 2002b), work on joint degree programmes stimulates the implementation of the Bologna declaration action lines by establishing joint quality assurance, improving

recognition, stimulating employability of graduates across Europe, mobility of students and teachers, etc.

The main obstacles for establishing joint degrees are a lack of appropriate provisions in the national legislation and the fact that current international legal framework for recognition applies only to national qualifications, while joint degrees in the strict legal sense do not belong to a single national higher education system (Rauhvargers *et al.* 2003). As regards amending the national legislations, in their Berlin communiqué, the European ministers agreed to engage at the national level to remove legal obstacles to the establishment and recognition of joint degrees. The EUA conference on Joint degrees in Cluj, Romania in October 2003 led to practical recommendations with regard to cooperation among partners in establishing joint degrees (<http://www.eua.be>).

A major development under the EU SOCRATES programme is the Erasmus Mundus programme which assists in establishing joint degrees and contains specific provisions for improving recognition of joint degrees between the partner institutions and countries (http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/mundus/index_en.html).

In order to improve the international recognition of joint degrees, ENIC and NARIC networks drafted a Recommendation that will be submitted for adoption by the Lisbon Recognition Convention Intergovernmental Committee in June 2004. The Recommendation extends the main principles of the Convention to joint degrees, stipulating that holders of a joint degree have a right to a fair assessment of their joint degree, establishing that a joint degree is recognised unless substantial differences can be clearly demonstrated between the joint degree in question and the host country's qualification. The Recommendation also sets requirements that should be fulfilled as a precondition for applying the Lisbon convention principles to a joint degree: each part of the joint curriculum has to be quality assessed or be part of a recognised national qualification, if the joint degree in question is awarded in the name of a larger consortium, care should be taken that each consortium partner is a trustworthy institution, the Diploma supplement and ECTS should be used as transparency tools, and the joint character of the award should be clearly indicated and described.

Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning has been addressed in all the Bologna process political documents starting from the Bologna declaration itself. Indeed, lifelong learning activities are very widespread and growing. However, a full integration of lifelong learning into regular higher education activities with a view to defining alternative study paths for lifelong learners that would allow them to reach regular higher education qualifications is an issue yet to be solved. A Bologna Seminar on recognition and credit systems in the context of lifelong learning, held in Prague in June 2003, addressed the issues of integration LLL into higher education activities and defining learning paths. The seminar recommendations also encourage higher education institutions to adopt internal policies to promote the recognition of prior formal, non-formal and informal learning for access and study exemption; reconsider skills content in courses and the nature of their study programmes, while the national authorities should ensure the right to fair recognition of qualifications acquired in different learning environments.

In the terms of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, lifelong learning paths would then be a part of the higher education systems of party States, which also means that the qualifications thus earned would be considered for recognition on par with the same qualifications earned through more traditional higher education paths. A second issue is how these learning paths could then be adequately described in transparency instruments like the Diploma Supplement, the ECTS and possibly a lifelong learning portfolio (Bergan, 2003).

The seminar in Prague concluded that on the international scale it could be desirable to seek to develop international good practice to promote the recognition of qualifications earned through lifelong learning paths, using the provisions and principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention; if feasible, to develop international instruments to facilitate such recognition; bring together existing experience with national qualifications frameworks with a view to facilitating the development of further national frameworks as well as a qualifications framework for the European Higher Education Area that would encompass lifelong learning (<http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/recommendations.pdf>).

A major development in the integration of LLL into the regular higher education activities should be expected, together with the establishing of the national qualifications frameworks that, according to the request of ministers in their Berlin communiqué, should seek to describe the qualifications in terms of their level, workload, learning outcomes and profile, and ‘encompass the wide range of flexible learning paths, opportunities and techniques and to make appropriate use of the ECTS credits’.

Focusing on Learning Outcomes — High Expectations from Qualifications Frameworks

To place a foreign qualification in another country’s system, the focus of credential evaluation should be shifted from input characteristics to learning outcomes and competencies earned. Assessing learning outcomes becomes even more important in the less traditional cases — evaluation of transnational education qualifications, joint degrees, and (parts of) studies pursued in the framework of lifelong learning. Moreover, when assessing qualifications for the needs of employers, ‘what the holder of the qualification can do’ is highly important, while the information on the number of study hours in each course or which textbooks have been covered may appear of very limited importance.

However, ‘assessing learning outcomes’ is easier said than done. The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and the Diploma supplement are very useful and facilitate recognition, but they do not provide a description of qualifications in terms of learning outcomes. ECTS allows for a shift from study time to actual student workload. According to the conclusions of the Zurich seminar on Credit transfer and accumulation, October 2002 (<http://www.ects-conference.ethz.ch/index.asp>), ‘when used as an accumulation system, ECTS credits are used to describe entire study programmes’ and ‘the basis for the allocation of credits is the official length of the study programme. Credits can be obtained only after completion of the work required and appropriate assessment’. The Diploma supplement contains indications of the purposes for which the qualification be used in holder’s further studies or employment in the country where it was issued —

it is a highly useful information for credential evaluators abroad, yet, it is a too general indication of learning outcomes.

Thus, while the main accent at learning outcomes rather than duration of studies and other input characteristics was fully acknowledged in the Lisbon Recognition Convention and especially in its subsidiary texts, until recently there were very few attempts in Europe to start describing qualifications in terms of learning outcomes. For this reason, so far credential evaluators could only attempt to estimate the learning outcomes knowing the contents and duration of programme.

The Joint Quality Initiative is a useful attempt to assign general learning outcomes to first and second cycle qualifications (<http://www.jointquality.org>). From the recognition point of view these bachelor and master descriptions can be useful only as a very general guide, much more detailed descriptions of outcomes are still needed for assessment of individual qualifications. Another recent and highly valuable initiative — the Tuning project (<http://odur.let.rug.nl/Tuning-Project/>) seeks to establish learning outcomes along subject lines.

The most important initiative with a view to overall improvement of recognition across the European Higher Education Area is the national qualifications frameworks. 'A national qualifications framework is nothing more than a precise description of the structure of national qualifications system, indicating the workload, level and learning outcomes of each qualification and the sequence in which the qualifications follow each other' (Adam, 2003). Although one could argue that each country already has some kind of a national qualifications' framework, the first systematic attempts to describe qualifications in terms of level, workload, profile and learning outcomes are just emerging. A satisfactory definition of learning outcomes is one of the major challenges the Bologna Process will face, and it is an area in which the concerns of policy-makers, recognition specialists, quality assurance agencies and other stakeholders come together.

The discussions at the Copenhagen seminar on qualifications frameworks on March 27–28, 2003 demonstrated that their introduction should substantially help recognition of qualifications across the European Higher Education Area — because the 'new type' description of qualifications through level, workload, learning outcomes, and profile, provides exactly that information about qualifications that was missing so far and that allows to find out how a foreign qualification can be used in the context of the host country. Following the Copenhagen seminar recommendations, the ministers in their Berlin communiqué 'encourage the member States to elaborate a framework of comparable and compatible qualifications for their higher education systems, which should seek to describe qualifications in terms of workload, level, learning outcomes, competences and profile. They also undertake to elaborate an overarching framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area'.

The group discussing the impact of the emerging qualifications frameworks on recognition formulated a rather idealised vision: national frameworks will describe qualifications in terms of learning outcomes and the quality assurance mechanisms will ensure that the stipulated outcomes can really be reached when studying in the programme in question. Thus, credentials' evaluators will use the European qualifications' framework to interpret the orientation, profile and main learning outcomes of the foreign qualification in their own system and will thus be able to

find the correct place of the foreign qualification in their country's education and/or employment system (Rauhvargers, 2003b).

Conclusion

The international legal framework for recognition in the European Higher Education Area is to a large extent established. The international 'recognition community' follows the developments and elaborates new international legal tools to cover emerging needs.

For the recognition of qualifications in the European Higher Education Area it is essential that the Lisbon recognition convention is ratified in all the *Bologna* countries — and this process is progressing notably. However, the national and institutional implementation of the legal framework for recognition seems to be a much weaker point. We are approaching the limits of what can be done at European or international level. The further success requires involvement of national authorities, and, what is much more difficult to achieve — all levels of higher education staff. A major effort and intensive information campaigns should be made in all Bologna countries with a view to:

- embed the principles of the Convention into both national legislation and institutional policies,
- substantially raise institutional awareness at all levels regarding recognition issues and the international legal framework,
- create and implement institutional recognition practices,
- last but not least, create a positive attitude towards foreign qualifications and willingness to find the way how they can be used in the host countries.

The introduction of the two-tier degree structure across Europe will benefit transparency and comparability, but will also create greater diversity, which means that it will not lead to automatic recognition between different parts of the European Higher Education Area.

Linking recognition of individual qualifications to the information on quality is widely accepted — but it is also an indication that such information should be available in a form that is useful for the assessment of individual qualifications. However, knowledge of quality (and accreditation) alone is not an adequate basis for evaluating a credential — a thorough knowledge of the system that conferred the qualification is also necessary.

As regards recognition of lifelong learning, emphasis should be put on establishing learning paths that allow reaching higher education qualifications in an alternative way. Once the lifelong learning studies have resulted in a regular national higher education qualification, the international recognition is not the most complex issue.

The importance to assess learning outcomes and not input parameters at recognition of qualifications has been stressed already in the framework of the Lisbon Convention. The Bologna process and the emergence of various types of non-traditional qualifications strengthen the need. At the same time, while the transparency of qualifications in general is growing, the qualifications at the current practice are not described in terms of learning outcomes. The commitment to establish national qualifications frameworks describing qualifications in terms

of level, workload, learning outcomes and profile, — and one overarching for European Higher Education Area at large — is an opportunity for substantial improvements in understanding between the European higher education systems and, as a consequence, recognition of qualifications.

The most important conclusion is that the international preconditions for improving recognition across the European Higher Education Area have been created. The next challenge is to bring it all ‘down to institutional reality’ — or fail.

NOTES

1. The author has chosen to use ‘qualifications’ as the generic term used in the Lisbon Recognition Convention to cover all kinds of educational credentials: degrees, diplomas, certificates, etc.
2. e.g. recognition of a programme by a national or international professional association leading to admission of graduates to exercise particular profession(s), recognition of an institution or programme by a kind of international body/association of a certain type of institutions or programmes, etc.
3. While the term ‘recognition of diplomas’ is used in the directives, the definition of ‘diploma’ also includes all the additional training, practical placements and other requirements that a holder of an educational credential has to fulfil before being granted the right to practise the profession, cf. directive 89/48/EEC, art. 1 http://europa.eu.int/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexapi!prod!CELEXnumdoc&lg=EN&numdoc=31989L0048&model=guichett
4. All the international legal texts mentioned in this article can be found at http://www.aic.lv/ace/ace_disk/
5. An ongoing UNESCO working group on transnational education had major difficulties in receiving information from providers even when addressing them directly (The Working party will report on its results at the ENIC/NARIC Joint meeting in Strasbourg, June 2004).

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E-learning Systems Support of Collaborative Agreements: A Theoretical Model

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ABSTRACT

This paper introduces a theoretical model for developing integrated degree programmes through e-learning systems as stipulated by a collaboration agreement signed by two universities. We have analysed several collaboration agreements between universities at the national, European, and transatlantic level as well as various e-learning frameworks. A conceptual model, a business model, and the architecture design are presented as part of the theoretical model. The paper presents a way of implementing e-learning systems as a tool to support inter-institutional degree collaborations, from the signing of the collaborative agreement to the implementation of the necessary services. In order to show how the theory can be tested one sample scenario is presented.

Keywords

Collaboration agreements, Distributed learning environments, E-learning, Joint degrees, Globalization

Introduction

The development of joint degrees is an important mechanism for strengthening academic research collaborations and diversifying knowledge. There is currently a wide range of joint and double degrees on offer. Both of these degrees are offered through the collaboration between at least two universities. The development of joint degrees requires joint curriculum development and very close cooperation between the partner institutions because the associated administrative and academic processes are managed jointly.

Joint degrees are becoming increasingly implemented in universities around the world. The number of joint degree programmes has grown dramatically in recent years. In Europe, both the Bologna process and the Erasmus programme have encouraged global recognition of joint and double degrees.

Collaboration and internationalization are important strategies for gaining access to the global market. The current global economic crisis is having a marked impact on certain internationalisation activities (Egroun-Polak & Hudson, 2010) as a result of the extra financial cost to students for mobility. E-learning can help to reduce these expenses, enhance the diversity of programmes, and extend into new markets.

Technology and communication infrastructure provide better opportunities to deliver online courses and thus support e-learning. According to Euler, Seufert, and Moser (2008), e-learning is a tool that facilitates the servicing of a new market; it offers the potential to enhance the programme profile of a given university to include other services, as well as being used for the enhancement of university teaching and the implementation of internationalisation in education. The European commission has integrated various educational and training initiatives under the Lifelong Learning Programme of 2007–2013. There are several ways of promoting the use of e-learning as a collaborative tool.

Service-oriented approaches in e-learning systems are gaining popularity with the increasing adoption of web services and the lower integration costs coupled with the flexibility and simplification of the configuration. Below are some examples of service-oriented approaches. A web service architecture for e-learning is presented to solve the problem of interoperability between different learning systems (Qiu & Jooloor, 2006). Fang and Chien (2009) highlighted the need to integrate SOAs to enhance the interoperability, flexibility, and reusability of e-learning content in a collaborative environment. Cheng, Huang, and Nong (2008) proposed a methodological framework for the development of e-learning systems based on an SOA and a Model Driven Architecture (MDA). These proposals are interesting; however, none of them involves the management of e-learning architectures based on collaboration agreements.

Our motivation is to present the usefulness of e-learning as a tool to support the development of joint degrees based on collaboration agreements. A new domain of e-learning system is presented. This approach should help

universities participate in new markets and create strategic alliances. Moreover, it should allow students to benefit from global curricula and learning environments by providing students with the opportunity to develop language skills as well as other abilities needed to work and participate in multicultural environments. It is important that the participating universities ensure the quality of the joint degrees they offer. This implies that they have a qualified staff as well as first-rate academic programmes, learning facilities, and student support.

Literature review

Joint degrees

Joint degrees are academic programmes implemented by two education institutions on the basis of written agreements. Joint degrees are seen as a principal instrument for developing the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and for improving the competitiveness of European higher education around the world (Knight, 2008).

A survey report, “Joint and Double Degree Programs in the Transatlantic Context” (Kuder & Obst, 2009), found that double degrees appear to be much more common than joint degrees, and a large majority of both US and EU institutions plan to develop more joint and double degrees in the future. The major findings of this report are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Findings of the survey (Kuder & Obst, 2009)

Institutions	United States	Europe
Top 5 partner countries	Germany, China, France, Mexico, and South Korea/ Spain	United States, France, Spain, Germany, and the UK
Desired partners for future joint degrees	China, India, Germany, and France	United States, China, Germany, Canada, and the UK
Educational level	More likely at undergraduate level	More likely at graduate level
The most popular academic disciplines	Business and Management Engineering	Business and Management Engineering
Probability of students participation	Less likely	More likely
Cover cost with students feeds	More likely (institutions tend to draw more funding from university budgets and external sources.)	Less likely
Language of instruction	English	English and home language
Most important challenges	Adequate funding and sustainability Institutional support and recruiting students	Adequate funding and sustainability Difficulties in designing the curriculum and agreeing on credit transfer recognition
The key motivations	The internationalisation of the campus and raising international visibility and prestige of the institution	The internationalisation of the campus and raising international visibility and prestige of the institution
Selection process	Student selection is done by each institution separately but based on shared criteria.	Student selection is done by each institution separately but based on shared criteria.

According to the 2005 IAU global survey on the internationalization of higher education (Knight, 2005), the implementation of institutional agreements and networks together with the development of joint and double degrees are the 1st and 10th priorities, respectively, of the 17 internationalisation policies. The initial results of the 3rd IAU Global Survey (Egron-Polak & Hudson, 2010) ranked the development of joint or double degrees as the fifth institutional priority in internationalisation of higher education.

Joint degrees are being developed worldwide. A few examples of funding programmes available to promote integrated degrees include the European Union-United States Atlantis programme (<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/fipseec>), the Erasmus Mundus programme, the Singapore-MIT Alliance

(<http://web.mit.edu/sma/>), and the Worldwide Universities Network (<http://www.wun.ac.uk>). Table 2 lists examples of joint degrees at the bachelors, Masters, and PhD levels.

Table 2. Examples of joint degrees

Joint Degree	University
Master's in Public Administration	University of Alaska Southeast (USA) and Yukon College (Canada)
Master's in International Studies	Johns Hopkins University (USA) and Nanjing University (China)
Master's in Business Administration (MBA)	New York University (USA), London School of Economics (UK), HEC Paris (France), and National University of Singapore (Singapore)
European MBA	Deusto University (Spain), AUDENCIA-Nantes Ecole de Management (France), and Bradford University (UK).
PhD in Medicine	Makerere University (Uganda) and Karolinska Institutet (Sweden)
Master's in History of South-Eastern Europe	Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca (Romania), University of Graz (Austria), and University of Ljubljana (Slovenia)
Bachelor of Engineering	Universidad del Norte (Colombia) and University of South Florida (USA)
European Master's Program in Computational Logic	Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (Spain), Dresden University of Technology (Germany), Free University of Bozen-Bolzano (Italy), Vienna University of Technology (Austria), and New University of Lisbon (Portugal)

Eckel (2003) identified and described one trend emerging from globalisation; namely, American colleges and universities are leveraging their curricula internationally through joint ventures with other universities or with other partners such as corporations, non-profits, and non-governmental organisations, which result in new academic programmes that each partner alone could not offer.

Collaboration agreements

In this context, contracts or collaboration agreements formalise an agreement between universities working toward a common objective, which is the development of a joint degree. A collaboration agreement states the rights and obligations of the parties involved as well as the control policies that are applicable under it.

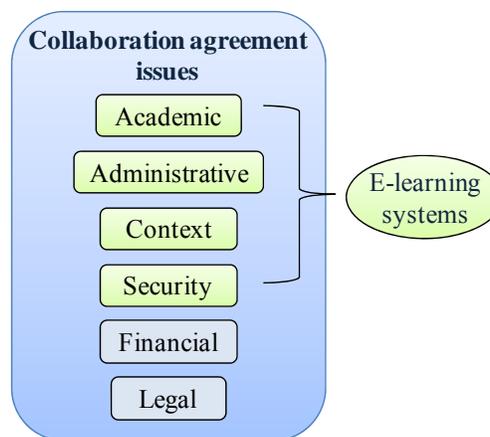


Figure 1. Categories of collaboration agreement issues

To identify the variables, rules, components, and roles that should be taken into account in our approach, we have analysed several collaboration agreements between universities at the national, European, and transatlantic levels such as:

- Dual Degree Master Program in Computer Science between KAIST Department of Computer Science (Korea) and Technische University at Berlin (Germany).
- Joint degree programme agreement at the School of Nursing and the Divinity School of Yale University (USA).

- Agreement on a joint diploma/degree program between Alpen-Adria Universität Klagenfurt (Austria) and Poznan University of Technology (Poland).
- Joint degree programme agreement between Sheridan College (Canada) and York University (Canada)
- Model general of collaboration agreement between Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (Spain) and academic partner
- Collaboration agreement between National University of Singapore (Singapore) and University of Melbourne (Australia)
- Some key terms of the collaboration agreements in UK are presented in the report publish by Eversheds (2009).

In accordance with this analysis, the collaboration agreement can be divided into six categories: academic, administrative, context, security, financial, and legal (Figure 1). Some issues that belong in the first four categories can be managed through e-learning systems.

Table 3 summarises the general issues stipulated in a collaboration agreement regarding joint degrees. The issues that can be managed and implemented through the e-learning systems are italicized in Table 3. The rest of the issues require manual process and they are independent of any technical implementation.

Table 3. Collaboration agreement issues

Collaboration agreement issues					
Academic	Administrative	Context	Security	Financial	Legal
<i>Joint curriculum</i>	Enrolment rules	<i>Academic calendars</i>	<i>Access control and security policies</i>	Programme fees	Legal recognition
Admission requirements	<i>Duration and conditions of the agreement</i>	<i>Language of instruction</i>	Data protection	Financial aid	Legal status
<i>Assessment</i>	Credit transfer recognition	<i>Credit format</i>		Money exchange rate	Intellectual property
<i>Quality assurance</i>	Recruitment strategies	Programme dissemination		Sustainability	
	Administrative, teaching, and technical staff	Awarding of degrees		Marketing	
				Distribution of incomes between partners	

E-learning frameworks

In the same way that we examined collaboration agreements, we analysed several e-learning frameworks to identify the main components that an e-learning system should include to facilitate the development of integrated study programmes. The e-learning frameworks identify and specify the main components and services that may be implemented by an e-learning system. Table 4 presents an overview of the main layers specified by the most common e-learning frameworks based on services-oriented approach such as: ELF, IMS Abstract Framework, and OKI.

Table 4. Layers of the main e-learning frameworks

Frameworks	Layers
ELF	User Agents Learning Application services Common Services
IMS Abstract Framework	Application Application services Common Services Infrastructure
OKI	Educational Applications Educational Services Common Services Infrastructure

In 2004, the JISC released an initial technical framework to support e-learning that consisted of a set of services. This e-learning framework was expanded to include international partners as well as other domains such as resource management, research, and academic administration. This new approach is referred to as the e-framework which is an initiative to promote the use of a service-oriented approach in the analysis and design of software for use in education and research (Nicholls, 2009).

As regards e-learning systems, we have selected some criteria oriented to services which can be of interest when implementing a service-oriented architecture (Table 5).

Table 5. A comparison of e-learning systems

Criteria	Moodle	dotLRN	Blackboard	Sakai
Development Language	Php	Tcl	Java	Java
E-learning standards	IMS-CP, IMS-QTI, SCORM	IMS-CP, IMS-MD, IMS-QTI, IMS-LD, IMS Enterprise, SCORM	IMS-CP, IMS-MD, IMS-QTI, IMS-LD, IMS Enterprise, SCORM	IMS-CP, IMS-LD, IMS-QTI, IMS Enterprise, SCORM
Web services protocols	AMF, REST, SOAP, XML-RPC	REST, XML-RPC, SOAP	SOAP	SOAP, REST
Web services Development	Modules based on php	Web Framework based on OpenACS. TWiST (Tcl web Service Toolkit)	Blackboard Building blocks or JWS (Java web Service).	JWS implemented in Apache Axis
License	Open source	Open source	Commercial	Open source
Authentication	CAS, External DB, First class, LDAP, IMAP, NNTP, Moodle network, PAM, POP3, RADIUS, Shibboleth, web services	LDAP, PAM, RADIUS, web services	CAS, LDAP, Kerberos, RDBMS, ActiveDirectory, Shibboleth, web server delegation	CAS, LDAP, Shibboleth, Kerberos, web services
Syndication feeds	RSS, ATOM	RSS, ATOM	RSS, ATOM	RSS, ATOM

Theoretical model

Conceptual model

To evaluate whether an e-learning system can be used as a means to develop joint degrees, we first defined the conceptual model. Based on different case studies (Dougherty & Su, 2009; Banks, 2006), we identified the main phases that are carried out during the specification and development of a joint degree. Figure 2 illustrates the main phases ranging from the recognition of the benefits of integrated programmes to the examination of the degrees.

The first four phases are related to the specification of objectives, resources, and terms of the agreement. The following four phases, which are related to the development of the programme, can be automated and implemented through e-learning systems.

Figure 3 presents the conceptual model according to which universities can participate in the creation of new academic degrees using their e-learning systems. Partner universities should establish collaboration agreements to develop a joint degree. First, they need to work on the terms of agreement and find solutions to every difference of opinions for the success of the integrated degree programme. Once the partners have identified, defined, and negotiated all of the terms, the signing of the collaboration agreement will be the culmination of the specification process. If the agreement is signed, the next step will be to translate it into a technical language to manage the e-learning systems in accordance with the terms specified.

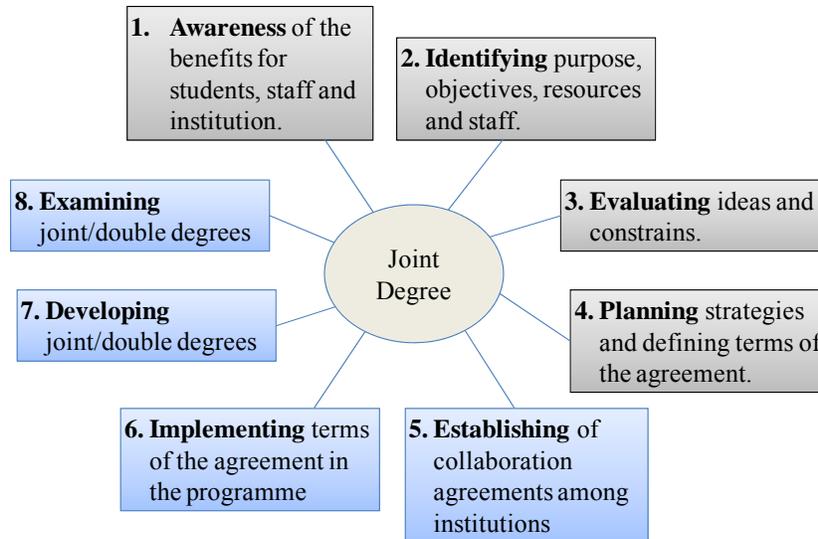


Figure 2. Phases in the development of a joint degree

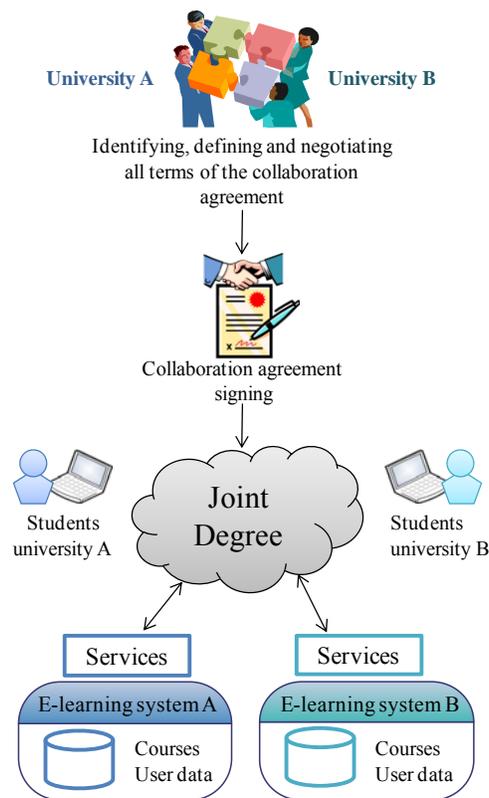


Figure 3. The conceptual model

Students enrolled in a joint degree can access it through any participating e-learning system. Universities must ensure both the access to their e-learning system and the availability of all services and content needed to complete the joint degree. The main obstacles, benefits, and challenges to overcome in the context of e-learning systems and joint degrees have been identified (Aguirre, Quemada, & Salvachúa, 2010).

In relation to the collaborative agreements issues identified in the previous section, the implementation of the conceptual model means that many of these issues can be considered as limitations because they can block the process. These key issues are presented in the next section.

Key issues and limitations

Taking into consideration the issues stipulated in a collaboration agreement (Table 3), we have analyzed which of them can be managed through e-learning systems and which can be considered as limitations.

Academic level

Joint degrees are based on a curriculum developed jointly by the participating partners. The specification of the curricula will determine the courses that each partner will have to offer and support in their e-learning systems. Each partner must ensure both the access to their e-learning system and the availability of all courses and functionalities needed to develop the joint degree. Both the admission criteria for entering the programme and the assessment methods have to be jointly specified by both participating institutions.

The globalisation of higher education generates a number of crucial challenges, which require the intervention of an international regulatory framework for quality assurance and accreditation. The joint degree consortium should ensure that participating institutions are officially accredited in their home country. Likewise, their programmes should be accredited by a national accreditation agency. Some agencies for quality assurance include the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain (<http://www.aneca.es/>), the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (<http://www.enqa.eu/>), and the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency in United Kingdom (<http://www.qcda.gov.uk/default.aspx>).

A major limitation in this context is the different teaching styles that each partner can follow. Banks (2006) presented a case of study on the experience of developing intercultural collaboration in a UK-Chinese context. The UK's theoretical approach to e-learning follows a social-constructivist view of learning whereas the Chinese approach to e-learning has been influenced by instructional system design (problem-based learning). Academic staff in some countries must learn to work as part of pedagogical teams, which represents a challenge to those cultures where teachers are individually responsible for what they teach without any coordination required at the programme level. The high average age of the teaching staff can also be an obstacle to adopting the new methods and ideas (Sursock & Smith, 2010).

Administrative level

The administrative support in the development of an integrated programme through e-learning systems plays a crucial role. From our point of view, e-learning systems could offer support to the following issues: user registration, generation of administrative reports, and the control of service availability according to the duration of the agreement.

Manual process is required to define the enrolment rules, credit transfer recognition, programme dissemination activities (e.g., brochures, home page), recruitment strategies, generation of academic certificates, staffing, and awarding of degrees.

Context level

At this level we have grouped the issues that we identified as more dependent on the scope (national or international) in which a joint degree is developed.

Academic calendars can differ from country to country. When the time difference is large, the scheduling of courses and virtual meetings are a challenge. Lack of harmonization of academic calendars is a limitation although the e-learning systems can help to manage it. The management of different credit formats and its allocation has to be specified. A table of equivalence of the different types of credit must be specified. This table can be managed in e-learning systems. Along with the latest Trends report (Sursock & Smith, 2010) most of the institutions in Europe have reported the use of ECTS for credit accumulation, and only England, Wales and Northern Ireland and Lithuania are using a different credit transfer system.

Institutional resistance to change is an important limitation at a context level. Therefore, academic institutions have to promote international cooperation and intercultural experience through bilateral contacts, consortia, and treaties. Consortia serve as platform for bilateral agreements between their members.

Additional difficulties are associated with language and cultural barriers. Students with different cultural backgrounds may understand the same e-learning website in different ways (Mushtaha & De Troyer, 2007). Cultural aspects and website design have an intrinsic relationship. Navigation, page orientation, menus, language, colors, information organization, and images have been identified as elements with distinctive cultural attributes (Callahan, 2005). Edmundson (2007) designed the Cultural Adaptation Process (CAP) model as a guide for evaluating existing e-learning courses and for matching them to the cultural profiles of targeted learners. Internationalization and localization is being implemented in e-learning systems to adapt different languages, regional, and culture differences.

English is dominant as the foreign language of most interest to students. According to the OECD report (2010), an increasing number of institutions in non-English-speaking countries are offering courses in English to overcome their linguistic disadvantage in terms of attracting foreign students. In the development of a joint degree between the University of Kansas (KU) and the Korean University of Technology and Education (KUT), KU students have found that even though KUT courses are taught in English, the question/answer sessions may be in Korean, thus leaving the non-Korean speaking student without valuable information (Dougherty & Su, 2009). Therefore the choice of a common language is important for the success of this scenario.

At the political level, initiatives for promoting regional integration in higher education are being carried out, for instance, the Bologna Process in Europe is an attempt to create the EHEA, the Association of Arab Universities (AARU) enhances cooperation between members of the association, the Association of African Universities (AAU) proposes the creation of the “African Higher Education Area” (AHEA) and the UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC) is in Latin America.

Security level

Since the scenario of joint degrees involves the exchange of personal data and students between partner universities, the data protection must be clearly defined. Copyright management may require a shared consensus of all the members of consortium.

E-learning systems must provide a secure access control and a reliable security policy management. In order to avoid sharing personal data it is safer for each member of a joint degree to carry out the registration process in each e-learning system of the participating partners. A reliable system of backup must be available.

Financial level

The economic crisis is having a marked impact on the internationalization process as a result of the extra financial cost to students for mobility. E-learning can help to reduce these expenses, enhance the diversity of programmes and extend into new markets. The tuition fees should be charged by each institution. The numbers of student admitted by each university have to be specified. A business model for this scenario is presented below.

Legal level

One of the main difficulties of developing joint degrees is related to legal recognition of the degrees. A joint degree should be recognized outside of the consortium and in a wider international context. In some countries, universities are not allowed to award a degree unless the students spend their last academic year at this university. A joint degree should be recognized outside of the consortium and in a wider international context. Non-recognition and limitations on the numbers of courses or credits taken at a partner university raise additional barriers (Knight, 2009). Double degrees can be an alternative solution in those countries where legal restrictions prevent the recognition of a joint degree.

Although the ministers of Education in some countries are promoting the creation of joint degrees, there is no change of legislation leading their recognition. Only a few countries allow a domestic university legally to confer a joint qualification in partnership with a foreign institution (Knight, 2009).

Nowadays, there are consortia promoting regional cooperation and facilitating the mutual recognition of study achievements. A consortium like the European Confederation of Upper Rhine Universities (EUCOR) aims to promote cooperation in education and research among some universities in Germany, France, and Switzerland.

An interesting legal guide for the UK universities on collaboration with overseas partnerships has been published by Eversheds (2009). This guide includes higher education jurisdiction of some partnerships such as Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, UAE, Qatar, and USA.

Technical level

Heterogeneity of e-learning systems is a limitation in the development of integrated study programs. The implementation of a common services layer is the proposed solution for this scenario. The use of standards has to be promoted in order to facilitate the interoperability of learning objects.

The use of a notification system for e-learning will allow all members to deliver and receive messages. The adaptation of an effective evaluation system is important to obtain feedback on performance, usability from their students, teaching staff, administrative (all roles) that can be used for future improvements.

Speed, stability, and security in telecommunications infrastructure have an enormous impact on effective e-learning. Hence, the guarantee of a stable infrastructure should be an essential condition for each partner.

Identifying roles

Table 6 presents the main roles stipulated in a collaboration agreement and the corresponding responsibilities.

Table 6. Description of roles

Role	Responsibilities
Coordinator	Provide general information Ensure that the terms of the agreement are carried out Facilitate communication between roles Provide a report on final results
Academic manager	Manage the registration and enrolment process Ensure that students have the appropriate background Guide students
E-learning system manager	Provide technical support Make necessary technical adaptations
Teacher	Prepare course materials Develop the course Manage online courses Respond to students' queries Evaluate students' work Follow up on student feedback
Student	Use tools and resources Participate actively Interact with other students and teachers Present assessments Provide feedback

Business model

A business model can be defined as “an architecture for the product, service, and information flows, including a description of the various business actors and their roles; and a description of the potential benefits for the various business actors; and a description of the sources of revenues” (Timmers, 1999). Based on this definition and our educational scenario, we specify the potential benefits for the main actors (or roles) in a joint or double degree programme, which are detailed in Table 7. The Return on Investment (ROI) can be calculated by comparing the development cost of the new services for e-learning with its benefits.

Table 7. Potential benefits of a joint degree

Actor	Benefits
University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidate partnerships Offer new opportunities Improve and diversify knowledge Gain prestige and reputation Provide additional uses for educational content Improve inter-university cooperation Develop curriculum and sustainability Internationalize the curriculum Enhance the diversity of programmes Enhance competitiveness in the educational market Save time, money, and space Enrich e-learning platforms Reach new students Strengthen academic research collaborations, and alliances Promote collaboration and exchange Increase usage of networks and services Increase ROI Expand into new markets Diversify its faculty and staff
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance intercultural experience Enhance competitiveness Provide opportunities for innovation in the teaching and learning process Establish new courses with an international focus Promote cooperation and exchange of ideas between teaching staff
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve opportunities and skills for employment Access wide ranges of online resources Stimulate the international employability of students Provide intercultural experience Enhance competitiveness in the labour market Provide broader experiences Provide opportunities to interact with international students Improve foreign language skills Provide flexibility, with 24/7 access to learning resources

The development of joint degrees using e-learning systems allows universities to create new business opportunities. In this context, educational business processes are defined as a series of implemented services. Many institutions now view their curriculum and courses as capital. Some engage in for-profit, curriculum-based ventures, and others enter into strategic alliances “capitalizing on the curriculum” (Eckel, 2003). Based on this reasoning, we ask, why not capitalise on the electronic curriculum? If a university offers courses online, it can add value to its investment by being part of collaboration agreements to develop joint degrees. According to Eckel (2003), the curriculum may be conceptually considered as capital.

E-learning effects networking between universities in a global market. Traditional universities have the option of cooperating with other universities in developing course material and e-learning products. The sources of revenues

needed to participate in a joint degree are generated by e-learning course fees and reductions in commuting costs for teaching staff. We can identify four kinds of partner: paired domestic, European, transatlantic, and corporate partners.

A huge potential exists for combining these sources of revenue with economies of scale and the low provision costs that can be realised by offering e-learning services. The reusability of e-learning systems, or at least single system components, is an important aspect in implementing cost reductions. The number of potential users of e-learning systems increases by reusing system components (Breitner & Hoppe, 2005).

We propose to implement a service-oriented architecture that allows the easy adaptation of modules if business processes change over time. In this context, e-learning providers can model their business by selecting services as well as designing the services to be produced and their appropriate functionality. The following section presents the architecture proposed.

Architecture design

To facilitate the development of joint degrees through e-learning, a service-based architecture developed in accordance with the policies set out in the collaboration agreement is proposed. In this scenario, a joint degree can be defined as an academic program made up of a cluster of services that are offered by universities through their e-learning systems. These services offer support to academic and administrative processes, all of which are included in the academic program. The services are combined and federated in accordance with the agreement established by the universities involved (Aguirre, Quemada, & Salvachúa, 2008).

The services defined in existing e-learning frameworks are very useful in supporting typical e-learning applications. However, the development of a joint degree through these frameworks is not possible because of the lack of services to manage the joint curricula. Based on the aforementioned frameworks, we propose the design of a service-oriented architecture made up of an identity provider, service providers (e-learning systems), a policy editor, a policy manager, a workflow engine, and a service manager. This architecture will be federated by policies in accordance with the collaboration agreement signed by the participating universities (Aguirre, Quemada, & Salvachúa, 2010). The overall architecture is illustrated in Figure 4.

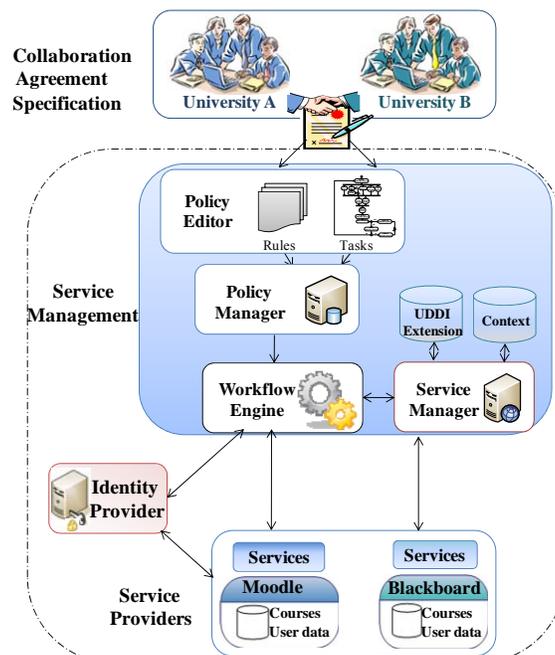


Figure 4. Proposed architecture

The identity provider is responsible for controlling the identity and validity of users. The service providers are responsible for publishing and offering services that allow access to other e-learning services. The policy editor enables the e-learning administrator to define policies expressed as sets of rules, which can be translated into policy language such as BPEL. In the same way, the policy editor allows administrators to define the process expressed as tasks. These policies and process will be sent to the policy manager. The policy manager is responsible for editing, storing, activating, deactivating, and deleting existing policies. Policies allow administrators to modify system behaviour without changing source code. Once the policies have been managed, the process, and policies are sent to the workflow engine, which is responsible for managing the federation and orchestration the process according to the policies. Each process is identified as a service. The workflow engine will enable and execute services in accordance with the information specified in the collaboration agreement (rules and process). The service information will be provided by the service manager. The service manager is responsible for identifying services that can be required in this scenario using context information stored in a database. The identified services are submitted to the policy manager, which will bind the services according to the policies specified in the agreement and the context information. In order to support the service federation, all educational services need to be registered in a central repository like UDDI.

The main difference between the existing e-learning frameworks and our approach is the inclusion of new services for supporting joint collaboration. Although the services that allow access to the courses will be available on different systems, they constitute a unique study plan.

Implementing the model

Based on the conceptual model presented in figure 3, the specification of objectives, resources, and terms of the collaborative agreement is the starting point. The implementation of a collaboration agreement in this context can be split into three layers: the business layer, the design layer, and the implementation layer. An example of objective of these layers is shown in Figure 5. The business layer specifies the terms of the joint agreement in plain language. The design layer identifies the necessary variables, rules, and tasks to satisfy the agreement. One or more rules are combined to form policies. The implementation layer invokes the services in each e-learning platform in accordance with the policies of the agreement. On this level, the composition, and orchestration technologies are carried out.

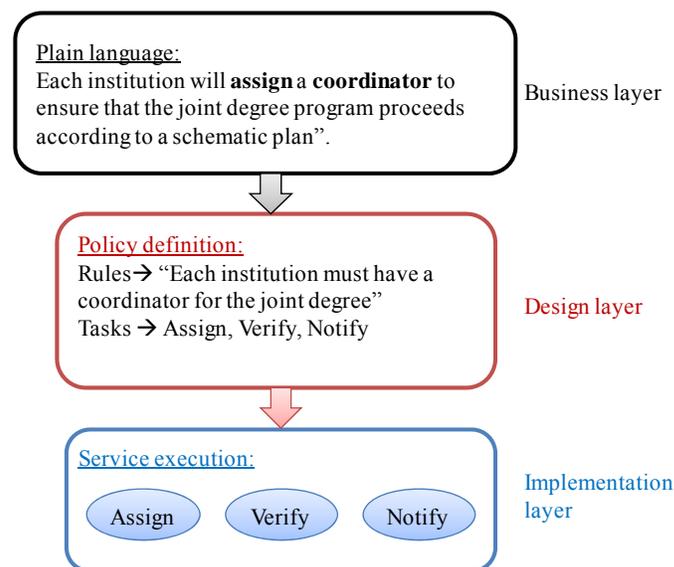


Figure 5. Layers in the development of collaboration agreement

Once the document has been signed by the persons responsible for each partner university, the agreement must be translated into technical language. The translation process is carried out in the design layer, and the execution of services in the implementation layer.

The main tasks related by each role to the development of a joint degree are shown in Figure 6. These tasks are based on a collaboration program at our university and may vary with respect to different education systems. A clear assignment of tasks and responsibilities to each role should be carried out.

Each partner must ensure both the access to their e-learning system and the availability of all services needed to develop the joint degree. Each course specified in the agreement must be accessed through a service, which will be deployed according to the policies and context information. Therefore, each e-learning system manager has to make the necessary technical adaptations with the implementation of customized services.

A joint degree web page should be created in each institution host. It should contain the administrative support of the integrated program for students and teaching staff, course scheduling, and the integrated curricula which will be a list of courses linked to the corresponding e-learning system.

Students have to request admission and enrolment in each partner institution. Institutions can trust the management of users through an identity provider which will be responsible for controlling the identity and validation of users. It permits the support of Single Sign On in order to allow students to access an enrolled joint degree through any participating e-learning system. On the other hand, students should register in each platform.

In order to illustrate how the theoretical model can be tested, we describe a sample scenario in which only the terms of a collaboration agreement that can be implemented through e-learning have been selected.

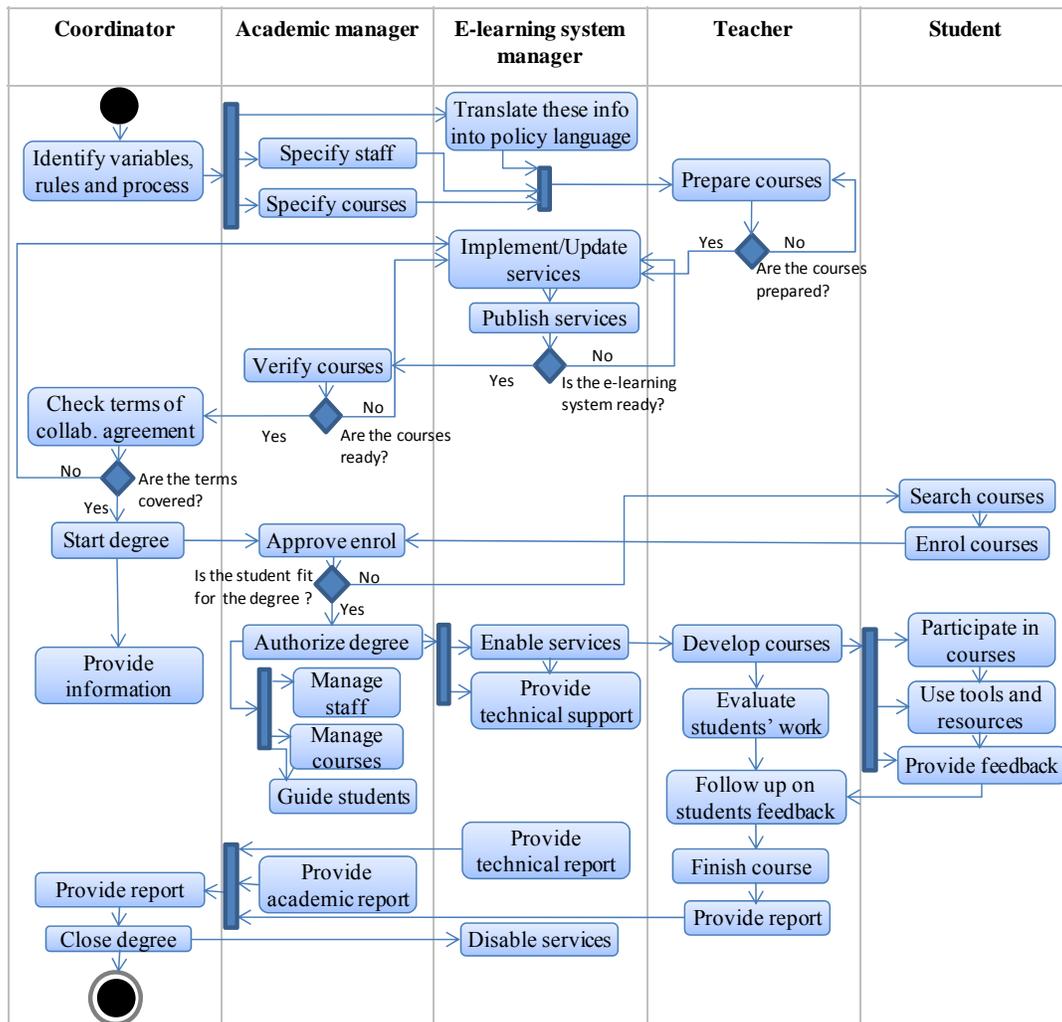


Figure 6. The main tasks to be implemented

Sample scenario

Business layer

The summarized version of the agreement for this scenario is as follows:

“A) The University A (UA) from France and the University B (UB) from Spain agree to develop a joint master degree in Computer Science. B) The duration of the program is two years. C) The credit format is ECTS. In order to obtain the Joint Degree, the students have to study for a total of 120 ECTS credits. D) The curriculum approved by the universities involved is made up of: Course 1 (UA, 20 credits), Course 2 (UB, 20 credits), Course 3 (UA, 30 credits), Course 4 (UB, 30 credits) and 20 credits for the thesis at any participating university. A minimum of 60% is valid to pass a course. E) The language for instruction is English. F) Up to 15 students are to be accepted by each institution. G) The identification process will be federated through shibboleth, which will be located at <http://jointdegree.shibboleth>. H) This agreement will be in force for a period of five years starting from 20 July 2011”

Design layer

Based on this collaboration agreement, the e-learning manager will have to translate the agreement in terms of rules (policies) and tasks (services). Some rules and tasks identified for this example are detailed in Table 8.

Table 8. Rules and tasks identified

Terms	Rules	Tasks
A	Context: European	Set Name_degree: Computer science Set HostU: UA Set HostPartner: UB Search_DB_Context : European
B		Set Duration: 2 years
C		Set Credit_num: 120 Set Credit_format: ECTS
D	A minimum of 60% is valid to pass a course	Set list_courses Enable_courses (list_courses) Register_courses (list_courses)
E		Set Language: English
F	Up to 15 students are to be accepted by each institution	Set Total_students: 30
G	Federated authentication	Set Id_provider: http://jointdegree.shibboleth Notify_providers
H		Set Signature_date: 20 July 2010 Set Expiration_date: 20 July 2015

Implementation layer

The rules and tasks identified above allow us to define the policies and services required to develop a joint degree managed by the execution of a workflow system. We can define a policy as a rule that defines the features of a service in terms of security, privacy, and implementation according to a set of conditions and context information. Figure 7 illustrates the sample scenario. Students enrolled in a joint degree can access it through any participating e-learning system.

Universities must ensure both the access to their e-learning system and the availability of all services and content needed to complete the joint degree. Therefore, the service “*Register_course*” must be executed by the e-learning managers to register each course at the service manager. The steps to register a course are: First, the e-learning manager, who is the only authorised role to execute this service, is logged in the e-learning system. Shibboleth will validate the user identity. Second, the request for the service “*Register_course*” is sent the workflow engine. Third,

the workflow engine checks if the policy manager has associated policies to this service. Forth, as a result of the service only can be executed by the e-learning manager role, the workflow manager must verify the user role with the identity provider. Finally, the course will be registered into the service manager. Considering that cultural aspects and website design have an intrinsic relationship, this service can use the context information to define the runtime environment (colour, styles, etc).

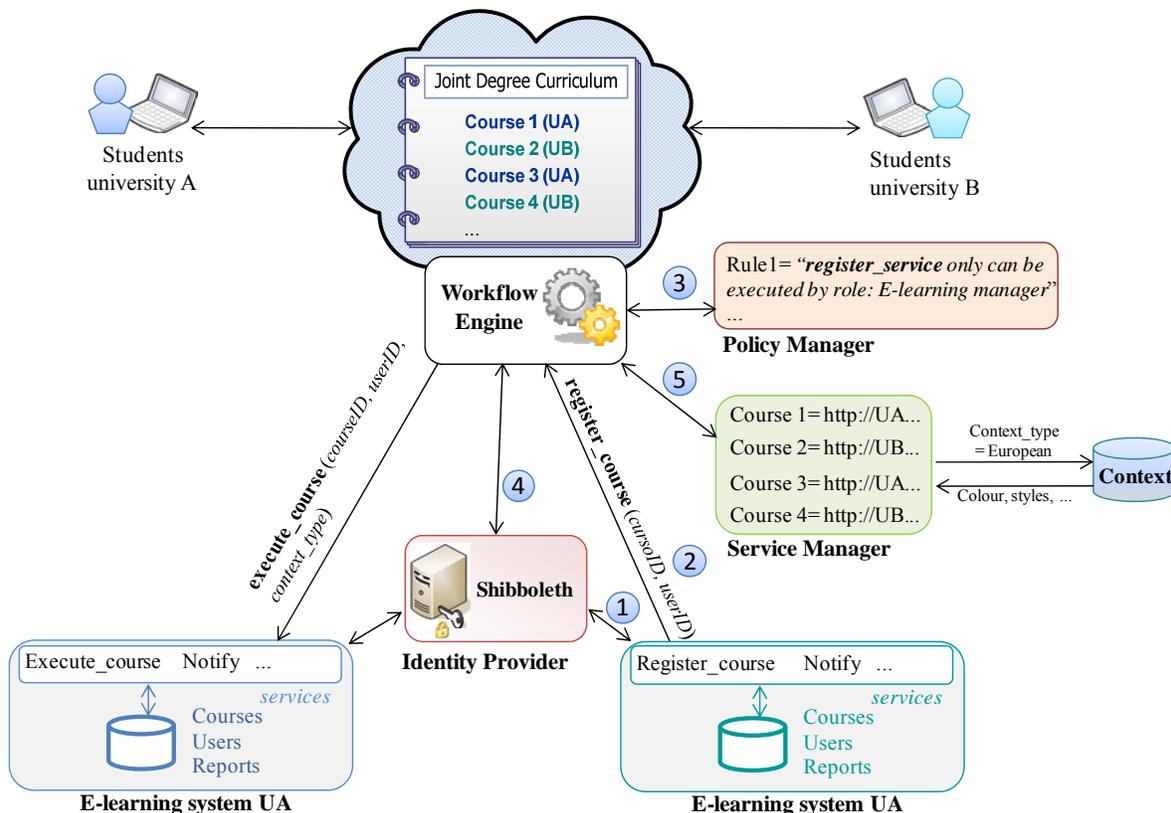


Figure 7. Sample scenario

Policies should be able to be updated during runtime by the e-learning system managers. The workflow supports processes based on a set of rules. Services management must be dynamic and adaptable to meet changing educational needs.

When a joint degree has been implemented, the academic manager, and coordinator must check whether the terms of the collaboration agreement have been fulfilled satisfactorily. Once a course has finished, the teacher will provide a report to the coordinator of the degree who will terminate the degree when all of the courses have been completed and the technical and academic reports finalised.

Conclusion

Joint and double degree programmes with international partners are becoming increasingly widespread. However, the lack of funding has become the most important barrier to advancing internationalization within institutions. An e-learning system can be adapted technically to support integrated programmes, to bridge national, international, and cultural issues and be used as an alternative to the very costly mobility of students

The paper presents a review of the theoretical and technical issues on how e-learning systems can enable inter-institutional degree collaborations. We introduce a new domain of e-learning system. Joint degrees based on e-learning systems can be possible through automated composition of web services that can be implemented and

executed to fulfil collaboration agreements among academic institutions at national and international level. We have shown a theoretical model of developing new and innovative ways of promoting the internationalisation.

According to the key issues and limitations identified, most of the process of developing a joint degree through e-learning systems can be carried out, from the signing of the agreement to the implementation of the necessary services. Language and some cultural aspects related to web design can be managed through the implementation of context in services. However, some of the barriers to overcome in this scenario are: legal obstacles, national, and international recognition, quality assurance, the need for compatible credit systems, varying teaching approaches, examination procedures, the bureaucracy involved in the administrative processes, cultural differences, and bandwidth limitations. The administrative support in this context plays a crucial role, for this reason is important to develop a complete administrative support to ensure the success of this approach.

The economic crisis is having a marked impact on the internationalization process. E-learning can help to reduce these expenses, enhance the diversity of programmes and extend into new markets.

Legislation in each country should allow joint degrees to be established and recognised. In Europe, diploma supplements and the ECTS should facilitate this recognition process.

Acknowledgement

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Executive summary

Internationalization of Higher Education: *Growing expectations, fundamental values*

IAU 4th Global Survey

Eva Egron-Polak and Ross Hudson

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The European Association for International Education (EAIE) is the European centre for expertise, networking and resources in the internationalisation of higher education. The EAIE is a non-profit, member-led organisation serving individuals actively involved in the internationalisation of their institutions. The EAIE equips academic and non-academic professionals with best practices and workable solutions to internationalisation challenges and provides a platform for strategic exchange. It offers a variety of training activities, topical publications and hosts an annual conference attracting thousands of higher education professionals from around the world. The EAIE also partners with key stakeholder organisations and institutions to promote its membership interests, and advance international higher education in Europe and the rest of the world.

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International Association of Universities (IAU)

Founded in 1950, IAU is a global association of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and university associations. IAU's mission is to strengthen higher education worldwide by providing a global forum for institutional and association leaders to discuss, examine and take action on issues of common interest. It is a membership organization which brings together about 630 higher education institutions from every region in the world, as well as more than two dozen national and regional associations. A number of specialized organizations have become IAU Affiliates and a growing number of individuals join as IAU Associates. Benefits of membership include a global forum for networking; scholarly and reference publications; original research reports; grants; opportunities to get involved in projects as well as advisory services on internationalization. IAU facilitates collective action for advocacy and develops normative statements on important issues in higher education which serve to raise Members' views and concerns in public debate with organizations such as UNESCO, the OECD, the Council of Europe, the World Bank and the European Commission among others.

The Association upholds the values of academic freedom and institutional autonomy, while promoting greater accountability, institutional responsibility and effectiveness, and the ideal of knowledge made accessible to all through collaboration, commitment to solidarity and improved access to higher education.

Internationalization of higher education is one of the IAU priority themes and the Association has a number of initiatives in this area such as:

- **Policy Statements and Guidelines** – *Towards a Century of Cooperation: Internationalization of Higher education* was the first IAU policy declaration on internationalization prepared in 1998. It was followed in 2004 by the statement produced by IAU in partnership with three other associations (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), American Council on Education (ACE), and Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)) entitled: *Sharing Quality Higher Education Across Borders: A Statement on Behalf of Higher Education Institutions Worldwide*. To assist institutions in implementing the statement the same four Associations jointly issued related document: *A Checklist for Good Practice* in 2006. This checklist provides a series of questions to help institutions in designing and assessing their cross-border educational initiatives. In 2012, the IAU brought together an Ad-hoc expert group, made up of 28 internationalization experts from every world region. This group sought to assess the extent to which current internationalization activities fit the conceptual umbrella; critically examine the causes that are leading to some questioning and even criticism of the process, and find ways to address these concerns. The main output of the work of this group, was the third IAU statement: *Affirming Academic Values in Internationalization of Higher Education: A Call for Action*

- **Regular Global Surveys** – prior to the present survey three others have been undertaken and published, starting in 2003.

- **Internationalization Strategies Advisory Service (ISAS)** – available to all IAU member institutions to assist them in developing, reassessing and/or revitalizing their internationalization strategy and related activities. ISAS works with institutional leadership and staff to ‘accompany’ them in their reflection, and efforts to enhance their internationalization policy and actions.

- **Webpages on internationalization.** An open resource, the website includes definitions of key concepts, all IAU statements on internationalization; a summary of relevant declarations and codes of conduct, links to internationalization initiatives taking place across the world, and a bibliography of some key articles and research papers. www.iau-aiu.net

Executive Summary and Highlights of Findings

Introduction and Context

This fourth edition of the IAU Global Survey on internationalization of higher education was undertaken with support from, and in collaboration with four partner organizations: the British Council, the European Commission, NAFSA: Association of International Educators, and the European Association of International Education (EAIE). IAU is grateful to them and to all others who contributed to the design of the questionnaire, its translation into Spanish, its wide dissemination to institutions worldwide. Most particular words of thanks and appreciation go to those in the higher education institutions who provided invaluable data by responding to the survey.

Internationalization is an integral part of a continuous process of change in higher education; increasingly it is becoming a central motor of change. Its importance has grown along with the more general developments of globalization, offering new opportunities but also posing new challenges. Discussions among policy makers, higher education leaders and stakeholders and ongoing research have shown that the expansion of internationalization has brought with it questions about its meaning, its impact on learning as well as on the nature of relations among institutions. A very healthy debate about the assumptions and underlying values of internationalization has been taking place over the past two or three years, with the International Association of Universities (IAU) very much engaged in it. The initiative to 're-think' internationalization, coordinated by IAU, and involving a large international group of experts resulted in the adoption in 2012 of a policy statement entitled *Affirming Academic Values in Internationalization of Higher Education: A Call for Action*. Along with findings from previous IAU Global Surveys, the statement and this survey have given rise to a better appreciation of the benefits as well as the possible negative consequences of internationalization. Most importantly, these activities have stimulated a worldwide discussion about the measures that might be needed to avoid potential negative impacts of the processes that take place within the framework of internationalization.

The purpose of the IAU Global Surveys is to provide data and analysis of developments in internationalization of higher education. Alongside its data collection on the importance, the activities and priorities of this process, this 4th edition of the IAU Global Survey adds an important focus on values and principles, as well as the potential benefits and risks of current trends in internationalization of higher education for both institutions and society.

Methodology and Respondents

The IAU 4th Global Survey took place approximately four years after the previous one. The report is based on responses from 1,336 institutions of higher education located in 131

countries in every world region. The number of responses was nearly double that of the previous survey. The dominant institutional profile of responding HEIs is public, focused on both teaching and research, offering programs at all degree levels and relatively small in size in terms of student enrolment (under 5,000 students). The table below presents the geographic distribution of respondents:

TABLE 1: GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

Region	% of respondent	Number of HEIs
Africa	9%	114
Asia and Pacific	12%	164
Europe	45%	604
Latin America & the Caribbean ²	11%	141
Middle East	4%	60
North America	19%	253

Electronic invitations and to with a link to the questionnaire were sent to the heads of higher education institutions, and when available, also to heads of international offices of those institutions. In total, 6,879 institutions worldwide were contacted. They were instructed to provide data for the start of the 2012 academic year, and the survey was conducted between May and September, 2013. The questionnaires and a glossary of terms and definitions were made available in English, French and Spanish.

In all results, the n=1,336 unless otherwise indicated. Results are presented at the aggregate/global level and where there were notable findings, also at the regional level. To the extent possible, given differences in the questions in the successive surveys, changes over time were also documented.

Highlights of Findings

The results of the 4th Global Survey bring some good news starting with an almost 20% rate of response, itself a measure of success. The findings demonstrate that internationalization remains, or indeed grows in importance for higher education institutions. It is being driven, in large measure, by the most senior levels of leadership of the institutions. The majority of the institutions already have or are developing policies to implement the process and have the key elements of supportive infrastructure in place to move forward and monitor progress.

At the aggregate level, results show that internationalization has fairly clear priorities with respect to specific activities, most often targeting student learning and student mobility.

Student knowledge and appreciation of international issues is also the most significant expected benefit, though institutions also perceive risks, at both institutional and societal levels. The report also indicates that in terms of geographic priorities, an intra-regional focus remains strong, with interest in Europe continuing to be a high priority for internationalization in most other regions.

Responses to specific questions with regard to the values and principles that are referenced in institutional internationalization policies, as well as the results concerned with perceived institutional and societal risks demonstrate that higher education institutions place emphasis on academic goals in their internationalization strategies. They express concern about equal access to international opportunities for all students and about the commodification and commercialization of education. They are also preoccupied that more competition among higher education institutions will arise as a result of internationalization.

There is consensus with regard to limited funding being a major obstacle in internationalization, but on the more positive side, when asked about changes to the allocation of budgets over time, for the most part, the results provide evidence that support has remained steady or has in fact increased for some internationalization activities. Decreases in budgets for such activities are reported by a relatively small percentage of respondents.

As in the past, significant regional differences remain in several areas, including for example, with regard to the expected benefits of internationalization where the top ranked reply in one or two regions – student appreciation of global issues or knowledge about international topics, is not even among the top three benefits in other regions. In other cases of regional comparisons, there can be a general consensus around the top ranked response – for example with regard to the risk at the institutional level which concerns access for all to opportunities, yet beyond this top ranked response, there are rather clear regional differences. In some regions, risks concern the inability to assess quality of foreign programs, elsewhere it is the concern with too much competition among HEIs and still in other regions, there is a concern that too much emphasis is placed on internationalization. Thus the regional results remain a critical aspect of this analysis and often tell a much more nuanced story about how internationalization is evolving but also what aspects need to be considered when building inter-regional partnerships and exchanges.

Finally, there appear relatively few major changes over time when comparisons are drawn between this and previous IAU surveys. For example, there is a fairly significant consistency with regard to the perceptions of the most important risks at the aggregate level. When both societal and institutional risks in the 4th Global Survey are compared with the perceived risks in the previous two surveys, practically the same issues are identified: commodification/commercialisation, brain drain, difficulty in assessing quality of foreign programs. At the same time, there are some new issues being reported such as the risk of growing gaps in quality and/or prestige among institutions in a given country. As well, some areas of activity which were growing in prominence in the past – dual/double and joint degrees, for example, may be losing momentum in institutions according to results in this survey.

On the whole, as the report's findings show, in several areas, institutional strategies show a pretty strong internal coherence. Several examples can be underlined, including the

parallels between priority internationalization activities, expected benefits and budget allocations trends in recent years. For the most part, these are going in similar directions and thus, institutions appear not only to elaborate policies, they are also aligning their actions accordingly.

The results of this survey, as of those in the past, also raise new or persistent questions about, *inter alia*, the exact nature of the role of faculty in internationalization, about the extent to which curricular change is seen as a key way to prepare students for life and work in and international environment, rather than relying primarily on mobility opportunities, about the place of online and distance education in internationalization. More studies and research, building on the findings are needed to find these and other answers.

Internationalization policy/strategy and infrastructural supports

Aggregate results

- 53% of the respondents have an institutional policy/strategy and 22% report that one is in preparation; 16% indicate that internationalization forms part of the overall institutional strategy.
- A comparison over time shows a consistent drop in the number of institutions reporting having a policy; 53% reported such a policy in the 4th Global Survey, 67% did so in the 3rd Global Survey; and 82% did in the 2nd Global Survey. This drop needs to be considered with caution. The fact that 22% of the respondents report that a policy is being prepared, added to those reporting that they already have such a policy (totaling 75% of the HEIs) may be a more accurate comparative figure, thus decreasing the difference in findings in previous surveys considerably. The drop may perhaps also be explained by the fact that the policy is now an integral part of the overall institutional policy in more institutions.
- 61% of the institutions report having a dedicated budget for internationalization, compared to 73% reporting one in the previous survey.
- 66% of the respondents report having explicit targets and benchmarks to assess their internationalization policy implementation.
- The most frequently assessed areas of internationalization are international student enrollment, outbound student mobility and partnerships.

Regional results

Wide variations exist among regions with respect to internationalization policy/strategy, with the highest proportion of respondents with such a policy being in Europe and Asia (56% - 61%), and the other regions ranging from 40% to 47%. About 15% - 20% of respondents in all regions indicate that internationalization forms part of the overall policy, with the smallest proportion of regional respondents reporting this in the Middle East (13%).

Importance of internationalization and expected benefits

Aggregate results

- 69% of the respondents report that internationalization is of high importance for the leadership of their institution.
- In terms of change in the past three years, 27% report that over this period, internationalization has remained very important; 30% report that it has substantially increased in importance, and for another 31% it has increased in importance.
- For 32% of the respondents, the top ranked expected benefit is students' increased international awareness and engagement with global issues. This is followed by improved quality of teaching and learning. Revenue generation is the lowest ranked benefit overall.
- When compared over time, expected benefits at the aggregate level have generally remained similar, focusing on student awareness, quality of teaching and learning, and strengthening research.

Regional Results

Regional differences are visible. Students' increased international awareness is top-ranked in Asia and Pacific and North America. In Europe and the Middle East, the top ranked benefit is improved quality of teaching and learning. For African respondents, the top ranked benefit is strengthened knowledge production capacity, and for Latin America and the Caribbean institutions, the highest ranked benefit is increased networking of faculty and researchers.

Internal and external drivers of internationalization

Aggregate results

- 46% of the respondents see the head of the institution as the most important internal driver of internationalization and 28% see the international office or the person responsible for internationalization in that role. Faculty members are ranked in third place.
- 32% of the respondents identify government policy (national, state/province, municipal) as their top ranked external driver, followed by business and industry (18%). When the results of the three-ranked external drivers are considered together, national and international rankings are the third most important external driver.

Regional results

Respondents in Africa and the Middle East cited national and international rankings as the most significant driver of internationalization, not government policy –which is the top driver in the aggregate results. Rankings are reported among the top three external drivers by respondents in all regions but North America.

African and North American respondents also identify demand from foreign HEIs among top three external drivers. Only European respondents place regional policies as an important external driver (ranking this as the second most important driver).

Risks of internationalization to institutions and to society

Aggregate results

- Respondents perceive, as the most significant risk of internationalization for institutions, that international opportunities will be available only to students with financial resources; 31% of the respondents cited this as the most significant risk. This top-ranked risk is followed by the difficulty of local regulation of the quality of foreign programs (13% respondents selected this as their top choice), and by excessive competition among HEIs.
- The most significant potential risk of internationalization for society is commodification of education, ranked first by 19% of the respondents. The unequal sharing of benefits of internationalization among partners was ranked at the top by 18%. When all three top-ranked responses are brought together, in third place is growing gaps between HEIs within the country.

Regional results

Respondents in all regions except Europe rank the risk that international opportunities will be available only to students with financial resources as the most important.

Regional variations emerge below the top-ranked choice. Respondents in Africa and the Middle East consider brain drain the second most important risk for institutions. For respondents in Asia and Pacific, two institutional risks are ranked in second place: excessive competition among HEIs, and over-emphasis on internationalization at the expense of other priorities. Only North American respondents identify too much focus on recruitment of international fee-paying undergraduates as a risk, ranking it in second place. In Latin America and the Caribbean as well as in Asia and Pacific, respondents ranked the pursuit of international partnerships only for reasons of prestige as the third most important risk of internationalization to the institutions.

Societal risks of internationalization are also perceived differently in various regions. Commodification and commercialization of education is the top ranked risk in all regions but Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, where it is in third place and in the Middle East where it is not ranked among the top three at all. Both Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean place the risk of unequal sharing of benefits of internationalization at top of their ranked list. The respondents in the Middle East identify the risk of brain drain as the most important potential risks of internationalization to society. For African respondents, the dominance of a 'western' epistemological approach is seen as the second most important societal risks, while in the Middle East, respondents view the loss of cultural identity as the second most important societal risk. In Asia and Pacific, the third most important risk to society is the increase in foreign 'degree mills' and/or low quality providers.

Internal and external obstacles

Aggregate results

- The respondents identify insufficient financial resources as the most significant internal obstacle, with 49% ranking this first.
- The second highest ranked internal obstacle, but ranked so by far fewer institutions, is the limited experience and expertise of faculty and staff.
- 38% of the respondents place limited public funding for internationalization as their top-ranked external obstacle, representing a strong consensus in comparison to all other choices.
- When the respondents' three top-ranked external obstacles are examined together, the language barrier becomes more significant, ranking second overall.

Regional results

Respondents in all regions agree that lack of funding is the most significant internal obstacle to advancing internationalization. Beyond this responses diverge. Insufficient exposure to international opportunities is ranked second by respondents in Africa, Asia and Pacific and Middle East. The limited experience and expertise of faculty members and staff is ranked second by respondents in Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean, while North American respondents put the too rigorous and inflexible curricula in second place.

There is also a high level of agreement among respondents in all regions that the most significant external obstacle is limited public funding to support internationalization. Language barrier is ranked second among external obstacles by respondents in Latin America and the Caribbean and in Europe, while recognition difficulties for qualifications and programs is ranked second by respondents in Africa and Asia and Pacific. Visa restrictions imposed on international students, researchers and academics is the second most important external obstacle in the Middle East, North America and Africa. Only in Africa is the fact that internationalization is not a priority in national policy ranked as an important external obstacle; African respondents ranked it third.

Geographic priorities in internationalization

Aggregate results

- 60% of the respondents report having identified geographic priorities for internationalization.
- Results show that Europe is the overall geographic priority region for the respondents that report having such priorities, followed by Asia and Pacific and North America. As a region, Africa is selected as a priority region by the smallest number of respondents.

Regional results

European respondents identify geographic priorities most frequently (66%), while respondents from Africa do so least often (44%). Of those respondents who reported that

their institutions had established geographic priorities, respondents from Africa, Asia and Pacific and Europe identify their own region as the top priority; North American respondents identified Asia and Pacific as theirs. Respondents in Latin America and the Caribbean placed Europe and North America on an equal footing as their top geographic priorities.

European respondents identified Asia and Pacific as their second most important geographic priority; for North America the second highest priority region is Latin America and the Caribbean. Neither the Middle East nor Africa is cited by respondents in any other region as among their top three priorities.

Values and principles in internationalization policy

Aggregate results

- Of the values and principles that were identified as options that may be referenced in institutional internationalization policies, the principle that academic goals were central to the international efforts was selected by 59% of the respondents.
- 51% of the respondents indicated that their policy referred to sharing of benefits, respect and fairness as the basis for international partnerships.
- Almost an identical proportion of respondents (50%) report that a reference to the value of equitable access to internationalization opportunities was part of their policy.
- 25% of the respondents report that the principle of shared decision-making, is referenced in their policy, making it the least often cited option.

Regional results

Respondents in all but one region, the Middle East, report that their institutional policy refers to academic goals as central to internationalization efforts. In the Middle East, it is the values or principles of scientific integrity and research ethics that are mentioned most frequently in the institutional policies. Respondents in only one other region, Africa, select the issue of scientific integrity among the top three values or principles. Respondents in Asia and Pacific, the Middle East, and North America cite local and global social responsibility as their second most frequently referenced value, while Latin American and Caribbean respondents cite the values concerned with shared benefits, respect and fairness as the basis for international partnerships.

Priority internationalization activities

Aggregate results

- The top-ranked internationalization activities are outgoing mobility opportunities for students (29%), international research collaboration (24%) and strengthening international content of curriculum (14%) as a distant third.

Regional results

Respondents in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and North America rank outgoing student mobility opportunities as the most important internationalization activity. For respondents in Africa, Asia and Pacific and the Middle East, international research collaboration was cited as the most important internationalization activity. Outgoing faculty or staff mobility is the second highest ranked activity in Africa, Asia and Pacific and Middle East; in Latin America and the Caribbean it is ranked third.

North American respondents are the only ones to rank recruiting fee paying international undergraduates as one of the top three internationalization activities; it is ranked second. Respondents from the Middle East are alone in ranking international marketing and promotion among the top three; it is ranked third. Similarly, African respondents are the only ones to rank international development and capacity building among the top three activities; they rank it third.

Funding of internationalization

Aggregate results

- 53% of the respondents report that the general institutional budget is the largest single source of internationalization funding, while 24% cite external public funds as the largest source.
- A majority of respondents report either stable or increased funding for internationalization.
- A significant proportion of respondents (between 39 and 47% depending on the activity) cited increased budgets for internationalization over the past three years in the following areas: international research cooperation, outgoing mobility for staff and outgoing mobility for students.
- No more than 10% of the respondents reported decreased budgets in the past three years for any internationalization activities.

Regional results

Increases in funding for the greatest number of internationalization activities are reported by respondents in the Middle East, followed by African respondents. Respondents from both regions report funding increases in activities such as marketing and promotion of their institutions internationally and international development and capacity building projects. Respondents in the Middle East are the only ones that report increased funding for strengthening the international content of curriculum and North American respondents are the only ones reporting increased funding for the recruitment of fee-paying undergraduate students.

International student enrollment

Aggregate results

- Just over 50% of the respondents report that international degree-seeking undergraduate students represent less than 5% of their total enrollment. Results show that at the post graduate levels, respondents are less likely to have more than 5% of their post-graduate enrollment comprised of international degree seeking students.
- Just over a quarter of the respondents report that international degree-seeking students represent between 6 and 15% of their total enrolment at the undergraduate level; again fewer respondents report this share at post-graduate levels.
- 64% of the respondents report that shorter-term, credit earning international students represent up to 5% of their overall student enrollment at the undergraduate level. 54% report this share for Master's level enrollment and 50% at the Doctoral level.

Outgoing student mobility

Aggregate results

- 15% of the respondents report that their institutions do not offer undergraduate students short/medium (3-12 months) out-going mobility opportunities. Similarly, 28% of institutions do not offer such opportunities at the Master's level and 33% do not offer them at the Doctoral level.
- 63% of the respondents report that up to 5% of their students at the undergraduate level participate in short/medium term mobility opportunities, 54% report the same for Master's level students, as do 51% at the Doctoral level.
- Short-term (less than 3 months) outgoing mobility opportunities are not available at 26% of institutions for any students at the undergraduate level.
- 59% of the respondents report that up to 5% of their enrolled undergraduates can take advantage of such short-term international mobility opportunities.

Recruitment of international students

Aggregate results

- Respondents are almost equally distributed between those that have specific targets for international student recruitment and those that do not
- Among those that have such a target, nearly a quarter set it at 5% of their total enrollment; another quarter set this target at between 6 and 15% of their enrollment.
- Asia and Pacific is the geographic region most often prioritized for international student recruitment, followed by Europe.

Regional results

Institutions in Asia and Pacific, followed by those in North America, are most likely to have

quantitative international student recruitment targets. Latin American and Caribbean institutions are the least likely to set such targets. Intra-regional focus is prioritized in recruitment strategies of institutions in Africa, Asia and Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Faculty members' international experience and mobility

- 40% of the respondents report that up to 10% of their faculty members have at least one year of experience working abroad.
- 15% of the respondents report that between 11 and 20% of their faculty members have had at least a year-long international work experience.
- 54% of the respondents indicate that in the previous year, up to 10% of their faculty members taught or undertook research for a short-term (least 3 months) period abroad.
- 14% of the respondents were unable to respond to each of the two questions concerning faculty members' international experience and mobility.

Internationalization at home

Aggregate results

- Requiring a foreign language was most frequently ranked first among internationalization activities that respondents reported undertaking as part of the formal curriculum; 26% cited it as their top-ranked activity.
- When the top three-ranked activities are combined, the provision of student scholarships for outgoing mobility opportunities is the highest ranked. Programs or courses with an international theme are also ranked high.
- Integrating the contributions of international students into the learning experience is ranked second last in importance.
- The top ranked extra-curricular activity is events that provide an intercultural or international experience; followed by mentor or 'buddy's schemes linking international and home students.

Regional results

Regional results showed significant variations with regard to internationalization activities as part of the formal curriculum. For respondents in Africa and in Asia and Pacific, the top ranked activity is professional development of faculty to enhance their ability to integrate an international dimension into their teaching and in Latin America and the Caribbean the top ranked activity is foreign language learning. In Europe, respondents ranked first the offer of scholarships for outgoing mobility of students and North American respondents cited offering programs or courses with an international theme as the most important internationalization activity in the formal curriculum.

Learning outcomes

Aggregate results

- A majority of respondents indicate that they have (35%) or are developing (22%) institution-wide learning outcomes related to international/global competencies.
- In general, discipline-specific learning outcomes related to international competencies are more frequent in professional programs.

Regional results

The region where most respondents confirm having identified specific, internationally focused learning outcomes is North America (46%), followed by Asia and Pacific (45%). Respondents in Europe (36%) and in the Middle East (35%) were the least likely to confirm having such learning outcomes. It is also in these two regions, as well as in Africa, that the highest number of respondents indicates that such learning outcomes are in development.

Joint and dual/double degree programs

Aggregate results

- At all degree levels, there is a higher percentage of respondents whose institutions offer dual/double degree programs with foreign partners than joint degree programs.
- Over the past three years, the largest growth of both types of programs has taken place in professional areas, such as medicine, engineering, business or education, Off Shore provision, distance, on-line and e-learning
- 50% of the respondents do offer academic courses abroad and these courses are offered almost equally at the undergraduate and Master's level.
- The majority of respondents report not being involved in other type of off-shore provision. This is the case for all other categories of activity (offering full academic programs abroad, branch campuses or joint ventures and franchises).
- Of those that offer off-shore courses, for 52% of them the majority of the students enrolled in these courses are local students from the host country; for 25% of these respondents, they are from the country of the institution offering the course and in 19% of the respondents, the information about where students come from is unknown.
- Just over 50% of the respondents confirm offering distance, online or e-learning course. Of those that do, the offer is available almost equally at the undergraduate/1st cycle level as at the MA/ 2nd cycle level.
- The geographic location of the majority of international students enrolled in distance, online, e-learning is highly varied but the largest source region is Asia and Pacific followed by Europe.

Language study

The fastest growing foreign language courses in terms of student enrolment are English, Spanish and Chinese.

Conclusion

The IAU 4th Global Survey report, *Internationalization of Higher Education: Growing expectations, Fundamental values*, offers a vast amount of data and information. Some of it provides substantiation to support anecdotal evidence and observable trends. In some cases, the report offers new information and expands the knowledge base about the process, both at the global level, but more importantly at the regional levels. It allows, in most cases, to see how various regions perceive the benefits of the process, what specific challenges institutions in certain regions face and on which activities they place most emphasis.

By gathering data on the articulation of certain values and principles in institutional policies, and asking about the perception of institutional and societal risks of internationalization, the report serves to raise awareness of key issues and to provoke discussion.

As was the case for previous IAU surveys, the results should stimulate new thinking about internationalization and point to many new areas for further research. Do we see increased congruence or divergence among respondents from different regions? In which areas is there a trend towards the first and in what areas the second? How can research get beyond the 'social desirability bias' in these studies? Although the full report provides many detailed findings, and analysis, it still cannot provide definitive answers or demonstrate causal relationships. The report does, however, add to the overall stock of knowledge about internationalization processes in higher education institutions across the globe, raises critical questions about similarities and differences in trends, and can serve as a useful resource to policy makers, higher education leaders and other stakeholders as they develop new strategies

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Monograph “Globalisation and Internationalisation of Higher Education”

ARTICLE

Doubts and Dilemmas with Double Degree Programs

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Abstract

The number and types of international joint, double and consecutive degree programs have skyrocketed in the last five years, demonstrating that they clearly have a role in the current landscape of higher education. For many academics and policy makers, double and joint degree programs are welcomed as a natural extension of exchange and mobility programs. For others, they are perceived as a troublesome development leading to double counting of academic work and the thin edge of academic fraud. A broad range of reactions exist due to the diversity of program models; the involvement of new (bona fide and rogue) and traditional providers; the uncertainty related to quality assurance and qualifications recognition; and finally, the ethics involved in deciding what academic workload or new competencies are required for the granting of joint, double, multiple or consecutive degrees.

This article aims to clarify the confusion about the differences between a joint, a double and a consecutive degree program by providing a conceptual framework of definitions. It provides highlights from recent research surveys and studies, and looks at new developments and innovations in establishing these types of collaborative programs. Finally, it examines the factors that challenge

the operationalization of the programs and explores those issues that raise doubts and dilemmas and require further debate and analysis.

Keywords

double degree programs, joint degree program, consecutive degree program, quality assurance, qualifications recognition, internationalization

Dudas y conflictos en torno a los programas de grado doble

Resumen

Los programas de grado conjunto, doble y consecutivo han experimentado un extraordinario crecimiento en los últimos cinco años, tanto en su número como en su tipología, lo cual demuestra sin lugar a dudas que tienen un papel en el actual panorama de la educación superior. Una gran parte del mundo académico y los responsables del diseño de políticas acogen con satisfacción los programas de grado doble y de grado conjunto en tanto que ampliaciones naturales de los programas de intercambio y movilidad. Otros los consideran un desarrollo problemático que puede llevar a un doble cómputo del trabajo universitario y ser un primer paso en el fraude académico. La diversidad de modelos de programas, la participación de proveedores nuevos (reconocidos y fraudulentos) y tradicionales, la incertidumbre en torno al aseguramiento de la calidad y el reconocimiento de títulos, y, por último, los aspectos éticos implicados en la decisión de qué cargas de trabajo universitario o qué nuevas competencias son necesarias para conceder los grados conjuntos, dobles, múltiples o consecutivos dan lugar a una gran diversidad de reacciones.

El objetivo de este artículo es aclarar la confusión sobre las diferencias entre los programas de grado conjunto, doble y consecutivo, para lo que aportamos un marco conceptual de definiciones. Presentaremos informaciones destacadas procedentes de estudios y sondeos recientes, y examinaremos nuevos desarrollos e innovaciones en el establecimiento de este tipo de programas colaborativos. Finalmente, revisaremos los factores que dificultan la operatividad de los programas y exploraremos los aspectos que plantean dudas y conflictos y que requieren un debate y un análisis más profundos.

Palabras clave

programas de grado doble, programa de grado conjunto, programa de grado consecutivo, garantía de calidad, reconocimiento de títulos, internacionalización

Introduction

The number and types of international joint, double and consecutive degree programs have skyrocketed in the last five years, demonstrating that they clearly have a role in the current landscape of higher education. As an internationalization strategy, they address the heartland of academia that is the teaching/learning process and the production of new knowledge between and among countries. These programs are built on the principle of international academic collaboration and can bring important benefits to individuals, institutions and national and regional education systems. The interest in them is increasing, but so is concern about the necessary academic requirements and the validity of a double or multiple degree qualification.

For many academics and policy makers, double and joint degree programs are welcomed as a natural extension of exchange and mobility programs. For others, they are perceived as a troublesome development leading to double counting of academic work and the thin edge of academic fraud. A broad range of reactions exist due to the diversity of program models; the involvement of new (bona fide and rogue) and traditional providers; the uncertainty related to quality assurance and qualifications recognition; and finally, the ethics involved in deciding what academic workload or new competencies are required for the granting of a joint, double, multiple or consecutive degree.

This article aims to clarify the confusion about the differences between a joint, a double and a consecutive degree program by providing a conceptual framework of definitions. It provides highlights from recent research surveys and studies, and looks at new developments and innovations in establishing these types of collaborative programs. Finally, it examines the factors that challenge the operationalization of the programs and explores those issues that raise doubts and dilemmas and require further debate and analysis.

Diversity of Terms – Mass Confusion

A review of the literature, university web pages, survey reports and research articles shows a plethora of terms used to describe international collaborative programs, such as double and joint degrees. These terms include: double, multiple, tri-national, joint, integrated, collaborative, international, consecutive, concurrent, co-tutelle, overlapping, conjoint, parallel, simultaneous, and common degrees. They mean different things to different people within and across countries, thereby, causing mass confusion about the real meaning and use of these terms.

To deal with the confusion of so many terms, organizations, governmental bodies and institutions have correctly tried to provide a definition to clarify what they mean. Different regions of the world, indeed each country active in this aspect of international education, have proposed definitions that relate to the concepts integral to their native languages and to their policy frameworks. This has resulted in a multitude of definitions and another layer of complexity. An analysis of these definitions shows a variety of core concepts or elements used to describe double and joint degrees. They include: 1) number of collaborating institutions, 2) number of qualifications/certificates awarded, 3)

completion time, 4) organization of the program, 5) recognition bodies and 6) number of countries involved. Together, these concepts illustrate the myriad of ways that definitions can differ. While it is not the intention to propose a universal set of definitions, it is necessary to have some common understanding of what is meant in order to facilitate the collaborative agreements and mutual understanding that underpin these programs/degrees and to ensure that the qualifications awarded are recognized.

Proposed Working Definitions

This section differentiates and defines three primary types of international collaborative programs: joint degree program, double degree program/multiple degree program and consecutive degree program (Knight 2008).

Joint Degree Program

"A joint degree program awards one joint qualification upon completion of the collaborative program requirements established by the partner institutions."

The distinguishing feature of this type of international collaborative program is that only one qualification is awarded jointly by the cooperating institutions. The duration of the program is normally not extended and thus students have the advantage of completing a joint program in the same time period as an individual program from one of the institutions. The design and integration of the course of study varies from program to program, but it normally involves the mobility (physical or virtual) of students, professors and/or course content. It is important to emphasize that students travelling to the partner country for research or course work is not a requirement in all joint degrees programs. Visiting professors, distance courses and joint virtual research projects are options that provide valuable alternatives to student mobility.

Awarding a joint qualification can face many legal issues. National regulations often do not allow for a university to jointly confer a qualification, especially in association with a foreign institution. In this case, if both names of the collaborating institutions appear on the degree certificate, there is a risk that the joint degree will not be recognized by either of the host countries, meaning that the student does not have a legitimate qualification even though all program requirements have been completed. The situation becomes more complicated when one looks for an international body that will recognize a joint degree from two bona fide institutions. At this point, the Lisbon Convention for Recognition of Credentials is the only one of six UNESCO regional conventions that does so. Innovative ways to circumvent this problem have been developed by organizers of joint degree programs.

Overall, the most important features of a joint degree program are the strengths that each institution brings to the program and the opportunities it allows for students to benefit from a program that draws on the teaching, curricular and research expertise of two or more institutions

located in different countries. The major drawbacks at the current time are the issues related to the legality and recognition of a jointly conferred qualification.

Double Degree Program/Multiple Degree Program

"A double degree program awards two individual qualifications at equivalent levels upon completion of the collaborative program requirements established by the two partner institutions."

A multiple degree program is essentially the same as a double degree program, except for the number of qualifications offered:

"A multiple degree program awards three or more individual qualifications at equivalent levels upon completion of the collaborative program requirements established by the three or more partner institutions."

As titles of bachelors' and masters' degrees and doctorates often differ across countries, the term 'equivalent level' is used to indicate that the double or multiple degrees conferred are of the same standing.

The duration of a double or multiple degree program can be extended beyond the length of a single degree program in order to meet the requirements of all partners participating in the collaborative program. The legality and recognition of the qualifications awarded by a double/multiple degree program are more straightforward than for joint degrees. It is assumed that each partner institution is officially registered or licensed in its respective country. Thus, awards offered by the enrolling institution in a collaborative program should be recognized in that country, while the other or double awards would be treated like any other foreign credential.

The major hurdles facing double/multiple degree programs involve the design of the curriculum and the establishment of completion requirements. There is no standard way to establish completion requirements due to the variety of disciplines, fields of study and national regulations involved. Each partnership does it according to the practices and legalities of the collaborating institutions. However, the double/multiple counting of the same student workload or of learning outcomes can put the academic integrity of the program in jeopardy. The idea of having two degrees from two different institutions in two different countries is attractive to students, but careful attention needs to be given to ensuring that the value and recognition of the qualifications are valid and do not violate the premise and academic purpose of a collaborative degree program. This is especially true for multiple degree programs.

Consecutive Degree Program

"A consecutive degree program awards two different qualifications at consecutive levels upon completion of the collaborative program requirements established by the partner institutions."

Consecutive degree programs are becoming more popular both nationally and internationally. This kind of program basically involves two consecutive qualifications (usually bachelor's/master's degrees

or master's degree/doctorate) awarded when program requirements for each degree, as stipulated by the awarding institutions, are completed. For the international consecutive degree program, the two awarding institutions are located in different countries. In this case, it is usual for a student to be mobile and complete the course work and research requirements for the first degree in one country and the requirements for the second degree in the partner institution located in another country. The duration of the program is usually longer than a single program, but shorter than if the two degrees are taken separately.

Major Surveys and Research Studies

Due to the relatively short history of international joint, double and consecutive degree (JD/CD) programs compared to other types of academic partnerships, research on these programs remains limited. However, several large-scale regional surveys and other reports show a distinct increase in international collaborative programs in the last few years and forecast further growth, even if the definitions of joint, double and consecutive are not consistently used among researchers, policy makers and practitioners.

In Europe, the European University Association (EUA) highlighted the growth of JD/CD programs in several survey reports as early as 2002 (Tauch & Rauhvargers, 2002). It is important to note that the term 'joint degree' is commonly used in Europe to include both joint and double degrees. The *Trends V* report documents the growth of joint degree programs particularly at master's degree level (Crosier, Purser & Smidt, 2007). However, this report also cautions that the additional financial cost required by these programs could ultimately limit their development and impact on institutional and regional goals for internationalization. The latest *Trends 2010* report also surveys institutions on the types of joint degree programs (bachelor's, master's and doctorate), new developments and legislative changes in permitting joint degrees. *Trends 2010* indicates that many institutions are developing joint degree programs as a response to an increasingly global job market (Sursock & Smidt, 2010). EUA's 2009 *Survey of Master Degrees in Europe* confirms further growth in joint degree programs but modest progress in legislative changes to allow the awarding of joint degrees (Davies, 2009).

In the United States, the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) documented the diversity and growth of collaborative degree programs between American and international higher education institutions (HEIs) in its annual *International Graduate Admissions Survey* both in 2007 and 2008 (CGS, 2007; CGS, 2008). These initial efforts at investigating international JD/CD programs reveal significant growth in double compared to joint degree programs, an increasing number of institutions with one or more JD/CD programs, and partnerships with institutions mostly in Europe, China, India and South Korea (Redd, 2008).

In 2009, the Institute of International Education (USA) and Freie Universität Berlin produced a survey report on trans-Atlantic joint and double degree programs based on responses from 180 American and European HEIs (Kuder & Obst, 2009). The data show that American institutions are more likely to offer joint and double degrees at undergraduate level, while European institutions prefer graduate level. Interestingly, American institutions are more likely to use student fees to cover

the cost of these programs, while European institutions rely on institutional budgets and external funding, such as governments and foundations.

In Latin America, a recent survey (Gacel-Avila 2009) confirms the growth of double degree programs compared to joint ones and indicates that private institutions are using JD CD programs to recruit fee-paying students, while public ones view these programs as capacity-building tools to strengthen graduate education. Unlike the European case, graduate employability ranks lowly as a rationale for developing these programs. Instead, the top rationales are the internationalization of the curriculum and the provision of innovative programs.

Data on JD CD programs in Asia, Africa and the Middle East are not currently available. However, the EU-Asia Higher Education Platform (EAHEP) met in 2009 to discuss the use of joint degree programs to promote student and staff mobility and cultural exchanges between the two regions. This symposium also examined the benefits and challenges of international JD CD programs and recommended best practices for such collaborations given some of the challenges and dilemmas facing these initiatives.

Several other national or institutional reports also address the growth of international JD CD programs. At national level, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) completed a regional survey report with most respondents coming from Germany (Maiworm, 2006); another study examines German-Dutch joint degree programs (Nickel, Zdebel & Westerheijden, 2009); the Finnish Ministry of Education makes several recommendations for the development of joint and double degree programs (Ministry of Education, 2004). At institutional level, there are reports from the University of Graz, Austria (Maierhofer & Kribernegg, 2009) and the National University of Singapore (Kong, 2008). Lastly, the European Consortium for Accreditation recently published a report on quality assurance and accreditation issues related to international joint degree programs (Aerden & Reczulska, 2010).

New Developments and Trends

These reports illustrate several new trends evident in the landscape of JD CD programs around the world. While it is difficult to assume that these trends apply to all countries and institutions promoting JD CD programs, they do illustrate some general trends worthy of serious consideration (Knight & Lee, in press).

- Double degree programs are far more common than joint degree programs. This is most likely due to legal barriers and administrative challenges in granting a joint diploma. Yet double degree programs raise the most doubts and dilemmas about completion requirements and legitimacy of the qualifications. Consecutive degree programs appear to be the least common but are also controversial.
- Most joint degree programs involve two rather than multiple institutions. Joint degree programs in most disciplines are commonly intra-regional rather than inter-regional. In

- contrast, double degree programs exhibit more inter-regional pairings that are remarkably international in scope.
- Joint and double degree programs are mostly at master's degree level, but there is increasing interest in developing collaborative doctorate programs that draw on expertise such as teaching, thesis supervision and the research specialties of different institutions. The short length and flexibility of many master's degree programs compared to bachelor's degree and doctorate programs probably facilitate international collaborative programming.
 - Many JDCD programs are in business or engineering disciplines, two areas that are often considered highly mobile and international in nature, and for which there is a market demand. MBA double degree programs are probably the most numerous and varied type of JDCD programs. As such they also raise many questions and issues.
 - JDCD programs are now incorporating an overseas internship component, especially in professional fields such as nursing and journalism. In some cases this is how student mobility is introduced into the program.
 - Online JDCD programs are being developed to facilitate program mobility. Some collaborative programs rely on faculty mobility rather than student mobility, or require student mobility only for the internship component. Conceivably, a student could complete an entire international JDCD program without ever leaving his/her home country. Although online programs may be more accessible to students with demanding schedules and/or limited resources, these students are deprived of the cultural immersion that characterizes many JDCD programs.
 - A new development is the creation of large consortia to provide a wide range of learning opportunities for students. For example, in 2010, Europe launched the Erasmus Mundus joint doctorate program in astrophysics, with the collaboration of 13 institutions. This international consortium includes both traditional universities in Europe and advanced research institutes worldwide. The research institutes provide cutting-edge scientific equipment and a community of highly skilled scientists to complement the academic environment of universities.
 - Another innovative measure is the consecutive degree program that offers two degrees at separate levels from two different countries. Some of these programs appear to act as new channels for graduate schools to recruit international students rather than as a collaborative program designed for both local and international students. Some double degree programs also offer diplomas in two very different disciplines (e.g., science and philosophy) in a time frame that is equivalent to a standard single-discipline degree.

Issues and Challenges

The benefits of joint, double and consecutive degree programs are many and diverse, but so are the challenges that face the collaborating institutions involved in establishing these types of initiatives. Different regulatory systems, academic calendars, credit systems, tuition and scholarship schemes, teaching approaches and examination requirements are only a few of the more technical challenges

that need to be surmounted. This section identifies several academic issues that institutions and higher education authorities need to address in order to move ahead in the development and recognition of these programs and qualifications.

Alignment of Regulations and Customs

National and institutional regulations and customs differ from country to country, and present many challenges for the design and implementation of international collaborative programs. For instance, there are often regulations preventing students from enrolling at more than one university at a time, or laws requiring students to spend their last year or semester at the home university, or mandatory practices regarding the recruitment and selection of students. Non-recognition or limitations on the number of courses/credits taken at a partner university are additional barriers. Different academic years can present problems for JDCD programs, in particular student mobility. However, they provide more opportunities for faculty exchange. Examination/evaluation requirements and procedures often present obstacles to double degree programs.

Quality Assurance and accreditation

Quality assurance and accreditation are of fundamental importance but pose significant challenges for JDCD programs. When institutions have internal quality assurance procedures in place, quality review requirements for their own components can be met. But, it is more difficult to assure the quality of courses offered by a partner university. Common entrance and exit requirements are often used as quality proxies, but it would be helpful if mutual recognition of respective quality assurance programs (where they exist) were included in the agreement for a collaborative program.

Accreditation is even more of a challenge, as national systems do not exist in all countries around the world. Where they do exist, an added challenge is that accreditation agencies differ enormously; some focus on programs and others on institutions, some focus on inputs and others on processes or outputs. Furthermore, the establishment of procedures for accrediting international collaborative programs is relatively new territory for many agencies.

For the time being, the best case scenario is that accreditation is completed by each partner institution involved in a double, joint, consecutive degree program. For professional programs, there are international accreditation agencies like ABET or EQUIS, which may be appropriate for joint or double degree programs. However, at the current time, more institutions have their home programs accredited by these professional accreditation bodies than their double or joint degree programs. An important question is whether regional, national or international accreditation is the best route for international collaborative programs.

Language

The language of instruction for joint and double degree programs introduces new complexities. Each partner usually offers its programs in the home teaching language and, in some cases, in English. This means that courses may be offered in at least three different languages, or more if multiple

partners are involved. Students need to be at least bilingual – usually their native language/s plus English. There are two issues at play here. The first is the dominance of English in cases where English is not the native language of any of the partners. This underscores the Anglicization trend, or what some call ‘language imperialism’ in the higher education sector (and many other sectors as well). Are international collaborative programs encouraging the overuse of English and the standardization of the curriculum? The second issue relates to the required proficiency level of students/professors in the second language of instruction/research, and the training needed to help students/academics meet language proficiency requirements. The positive side of the language issue is that students are required to be bilingual or multilingual, which helps their communication skills, employability and understanding of another culture. However, the establishment of language requirements and the availability of improvement courses need to be made crystal clear by each partner in the collaborative agreement. It is imperative that teaching and learning standards remain high, even when non-native language is being used by all institutions and students involved in the program.

Fees and Financing

Financial issues such as tuition fees and funding can be quite complex. It is clear that revenue generation is not usually the primary motive for these kinds of programs as they often require extra investments by the institutions or higher tuition fees charged to students (Maierhofer & Krieberegg, 2009). In countries that do not charge tuition fees per se, or have limited autonomy to set fees, the extra costs must be borne by the institutions or external funders. However, the sustainability of a program can often be at risk when it is dependent on external funds. The development of a program becomes more complicated when multiple partners with different tuition fees are involved, or when there are extra costs for the professors’ physical and virtual mobility. Arrangements for joint costs regarding marketing, recruiting, assessments and administration also need to be negotiated. In those cases where revenue is generated, an agreement for income distribution is necessary.

Doubts and Dilemmas

In addition to paying attention to academic alignment and technical questions, there are other macro issues that also need to be considered, as they are often expressed as doubts and dilemmas. These revolve around the questions such as: What is really driving the growth of JCD programs? Are they sustainable without external funding sources? What are the certification processes? Are qualifications being recognized as legitimate ones? And, lastly, how are completion requirements and standards being established and met?

Student Rationales – Quality experience or two degrees for the price of one?

Students are attracted to JCD programs for a number of reasons. The opportunity to be part of a program that offers two degrees from two universities located in different countries is seen to

enhance their employability prospects and career path. Some students believe that a collaborative program is of higher quality given that the expertise of two universities has shaped the academic program. This is especially true for joint degrees. Other students are not as interested in enhanced quality but are attracted to the opportunity to obtain two degrees 'for the price of one,' so to speak. They argue that the duration is shorter for a double or consecutive degree program, the workload is definitely less than for two single degrees, and there is less of a financial burden too. This argument is not valid for all programs of this type, but there is an element of truth in these claims. Double degree programs are being presented by a leading European international education organization as "a lot easier to achieve and not necessarily less valid" and "two degrees for the price of one." Finally, the status factor cannot be ignored. There is a certain sense of elitism attached to having academic credentials from universities in different countries, even if the student never studied abroad but benefited from distance education and visiting foreign professors.

Institutional Drivers – Capacity building or status building?

JCDC degree programs can lead to a deeper, more sustainable type of relationship than other internationalization program strategies, such as twinning and franchising. Academic benefits in terms of curriculum innovation, exchanges of professors and researchers, and access to expertise and networks of the partner university make joint degrees especially attractive. Consecutive degrees allow institutions to work with partners that may offer a master's degree, doctorate program or specialty that is not available at their own university.

For other institutions, the primary rationale is to increase their reputation and ranking as an international university. This is accomplished by deliberately collaborating with partners of equal or greater status. This type of status building applies to institutions in both developed and developing countries. For instance, institutions in developing countries seek double degree programs with developed country partners, as they can indirectly verify the quality of their program because courses are judged to be equivalent in order to count towards a double or multiple degree. Examples exist of institutions that believe that a collaborative program with a partner of greater status will also help or even bypass their national accreditation processes. Finally, collaborative programs are perceived by some universities as a way to attract talented students who may want to stay for work experience after graduation, and perhaps immigrate permanently. These present enduring questions and doubts about what is truly driving institutions to promote more and more JDCD programs.

Sustainability

The financial investment required to launch these kinds of programs is a subject worthy of further investigation. In some cases, the bulk of the extra costs can be borne by increasing student tuition fees, which in turn makes the program quite elitist and only available to financially independent or supported students. In other situations, costs are absorbed by the institutions. So far, the driving force for collaborative programs does not appear to have been income generation, unlike cross-border

programs (e.g., franchise and twinning programs, and the recruitment of foreign students). All in all, the sustainability of JDCD programs reliant on external funding from governments, businesses or foundations is vulnerable, as are programs that are totally dependent on student fees.

Certification

The granting of legal certification for the award, and the subsequent recognition of the qualifications awarded, are by far the most vexing issues. As already discussed, there are only a few countries – although the number is increasing – that legally allow one of its universities to confer a joint qualification in partnership with an institution in another country. This means that the student often gets a formal diploma from one university and an unofficial certificate from the other/s, indicating that it was a joint collaborative program. For some students, this is not a problem as it is the international nature of the academic program that is most important, and not the qualification. For others, this is not the case, as credentialism is an increasingly important concern to students.

Recognition and Legitimacy of Qualifications

Employers, academic institutions and credential evaluation agencies all need to be cognizant of what is entailed in the granting and recognition of double or multiple qualifications. There is a perception that some double, multiple and consecutive degrees are more legitimate than others, but this is merely a perception, and one that is difficult to prove. The recognition process raises legitimacy or misrepresentation issues often associated with double/multiple degree qualifications – more than with joint or consecutive qualifications. Part of the concern rests with the double counting of course credits/workload for two or more qualifications. This has led to the ‘two for the price of one’ label for double degrees. In this case, cost is measured not only in monetary terms, but also in student workload terms.

Completion Requirements

The diversity of models used to determine the completion requirements for double/multiple degree programs is extremely varied. There is no single explanation or standard framework used to set program completion requirements. This raises the critical question of whether the framework is based on 1) the number of completed courses/credits, 2) the student workload or 3) required outcomes/competencies. These three approaches lead to different explanations and doubts regarding the legitimacy of the double/multiple degrees awarded. The value of a qualification/credential is at the root of the murkiness surrounding the acceptability or legitimacy of double/multiple degrees emanating from a collaborative program. Many would argue that attributing the same courses or workload towards two or more degrees from two or more institutions devalues the validity of a qualification. Others believe that if students meet the stated learning outcomes/competencies required to obtain a qualification, regardless of where or how the competencies are acquired, the credential is legitimate. This logic infers that double and multiple degrees, based on a set of core courses or competencies and augmented by the additional requirements of

collaborating institutions, are academically sound and legitimate; it is the process for recognizing these qualifications that requires more attention, and not the completion requirements per se. Both arguments are valid, but the variety of models used prevents a clear resolution to the question of legitimacy. Doubt remains.

Final Words

Clearly, the debate is nuanced and complicated by national policies, customs and interpretations of what constitutes the requirements for a qualification. The critical point emanating from the doubts and different interpretations of the legitimacy of double/multiple degrees is that rigorous analysis is required. Stakeholders, including students, higher education institutions, employers, accreditation and quality assurance agencies, policy makers, academic leaders and credential recognition bodies, need to address this issue individually and collectively. Similarities and differences among countries and stakeholders need to be acknowledged and respected, but there needs to be some common understanding about what two or more qualifications at the same level emanating from a double or multiple degree collaborative program actually represent and signify.

The challenge facing the higher education sector is to work out a common understanding of what joint, double and consecutive programs actually mean and involve, and to iron out the academic alignment issues inherent to working in different national regulatory frameworks, cultures and practices. Most importantly, a robust debate on the vexing questions of accreditation, recognition and legitimacy of qualifications needs to take place to ensure that international collaborative programs and their awards are respected and welcomed by students, higher education institutions and employers around the world, and do not lead to undesirable unintended consequences.

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Joint Degrees: Do They Strengthen or Weaken the Profession?

by ROBERT McCLELLAND

The joint degree has grown increasingly popular because it is seen as a way of becoming more competitive in a tight job market. Many schools of social work view it as a way of attracting students. This article explores the structural and philosophical aspects of collaborative education, with particular attention to the joint Master of Social Work–Master of Public Health (MSW–MPH) program. Important issues that should be considered before initiating a joint degree option are also discussed.

Social work has the capacity to redefine its client focus, intervention methods, practice setting, and even its expected outcomes in the face of new knowledge. How is this new information infused into the practice and knowledge base which represents the state-of-the-art in social work? Historically, social workers have built on the traditional social sciences, but it has

become increasingly evident that we can usefully join our educational efforts with other professionally oriented programs such as counseling, education, law, and public health. As an example, Rosalee Kane, in an article that has sparked a good deal of controversy, stressed that we should set aside our traditional antagonism toward "the medical model" and learn from some of the approaches used in the health sciences.¹

THE CHANGING MARKET

The alarming drop in applications to schools of social work has been documented by Carbino and Morgenbesser.² They suggest that factors contributing to this decline include low salaries and employment uncertainty, changes in social values, and the high cost of graduate education. In spite of or perhaps because of these pressures, many social work students are interested in seeking double master's de-

degrees. Although the cost of attending graduate school has increased dramatically in recent years, a number of students appear willing to choose alternatives that increase their marketability rather than abandon the profession altogether. Approximately 10 percent of the students in our school are pursuing this option. The MSW-MPH appears to attract the most interest, representing approximately 8 percent of the graduate admissions. Apparently, a unique program leading to credentials in two fields is the wise choice for some individuals, despite the negative factors of extremely high tuition and a depressed job market. Of special note is this program's ability to attract a larger proportion of the nonresident applicants than the graduate program as a whole (22 percent vs. 16 percent). As a "marketing device," joint degrees appear to provide a way to attract a diverse, highly committed population to the graduate program.

**MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK-
MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

The most highly developed joint degree at the University of Minnesota is the Social Work-Public Health program. Since its inception in 1977, it has enrolled 58 students representing 5 percent of the school's enrollment. Compared with the school population as a whole, the number of male students and nonresident students is notable. When the joint MSW-MPH program is compared with the MSW class as a whole over a five-year period (1978-1982), we find a larger proportion of males (26 percent vs. 20 percent), the same proportion of minorities (12 percent vs. 12 percent), and a considerably larger proportion of nonresident enrollees (22 percent vs. 16 percent).³

Description of Program

A promotional pamphlet is used to explain the philosophy of the joint

MSW-MPH degree. One paragraph from this pamphlet captures the focus and intent of the program:

The social work and public health professions have much in common to unite them as a strong force for resolving the complex social-health problems in today's society. Both are socially oriented professions which share the broad goals of improving the physical, mental and social well-being of individuals and groups and reducing individual, family, and community-wide dysfunction through the development of community programs and activities. Both professions have developed out of a concern about prevention of disease and social dysfunction. Both are becoming increasingly involved with public policy, planning, research, administration and evaluation of human service programs aimed at promoting physical, mental and social well-being. Both are becoming acutely aware of the need for interprofessional collaboration in addressing many of the highly complex current problems.⁴

The blending of the preventive perspective of public health and the problem-solving orientation of social work has produced an increase in practice approaches using interdisciplinary concepts.⁵ Bassoff and Ludwig stress that "educators [of joint programs] will be required to innovate and test shared educational experiences geared to the new models of group practice and preventive health care already in existence."⁶

In response to their common concerns, ideologies, and practice approaches, the School of Public Health, School of Social Work (Minneapolis Campus), and the School of Social Development (Duluth Campus) established a collaborative, integrated academic program leading to both the Master of Public Health (MPH) and the Master of Social Work (MSW) degrees. Graduates of the combined degrees are

prepared to function in a variety of public health settings as policymakers, planners, administrators, researchers, program developers, evaluators, and community organizers.

First Jobs for MSW—MPH Students

A recently compiled list of first jobs after graduation shows that joint degree students tend to assume primarily administrative or staff positions in health settings (75 percent). Only a few chose to remain in personal social services (12.5 percent) while some chose to continue their education (12.5 percent). The career pattern of joint MSW—MPH graduates is similar to that of other MSW graduates, only it is accelerated. Typically, MSW graduates begin with a direct practice focus and eventually assume supervisory and management responsibilities after a few years.⁷ Most of the graduates of the joint degree program move directly into mid-level administrative positions.

Typical Student Program

Because course content is integrated, the student is allowed to double count 18 credits, reducing the total number of credits required for two degrees. Both degrees can usually be completed in nine quarters or three years.

Because of the individualized nature of the joint degree program, it is difficult to enumerate the range of choices open to students. Figure 1 shows the interface between the School of Social Work—Minneapolis and the School of Public Health for a typical student. Each school has a core of required or “strongly suggested” content plus a number of advanced or elective credits. The 18 credits that are counted twice may come from either required or elective content.

RISK AND OPPORTUNITIES OF JOINT PROGRAMS

As the number of applications decrease, many schools are reaching for ways to attract high quality students. As Director of Admissions, this author has noted a remarkable growth in the interest of students in joint degrees. It is particularly striking when tuition increases have inflated the cost of this option. One could argue that if the program helps to draw students and provides a vehicle to infuse new information and approaches into social work, it must be a boon to the field. Rather than accept this without question there are several issues which should first be examined. Why not encourage students simply to seek two serial degrees? What are the risks involved in expanding course content through joint degree options? Are concentrations an alternative to joint degrees? The answers to these questions should be sought before a school initiates a joint degree option. Some combined degrees may be desirable while others are considerably less attractive.

Joint versus Serial Degrees

The difference between joint and serial degrees is more than one of semantics. Serial degrees generally make no attempt to blend course content from the two disciplines. One degree is simply taken after finishing the first one. Consequently, there is a greater risk that content may be duplicated. For example, knowledge of complex organizations is generally required of both social work and public health students, but there is no reason why this material should be covered twice. Another common problem concerns courses that complement each other but would be taught out of sequence in a serial degree sequence. For instance, students must be familiar with the language and con-

philosophies and concepts of both fields into a coherent whole. An essential element of the joint degree at the University of Minnesota is a course called the "Integrative Seminar." This seminar examines the differences and similarities of the two fields and attempts to foster a sense of identity and mission in the students. It helps to resolve the question, "Am I a social worker or a public health worker?" Our view is that students become hybrids, drawing upon the strengths of each field. In a serial degree, students are left to resolve this on their own, with the result that they choose one profession over the other.

Risks of Joint Degrees

As noted above, there is a potential risk that students seeking two degrees may identify more strongly with the companion field than social work, in order to enjoy the approbation typically bestowed on higher status professions. The graduates of our joint degree program have observed that the strength of their identity depends in large part on where they are employed. Those with a social work reference group retain their professional identity, while graduates working in organizations with few social workers find it harder to maintain their social work identity. Although this is disturbing, it is clear that the joint degree graduates would not be employed in these multidisciplinary facilities if it were not for the combined educational focus. This leads us to conclude that stress should be placed on the value of professional associations, journals, continuing education, and support groups because these contacts help one retain one's professional identity.

The question of professional identity is one which all MSW students must face while in school, and is a concern not limited to joint degree students. It is the same issue when direct-practice

oriented social workers promote themselves as "family therapists," or when macro-oriented social workers identify themselves as "human service administrators." Our school believes that the conflicts created by joint programs may not be problems at all but rather essential elements in professional renewal and growth.

There is another kind of risk that should be considered before a joint degree is implemented. Educators should determine whether the companion field is compatible with the aims and ethics of social work. Chauncey Alexander has identified five essential elements in social work practice: (1) value, (2) purpose, (3) sanction, (4) knowledge, and (5) method.⁸ The acquisition of new knowledge or methodology represents only part of the package in professional education and problems are likely to be encountered if there is not a close match between all five areas. For example, public health is a field which is highly compatible with social work, but law and business present some unique problems.

Combined programs with law may generate problems over the differences between the legal notion of privileged communication and the idea of confidentiality as understood by social workers. Students with joint social work-legal training may face conflicts about who sanctions their actions. The degree of protection the client can expect may be unclear and false expectations may develop due to role ambiguity.

Students who have attempted to combine social work with business administration have noted the lack of a code of professional ethics in business. They experience conflicts over questions of social responsibility and interdependence, especially in regard to unanticipated negative impacts of business decisions on innocent people.

These conflicts are of greater importance than questions of professional identity, and they should be explored thoroughly before approving any joint degree. In her review of the literature on conceptual frameworks in social work, Bernece Simon underscores the need to temper our acquisitiveness with selectivity. She states, "The borrowing of knowledge from other disciplines is necessary for social work, but it must be done with discrimination and in terms of what the purpose of that knowledge is and how it will be used."⁹

Concentrations

With the growth in concentrations at the graduate level, it seems reasonable to ask whether joint degrees are redundant. Or can students obtain the essential content they need if they do not seek two degrees? Since the University of Minnesota offers both a joint MSW–MPH and a concentration with a health focus, we obviously feel that there is justification for both. Most MSW students do not have the time to pursue two degrees. So those who want to enter the health field are exposed to advanced content that prepares them for work in this field. Our students choose four advanced courses (12 credits) in the concentration area. Electives (18 credits) are often used to focus on subspecialty content in health care such as aging or chemical dependency. If all advanced content is focused on health, the graduating MSW has a total of 30 credits of health-oriented content. For most students, this focus provides an adequate introduction to the field.

Individuals choosing a joint social work–public health degree more than double health oriented content. Their field placement focuses on prevention rather than treatment, and they are expected to write a thesis which explores a public health issue. The difference

between a health concentration in social work and a joint MSW–MPH degree lies in quantity, depth, and focus. Those who devote the extra year to the joint MSW–MPH degree gain greater breadth and depth of understanding about the field while earning a credential which can help establish their credibility among professionals who were trained largely in the health sciences. This has proven to be quite useful.

CONCLUSION

To answer the question whether joint degrees should be encouraged, it is important to examine who benefits and at what cost. First, there is clearly a student market for these programs and often they attract individuals who add diversity to the class. The MSW–MPH degree tends to attract more out-of-state students and more male students than the MSW degree program. Although the schools must devote faculty and administrative time to the maintenance of two programs, this effort builds interdisciplinary communication and understanding. Faculty clearly benefit from such exchange.

Whether joint degrees benefit the profession of social work requires another assessment. Not all professions are compatible with the philosophy of social work practice. Ironically, the CSWE accreditation standards largely ignore the beneficial or destructive nature of certain joint programs. We are apparently still in a trial-and-error phase in which detailed reports on these programs should prove valuable.

The most successful program for the University of Minnesota has proved to be the joint MSW–MPH. Judging by the infusion of public health concepts into the articles written for *Social Work: Conceptual Frameworks II*, it appears that we are not the only school that has found the match useful and stimulating.¹⁰ Joint programs lead to a

broader exchange of ideas and approaches which benefit both fields. There is little if any risk of social workers losing ground in such an exchange—indeed, we may be seen as the intruders. There is perhaps a danger that students may choose to identify with the other profession and thus abandon the ethical and practice foundations of social work, but this is not unique to joint degree graduates. It is a risk inherent in all of social work practice.

Finally, the most important criterion for judging the value of joint degrees is whether clients have benefited from this combined educational effort. Historically, we have tended to educate students as if human problems fell neatly into either social welfare or health systems. The facts are quite different—witness the linking of medical assistance and public welfare; social services to the elderly; social and medical treatment in cases of chemical abuse; and finally, the team effort needed to promote health and well-being at the community level.

The merging of client populations, service systems, and professional interests make it increasingly important for social work practitioners to understand related fields. In the health field particularly, joint degrees can prepare social workers who can practice in the full range of systems they may encounter.

NOTES

1. Rosalie A. Kane, "Lessons for Social Work from the Medical Model: A Viewpoint for Practice," *Social Work*, 27 (July 1982), pp. 315–321.
2. Rosemarie Carbino and Mel Morgenbesser, "A National Challenge: The Decline in MSW Admissions Applications," *Journal of Education for Social Work*, 13 (Fall 1982), pp. 14–22.
3. Admissions Committee Annual Summaries and Statistical Reports to CSWE which are submitted each year.
4. Robert Schwanke, "MSW-MPH Program" (University of Minnesota-Minneapolis, School of Public Health, mimeographed ms, Spring 1982).
5. For a comprehensive view of prevention in social work it is useful to note the entire issue of *Social Work Research and Abstracts*, 18 (Fall 1982). Several articles in *Social Work*, 27 (July 1982) focus on prevention and interdisciplinary concepts. See also Carel B. Germain, "Teaching Primary Prevention in Social Work: An Ecological Perspective," *Journal of Education for Social Work*, 18 (Winter 1982), pp. 20–28.
6. Betty Z. Bassoff and Stephen Ludwig, "Interdisciplinary Education for Health Care Professionals," *Health and Social Work*, 4 (May 1979), p. 60.
7. Stephen Holloway, "Up the Hierarchy: From Clinician to Administrator," *Administration in Social Work*, 4 (Winter 1980), pp. 1–14.
8. Chauncey Alexander, "Social Work Practice: A Unitary Conception," *Social Work: Special Issue on Conceptual Frameworks*, 22 (September 1977), p. 411.
9. Bernece K. Simon, "Diversity and Unity in the Social Work Profession," *Social Work: Special Issue on Conceptual Frameworks*, 22 (September 1977), p. 39.
10. *Social Work: Conceptual Frameworks II*, 26 (January 1981). Several articles in this issue speak of an ecological approach to social work practice, and two articles specifically use public health concepts: Steven Segal and Jim Baumohl, "Social Work Practice in Community Mental Health," pp. 16–24; and Claudia Coulton, "Person-Environment Fit as the Focus in Health Care," pp. 26–35.



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AGREEMENTS INVOLVING JOINT AND DUAL ACADEMIC AWARDS: POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Policy Statement

This policy pertains to agreements between institutions accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and accredited or non-accredited degree-granting institutions of higher education throughout the world for purposes of awarding academic completion awards, e.g., certificates, diplomas, or degrees.

For the purposes of review by SACSCOC, the following definitions apply:

- An agreement by two or more institutions to grant dual academic awards is one whereby students study at two or more institutions and each institution grants a separate academic award bearing only its name, seal, and signature.
- An agreement by two or more institutions to grant a joint academic award is one whereby students study at two or more institutions and the institutions grant a single academic award bearing the names, seals, and signatures of each of the participating institutions.

While SACSCOC member institutions may use alternative terms for agreements involving dual or joint academic awards (for example, “affiliations” or “partnerships” or “collaborations”) for purposes of reporting agreements involving dual or joint academic awards, they are responsible for using the above definitions and for following the appropriate procedures described below.

For the reporting of other arrangements or agreements not involving dual or joint academic awards, member institutions should consult the Substantive Change Policy and reporting requirements for other reviews by SACSCOC.

Responsibilities of SACSCOC Member Institutions

Provide Appropriate Information to SACSCOC: Member institutions are responsible for providing notification to SACSCOC of agreements involving dual or joint academic awards, providing signed copies of the agreements, and providing any other documentation or information required by SACSCOC policies and procedures for review. Specific required documentation is listed below.

Ensure Access to Partner Institutions’ Information: The member institution is responsible for ensuring that SACSCOC has timely access to the partner institutions’ materials, physical site(s) and personnel in conjunction with accreditation activities.

Ensure the Integrity of their Accreditation and their Awards: Because the SACSCOC accreditation that has been awarded to a member institution is not transferable to a partner institution—either in actuality or appearance—SACSCOC prohibits the use of its accreditation to authenticate courses, programs, or awards offered by organizations not so accredited with which it has formed partnerships. Likewise, member institutions

are responsible for ensuring the quality of courses, programs, or awards offered through relationships with other institutions, particularly those resulting in dual or joint academic awards.

Provide a Disclaimer Statement: Member institutions entering into agreements with institutions not accredited by SACSCOC for the awarding of either dual or joint academic awards and their non-SACSCOC partner institutions must use the following disclaimer statement in any materials describing the relationship. The member institution is responsible for reviewing, approving, and monitoring the non-SACSCOC partner institutions' statements of relationship to ensure conformity with the disclaimer:

[Name of SACSCOC member institution] is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award [state degree levels]. [Name of partner institution] is not accredited by SACS Commission on Colleges and the accreditation of [name of member institution] does not extend to or include [name of partner institution] or its students. Further, although [name of member institution] agrees to accept certain course work from [name of partner institution] to be applied toward an award from [name of member institution], that course work may not be accepted by other colleges or universities in transfer, even if it appears on a transcript from [name of member institution]. The decision to accept course work in transfer from any institution is made by the institution considering the acceptance of credits or course work.

Ensure Appropriate Percentages of Work Offered by the Member Institution: To receive an undergraduate academic award, students must earn 25 percent or more of the credits required for the award through the SACSCOC member institution's own direct instruction. To receive a graduate academic award, students must earn one-third or more of the credits through the SACSCOC member institution's own direct instruction.

Avoid Use of the SACSCOC Logo: Neither member nor partner institutions may use the SACSCOC logo in any of their materials or on websites. Use of the logo is reserved exclusively for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

Ensure the Quality of Credits Recorded on Transcripts: When evaluating, accepting, and transcribing credits awarded through an agreement involving dual or joint academic awards, the member institution must ensure the following:

- Examine courses transferred in and transcribed from partner institutions to ensure that they meet the requirements of the member institution and the requirements of *The Principles of Accreditation*. (See a list of applicable requirements below.)
- Assess and monitor effectively courses and components completed through instruction by partner institutions. The assessment and monitoring should be accomplished by academically-qualified persons.
- Record on the academic transcript the name of the institution from which a course is taken. If a member institution desires to transcript as its own a course taken through an agreement with a partner institution, it must be able to demonstrate that the instruction was provided under the member's supervision and included approval of the academic qualifications of each instructor in advance and that regular evaluation of the effectiveness of each instructor occurs.
- Disclose fully the nature of the agreement on the transcript of the institutions awarding the degree.
- Reflect accurately in its catalog the courses being offered through the agreement if they are available to its own students as part of an educational program.
- Ensure that qualified and competent faculty members at each participating institution agree on the content and teaching methodologies of courses and education programs and on the qualifications of the faculty members who teach in the programs. Qualifications of teaching faculty must comply with the faculty competence requirements of the *Principles of Accreditation*.
- Ensure that the educational outcomes of a major or concentration offered as part of dual or joint award agreements are (1) comparable to the outcomes of the same major or concentration offered by the institutions or, if not offered by any of the participating institutions, (2) comparable to the outcomes of a peer institution external to the agreement that offers the same educational program's major or concentration.

- Ensure that, within the agreement, there is appropriate faculty accountability to the institutions accepting the credit, perhaps through dual faculty appointments or other approaches that include evaluation by the accepting institution.

Ensure Compliance with Appropriate SACSCOC Requirements: Requirements and standards in the *Principles of Accreditation* which affect the implementation of agreements involving dual and joint academic awards are listed below. They should be considered when developing the agreement, documentation of compliance, and, if relevant, a substantive change prospectus:

- Integrity (Section 1)
- Institutional mission (CR 2.4)
- Faculty (CR 2.8 and CS 3.7.1)
- Learning resources and services (CR 2.9)
- Institutional Effectiveness: educational programs, to include student learning outcomes (CS 3.3.1.1)
- Academic program approval (CS 3.4.1)
- Admission policies (CS 3.4.3)
- Acceptance of academic credit (CS 3.4.4)
- Practices for awarding credit (CS 3.4.6)
- Consortial relationships/contractual agreements (CS 3.4.7)
- Institutional credits for a degree (CS 3.5.2 and CS 3.6.3)
- Student records (CS 3.9.2)
- Physical facilities (CS 3.11.3)
- Substantive change (CS 3.12.1)
- Program curriculum (FR 4.2)
- Publication of policies (FR 4.3)
- Program length (FR 4.4)
- Student complaints (FR 4.5)
- Recruitment materials (FR 4.6)
- Distance and correspondence education (FR 4.8), if applicable
- Definition of credit hours (FR 4.9)
- Policy: Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards: Policy and Procedures
- Policy: Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions
- Policy: Distance and Correspondence Education (if applicable)

Reporting Responsibilities and Procedures When Developing Agreements for Dual Academic Awards

Prior Notification: Entering into an agreement with a member or non-member institution involving a dual academic award is a substantive change that requires an institution to submit a letter of notification six months prior to implementation of the agreement and a final signed copy of the agreement. Formal, written acceptance of that notification and agreement by SACSCOC is required before implementation of the provisions of the agreement. (See note at the end of this policy for additional requirements if the agreement involves a new program which is significantly different from currently offered programs or an off-campus site where students may earn 50 percent or more of the credit in a program.) Expectations are that the agreement will reflect assumption of responsibility on the part of the member institution for the academic quality of any course work or credit recorded on the institution's transcript and accepted toward a dual academic award. The following should be submitted to SACSCOC:

- A notification letter that includes a statement of intent, the anticipated beginning date of the agreement, a description of the agreement, the complete address/location of the parties involved in the agreement, and information for contact persons at each participating institution regarding the agreement.
- A copy of the final signed agreement.

Reporting Responsibilities and Procedures When Developing Agreements for Joint Academic Awards

Participating in agreements involving the offering of joint academic awards (as defined above) falls into three categories. Reporting responsibilities differ depending on the accreditation status of the institutions which are partnering with the SACSCOC member institution.

Category One: A SACSCOC member institution and partner institutions that are all SACSCOC accredited

Prior Notification by Each Member Institution: Entering into a *joint* academic award agreement with partner institutions which are all SACSCOC accredited institutions is a substantive change that requires (1) submission of prior notification at least six months in advance of implementation of the agreement and (2) a final signed copy of the agreement. Formal, written acceptance of the agreement by SACSCOC is required before implementation of the provisions of the agreement. (See note at the end of this policy for additional requirements if the agreement involves a new program which is significantly different from currently offered programs or an off-campus site where students may earn 50 percent or more of the credit in a program.) Expectations are that the agreement will reflect assumption of responsibility on the part of the member institution for the academic quality of any course work or credit recorded on the institution's transcript and accepted toward a *joint* academic award. The following should be submitted to SACSCOC:

- A notification letter that includes a statement of intent, the anticipated beginning date of the agreement, a description of the agreement, the complete address/location of the parties involved in the agreement, and information for contact persons at each participating institution regarding the agreement.
- A copy of the final signed agreement.

Category Two: A SACSCOC member institution and at least one partner institution that is accredited by a U.S. Department of Education-recognized accreditor other than SACSCOC

Prior Notification by SACSCOC Member Institution: Entering into a *joint* academic award agreement with at least one partner institution which is accredited by a USDOE-recognized accreditor other than SACSCOC is a substantive change that requires (1) submission of prior notification at least six months in advance of implementation of the agreement along with the required documentation listed below and (2) a final signed copy of the agreement. Formal, written approval of the agreement by SACSCOC is required before implementation of the provisions of the agreement. (See note at the end of this policy for additional requirements if the agreement involves a new program which is significantly different from currently offered programs or an off-campus site where students may earn 50 percent or more of the credit in a program.) Expectations are that the agreement will reflect assumption of responsibility on the part of the member institution for the academic quality of any course work or credit recorded on the institution's transcript and accepted toward a *joint* academic award. The following should be submitted to SACSCOC:

- A letter of notification that includes a statement of intent, the anticipated implementation date for the agreement, a description of the proposed agreement, the address/location of each institution involved in the agreement, and information for the contact person at each participating institution
- A copy of the final signed agreement
- Documentation that the non-SACSCOC partner institution is not on a public sanction with its accreditor
- Documentation that the courses or programs of the non-SACSCOC Partner institution(s) are consistent with the educational purpose and goals of the SACSCOC-accredited institution(s)
- Documentation that the institution meets the provisions of Comprehensive Standard 3.4.7 (Consortial relationships/contractual agreements), including the analysis of credits accepted in transfer
- A plan to monitor and ensure that the quality of contributions made by the partner institution(s) meets SACSCOC expectations

- A plan and process produced by the SACSCOC-accredited institution(s) ensuring that the agreement and awarding of a joint award does not result in the appearance of extending SACSCOC accreditation to partner institutions through promotional materials, academic publications, student transcripts, credentials verifying program completion, and releases to the news media. (See the disclaimer statement above.)
- Prototypes of official academic documents (e.g. student transcript, degree, diploma, certificate) involved in the agreement.

Category Three: A SACSCOC member institution and at least one partner institution that is not accredited by a USDE-recognized accreditor

Prior Notification by SACSCOC Member Institution: Entering into a *joint* academic award agreement with at least one partner institution which is not accredited by a USDOE-recognized accreditor is a substantive change that requires (1) submission of prior notification at least six months in advance of implementation of the agreement along with the required documentation below and (2) a final signed copy of the agreement. Formal, written approval of the agreement by SACSCOC is required before implementation of the provisions of the agreement. (See note at the end of this policy for additional requirements if the agreement involves a new program which is significantly different from currently offered programs or an off-campus site where students may earn 50 percent or more of the credit in a program.) Expectations are that the agreement will reflect assumption of responsibility on the part of the SACSCOC member institution for the academic quality of any course work or credit recorded on the institution's transcript and accepted toward a *joint* academic award. The following should be submitted to SACSCOC:

- A notification letter that includes a statement of intent, the anticipated beginning date for the agreement, a description of the proposed agreement, the address/location of each institution involved in the agreement, and information for the contact person(s) at each participating institution
- A copy of the final signed agreement
- A description of (1) any external governmental or accrediting agency approval for the institution(s) or program(s) involved in the agreement, excluding the SACSCOC institution(s), (2) the process of quality assurance used by the agency granting this approval, and (3) any required legal or licensing approvals
- Documentation that the courses or programs of the non-SACSCOC Partner institution(s) are consistent with the educational purpose and goals of the SACSCOC-accredited institution(s)
- Documentation that the institution meets the provisions of Comprehensive Standard 3.4.7 (Consortial relationships/contractual agreements), including the analysis of credits accepted in transfer
- Documentation that faculty involved in the collaboration are qualified to teach assigned components or courses and a description of the means by which the SACSCOC-accredited institution(s) will monitor these qualifications (Submit a completed SACSCOC Faculty Roster Form.)
- Documentation describing the physical and learning resources that will support the collaboration
- A plan and process to monitor and ensure that the quality of contributions made by the partner institution(s) meets applicable SACSCOC requirements A plan and process produced by the SACSCOC-accredited institution(s) ensuring that the agreement does not result in the appearance of extending SACSCOC accreditation to partner institutions through promotional materials, academic publications, student transcripts, credentials verifying program completion, and releases to the news media. (See the disclaimer statement above).
- Prototypes of official academic documents (e.g. student transcript, degree, diploma, certificate) involved in the agreement

When necessary to ensure compliance with SACSCOC requirements, SACSCOC may request additional information concerning any of these agreements involving joint and dual academic awards.

Note: *If the joint or dual academic award arrangement involves offering 50 percent or more of a program at a previously unapproved off-campus site by a member institution or involves offering a new program which is significantly different from currently offered approved programs, notification is due six months prior to the implementation date with a prospectus for approval due at least three months prior to implementation.*

Document history

Note: Previously called "Collaborative Academic Arrangements"

Approved: SACSCOC Board of Trustees, June 2010

Revised: Executive Council, December 2010

Revised and Approved as "Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Programs":

Approved: SACSCOC Board of Trustees, December 2012

Reformatted: July 2014



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Guidelines

Degrees and Credits

[Effective June 26, 2009]

The Commission's Requirements of Affiliation stipulate that accredited institutions comply with all applicable Federal, state, and other relevant government policies, regulations, and requirements, which generally include requirements and expectations for degrees and credits. The purpose of these guidelines is to remind institutions of these requirements and expectations.

The Commission's accreditation standards, particularly Standards 11 (Educational Offerings) and 14 (Assessment of Student Learning), require evidence of:

- academic study of sufficient content, breadth, and length;
- levels of rigor appropriate to the programs or degrees offered;
- statements of expected student learning outcomes that are consonant with the standards of higher education and of the relevant disciplines;
- direct evidence of student learning; and
- assessment results that provide sufficient, convincing evidence that students are achieving key institutional and program learning outcomes.

The Commission considers assessment evidence to be the most compelling evidence that an institution's academic offerings are of appropriate academic content, breadth, length, and rigor. It nonetheless recognizes that, because student learning requires students and faculty to spend time engaged in the teaching-learning process, it is appropriate for relevant government agencies to set reasonable and suitable expectations for time spent earning degrees and credits.

Federal Definitions

These definitions are provided as a reminder to institutions. They are not Commission requirements, and an institution may demonstrate in alternative ways that academic offerings are of appropriate academic content, breadth, length, and rigor, provided that it also demonstrates compliance with all applicable government policies, regulations, and requirements.

The full sources of these definitions are provided at the end of these guidelines.

Contact hour or clock hour. A unit of measure that represents an hour of scheduled instruction given to students. *Source:* IPEDS

Credit or credit hour. A unit of measure representing the equivalent of an hour (50 minutes) of instruction per week over the entire term. It is applied toward the total number of credit hours

needed for completing the requirements of a degree, diploma, certificate, or other award. *Source:* IPEDS

Credit hours are used by most U.S. higher education institutions to calculate, record, and interpret the amount of earned academic or training credits that students accumulate en route to earning certifications, diplomas, degrees, and other qualifications. Institutions typically use credit hours to record all types of academic work including independent research and not just taught courses. *Source:* USNEI

Some U.S. higher education institutions use other approaches to calculate, record, and interpret the amount of academic or training work that students complete en route to earning a degree or other award. These approaches may be acceptable if the institution can justify them and demonstrate compliance with applicable Commission and government policies, regulations, and requirements.

Semester credit hour or semester hour. A semester hour must include at least 30 clock hours of instruction. *Source:* 34 CFR 668.8

The actual amount of academic work that goes into a single semester credit hour is often calculated as follows: *Source:* USNEI

- One lecture, seminar, or discussion credit hour represents 1 hour per week of scheduled class/seminar time and 2 hours of student preparation time. Most lecture and seminar courses are awarded 3 credit hours. Over an entire semester, this formula represents at least 45 hours of class time and 90 hours of student preparation.
- One laboratory credit hour represents 1 hour per week of lecture or discussion time plus 1-2 hours per week of scheduled supervised or independent laboratory work, and 2 hours of student preparation time. Most laboratory courses are awarded up to 4 credit hours. For a laboratory course earning 3 credit hours, this formula represents at least 45 hours of class time, between 45 and 90 hours of laboratory time, and 90 hours of student preparation per semester.
- One practice credit hour (supervised clinical rounds, visual or performing art studio, supervised student teaching, field work, etc.) represents 3-4 hours per week of supervised and/or independent practice. This in turn represents between 45 and 60 hours of work per semester. Blocks of 3 practice credit hours, which equate to a studio or practice course, represent between 135 and 180 total hours of academic work per semester.
- Internship or apprenticeship credit hours are determined by negotiation between the supervising faculty and the work supervisor at the cooperating site, both of whom must judge and certify different aspects of the student's work. The credit formula is similar to that for practice credit.

Quarter credit hour or quarter hour. Quarter credit hours represent proportionately less work than semester hours due to the shorter terms, about two-thirds of a semester credit hour. *Source:* USNEI

A quarter hour must include at least 20 hours of instruction. *Source:* 34 CFR 668.8

Independent study credit hour. One independent study (including thesis or dissertation research) hour is calculated similarly to practice credit hours (see “Semester credit hour” above). *Source:* USNEI

For the purposes of direct assessment programs (see the section below on “Federal Regulations Regarding Competency-Based Programs”), independent study occurs when a student follows a course of study with predefined objectives but works with a faculty member to decide how the student is going to meet those objectives. The student and faculty member agree on what the student will do (e.g., required readings, research, and work products), how the student’s work will be evaluated, and on what the relative timeframe for completion of the work will be. The student must interact with the faculty member on a regular and substantive basis to assure progress within the course or program. *Source:* 34 CFR 668.10

Week of instructional time. An institution provides one week of instructional time in an academic program during any consecutive seven-day period that the institution provides at least one day of regularly scheduled instruction or examinations, or, after the last scheduled day of classes for a term or payment period, at least one day of study for final examinations. Instructional time does not include any vacation periods, homework, or periods of orientation or counseling. *Source:* 34 CFR 668.8

A week of instructional time in a direct assessment program (see the section below on “Federal Regulations Regarding Competency-Based Programs”) is any seven-day period in which at least one day of educational activity occurs. Educational activity in a direct assessment program includes regularly scheduled learning sessions, faculty-guided independent study, consultations with a faculty mentor, development of an academic action plan addressed to the competencies identified by the institution, or, in combination with any of the foregoing, assessments. It does not include credit for life experience. *Source:* 34 CFR 668.10

Academic year. For the purposes of Federal student assistance programs, an academic year has a minimum of 30 weeks of instructional time for a course of study that measures its program length in credit hours or a minimum of 26 weeks of instructional time for a course of study that measures its program length in clock hours. A full-time student in an undergraduate course of study is expected to complete at least 24 semester credit hours or 36 quarter credit hours in a course of study that measures its program length in credit hours, or at least 900 clock hours in a course of study that measures its program length in clock hours. *Source:* 20 USC 1088

An academic year in a direct assessment program (see the section below on “Federal Regulations Regarding Competency-Based Programs”) is a period of instructional time that consists of a minimum of 30 weeks of instructional time during which, for an undergraduate educational program, a full-time student is expected to complete the equivalent of at least 24 semester credit hours, 36 quarter credit hours or 900 clock hours. *Source:* 34 CFR 668.10

The U.S. Secretary of Education may reduce the 30-week minimum to not less than 26 weeks for good cause, as determined by the Secretary on a case-by-case basis, in the case of an institution of higher education that provides a 2-year or 4-year program of instruction for which the institution awards an associate or baccalaureate degree [*the following was proposed on May 26, 2009, through negotiated rulemaking*] and that measures program length in credit hours or clock hours. *Source: 20 USC 1088*

Semester. Most U.S. higher education institutions operate on an academic year divided into two equal semesters of 15-16 weeks' duration, with a winter break of 2-3 weeks and a summer session of 10-12 weeks, plus additional shorter breaks. Normal full-time registration is usually 15 credit hours per semester or 30 per academic year (shortfalls can be made up in summer sessions or independent study). *Source: USNEI*

Quarter. Some U.S. institutions use a quarter calendar, in which the academic year is divided into three terms, called quarters, of 10-11 weeks' duration plus a summer session (considered the fourth quarter, but optional), a short winter term and other calendar breaks. *Source: USNEI*

Program. A combination of courses and related activities organized for the attainment of broad educational objectives as described by the institution. *Source: IPEDS*

Accelerated program. Completion of a college program of study in fewer than the usual number of years, most often by attending summer sessions and carrying extra courses during the regular academic term. *Source: IPEDS*

Diploma. A formal document certifying the successful completion of a prescribed program of studies. *Source: IPEDS*

Certificate. A formal award certifying the satisfactory completion of a postsecondary education program. *Source: IPEDS*

Postsecondary award, certificate, or diploma. An award that requires completion of an organized program of study at the postsecondary level (below the baccalaureate degree). *Source: IPEDS*

Postbaccalaureate certificate. An award that requires completion of an organized program of study equivalent to 18 semester credit hours beyond the bachelor's degree. It is designed for persons who have completed a baccalaureate degree, but does not meet the requirements of a master's degree. *Source: IPEDS*

Post-master's certificate. An award that requires completion of an organized program of study equivalent to 24 semester credit hours beyond the master's degree, but does not meet the requirements of academic degrees at the doctor's level. *Source: IPEDS*

Academic program. An instructional program leading toward an associate's, bachelor's, master's, or doctor's degree or resulting in credits that can be applied to one of these degrees. *Source:* IPEDS

Degree. An award conferred by a college, university, or other postsecondary education institution as official recognition for successful completion of a program of studies. *Source:* IPEDS

Associate's degree. An award that normally requires at least 2 but less than 4 years of full-time equivalent college work. *Source:* IPEDS

Bachelor's degree. An award (baccalaureate or equivalent degree, as determined by the U.S. Secretary of Education) that normally requires at least 4 but not more than 5 years of full-time equivalent college-level work. This includes bachelor's degrees in which the normal 4 years of work are completed in 3 years. *Source:* IPEDS

A typical bachelor's degree on a semester calendar requires at least 120 credit hours to be earned by the student. This roughly translates into at least 30-40 courses (depending on the major subject and thus the proportion of types of credit hours earned) and represents at least 5,400—and probably more—actual hours of dedicated academic work. A bachelor's degree at an institution on the quarter calendar may require a minimum of 180 quarter credit hours, which compares to 120 semester credit hours. *Source:* USNEI

Master's degree. An award that requires the successful completion of a program of study of generally one or two full-time equivalent years of work beyond the bachelor's degree. Some of these degrees, such as those in Theology (M.Div., M.H.L./Rav) that were formerly classified as "first-professional," may require more than two full-time equivalent academic years of study. *Source:* IPEDS

Doctor's degree. The highest award a student can earn for graduate study. The doctor's degree classification includes such degrees as Doctor of Education, Doctor of Juridical Science, Doctor of Public Health, and the Doctor of Philosophy degree in any field such as agronomy, food technology, education, engineering, public administration, ophthalmology, or radiology. *Source:* IPEDS

Doctor's degree – research/scholarship. A Ph.D. or other doctor's degree that requires advanced work beyond the master's level including the preparation and defense of a dissertation based on original research, or the planning and execution of an original project demonstrating substantial artistic or scholarly achievement. Some examples of this type of degree may include Ed.D., D.M.A., D.B.A., D.Sc., D.A., or D.M. and others, as designated by the awarding institution. *Source:* IPEDS

Doctor's degree – professional practice. A doctor's degree that is conferred upon completion of a program providing the knowledge and skills for the recognition, credential, or license required for professional practice. The degree is

awarded after a period of study such that the total time to degree, including both pre-professional and professional preparation, equals at least six full-time equivalent academic years. Some of these degrees were formerly classified as “first-professional” and may include: Chiropractic (D.C. or D.C.M.); Dentistry (D.D.M. or D.M.D.); Law (L.L.B. or J.D.); Medicine (M.D.); Optometry (O.D.); Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.); Pharmacy (Pharm.D.); Podiatry (D.P.M., Pod.D., D.P.); or Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.); and others, as designated by the awarding institution. *Source:* IPEDS

Doctor’s degree – other. A doctor’s degree that does not meet the definition of a doctor’s degree – research/scholarship or a doctor’s degree – professional practice. *Source:* IPEDS

Federal Regulations Regarding Competency-Based Programs

Programs in which credits and degrees are awarded based solely on successful student demonstration of expected competencies, and not through credit hours or clock hours, are defined by Federal regulations as direct assessment programs. See the “Federal Definitions” section above for definitions of “Independent study,” “Week of instructional time,” and “Academic year” as they apply to direct assessment programs.

A direct assessment program is an instructional program that, in lieu of credit hours or clock hours as a measure of student learning, utilizes direct assessment of student learning, or recognizes the direct assessment of student learning by others. The assessment must be consistent with the accreditation of the institution or program utilizing the results of the assessment.

Direct assessment of student learning means a measure by the institution of what a student knows and can do in terms of the body of knowledge making up the educational program. These measures provide evidence that a student has command of a specific subject, content area, or skill or that the student demonstrates a specific quality such as creativity, analysis or synthesis associated with the subject matter of the program. Examples of direct measures include projects, papers, examinations, presentations, performances, and portfolios.

To be an eligible program, a direct assessment program must meet the requirements in 34 CFR 668.8 including, if applicable, minimum program length and qualitative factors. Because a direct assessment program does not utilize credit or clock hours as a measure of student learning, an institution must establish a methodology to reasonably equate the direct assessment program (or the direct assessment portion of any program, as applicable) to credit or clock hours for the purpose of complying with applicable regulatory requirements. The institution must provide a factual basis satisfactory to the U.S. Secretary of Education for its claim that the program or portion of the program is equivalent to a specific number of credit or clock hours.

An institution that offers a direct assessment program must apply to the U.S. Secretary of Education to have that program determined to be an eligible program for Title IV program purposes. The institution's application must provide information satisfactory to the Secretary that includes:

1. A description of the educational program, including the educational credential offered (degree level or certificate) and the field of study;
2. A description of how the assessment of student learning is done;
3. A description of how the direct assessment program is structured, including information about how and when the institution determines on an individual basis what each student enrolled in the program needs to learn;
4. A description of how the institution assists students in gaining the knowledge needed to pass the assessments;
5. The number of semester or quarter hours, or clock hours, that are equivalent to the amount of student learning being directly assessed for the certificate or degree;
6. The methodology the institution uses to determine the number of credit or clock hours to which the program is equivalent;
7. The methodology the institution uses to determine the number of credit or clock hours to which the portion of a program an individual student will need to complete is equivalent;
8. Documentation from the institution's accrediting agency indicating that the agency has evaluated the institution's offering of direct assessment program(s) and has included the program(s) in the institution's grant of accreditation;
9. Documentation from the accrediting agency or relevant state licensing body indicating agreement with the institution's claim of the direct assessment program's equivalence in terms of credit or clock hours; and
10. Any other information the Secretary may require to determine whether to approve the institution's application.

The Secretary's approval of a direct assessment program expires on the date that the institution changes one or more aspects of the program described in the institution's application. To maintain program eligibility, the institution must obtain prior approval from the Secretary through reapplication. *Sources:* 34 CFR 668.10 and 20 USC 1088

Institutions wishing to obtain documentation from the Commission as described in Items 8 and 9 above should consult with their Middle States liaison and submit a request to the Commission, following the general procedures described in the Commission's policy statement on "Substantive Change."

State Definitions

A number of states in the Middle States region have their own definitions and regulations regarding degrees and credits. These requirements are generally consistent with Federal definitions and considered to be common practice. It is the responsibility of each institution to demonstrate compliance with any applicable state regulations that go beyond Federal regulations.

Joint, Concurrent, and Dual Degrees

Some institutions allow students to pursue two degrees concurrently or to pursue one degree awarded jointly by two institutions. The Commission uses the following definitions of these arrangements, noting that nomenclatures may vary:

Jointly conferred degree. A single degree jointly conferred by two institutions, such as a B.S. in Environmental Science jointly conferred by two institutions. The transcript and diploma bear the names of both institutions.

Dual or concurrent degrees. In these programs, often referred to as joint degrees, two separate degrees pursued concurrently and seamlessly by the student. The degrees may be conferred by one or two separate institutions. For example, many institutions offer a dual B.A./B.S.Ed. program, and a number of business schools and law schools, either at the same institution or at two separate institutions, offer J.D./M.B.A. programs. In the latter example, the transcript and diploma for the J.D. bear the name of the law school's institution, and the transcript and diploma for the M.B.A. bear the name of the business school's institution.

Dual or concurrent degrees require further study than either degree alone but less than if the degrees were pursued separately. Dual bachelor's degrees typically require at least one additional academic year of study beyond a single bachelor's degree. Dual graduate degrees, each requiring two academic years of study if pursued separately, would typically require 3½ academic years of study if pursued concurrently.

Institutions considering establishing jointly conferred, dual or concurrent degrees should consult the Commission's policies on "Contracts by Accredited and Candidate Institutions for Education-Related Services" and "Substantive Change." If one institution is providing faculty and courses that earn credits awarded by the other institution, Commission approval of the program may be required as a substantive change. For example, suppose a law school at one institution and a business school at a second institution plan to offer a J.D./M.B.A. program. No substantive change approval is required if the law school and its faculty offer all the J.D. courses and the law school's institution awards the J.D., and the business school and its faculty offer all the M.B.A. courses and the business school's institution awards the M.B.A. But if the two institutions enter into a contract in which business school faculty teach some of the courses in the J.D. program, with credit awarded by the law school, substantive change approval of the contractual agreement may be required.

Sources

20 USC 1088: U.S. Code, Title 20, Chapter 28, Subchapter IV, Part F, Section 1088, in effect January 3, 2007 (<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/uscode/browse.html>)

34 CFR 668.8: Code of Federal Regulations Title 34, Volume 3, Chapter VI, Part 668, Section 668.8, revised as of July 1, 2008 (http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2008/julqtr/34cfr668.8.htm)

34 CFR 668.10: Code of Federal Regulations Title 34, Volume 3, Chapter VI, Part 668, Section 668.10, revised as of July 1, 2008

(http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2008/julqtr/34cfr668.10.htm)

IPEDS: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, National Center for Educational Statistics, U.S. Department of Education (<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/glossary>)

USNEI: International Affairs Office, U.S. Department of Education

(<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ous/international/usnei/us/credits.doc>)

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS
PROCEDURES FOR UNIVERSITY APPROVAL OF NEW ACADEMIC DEGREE
PROGRAMS, PROGRAM CHANGES, AND PROGRAM TERMINATION

PREAMBLE

This document sets forth the substantive and procedural requirements which govern the review and approval of proposals for new Academic Degree Programs, proposed changes to existing programs and the termination of existing programs proposed by any of the five University of Massachusetts campuses as well as new joint Academic Degree Programs proposed by two or more of the campuses. It is intended to provide clear instruction concerning the required content and format of proposals as well as clear notice regarding the criteria under which proposals will be reviewed. The policy has been written to conform to the fullest extent possible with the relevant program approval policies of the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education.

The requirements of this policy demonstrate a recognition that the President's Office has a central role to play in the planning and coordination of Academic Degree Programs at the five campuses and reflect an understanding that effective planning and coordination involve the thorough and careful evaluation of program proposals within the broad contexts of social need, institutional mission attainment and efficient resource allocation. Implementation of these requirements should be guided at all times by these general principles.

I. DEFINITIONS

The following words or phrases shall have the following meanings whenever used in this document, unless the context in which they appear clearly indicate to the contrary:

"Academic Degree Program" shall mean an undergraduate or graduate certificate of 30 semester credit hours or more, or a major or degree at the undergraduate or graduate levels, including a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study.

II. SCOPE

This policy shall apply to all proposals for new Academic Degree Programs, certain proposed changes to existing Academic Degree Programs, and all proposed terminations of existing Academic Degree Programs. Separate procedures are included for joint Academic Degree Programs in which one or more campuses already holds degree-granting authority.

This policy does not apply to proposals to offer new concentrations, tracks, options or the like within existing degree programs. It also does not apply to changes in the content or delivery of program curricula (courses) or in the graduation requirements of approved programs.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES: NEW ACADEMIC DEGREE PROGRAMS

The review and approval of new Academic Degree Programs will occur in two phases. A "Preliminary Application" consisting of a concise description of, and rationale for, the proposed program will be reviewed by the President and the Academic Advisory Council. The "Final Application" will fully address all relevant issues including those relating to need and demand, mission, resources, curriculum and faculty. The full proposal will be reviewed by the Academic Advisory Council and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and, if approved by the President, forwarded to the Board of Trustees for action. All proposals approved by the University Board of Trustees must be forwarded to the Board of Higher Education for approval.

Preliminary Application

The Preliminary Application should provide a succinct description of, and rationale for, the proposed Academic Degree Program and should be no more than five (5) single-spaced pages in length. It should be viewed as a vehicle by which the proponents of a new program can, in a general way and without significant expenditure of time and resources, "make the case" for their proposed program to the campus and system officials responsible for the approval of new programs. Its main purpose is to provide those campus and system officials with sufficient descriptive and contextual information about the program to allow those officials to make an informed judgment about whether the proposal has sufficient merit to warrant the preparation of a Final Application. Specifically, the Preliminary Application should address the extent to which there is a need for the degree program (including why existing programs at the same campus, on other University campuses, or at other public or private institutions within the campus' service area cannot meet this need). It should also explain the ways in which the proposed program is consistent with and serves to advance the stated mission and goals of the campus and the University.

The Preliminary Application should be forwarded to the President by the campus Chancellor. It will be circulated for comment to the members of the Academic Advisory Council. The Chancellor of the Board of Higher Education will also be invited to comment. Upon review, the President will advise the campus Chancellor as to whether to proceed with a Final Application and discuss any issues that merit particular consideration in that process. An instruction to proceed with a Final Application does not constitute assurance of approval of the proposed program.

Final Application

The Final Application should provide a comprehensive description of the proposed Academic Degree Program and should include an expanded analysis of the issues discussed in the Preliminary Application (e.g. purpose, need and relationship to mission) as well as a careful and thorough discussion of the more practical and technical issues raised by the proposal (e.g. resources, curriculum, admissions and faculty). It should contain all of the information necessary to allow campus, University and other reviewers to meaningfully evaluate the program and should provide all of the information requested under the nine (9) general subject headings set forth below.

The Final Application must also include a "Program Abstract" which should not exceed four pages in length. The program abstract should be a fair and concise summary of the proposal and the nine (9) items noted below. In the event the proposal is approved by the University's Board of Trustees and forwarded to the Board of Higher Education, the Program Abstract will be circulated by the Board of Higher Education to other public institutions for comment.

While it would be helpful if the main body of the application were organized under the same subject headings that are listed below, different formats may be used as long as the relevant information is provided. Persons preparing the Final Application should, in any event, be mindful that the cogency and realism of the proposal, and the succinctness and clarity of its presentation, will be considered good indicators of a campus' ability to mount a program of high quality.

The Final Application should include the following:

1. Proposal Development.

- Provide a brief overview of the process for developing the proposed program, including any use of outside consultants or assistance provided by prospective professional accreditation groups.

2. Purpose and Goals.

- Describe the program's purpose and the particular knowledge and skills to be acquired by program graduates.
- Describe the goals you hope to achieve within five years and specify the measures which would be used to determine the successful achievement of those goals.
- Identify in general the strategies for achieving these goals and for ensuring the continuing quality of the program.

3. Mission Context.

- Describe in detail how the proposed program supports the mission and current priorities of the campus. Also comment on whether and how the proposed program supports the mission and priorities of the University and the system of public higher education in Massachusetts.
- Explain the general impact of expanding the campus' academic degree offerings through the addition of the proposed program as well as the likely effect of the new program on the quality of the campus' existing offerings.
- Describe whether students will be drawn from enrollments in existing program offerings or whether new students will be attracted to the campus by the program (if the latter, describe what evidence supports this conclusion).

4. Need.

- Provide evidence of student demand and current career opportunities for graduates of the program.
- If the proposed program is similar to a program in existence at the University, or at another public or private institution in Massachusetts, describe how the program differs from, and how it complements, that (those) program(s). If there are similar programs within the University, explain why the purposes of the proposed program cannot be achieved through these related, existing programs or through modifications to those programs.

5. Students.

- Provide an estimate of full-time and part-time student enrollment by year, for the first year and for the year (which should be specified) in which it is expected that the program will be fully implemented. Indicate if students will be drawn from existing programs or from attracting new enrollments.
- Describe the kinds of students to be served (e.g., traditional/non-traditional, minority and non-minority students, members of a particular profession) and any special recruitment efforts planned.
- Discuss the types of student retention strategies that will be utilized, and the support services that will be offered, which are different from existing institutional practices and procedures.

6. Administration and Operation.

- Describe the organizational structure for the administration and operation of the proposed program and strategies designed to ensure its continued quality.

7. Curriculum and Faculty.

- Include a complete description of the curriculum and plans for delivering the proposed program, including a semester by semester sequence of courses and other requirements.
- Explain how the program makes sense academically and how the proposed curriculum adequately covers the subject areas. Provide evidence that the program is considered a legitimate academic discipline. If the program is interdisciplinary, provide a rationale for the inclusion of the relevant disciplines and faculty.
- Show course numbers, titles and a brief description of each with an indication of which courses already exist (either on that campus or another campus) and which are to be newly developed. Include a summary by course category (major, cognate areas, general education, electives). If applicable, describe the procedures for any required independent exercise and for any required internship or clinical experience. In the latter case, describe the proposed arrangements for the placement of students.
- Submit current curriculum vitae for all participating faculty.
- If applicable, provide information concerning certification, licensure, and specialized accreditation.

8. Admission and Graduation.

- Describe standards for admission to the program and degree requirements in detail, such as general education requirements, major requirements, required academic work in related fields, electives, practical experience, internships, clinical practices and the like. Include admission requirements for transfer students, if applicable.
- Explain how the proposed matriculation requirements provide assurance of the likelihood of student success in pursuing the program to completion, and project percentages of such degree completion rates and expected times from admission to graduation for successful full-time students.

- Describe procedures and criteria for evaluation of student progress, for initiating, implementing and evaluating any required independent activity or for internship experience.
- Describe any aspects of the program that are intended to attract students from underrepresented groups into the field, or to prepare graduates for service to diverse populations. Also address the program's potential to increase the diversity of the faculty.
- Detail any collaborations with other campuses (or with other colleges and universities) and explain what opportunities or benefits the program offers for University students and faculty at the other campuses.

9. Resources, Program Delivery and Budget.

- Describe the amount and kind of faculty and staff, facilities, equipment, and library resources (and field and clinical resources, if applicable) necessary to offer the proposed program for the first year and for the year (which should be specified) in which it is expected that the program will have arrived at a steady state.
- Describe funding sources by source, such as external grants and contracts or internal University budget. If external funding sources are not committed, identify the sources of the reallocated internal funding and describe the impact of such reallocation on the programs which will lose funding and on the mission and priorities of the campus.
- Include detailed program delivery information to show the anticipated date of implementation, location of program facilities, and equipment to be utilized. In the event that additional space or specialized facilities would be needed for the program, indicate clearly what these are and what binding agreements have been obtained to provide and fund them in the event that a program is approved.
- Include detailed budgets to show the first-year implementation costs and, for the year (which should be specified) in which it is expected that the program will have arrived at a steady state, the budget at that time. The term "budget" includes that for any and all resources, including personnel, facilities, equipment, library, and other resources. Include budget projections of the campus' internal contribution through reallocations, expected external support and sources and, if any, new internal funding to be requested through the University budget process.

The Final Application must be approved by the appropriate campus governance bodies and reviewed and approved by the campus Chancellor before being forwarded to the President. The President will solicit comments on the proposal from the Academic Advisory Council. If, after a careful and thorough review by staff, the President decides to recommend approval of the program, the President will forward a written recommendation to the University Board of Trustees. The President may require that the proposal be reviewed by a team of external evaluators qualified to comment on issues of faculty, quality, curricular coherence, and adequacy of resources. External evaluations will normally be required when graduate programs are being proposed and may entail a visit to the campus by the evaluators. All expenses for external evaluators will be borne by the requesting campus. If the Final Application is approved by the Board of Trustees, it will be forwarded to the Board of Higher Education.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES: JOINT ACADEMIC DEGREE PROGRAMS

This section shall apply to proposals to establish joint degree programs between two or more campuses of the University of Massachusetts where at least one of the campuses already holds specific degree-granting authority. Proposals for collaborative degree programs in fields in which no participating campus has degree-granting authority, and proposals to develop joint degree programs involving colleges or universities outside the University of Massachusetts, must be developed in accordance with the requirements of the section of this policy document applicable to new Academic Degree Programs. This approval process is not required for programs in which an authorized degree is conferred by one campus onto students enrolled through another campus by special agreement.

Proposals for joint degree programs will also be reviewed in two phases. A Preliminary Application (meeting the requirements set forth below) should be submitted by the Provosts of the participating campuses to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who circulates it to the Academic Advisory Council. Once the Preliminary Application has been vetted by the Academic Advisory Council, the campuses can proceed to prepare a Final Application. All proposals for joint degree programs must go through normal campus approval processes before being submitted to the President in the form of a Final Application. The Final Application is submitted to the President jointly by the Chancellors of the participating campuses and reviewed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. If approved by the President, the proposal will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees. If the Board of Trustees approves it, it will then be forwarded to the Board of Higher Education for final action.

Preliminary Application

The initial proposal for a joint degree program should be succinct (not to exceed 5 pages) and should include: (1) a discussion of the reasons for the proposed collaboration, including an explanation of how the proposed joint program would complement, replace, or enhance any current stand-alone programs, and how it would contribute to the missions of participating campuses and the University as a whole; (2) a brief description of current degree program(s) on each participating campus that would contribute to the joint program (including program emphasis, size of faculty and students, etc.); and (3) a discussion of the need and demand for the joint program, including evidence of student demand and career opportunities.

Final Application

The Final Application should incorporate the proponents' discussion of the questions covered in the Preliminary Application and should, in addition, include the following:

1. A "Program Abstract" consisting of a "fair and concise summary" of the proposed joint degree program, i.e. a condensed version of the Final Application (Note: the Program Abstract is circulated by the Board of Higher Education to outside reviewers).
2. A projection of the expected size of the program, including full-time and part-time students enrolled, projected degree completion rates and the expected time from admission to graduation.
3. A detailed description of proposed curriculum and program emphasis (including changes to existing curricula where applicable). Include (in an Appendix) a semester by semester sequence of courses including course numbers, credits, and titles, clearly indicating which campus will offer the course as well as which of the courses are new.

4. A description of how curriculum will be delivered: who will teach courses, where and how (e.g., distance learning, travel between campuses), research and thesis supervision for graduate programs; in other words, the nature of the collaboration.
5. A description of the structure for program oversight, including admissions, curriculum development, graduation requirements, faculty hiring and assignment, quality control and program evaluation.
6. A description of mechanisms for distributing student credit hours and faculty effort among campuses for budgetary purposes.
7. A description of procedures for student registration, advising, and other administrative matters.
8. A discussion of the budgetary implications for each campus, including sources for required support and anticipated costs or savings. Please display by institution the amount and kinds of additional faculty/staff, facilities, equipment, and library resources needed for the first year and the first full year of implementation, indicating funding sources.
9. A discussion of the implications for programmatic accreditation and certification or licensure, if applicable.

Approval of a joint degree under these procedures requires that every diploma and transcript issued to students in the program reflect that the program is a collaborative offering of the campuses involved. Approval of a joint degree under these procedures does not constitute authorization for a campus to offer a stand-alone degree unless the campus holds independent authorization to offer such a degree. Should the joint degree program be discontinued at any time, campuses without independent authorization to offer the degree may not continue to offer such degrees without the approval of the Board of Trustees and the Board of Higher Education.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES: CHANGES TO EXISTING ACADEMIC DEGREE PROGRAMS

Once approved, an Academic Degree Program may not be materially and substantially changed unless and until it has been reviewed and approved under a process deemed appropriate by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. A brief written description should be submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs who will determine whether the proposed change should be reviewed under the same procedures applicable to new programs or under some less comprehensive procedure, as he or she shall specify. Proposals to offer new concentrations, tracks, options, certificate programs or the like within existing degree programs will not be considered material or substantial changes. However, campuses proposing such changes are required to send a written notice to the President and the Board of Higher Education 60 days prior to announcing the change.

A campus wishing to change the name of a program must obtain the approval of the President of the University as well as the Vice Chancellor of the Board of Higher Education. The request for approval should include an explanation of the reasons for the name change.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES: TERMINATION OF EXISTING PROGRAMS

Campuses must notify the President prior to, and the Board of Higher Education following, the suspension or termination of an existing Academic Degree Program. A campus may reactivate a suspended or discontinued program, with the approval of the President and the Board of Higher

Education. The President may require that the reactivation proposal be reviewed under a process similar to that applicable to proposals for new programs, or some other appropriate process.

In the event that discontinuance, termination, or reactivation of programs would have a significant impact upon other campuses as determined by the President, such action will only occur after the President has obtained the advice of the Academic Advisory Council and subsequently the approval of the Board of Trustees.

**Nanoscience Technology AAS Degree
Intra-Agency Consortium Agreement**

**Article I
Consortium Members**

This Nanoscience Technology Associate in Applied Science Consortium Agreement (Agreement) is made pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 136F.06, by and among Normandale Community College, Inver Hills Community College, Saint Paul College, and Dakota County Technical College (individually referred to as Participating Colleges and collectively referred to as the Nanoscience Consortium) of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU), on behalf of their respective College Academic Affairs Standards Councils to create and deliver an Associate in Applied Science degree cooperatively. This Agreement shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with Minnesota law.

PARTICIPATING
Normandale Community College Nanoscience Technology
Inver Hills Community College Nanoscience Technology
Saint Paul College Nanoscience Technology
Dakota County Technical College Nanoscience Technology

**Article II
Purpose of the Consortium Agreement**

The purpose of this Agreement is to set the terms and conditions of the Nanoscience Technology Associate in Applied Science Consortium (Consortium) cooperative efforts and to minimize administrative and system barriers with the intent to maximize sustainability of the Nanoscience Technology AAS degree, a shared degree program offered collaboratively by the Participating Colleges. The purpose of the Consortium is to provide an innovative, collaborative model of efficiency providing education for high growth, high demand jobs in the nanoscience industry by integrating Participating Colleges’ resources of curriculum, faculty, equipment and labs, and student access. Specific cooperative outcomes will support increased access and program quality through:

1. Development of needed competencies for nanoscience, growth, and sustainability.

2. Share a standardized nanoscience technical program that will facilitate student mobility and transferability of learning outcomes among Participating Colleges.
3. A common industry response to Minnesota nanoscience economic development and worker training needs.
4. Sharing and leveraging of qualified faculty knowledgeable in specific nanoscience technologies.
5. Enhanced ability to attract individuals to high growth nanoscience job opportunities.

The Participating Colleges agree to participate in collaborative activities intended to accomplish the following goals:

1. Improve the overall supply of technicians with skills to sustain and expand nanoscience in Minnesota.
2. Make efficient and effective resource allocation decisions that support accomplishment of Consortium outcomes.
3. Implement innovative educational strategies designed to enroll students who live in Minneapolis Saint Paul metropolitan area and beyond.
4. Implement innovative interdisciplinary relationships allowing the Consortium and Participating Colleges to achieve economies of scale, eliminate duplication, and share academic and industry education resources.
5. Respond to the needs of communities or regions within the state that cannot support nanoscience-related education programs of their own.
6. Expand accessibility for all students through the use of distance learning technologies and blended hybrid courses.
7. Establish stable, long-term financing strategies for nanoscience education programs and student financial support.

The Participating Colleges agree to support the development, ongoing implementation of program delivery, and related activities necessary to sustain the Nanoscience Technology AAS program.

Article III Establishment of the Consortium

Each Participating College will be approved to offer the Nanoscience Technology AAS degree and the Participating College shall be eligible to award the Nanoscience Technology degree for as long as they are part of the Consortium. If a Participating College leaves the Consortium but plans to continue offering the Nanoscience Technology AAS degree, they must go through the new program approval process. The Consortium, through Participating Colleges collectively, strives to more effectively and efficiently provide graduates that will meet the needs of the State and beyond. New members may be added to the Participating College upon approval of the Program Management Council (PMC).

Article IV Structure and Governance

A. Program Participation Requirements

The Participating Colleges agree to provide:

1. Representation and participation on the Program Management Council (PMC).
2. Representation and participation in the Nanoscience Technology curriculum work including redesigning courses to meet the objectives of the program.

3. Representation and participation on Nanoscience Technology program committees, work groups, and task forces.
4. Student and course information for Nanoscience Technology program activities.
5. Demonstrated commitment to integrate program activities with the other Participating Colleges to foster program goals.

B. Program Management Council

1. Purpose and Responsibilities.

A Program Management Council (PMC) shall have primary advisory responsibility for day-to-day program operations of the Nanoscience Consortium, including, but not limited to:

- a. decision making that is consistent with the program mission and purposes;
- b. effective use of human and fiscal resources;
- c. advocacy for student support and student services;
- d. leadership of curriculum development/delivery/program evaluation;
- e. promotion of program recruitment;
- f. leadership of student admission, progression, and program advising;
- g. taking action on recommendations from Nanoscience Consortium committees, workgroups, and task forces;
- h. providing direction to project committees, work groups, and task forces;
- i. leadership and management of the program budget overall;
- j. approval of membership on the Program Management Council and revocation of membership; and
- k. assurance that the terms of the Nanoscience Technology Intra-Agency Consortium Agreement are adhered to by the members.

2. Composition.

The Project Management Council (PMC) will be made up of one academic administrator from each of the Participating Colleges. In the event an individual cannot attend a council meeting, an alternative representative may attend and vote in the absence of the designated. A representative from the Office of the Chancellor shall serve as an ex officio, nonvoting member of the PMC to assist the PMC in achieving its goals

C. Nanoscience Technology Industry Advisory Board

There shall be a Nanoscience Technology Industry Advisory Board to advise the PMC on matters of program improvement and to promote success of the program goals. Terms of Nanoscience Technology Advisory Board members shall be two years; members may serve two consecutive terms. The Board will meet two times yearly, or more frequently as needed. The PMC shall select one of its members to serve as co-chair of the Nanoscience Technology Advisory Board along with an elected industry co-chair. Each Partnering College may have representation on the Nanoscience Industry Advisory Board.

D. Issue and grievance resolution

1. Program issues.

The PMC is responsible for reviewing issues or problems related to the operation of the Nanoscience Technology program identified by any member of the PMC or Curriculum Council. The PMC will endeavor to reach resolution of issues or problems at the lowest level possible. If a

member of the PMC is involved as a party of interest in the problem or issue under review, that member shall not participate in the review.

2. Student conduct code violations.

Student conduct code violations shall be referred to the Participating College where the alleged violation occurred for disposition. If the alleged violation involves or affects more than one Participating College, the matter shall be referred to the student's Home College for investigation and decision-making, as appropriate. For purposes of this Agreement, Home College is the Participating College to which the student has been admitted. The Home College shall make recommendations to other Participating Colleges regarding the appropriate disposition of the alleged violation at their institutions.

3. Employee conduct code violations.

Employee conduct code violations shall be referred to the employee's employer for disposition, including investigation, decision-making, and disciplinary action as appropriate.

4. Discrimination reports and complaints.

Reports or allegations of discrimination shall be referred to the designated officer at the Participating College in which the complainant is enrolled as a student or is employed. If a report or complaint of discrimination involves or affects more than one Participating College, the matter shall be referred to the student's Home College for investigation and decision-making as appropriate. The Home College shall make recommendations to other Participating Colleges regarding the appropriate disposition of the report or complaint at their institutions.

E. Decision Making

Decisions will comply with contract provisions of the Minnesota State College Faculty association as applied at Participating Colleges.

**Article V
Operations**

The Agreement hereby establishes the following structure, responsibilities, and principles for operations to guide the Participating Colleges in the coordination and administration of the project to ensure that the Nanoscience Technology program goals are implemented and accomplished.

A. Student Recruitment, Admissions, Progression/Retention

1. Recruitment.

The PMC shall provide The Participating Colleges with sample recruiting tools (a Web site, printed materials, advertisements in various media forms, etc.) which each Participating College can use as they see fit.

2. Admissions.

The Admissions Office at each designated Participating College shall officially accept or deny the application based on the Participating College's admission criteria. Once the student has been admitted to the Nanoscience Technology program of a Participating College, the Participating College to which the student is admitted is considered the student's Home College for purposes of College enrollment status, financial aid, and degree award. Nothing in this Agreement shall be

construed to require a Participating College to admit an applicant who will not comply with individual college admissions standards.

3. Progression, Retention and Course Transfer.

Each Participating College agrees to use the home college academic policies, student progression requirements, time to degree completion, and academic calendar. Students enrolled across multiple institutions will adhere to academic policies and calendars of the offering institution for individual courses. A student's Home College agrees to accept credits earned by the student through the Consortium without regard to institutional residency requirements.

4. Tuition and Fees.

The model for tuition payment will be determined annually by the PMC for Participating Colleges in compliance with MnSCU policy. Any required application fees will be paid to the College to which the student submits an application for admission.

5. Annual Financial Settle-up.

Each Participating College will keep the revenue generated from tuition, fees, and FYE for each course taught for the Consortium. Except as otherwise agreed by the Participating Colleges, costs and expenses of the course(s), including compensation costs (salary and benefits) of Nanoscience Technology program faculty for program-related teaching or other activities and other discrete costs attributable specifically to the Nanoscience Technology program, supplies, and equipment, will be the responsibility of the Participating College teaching the course(s) for the Consortium. The Financial Settle-up will be reviewed annually by the Program Management Council (PMC).

6. Student Services.

Students participating in the Nanoscience Technology program shall be eligible for student services from Participating Colleges in accordance with each College's policies.

B. Curriculum Oversight

1. Curriculum.

The PMC will provide a mechanism for program assessment.

Each of the Participating College PMC representatives is responsible for obtaining approval for developed courses through their respective institution. Each Participating College is responsible for providing qualified faculty as required by the Minnesota State College Faculty contract for courses taught. Each Participating College is responsible for making commitments to faculty workload, program delivery, academic advising and student services that are comparable to those of the other Participating Colleges.

Each of the Participating Colleges can offer the general education courses in the Nanoscience Technology program (30-credits in the DCTC program). Dakota County Technical College will offer the 27-credits of Nano-specific technical credits for each Participating College. Each of the Participating Colleges will reverse transfer the 15-credits of University of Minnesota courses of the Capstone Semester (fourth semester) to complete the 72-credit degree.

C. Principles for Operation

1. Inter-Institutional Responsibilities.

Each Participating College agrees to:

- a. Support the development and delivery of courses taught by its faculty consistent with applicable bargaining agreements and College policy and procedure.
- b. Provide student services and web-based program information to support the Nanoscience Technology program.
- c. Support faculty participation in inter-institutional program faculty meetings and faculty development workshops consistent with applicable bargaining agreements and College policy and procedure.
- d. Offer the courses it is assigned to teach according to the published agreed upon schedule and provide the agreed-upon enrollment capacity for each course.
- e. Comply with the pricing and fee sharing agreements negotiated for the Nanoscience Technology program among Participating Colleges.
- f. Accept shared curriculum courses from member colleges to meet local college residency requirements as needed to complete the Nanoscience Technology Degree.
- g. In addition to the termination notice under Article IX, notify the PMC in writing that it intends to withdraw from the program at least twelve months in advance of the effective date of withdrawal.
- h. If the decision is made to discontinue the Nanoscience Technology program in its entirety, all reasonable efforts will be made, in accordance with the Nanoscience Consortium policies, to allow Nanoscience Technology students who are currently admitted to the program to complete the program within two years or to transfer to a Nanoscience Technology program offered by another Participating College.
- i. If the decision is made to discontinue the Nanoscience Technology program in its entirety, the Participating College will not compete with the Consortium by offering their own Nanoscience Technology degree.
- j. Take steps necessary to receive required approvals and accreditation from third parties, including the Higher Learning Commission.

2. Policy and Procedure.

Nanoscience Technology faculty and staff are employees of their respective Participating College and are subject to all Minnesota State Colleges and Universities policies and procedures, and the policies and procedures of the Participating College.

3. Bargaining Unit Agreements.

The governance of each Participating College and its respective faculty shall be the responsibility of its faculty and administration in accordance with applicable bargaining unit agreements.

4. Fiscal Agent.

Each Participating College shall serve as its own fiscal agent.

Article VI Nanoscience Technology Program Support

Participating Colleges agree to support the Nanoscience Technology program in good faith, and to refrain from taking any direct action that would adversely affect Nanoscience Technology program funding, operations, accreditation, continued maintenance or render performance of its obligations untenable, unless otherwise agreed by the other Participating Colleges.

Article VII

Relationship

None of the Participating Colleges, by entering into and performing this Nanoscience Grant Consortium Agreement, shall become agents of the other Nanoscience Technology members or be liable for any existing or future obligations, liabilities, or debts of the other members and/or partners. Each Participating College shall be solely responsible and liable for acts or omissions of its employees and agents and for claims or losses arising out of their performance of this Agreement on its behalf, consistent with Minnesota Statutes section 3.736 and other applicable law.

Article VIII Term

This Agreement shall commence upon the signatures of the Presidents or designee of the Participating Colleges and remain ongoing except as provided under the Agreement, subject to the authority of the Board of Trustees of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. This Agreement is subject to review at the end of the first year of operation and every three years thereafter unless the partners mutually agree to its written amendment, or termination, as hereinafter provided.

Article IX Termination

It is the intention of the Participating College that this Agreement and the Nanoscience Technology program hereby shall endure and provide long-term benefit to the citizens and businesses of Minnesota. Recognizing that the program is a part of the largest post-secondary educational system of the State, the partners agree at all times to use their good faith efforts to establish and continue operation of the Nanoscience Technology program, but intend that no third party shall have the right to enforce any provision of this Agreement. To terminate its participation under this Agreement, a Participating College must give written notice to the presidents of each of the other Participating Colleges no less than twelve months prior to the intended date of withdrawal from the program.

If a Participating College terminates membership or a new College joins the Nanoscience Consortium, the remaining Nanoscience Consortium members shall develop a plan to make any needed program delivery accommodations. Both terminating and new joining members of the Nanoscience Grant Consortium are responsible for providing any required notice to the Office of the Chancellor, Higher Learning Commission and any other applicable accrediting or governance bodies of their substantive change in status.

**Article X
New Participating College Application Process**

Any MnSCU College hereafter requesting to participate in the Nanoscience Technology Consortium as a Participating College shall submit a request to the chair of the PMC. The PMC shall make a recommendation concerning the request to the presidents of the Participating Colleges. Any new Participating College must be approved by the existing Participating Colleges by written amendment to this Agreement, along with obtaining MnSCU program approval and approval from the required accrediting organizations, the Higher Learning Commission, prior to consortium affiliation as a Participating College.

**Article XI
Non-Waiver**

The failure of any Participating College to insist on strict performance of any of the provisions contained herein shall not be construed as a waiver of any other default whether or not of the same or similar nature

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this Nanoscience Technology AAS Degree Intra-Agency Consortium Agreement to be duly executed intending to be bound thereby.

NORMANDEALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

By:
Date:

INVER HILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

By:
Date:

SAINT PAUL COLLEGE

By:
Date:

DAKOTA COUNTY TECHNICAL COLLEGE

By:
Date:

**Law Enforcement Professional Licensing Program
Intra-Agency Consortium Agreement**

**Article I
Consortium Members**

The Law Enforcement Professional Licensing Certificate Consortium Agreement (the “Agreement”) is made by and between the State of Minnesota, acting through its Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, on behalf of Hennepin Technical College, Century College, Inver Hills Community College, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, Normandale Community College, and North Hennepin Community College (hereinafter referred to as “Participating Colleges”) and all parties collectively referred to as the “Parties”. On behalf of their respective College Academic Affairs and Standards Councils Hennepin Technical College will deliver the Law Enforcement Professional Licensing Certificate and will transfer into the participating colleges’ Associate in Science Law Enforcement award.

Participating Colleges	Programs
Hennepin Technical College	Law Enforcement Certificate
Century College	Associate in Science Law Enforcement
Inver Hills Community College	Associate in Science Law Enforcement
Minneapolis Community and Technical College	Associate in Science Law Enforcement
Normandale Community College	Associate in Science Law Enforcement
North Hennepin Community College	Associate in Science Law Enforcement

**Article II
Purpose of the Consortium Agreement**

The purpose of this Agreement is to establish the terms and conditions for the seamless transfer of credits between the consortium colleges and Hennepin Technical College of the Law Enforcement Professional Licensing Certification.

The Law Enforcement Education Center (LEEC) is an accredited provider of the Professional Peace Officer Education program required by the Minnesota Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST). Students who complete LEEC’s Professional Licensing Program will be eligible to take the POST peace officer licensing examination. Passing this examination is required to be considered for full-time employment with any Minnesota state, county, or municipal law enforcement agency.

The Law Enforcement Program at the Law Enforcement Education Center (LEEC) prepares students for careers in law enforcement through one of two educational tracks:

- the Associate in Science in Law Enforcement degree, or
- the Law Enforcement Certificate Program.

Hennepin Technical College (HTC) DOES NOT CURRENTLY OFFER A DEGREE IN LAW ENFORCEMENT. Students who enroll in the Law Enforcement Program at HTC will receive a certificate in Law Enforcement. The Law Enforcement degree will be/is granted by one of the consortium colleges:

- *Century College*
- *Inver Hills Community College*
- *Minneapolis Community and Technical College*
- *Normandale Community College*
- *North Hennepin Community College*

The HTC Law Enforcement Certificate consists of two separate educational components totaling 22 credits:

1. Four (4) theory-based courses, and
2. Six (6) practical skills-development courses.

The Law Enforcement certificate courses are offered at the Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Education Center, located at 9110 Brooklyn Boulevard, on Hennepin Technical College's Brooklyn Park campus.

The theory-based courses:

- LAWE 2225 Criminal Investigation **3 credits**
- LAWE 2230 Legal Issues in Law Enforcement **3 credits**
- LAWE 2231 MN Criminal and Traffic Codes **3 credits**
- LAWE 2240 Patrol Operations **3 credits**

The practical, skills-development course:

- LAWE 2250 Operations **3 credits**
- LAWE 2260 In-Progress Crimes **1 credit**
- LAWE 2270 Traffic and Investigations **2 credits**
- LAWE 2280 Defensive Tactics **2 credits**
- LAWE 2290 Firearms **2 credits**
- LAWE 2300 Defensive Driving **0 credits**

Article III Operations

The Agreement hereby establishes the following structure, responsibilities, and principles for operations to guide the Participating Colleges in the coordination, administration and delivery of the curriculum to ensure that the Law Enforcement Certificate goals are implemented and accomplished.

Students in the associate degree track will be required to complete a balanced educational curriculum including liberal arts courses in the areas of English, speech, political science, sociology, psychology, and physical education.

Students are required to complete nine (9) prerequisite courses with a grade of “C” or better and a cumulative GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale in the nine (9) prerequisite courses prior to enrollment in the law enforcement program’s “Professional Licensing Program” offered at LEEC. Applicants must have a cumulative college G.P.A. of at least a 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.

Students may complete the required general distribution courses (including the nine (9) prerequisite courses) and receive their degree at any of the consortium colleges and should contact their school of choice for details.

Once accepted into the “Professional Licensing Program” students will register and pay for the courses through Hennepin Technical College.

Admission to the law enforcement “Professional Licensing Program” requires applicants to meet certain academic and POST licensing requirements. To qualify for admission, applicants must meet the following:

1. Applicants to the theory-based courses of the “Professional Licensing Program” must complete the following nine prerequisite courses, or their equivalent, with at least a “C” grade (2.00 on a 4.00 scale) in each course and a cumulative GPA of 2.50 in the nine prerequisite courses.

	CENTURY	IHCC	MCTC	NCC	NHCC
College English 1	ENCL 1021	ENG 1108	ENGL 1110	ENGC 1101	ENGL 1201
College English 2	ENGL 1022 or ENGL 1025	ENG 1111	ENGL 1111	ENGC 1102 or 2 nd comp course	ENGL 1202
Intro to Sociology	SOC 1020	SOC 1100	SOC 1105	SOC 1104	SOC 1110
Intro to Criminal Justice	SOC 1080	CJS 1150	SOCI 2155	SOC 2130	SOC 1710
Psychology	PSYC 1020 or	Choose any: 1101, 1201, 1210, 1215, 1220, 1230, 2100	PSYC 1100 or PSYC 1110 or PSYC 2260	PSYC 1100 or PSYC 1110 or SOC 2108	PSYCH 1165
Family Violence	SOC 1033	SOC 1130	SOCI 2115	SOC 2114	SOC 1750
American Minority Relations	SOC 2051	SOC 1127	SOCI 2145	SOC 2110 or	SOC 2207 or 2210
Juvenile Justice	CJS 2085	CJS 1154	LAWE 1220	SOC 2131	SOC 1730
Police & Community	CJS 2081	CJS 1152	LAWE 1215	SOC 2132	SOC 1720

Emergency Medical Response (EMR) (EMS Regulatory Board-Approved) is not required for admission to the “Professional Licensing Program.”

Proof of EMR is required before a student can take the POST Licensing Examination.

2. Applicants must have a cumulative college G.P.A. of at least 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.
3. Students may apply for admission to the “Professional Licensing Program” theory-based courses during the semester in which they will complete the above prerequisites (or the equivalent). See a college counselor for the course titles and numbers at each consortium campus.
4. US citizenship is not required for admission to the “Professional Licensing Program,” however applicants must be United States citizens before being hired by a law enforcement agency.

5. Applicants may not be convicted of a crime that would prohibit them from being admitted to the law enforcement program under the rules of the Minnesota Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST). Contact the POST Board at 651-643-3060 or their web site: www.post.state.mn.us/ for a list of current Criminal Conviction Standards.
6. Persons who are prohibited by State or Federal law from possessing a firearm are not eligible to apply.
7. Students who meet the above criteria will go online to www.hennepintech.edu/lawenforcement for the application forms and process. Applications are accepted for courses beginning each Fall and Spring semester. The application deadline for Fall semester is May1; the deadline for Spring semester is October 1.
8. Applicants who complete the application materials by the prescribed deadline for each semester and who meet admission criteria 1-6 will be considered eligible for admission to the theory-based courses of the Professional Licensing Program.
9. If the number of eligible applicants exceeds the space available in the program, applicants meeting all admission requirements by the posted deadline(s) will be selected for admission in the following order. If there are extenuating circumstances on an individual basis the director may change the process.
 - a. Applicants with admission preference certification from a chief law enforcement officer (police chief or sheriff) in Minnesota. The order for selection within this category will begin with students from the consortium colleges.
 - b. Applicants who are AS Law Enforcement degree candidates from a consortium school.
 - c. Applicants who have already earned a degree prior to application.
 - d. Applicants who are enrolled in, but have not completed all prerequisite courses. The order for selection within this category will begin with students from the consortium colleges.

Students will be selected for admission from the above categories using a random selection process. Applicants receive one chance in the random selection process. Applicants with a GPA of 3.50 (on a 4.00 scale) or higher in the nine prerequisite courses will receive one additional chance. Applicants who met all admission requirements in a previous application process, but were not selected for admission will receive one additional chance. The maximum number of chances an applicant can receive is three (3).

It will be the student's responsibility to abide by the different academic calendars, add/drop dates, differing tuition rates, and policies at each of the individual colleges.

Courses shall be identified in course catalogs as offerings from each Participating College and will be advertised by each Participating College. Each institution will inform potential students about this program.

Article IV
Relationship

None of the Participating Colleges, by entering into and performing this Agreement, shall become agents of the other member or be liable for any existing or future obligations, liabilities, or debts of another participating College. Each Participating College shall be solely responsible and liable for acts or omissions of its employees and agents and for claims or losses arising out of their performance of this Agreement on its behalf, consistent with Minnesota Statutes section 3.736 and other applicable law.

Article V
Term

This Agreement shall commence upon the date of the last required signature of the President or designee of the Participating Colleges for five years, subject to the authority of the Board of Trustees of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. This Agreement is subject to review at the end of the first year of operation and every year thereafter unless Participating Colleges mutually agree to its written amendment, or termination, as hereinafter provided.

Article VII
Termination

The Participating Colleges agree at all times to use their good faith efforts to establish and continue operation of the Law Enforcement Certificate. This consortium agreement is between the six Participating Colleges identified in Article II and no third party shall have the right to enforce any provision of this Agreement. To terminate its participation under this Agreement, a Participating College must give written notice to the presidents of each of the other Participating Colleges no less than twelve months prior to the intended date of withdrawal from the program.

Article VIII
General Provisions

Construction and Binding Effect. This agreement shall be construed and interpreted according to the laws of the State of Minnesota and shall be binding upon the parties hereto.

In Witness whereof, the Parties have caused this Law Enforcement Certificate Consortium Agreement to be duly executed intending to be bound thereby.

July 7, 2015

Summit – Supporting Students

“Complexities of taking courses from more than one institution in a semester”

Present:

Normandale Community College:	Tonya Hanson, Susan Ant, Allison Alstrin, Diem Vo, Jeremy McNamara
MnSCU:	Cynthia Mehoves, Jane Reinke
MCTC:	Christopher Rau, Jason Dorsett
Metro State:	Bobbi Anderson, Ashley Weatherspoon
Distance MN:	Teresa Theisen
SMSU:	Pat Carmody, Connie Smisek
MSU, Mankato:	Erica Johnson, Erin Harley, Marchell (Lela) Magxaka, Genise Boettcher

Meeting Participants Expectations: What everyone wanted to get out of the meeting

- Sharing ideas from other campuses
- Understanding implications/what we do
- Better interaction with other offices
- Remove silos
- Contributions to collaboration toolkit (Distance MN Model)
- Better serve students
- Easy, timely/specific accurate communication
- Process (improvement) pathway/common, efficient seamless
- Clarify student relations with institutions
- Example for the “system”/solutions
- Clear up confusion
- Identify where we still have gaps/missing knowledge
- Sharing solutions w/frontline?
- “Proactive”
- Who is involved
- ALL levels
- Who is doing partnership work?

Rules of the Day:

- Keeping students at the center of the solution
- “Outside the box thinking”
- Change might be needed but it also might not be needed
- Identify problems before trying to solving
- Respect differences when necessary
- Exercising freedom/know what is/isn’t policy
- “Simplified” in all things
- Have fun!

Questions that should be answered:

- How do students know if classes will transfer?
- When is the best time to tell students info?
- What is the policy/consortium rules?
- DARS encoding rules?
 - Exception level
 - Degree level
 - Institution level
- How is transfer credit accounted? “equivalencies”?
- Could the System Office create a report to help with shared aid?
 - Answer found: FA0062CB
 - Open apps?
- How can we share ISRS access better?
- Clarification of Program Navigator and the relationship to MnSCU and HLC
 - Definition of campus – branch
 - Definition of location – address – **50%**
 - Definition of site – remote – temp
 - Definition of off campus
 - Attached to courses
- Common MnSCU Definitions/context/language
 - Owning a student
 - only 1 school can “own” a student (based on financial aid and degree intent)
 - Dual admission
 - Dual enrollment
 - 2 + 2 (conditionally accepted)
 - Remote applicable → need urgency
 - Home school/host school
 - Consortium
 - Visiting student
 - Declaration of intent

Other things to think about:

- Timing matters
 - Planned (early)
 - Not planned (last minute)
- Registration between 2 schools w/cohort code
- Business, Psychology, Theatre, Biology
“Charting the Future”

Dream List:

- **Curriculum**
 - When curriculum gets aligned-how do we ensure coding gets done in DARS everywhere?
 - Cleaned up
 - Ensure everyone is updating
- **Updates Needed for Online Application**
 - Location
 - Need to tie location to major code to program navigator
 - Location code and program code tied to major code on the e-app
 - Will help colleges/universities know which location students plan to complete their degree at

- IE: Business Administration for Metro State could list locations: Normandale, North Hennepin, Minneapolis Community Technical College
 - Allow students to apply to one partnership program and pay one application fee
 - IE: SMSU and NCC Exercise Science
 - One communication for dual applications for partnership programs
 - Communication plan
- **Home School (vs host school) Identification**
 - Let students choose where they are completing their first degree at
 - Help with FA know which school should release aid
- **Standardize/systematize and Consistent practices:**
 - **Registration process/requirements**
 - Registration access code
 - Orientation (required/not)
 - Meeting with an advisor
 - Overall enrollment steps
 - **Visiting Student**
 - What is everyone doing?
 - What are the parameters
 - Needing to pull transcripts
 - **Transfer Criteria**
 - When are credits evaluated?
 - Pre-admissions, pre-enrollment, post-enrollment
 - How?
 - Who?
 - **Partnership Terminology/Definitions**
 - I.R. Reporting
 - Trends and highlights
 - Partnership
 - Bachelor Completion?
 - 2+2
 - How is everyone defining it from CC, University and SO
 - **Grading Practices**
 - F, FA, FW, W, WA
 - LDA Policy enforced (nonattendance grading)
 - GPA standards
 - **Student Email Accounts**
 - starid@mnsu.edu
 - starid@collegegrade.edu
 - **Student services to visiting students**
 - IT/technology
 - Printing
 - Parking
 - Etc
- **Financial Aid**
 - Enforcement of reporting attendance
 - Enforcement of paying aid for dual enrollment

A Summary of Options for Students

Ways students currently move between institutions: There are a number of conversations that have or are occurring at varying levels within MnSCU regarding the student experience accessing courses from more than one institution. A group convened a summit in July to discuss the complexities that students face when taking classes from more than one institution, with the goal of identifying ways to better serve these students. This is a work in progress. Participants in the summit came from Normandale, MCTC, Metro State, Distance MN, SMSU, MSU Mankato, and the system office. The below information is from Allison Alstrin, one of the summit participants and Normandale's project consultant for partnerships and collaborations and fellow Luoma participant.

1) Two then two (not concurrent):

- a. From community college to university when the university doesn't know they are transferring until student applies
- b. From community college to university when the university does know they're planning to transfer (e.g. MANE)

2) Planned concurrent:

- a. Dual enrollment (taking classes at more than one institution at a time) not using dual admissions (e.g. Distance Minnesota)
- b. Dual enrollment (taking classes at more than one institution at a time) and dual admissions (e.g. Normandale/Metro BS in dental hygiene, Normandale/SMSU BS in exercise science): Currently this requires students to apply to two institutions, submit transcripts to two institutions, potentially pay an application fee to two institutions, and receive communication from two institutions. They also need to know to use the correct school code for financial aid, some instances may require a consortium agreement, and students may need to go to four unique offices to obtain approval.

3) Unplanned concurrent/dual enrollment:

- a. Student taking classes from two or more institutions in the same semester. Ideally they are not admitted at the host institution and are considered a visiting student (see below) and may or may not be using a consortium agreement. This includes students at two- and four-year institutions who need specific classes and find alternatives for scheduling or availability reasons at the host institution. It may also include students who are making a gradual transition from one institution to another.

Additional information:

4) Visiting student status (Procedure 3.4.1):

"A system college or university shall allow a student who is currently admitted at another system college or university to enroll as a visiting student. A visiting student shall not be required to submit an application for admission, and is not a candidate for a degree, diploma or certificate at the system college or university attended in visiting student status. A visiting student may enroll for the maximum number of credits allowed by each college's or university's enrollment policy; provided that the student's total number of enrolled credits at all system colleges and universities shall not exceed 22 in any semester."

5) Common Market Passport:

This is an arrangement that pre-dates MnSCU but is still on the books and four-year institutions publicize it to varying degrees. It allows a student who is already admitted at one institution to take courses at another, without going through the admissions process. The seven state universities participate in the program. To qualify for the Common Market program students must have at least a 2.0 cumulative GPA, be an undergraduate student, and be classified as at least a sophomore.

To take part in the program, students complete a Common Market Passport form from their Registrar's office. The form includes basic information such as student name, the school they plan to attend, and the courses they intend to take there. The form is signed by the student's advisor and submitted to the Registrar's office. If the student qualifies, the form is sent to the other school and is registered for the classes requested.

Credits earned via Common Market are considered resident credits of the student's home university. Students pay the school they attend for registration, and if they are receiving financial aid it is issued at their home school. Students need to make special arrangements to have the financial aid sent to them. Students are limited to taking courses on a Common Market basis for only two consecutive terms.

While this arrangement currently only applies to four-year institutions, it could be adapted for two-year institutions as well. It would work best for two-year to two-year and four-year to four-year arrangements. It might be possible for two-year to four-year but would be more complicated.

From instructional cost study to allocation framework: How state resources are allocated



Lumoa Team – October 19, 2015

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities

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Overview

- History & Development
- Allocation Framework vs. Allocation Model
- Allocation Model
 - Instruction & Academic Support
 - Student & Institutional Support
 - Facilities
 - Library
 - Research & Public Service
 - Revenue off-set
- Instruction & Academic Support Detail
- Fully Allocated Instructional Cost Study



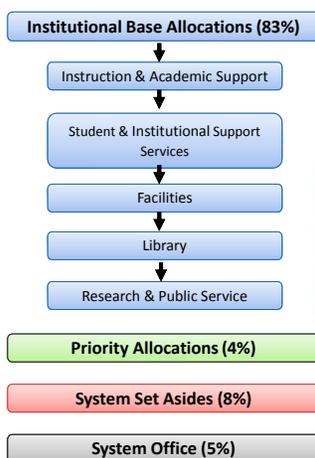
History & Development

- Post-merger in 1995 – the system had 3 different allocation models for each of the merged system’s
- Board of Trustees adopted vision in 1999
 - “A single model which equitably recognizes the diversity of MnSCU students’ needs and adequately supports the unique educational goals of each institution”
- Workgroups established to assist with the design of the allocation model
- Current allocation framework and model fully implemented in FY2006
- Allocation framework and model only allocates state appropriation. All other revenue generated locally are kept locally



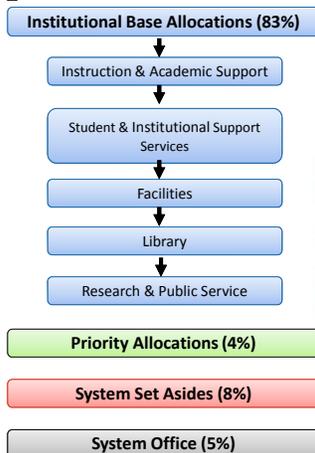
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Allocation Framework vs. Allocation Model



4

Base Allocation Model – Instruction & Academic Support



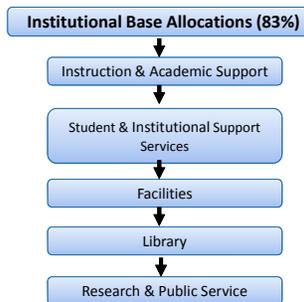
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Base Allocation Model – Student & Institutional Support Services



6

Base Allocation Model - Facilities



7

Base Allocation Model – Library, Research & Public Service



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Revenue Buy-down

- Allocation model only allocates state appropriations
- Isolates state appropriation from other general fund revenue (tuition)
- Recognizes expenses attributed to only state appropriation
- Purpose of buy-down is to account for the differences in tuition between institutions



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CIP Codes

- National Center for Education Statistics taxonomy scheme
- CIP = Classification of Instructional Programs
- Instructional program is defined as “a combination of courses and experiences that is designed to accomplish a predetermined objective or set of allied objectives such as preparation for advanced study, qualification for an occupation or range or occupations, or simply the increase of knowledge and understanding.”
- All courses assigned a 6-digit CIP code based on course content
- Programs are defined by either 2-, 4-, or 6-digit
 - 23 – English
 - 4008 – Physics
 - 513801 – Registered nursing



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Instruction/Academic Support – How it Works

- Revenue buy-down – 66.02%
- FY2014 FYE – 4,825
- Academic support - \$3,547,746
 - $\$3,547,746 * (1 - .6602) = \$1,205,445$
 - Academic support per FYE = \$250
- CIP 23 English – 680.97 FYE & \$2,171,270 direct instructional expenses
 - $\$2,171,270 * (1 - .6602) = \$737,635$
 - AS = 680.97 FYE * \$250 = \$170,243
 - Total Instruction/AS = \$907,878
 - Per FYE = \$1,333

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Instruction/Academic Support – How it Works cont.

- CIP 23 English – Instruction/Academic per FYE = \$1,333
- MnSCU CIP 23 English Average = \$1,817
- CIP Floor = \$1,635
- CIP Ceiling = \$1,999
- Results in a \$205,681 change for CIP 23 English – below the “band”
 - $\$1,635 - \$1,333 = \$302$
 - $\$302 * 680.97 = \$205,653$

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Within the band example

- CIP 16 Foreign Languages– Instruction/Academic per FYE = \$2,009
- MnSCU CIP 16 Foreign Languages Average = \$1,966
- CIP Floor = \$1,770
- CIP Ceiling = \$2,163
- Results in **no** change for CIP 16 Foreign Languages – within the “band”

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Above the band example

- CIP 1616 American Sign Language– Instruction/Academic per FYE = \$2,611
- MnSCU CIP 1616 American Sign Language Average = \$2,322
- CIP Floor = \$2,090
- CIP Ceiling = \$2,554
- Results in **-6,199** change for 1616 American Sign Language – above the “band”
 - $\$2,611 - \$2,554 = \$57$
 - $\$57 * 109.83 = -\$6,199$

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Fully Allocated Cost Study

- Based on same data that is used in allocation model
- Gross expenses – no revenue buy-down applied
- Compares direct and indirect expenses by CIP by level
- Direct expenses = instruction
- Indirect expenses per FYE = all other expenses (academic support, student services, institutional support, facilities)
 - \$3,580 per FYE
- CIP 23 English – Direct expenses
 - $\$2,171,270/680.97 \text{ FYE} = \$3,188 \text{ per FYE}$
- Fully allocated costs = $\$3,188 + \$3,580 = \$6,769$
- MnSCU average fully allocated costs CIP 23
 - Direct = \$3,640
 - Indirect = \$4,230
 - Fully allocated = \$7,870



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Process timeline

- Mid-October – initial expense, revenue, and enrollment data pulled from data warehouse
- Late-October – data compiled for instruction by level of instruction and by CIP code and shared with every college/university
- November/December – Colleges and universities are given 4 to 6 weeks to review their own data and make necessary adjustments
- December – System office reviews data and compiles rough data final to share for final review
- February – Allocation model completed and rough draft shared
- March – Fully allocated cost study completed



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Future of the allocation framework/model

- Charting the Future System Incentives and Rewards Recommendation:
 - Redesign the current financial model to incent and reward collaboration, Strategic Framework Commitments and Charting the Future recommendations
- Allocation Framework Technical Advisory Committee
 - Group responsible for evaluating changes to the framework and making recommendations for changes to MnSCU leadership
 - Group efforts currently underway to modify existing framework based on the recommendation by the System Incentives and Rewards team

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Data Feasibility for the MnSCU to Implement the (Multi-Institutional) Jointly Conferred Degree Program (JCDP)

Notes from the phone conversation with Craig Scheonecker (MnSCU System Office IR Director), initiated by Eri Fujieda (Luoma Action Team member and Winona State University Director of Institutional Planning, Assessment & Research) on March 17, 2016

1. Data implications

Type of Data	Current practice	Impact upon Implementation of the Jointly Conferred Program (JCDP)
Enrollment Count	Headcount is based on the count of individual students who enroll for credit in each institution in a given term. Concurrently enrolled students are counted for each of the institutions involved. On average, approximately 5% of students are enrolled in multiple MnSCU institutions at any term.	None. Should a student enroll in a JCDP <u>and take credit-bearing courses</u> in both/all of the institutions that participate in this program, this student will be counted in each of these institutions.
	Full-Year Equivalency (FYE) is calculated using the IPEDS formula to divide credit hours that are generated by enrollment in each institution in a given term. Formulas for undergraduate and graduate FYEs are different. No duplicate counting across MnSCU institutions.	None, as long as each course/section and credit hours generated in it is affiliated with only one institution.
Major Count	Headcount is based on the term-based count of individual students who have declared a major in a degree-awarding program and who enroll in an institution for at least one credit hour.	These counts will be affected. The major count would vary term by term should JCDP majors register at different institutions each term to take needed courses. Tracking JCDP majors via Tech ID will require collaboration among IR offices in all involved institutions. It is best also to sequence courses to minimize the need to switch institutions.
First-Year and Transfer Cohort Count	Each institution counts these students using admission codes.	These counts will be affected. Whenever JCDP majors take courses only from their non-home institution, they will be counted as transfers to the non-home institution while non-retained by their home-institution. If JCDP majors returned to their home-institution, they are considered as retained.
Count of Retained Students	Each institution counts retained students based on their re-registration record.	This count will be affected. See above.

Type of Data	Current practice	Impact upon Implementation of the Jointly Conferred Program (JCDP)
Completer Count	Each institution counts completers when the student record shows the completion of all requirements of a degree program. Only one institution counts a student's completion of a degree program.	Not determined. Should there be more than one transcripts for a JCDP degree, the completer count can be based on the number of transcripts for the JCDP degree, allowing double counting of completers across the MnSCU.
Retention/ Graduation Rates	Each institution calculates the retention and graduation rates using the first-time fall-entry cohort number as the base.	These rates calculation will be affected. Because JCDP majors will switch institutional affiliations as needed, the retention/graduation rates for the institution they entered as first-time students will be affected.
Financial Aid	The institution where students are enrolled handles the financial aid. Should students take credits in other institutions and transfer them to the "home" institution, the "home" institution will manage the transfer of financial aid credit to the other institution.	Workload may be affected due to the expected increase in transferring financial aid credit to other institutions when JCDP majors enroll in courses from more than one institution, with or without official transfer on record.
Student Debt	Students' debt calculation is based on credit hours at each institution.	No impact.

2. Allocation Model

The Technical Advisory Committee is charged with revising the current allocation model, particularly to incorporate student success outcome performance and collaboration performance into the model.

As of mid-March, 2016, the following recommendations are in progress.

- a. The student success outcome performance-based allocation will start at 1% of the total allocation and ultimately be scaled up to 5%. The student success outcome performance will be measured by the second fall persistence (including transfers) /completion for full-time and part-time students.
- b. The allocation based on the collaboration performance may be regarded as a factor that can be applied to the entire model. The measure of collaboration is still under discussion, although such measures as the FYE/headcount enrollment positively affected by collaborative programs (in both academic and non-academic areas) and the cost of collaboration are considered.

3. "Joint degree" history in the MnSCU

Prior to the merger of Minnesota Technical Colleges and Minnesota Community Colleges in the 1970s, "joint-degree associate programs" were developed so that technical college students would have access to associate degrees. Reflecting the accreditation status, associate degrees were conferred only by community colleges.

Policy Title: Institutional Change

Number: INST.F.20.040

An institution shall have the obligation to report institutional changes to the Commission as identified in this policy and related policies and to seek and receive Commission approval where appropriate prior to implementing specific changes.

The institution shall use the Commission's change reporting protocol for this purpose. Changes identified as requiring prior Commission approval prior to implementation shall be included in the institution's accreditation only after the Commission has reviewed the change through a process identified in this policy and formally acted to approve the change. Changes identified as requiring Commission notification are included in the institution's accreditation provided that the institution provides timely notification to the Commission through the Institutional Update and other data reporting instruments established by the Commission according to a schedule established by the Commission. However, institutions that have access to the Notification Program for Additional Locations must notify the Commission and receive acknowledgment prior to initiating the Additional Location.

Institutional Change Requiring Notification or Approval

1. Changes in actual or apparent mission of the institution or its educational objectives require prior COMMISSION APPROVAL.
2. Significant changes in the character or nature of the student body of the institution, particularly, but not limited to, those changes involved in seeking international students for the first time or acquiring students being taught-out of programs provided by a closing institution require prior COMMISSION APPROVAL.
3. Initiation of new academic program(s) or major(s) other than those listed below, or cancellation or suspension of academic programs requires COMMISSION NOTIFICATION. The following changes require prior COMMISSION APPROVAL:
 - The addition of academic program(s) at a degree or credential level not previously included in the institution's accreditation by the Commission;
 - the addition of academic program(s), including Title IV-eligible Certificate programs not related to existing degree programs, that represent a *significant departure* from programs previously included in the institution's accreditation;
 - the addition of a direct assessment program or the addition of competency-based programs wherein the academic program is organized around competencies;¹
 - the addition of academic programs that require allocation of substantial financial investment or resources, or any programs acquired from another institution;

- the addition of academic programs outside stipulations imposed by a previous Commission action limiting such activity without prior approval.
4. A change in one or more of the following requires NOTIFICATION OR APPROVAL:
 - change from clock to credit hours in one or more institutional programs;
 - substantial increase or decrease in the number of clock or credit hours required for successful completion of an academic program;
 - change in term length (e.g. semesters to quarters or semesters to a five-week compressed term) that affects 25% or more of all the institution's courses or programs; and
 - increase or decrease in the number of credit hours per course in 25% or more of the courses in the institution's curriculum.
 5. Change in the method of delivery of courses or programs requires prior COMMISSION APPROVAL:
 - The initial offering of academic programs through distance, correspondence or other alternate delivery wherein 50% or more of the courses or credits in the program are provided through the alternate delivery;
 - The initial offering of courses through distance, correspondence or other alternate delivery if the institution is not already approved to offer programs through that delivery mechanism; and
 - Programs offered for the first time by an institution are subject to review and approval, if required, by the Commission as a new program (see #3 of this section) prior to being reviewed as distance or correspondence education.
 6. The establishment of a campus or an additional location requires prior COMMISSION APPROVAL unless the institution has been approved for access to the Notification Program for Additional Locations as outlined in INST.F.20.050.
 7. The acquisition of a campus or an additional location from another institution, including one established or acquired in order to provide for teach-out of the students from another institution, requires prior COMMISSION APPROVAL unless the institution has been approved for access to the Notification Program for Additional Locations as outlined in INST.F.20.050.
 8. Closure or suspension for more than one semester of any of the following requires COMMISSION NOTIFICATION: 1) a course location outside the state of the institution's main campus at which an institution offers five or more courses per year, 2) an additional location, or 3) a campus.
 9. The establishment of a course location at either an international location or at a location outside the institution's home state at which the institution offers five or more courses per year requires prior COMMISSION NOTIFICATION.
 10. The initiation of a contractual or other arrangement wherein an institution outsources some portion of one or more of its educational programs to any of the following parties: an unaccredited institution; an institution that is not accredited by an accreditor recognized by the U.S. Department of Education; or a corporation or other entity:

- less than 25% of any educational program outsourced to the other party requires COMMISSION NOTIFICATION;
 - 25%-50% of any educational program outsourced to the other party requires prior COMMISSION APPROVAL;
 - more than 50% of any educational program outsourced to the other party will receive intense scrutiny and will not be approved by the Commission except in exceptional circumstances. (Note that 34 CFR 668.5(3)(ii)(A) provides that educational programs provided through contractual arrangements between an accredited institution and an ineligible entity wherein more than 50% of the educational program is being provided by the ineligible entity will not receive Title IV assistance even if approved by the accreditor.)
- ii. The initiation of a consortial or other arrangement wherein a consortium of institution(s) accredited by an accreditor recognized by the U.S. Department of Education² provides a significant portion of the academic program:
- 25-50% of one or more of the institution's educational programs provided by the consortium or other accredited institution requires COMMISSION NOTIFICATION;
 - more than 50% of one or more of the institution's educational programs provided by the consortium or other accredited institution requires prior COMMISSION APPROVAL.

¹ For institutions that offered competency-based programs prior to December 1, 2014, the Commission will validate the ongoing approval of the programs and their inclusion in the accreditation of the institution.

² The accreditor must be recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as an institutional accreditor whose scope of recognition includes the accreditation of degree-granting institutions.

Approval of Substantive Change

An institution requesting prior approval of a substantive change shall present appropriate application information seeking approval of change according to the Commission's change review protocol. Generally, such materials shall be reviewed by the Commission according to the provisions of this section; however, certain types of change may require additional review provisions as provided herein. With the exception of changes submitted under INST.F.20.030 Non-Substantive Changes in the Accreditation Relationship Between an Institution and the Commission - Notification, the process will result in formal approval of all substantive changes by a Commission decision-making body effective on or after the date of the action of that body. In no case will such approval be retroactive.

Policy Number Key

Section INST: Institutional Policies

Chapter F: Maintenance and Monitoring

Part 20: Intermittent Monitoring

Last Revised: February 2016

First Adopted: June 2010

Revision History: November 2011, November 2012, April 2013, November 2013, February 2014, February 2016

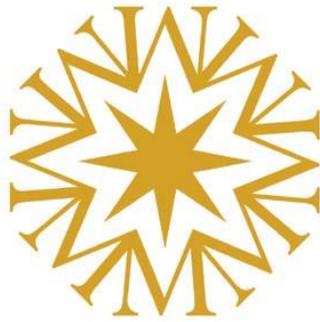
Notes: Policies combined November 2012 – 3.2(a), 3.2(b), 3.2(b)I

Related Policies: INST.B.20.040 Change of Control, Structure, or Organization, FDCR.B.10.010 Commission Approval of Institutional Teach-Out Arrangements, INST.F.20.030 Non-Substantive Changes in the Accreditation Relationship Between an Institution and the Commission

Luoma Leadership Academy

2013-2014

Project #9 Collaborative Academic Program Planning



Minnesota
STATE COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES

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Executive Summary

In July 2013, Luoma participants were charged with projects to complete during their year as Luoma Leadership Academy participants. Luoma Project 9, Collaborative Academic Planning, is the focus of this report, and the participants in this project engaged fully with the topic as well as with the project's sponsors. The end result is a document that offers background information about the project, a brief literature review of key articles, a notation of the processes followed, a framework for classifying the findings of Project #9's participants' findings, a discussion of the findings, recommendations, and conclusions.

Specifically, the Project 9 team wanted to know what works well in the MnSCU system, and what are the roadblocks to collaboration in general and specifically to the MnSCU system. In general, the system has some successful collaborations both within the system and with partners not in the MnSCU system. There are micro and macro level collaborations in place on campuses around the state. A general roadblock to collaboration that is not unique to the MnSCU system is the fear of a loss of autonomy and distinctiveness. This fear is mostly on the part of faculty, but it can also be found in staff related collaborations. Another is a lack of incentive to put in the needed effort above and beyond one's burgeoning workload in order for collaboration to happen. Specific barriers to collaboration within the MnSCU system are related to fear, lack of trust, issues of respect, identity, terminology and definitions, and communication. In order to foster collaboration and to dispel barriers, MnSCU's role is to take a broad overview of the entire system, create a system of reward and adoption, and communicate effectively and thoroughly.

Charting the Future of Collaboration

“Even though we remain steadfastly committed to our compact with Minnesota, we know too well that our ability to fulfill this promise is at risk – threatened by challenges that could weaken educational quality and our ability to deliver on our commitments.” *Charting the Future*, Nov. 20th 2013 – page 2.

The above quote, taken from the completed *Charting the Future for a Prosperous Minnesota* (MnSCU 2013b) document is the lead in for a series of changes recommended in assisting MnSCU in securing a more stable, innovative, and efficient Higher Education platform within Minnesota. One recommendation that emerged early on in this process was an understanding of the power of collaboration, a guiding principle set forth by the Strategic Workgroups to “*Transform Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) to better meet the needs of our students, our community partners and our state by: 1) forging deeper collaborations among our colleges and universities and system office, and 2) fully leveraging our collective strengths, resources and human capital.*” (MnSCU, 2013, pg.1).

This recommendation led to a list of collaborative examples within MnSCU (2013b 7), an emphasis on a variety of collaborative hierarchies, and laid the groundwork for a 2013-2014 Luoma Leadership Academy Action Learning Project. This project, Project #9 Collaborative Academic Program Planning (afterwards referred to as the team), was charged with elucidating a series of successful tools and information for guiding inter-institutional academic program collaboration based on current research and to specifically assess the principles, barriers, and incentives needed for such collaboration. This document is the result of that work and will hopefully serve to provide a richer level of detail to accompany those initial examples from *Charting the*

Future.

This document includes a brief literature review and use of two particular studies conducted by Kezar (2005) (Appendix B) and Kezar (2006) (Appendix C) on collaboration from which the team developed a work template (Appendix A). This work consisted of a series of exemplary case studies from recent collaborative efforts within MnSCU including commonalities as well as where gaps exist. Although several of these are academically focused, the team chose to include other examples to further exemplify the complexities of collaboration. Building from this is a section on roadblocks, which are both general and specific to our system. Finally, examination of these cases leads to a broader set of recommendations designed to encompass internal (intra) and external (inter) collaborations in order to meet the needs future collaborative efforts geared toward and , thereby make academic program planning a reality for MnSCU institutions.

Limitations Involved in the Documentation Process

At the beginning of the project almost a year ago, project 9 Team explored the reasons for desiring to serve on the team. The common denominator was a desire to ultimately create smooth transitions for students within the MnSCU system. The system is currently set up to foster competition as opposed to collaboration, and to become a system where transitions are smooth, there has to be some give and take. With the give and take of collaboration, there are also some fears. This section will explore the fears of collaboration that were either explicitly stated or there was implicit reference to them. The team will also note its own fears about the work it has done.

The interviews conducted were done so because of relationships that were in place and a certain amount of trust. There was hesitation on the part of interviewees about putting everything on the table for fear of where it would appear. The project

started out as a report rather than research, yet the nature of the project quickly become qualitative research. In retrospect, perhaps the team should have set up the strict parameters of research complete with IRB steps in order to protect the identity of those sharing their knowledge of collaboration. The first fear, therefore, was on the part of those being interviewed and that fear was based upon an uncertainty of how publicly truly honest comments would be shared.

When collaboration involves faculty courses and programs, there is fear of job loss and becoming expendable. In addition, programs that are unique to institutions are part of their identity, so collaborating to share and spread that work carries a certain fear of ownership loss.

Within the team, another fear surfaced as the discussion led to the lack of smoothness in the transition between two-year and four-year. When the question arose about why degrees earned at one institution may not be completely accepted as students move to complete a four-year degree, the fear of those four-year institutions is one of accepting work that may not meet the basic criteria of a field. The example was given of a field that requires deep interaction with the personal interaction components being a required part of the four-year program. When a two-year institution offers the content in a distance-learning format, there is a complete lack of trust that the students have met the requirement for the face-to-face interaction, thus the fear of accepting work that is not the same leads to the fear of producing graduates who are not truly prepared.

Another fear the team encountered was about its own work and how it would be used. For example, the team fears retaliation in exposing the system's shortcomings in collaboration because our work could cause MnSCU to take actions that might cost colleagues their jobs. While the team understands that change often challenges the

existence of business as usual, it does not desire to make strong recommendations as part of this work, and that leads the team back to the starting point of the scope of our work, which was to gather information about collaborations and to notice what was not smooth.

Collaboration in Higher Education

“a process in which a group of autonomous stakeholders of an issue domain engage in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms, and structures to act or decide on issues related to that domain” (Wood and Gray’s 1991: 437).

Very little research exists describing how academic institutions have developed effective collaborations either within their institutions or within a system environment (Kezar, 2005 & 2006). Due to the high failure rate of collaborations (approximately 50% as reported by Doz, 1996), much of the research has focused on barriers of collaboration, behaviors and attitudes of personnel, and specific rather system-wide collaboration (Kezar and Hirsch, 2002; Martin & Murphy, 2000). Some successful models are reported in business literature; however, to ensure success these models would require significant adaptation to fit higher education’s specific context (Birnbaum, 1991). Moreover, higher education institutions are often not structured to support wide collaboration due to the rigid nature of departments, inherent hierarchical units, and the separation between academic and student affairs (Kanter, 1994; Senge, 1990).

Creating a Template for Understanding Collaboration in Higher Education

In 2005, researcher Adrianna Kezar reviewed four models (Arino & Torre, 1998; Doz, 1996; Mohrman et al., 1995; Ring & Van de Ven, 1994) of collaboration that

existed in the literature based on their relatedness to collaboration, frequency of citations, and inclusivity of varied perspectives. Since the focus of this project is to increase systemic understanding of *how* system collaborations became successful rather than *what* were the factors that made them successful, the team chose to frame this report using the same framework created by Kezar (2005; 2006), adapted from Mohrman et al. (1995), due to its emphasis of understanding *how* to create a “context for collaboration”.

Kezar (2005) developed a three-stage model of collaboration (Fig. 1). Each stage has unique elements described below; however, they all share a networking element. Networks were defined as existing groups of people willing to engage in and support collaborative efforts. They carried the messages of collaboration and kept initiatives moving forward. Kezar (2005) explicitly notes in her model the importance of these networks at all stages and that system change cannot come only from the top down. Moreover, these networks of individuals or groups often became leaders within stage two, moving all collaborative initiatives and changes forward.

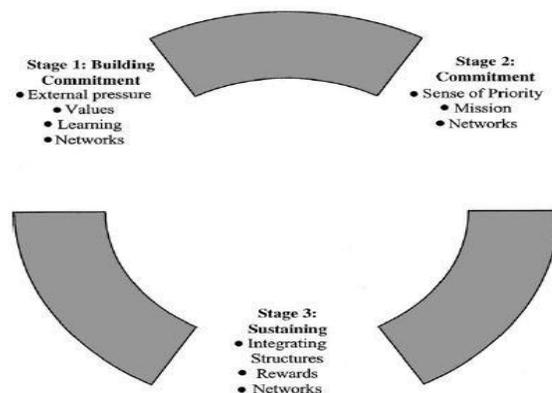


Fig. 1: Stage Model of Collaboration in Higher Education (Kezar, 2005).

Three elements were critical for building collaboration commitment: external pressure, values, and learning. External pressure from a variety of institutional and economic forces created a compelling case for collaboration. These pressures provided evidence and support for the need to collaborate. For example, the reduction in state-funded support for higher education in Minnesota has created external pressure for MnSCU to increase efficiencies and reduce duplication of programs.

The three values most described by Kezar included being student centered, innovative, and egalitarian. In other words, Kezar (2005) noted that collaboration was easier due to a “common ground for why to collaborate (students), an ethos to experiment (innovation) and the egalitarian ethic helped people to see the value in other people that obliterated hierarchies” (p. 846). A shared value system is key to building commitment for engaging in and supporting collaborative initiatives and system changes. Lastly, learning proved essential to all four institutions in building commitment for collaboration. Specifically, Kezar (2005) noted how important it was for change agents to educate others about collaboration’s benefits. Once individuals and groups engaged in learning about the benefits of collaboration they were able to increase their support for system-wide collaboration. Examples included evidence that supports collaboration as a tool for enhancing student learning outcomes.

Stage 2 is defined by Kezar as Commitment. This stage includes two elements: sense of priority and mission. If individuals felt that administration was not making collaboration a primary priority they likely did not support collaborative initiatives. In addition, administrators needed to exemplify the behavior of collaborating in their day-to-day work. The element of mission refers to an institution needing to rethink the entire mission or purpose of their organization in order to create a system-wide sense of

collaboration. For example, collaboration must be infused within all of teaching and learning - the core business of Higher Education.

Stage 3 is defined by Kezar as Sustaining. This stage includes two elements: integrating structures and rewards. Integrating structures were needed to facilitate cross-functional activities such as altering full time employment structures to allow for faculty to teach in inter-disciplinary programs as well as creating new accounting, computer and budgetary systems based on principles of collaboration. Lastly, reward systems were redesigned to support collaboration. Primarily, tenure and promotion systems were altered to reward collaborative initiatives. Kezar noted that although the above was the primary reward strategy, many campuses offered a variety of incentives within the same campus in order to be flexible in meeting discipline-specific needs.

The team's approach to completing their work was done through two avenues. First, team members selected a series of recent collaborative efforts from across MnSCU where they had either firsthand knowledge, or access to individuals integral to the programs. Second, once this work was done, additional research on collaborative efforts in higher education outside of MnSCU was conducted to correlate with and expand upon concepts documented in the first set. These insights from outside of MnSCU are interspersed throughout the recommendations and roadblocks portion of this report.

In conducting their work on MnSCU efforts, project members were instructed to collect the following information about the collaborations under investigation: history of relationship, initial collaboration concept, process and timeframe for conceptualization to realization, smooth and difficult processes, differences that may have been done, processes still needing to be carried out, collaboration surprises, and benefits to

stakeholders. After this, project members were then asked to re-interview or apply Kezar's three-stage template, previously described, to each case to see where components were present or absent, after which a series of final recommendations could be drawn (Please See Appendix A for the template document and Appendix D for expanded case study details).

The following is the list of academic programs selected for this report:

Translating and Interpreting (TRIN) Program; North Hennepin Community College (NHCC) and Concordia College 2+2 Business Program; NHCC and Minnesota State University Moorhead 2+2 Biosciences Program; Century College, Holmes Corporation, and Society for Human Resource Management Program; and Inver Hills Community College, Normandale Community College, Minneapolis Community and Technical College and Concordia College 2+2 Educational Foundations Program. Below is a brief summary of each collaborative effort. Following these is chart outlining how each of these programs aligned with Kezar's stages, accompanied by detailed analysis. Complete template materials related to each study including program guiding documents and materials is provided in Appendix A.

Translating and Interpreting Program

The Translating and Interpreting (TRIN) program is designed to educate students in developing professional interpreting skills. It is especially well suited for students who have had previous related work experience and wish to provide accurate, culturally-competent interpretation in a variety of settings in our increasingly diverse communities. Coursework includes consecutive interpreting, simultaneous interpreting, translation techniques, working within the code of ethics of interpreting, intercultural

communication, critical thinking, collaboration, and concepts in psychology and socio-linguistics. Students are trained to work in a variety of settings, including education, health care facilities, social service agencies, and legal settings. The program first started as an initiative out of Century College's Continuing Education and Customized Training (CECT). Because of community demand, CECT partnered with the University of Minnesota and the Upper Midwest Translation and Interpreting Association (UMTIA). These partners received three grants totaling over \$400,000 to create a two year degree track for the field of Interpreting and Translation within Minnesota making the degree accessible to greater Minnesota and smaller community interpreters alike.

North Hennepin Community College and Concordia College 2+2 Business Program

North Hennepin Community College's Business Department is continuously seeking four-year institutions for collaboration in a seamless transition from their two-year programs to their four-year degree options. One such collaboration was between North Hennepin and Concordia University. The collaboration was born out of a shared value between the two institutions: making higher education accessible to students. In addition to shared values, the two institutions formed the relationship based upon logic and the workability. Though the two institutions had not had a long-standing relationship built upon previous collaborations, there was a mutual respect for what each institution brought to the table. The study highlights the reason many MnSCU two-year institutions partner with four-year institutions that are not in the MnSCU system. The collaboration between Business Programs at North Hennepin Community College and Concordia University provides an opportunity for students to complete a two year degree and then move immediately on the same campus into a four year degree.

North Hennepin Community College and Minnesota State University Moorhead 2+2 Biosciences Program

The collaboration between North Hennepin Community College (NHCC) and Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM) was born out of a grant that was received for the two institutions to use in order to create a seamless transition for students as they moved from a two-year course of study to their final two years. The collaboration between NHCC and MSUM allows students to begin their work at NHCC, complete a two-year degree, and then continue without leaving the NHCC campus to complete a baccalaureate degree from MSUM. This relationship has produced MSUM graduates whose degrees originated at NHCC. Sadly, the relationship between NHCC and MSUM will end due to financial constraints. In order for the collaboration to work, MSUM had to provide faculty and staff onsite at NHCC, specifically faculty classroom and office space. Nonetheless, the venture was costly for MSUM. This collaboration has been incredibly meaningful for students especially for those involved in undergraduate research in the biosciences. NHCC is currently seeking another four-year partner in order to continue this seamless transition for students.

Century College, Holmes Corporation, and Society for Human Resource Management Program

The SHRM partnership, started over ten years ago, was an attempt to reach Human Resource professionals for national certification test preparation. The certification grants the designation of Professional Human Resource (PHR), or Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR), or Global Professional in HR (GPHR). The goal at that time at Century College was to offer face to face instructor led courses on campus. Over time, the college adopted the use of Interactive Television (ITV) and online learning methods in an attempt to keep the program attractive to busy professionals. Once the college made the classes

more accessible through the use of technology, the College invited other MnSCU partners into the mix. Over the past ten years, Century has partnered with over a dozen MnSCU colleges to offer national test preparation classes to busy Human Resource Professionals. The College has been very strategic in their instructor selection, resulting in student pass rates higher than the national average on most if not all testing cycles.

Minneapolis Community and Technical College, Normandale Community College and Inver Hills Community College Educational Foundations Program

Beginning in 2012, Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC), Normandale Community College (NCC), and Inver Hills Community College (IHCC) have successfully collaborated together to produce a more cohesive Education Foundations Program. Collectively the program provides a comprehensive, quality, pre-professional education curriculum that facilitates equal access to relevant upper-division teacher education licensure as well as staff development opportunities for urban educators which includes A.S. degree programs in early childhood and educational foundations. The Program's collaborators believe strongly in developing ethical pathways and transfer options for diverse students who seek a bachelor's degree and teaching licensure. The Education Foundations programs, at the two-year level, introduce students to the field of teaching through a series of pre-professional introductory courses and recommended electives. The curriculum includes opportunities to examine professional knowledge, engage in reflection, and understand culturally relevant approaches to instruction while also becoming immersed in classroom experiences in local K-12 schools. This value added model is derived from the program coordinators' years as teachers in the K-12 system and continued close work with teachers, administrators, and students.

During the production of this report, an opportunity was made available to the

Team to include a non-academic collaboration to use as a comparison to its other work and to more fully understand the workings of such models. This effort, M State Shared Services Program; is summarized in the following paragraph.

MState Business Services Program

MState Business Services provide payroll shared services and collaboration through a Campus Service Cooperative that includes six colleges, one university and one MNSCU agency. The idea of collaboration came primarily from understanding the trends in higher education statewide and nationally. With MNSCU being a large system and technology capabilities increasing, it seemed that employee collaboration for back office operations was sensible. Approximately one year from concept to realization MState had a process in place. This was heavily influenced by the fact that M State was used to doing business process from a distance and possessed standing protocols. Collaboration benefits are passed to students via sharing resources and services that hold down costs and could potentially positively impact other increases including tuition, allowing M State to protect academic budgets while still being accountable to state legislators.

Simplified Chart Showing Case Studies Related to Kezar (2006) Components

	External	Values	Learning	Networks	Priority	Mission	Structures	Rewards
Shared Services	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
TRIN Program	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Business		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bioscience	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Human Resources		X	X	X	X	X		X
Education	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Key: X = Present

Elements Present in Each Case Study

After reviewing all case studies presented in this report using the elements Kezar's (2005) model, there are clear trends. First, not all elements were present for each successful collaboration model; however, each model had at least six elements present. These results suggest that Kezar's model is a strong framework to guide future collaboration models within MnSCU.

Second, in all of the successful case studies, Values, Learning, Networks, Sense of Priority and Mission appeared to be most important in that they were elements of each case that led to the success of the collaboration. Within the Values domain, it was clear that the collaborating partners' values were allied before the collaboration begins and that there was mutually respect. Most individuals interviewed commented on how important it was to learn from the process of collaboration. Specifically, the most

repeated learning was that continuous education and reminders were needed on the benefits of collaboration to keep forward momentum.

Third, it was clear Networks were needed throughout the process of the collaboration. Most individuals interviewed noted that within the Networks leaders supporting and sustaining the project was key. If leadership was not involved, aware, or did not support the collaboration it would have not succeeded.

Fourth, the elements of Sense of Priority and Mission were addressed in each case study. If the collaboration did not have priority and there was no clear mission, most individuals interviewed stated it would not have been successful. In particular, the Sense of Priority element was a strong element in regards to those “doing the work” of the collaboration. All interviewees noted that collaborating was very time intensive and required a lot of additional work above and beyond normal job tasks. Thus, if there was not a strong priority, the work of collaborating would have fallen to the bottom of the list in terms of daily tasks. While evaluating the elements of Kezar’s (2005) model that were important to determining why the collaborations were successful, it was also key to assess which elements appeared in some case studies and which elements did not in order to further evaluate their impact.

Elements Absent in Each/Some Case Studies

The following elements of Kezar’s (2005) model appeared in some of the case studies but not all: 1) External Pressure, 2) Integrating Structures, and 3) Rewards. First, the External Pressure element was a driving force in all case studies but two. It appears as though for smaller, more direct collaborations with clear missions and a short time frame external pressure is not necessary for successful collaborations. Conversely, for those collaborations that involved large units or multiple institutions and included

elements of major structural changes (i.e., redesigning systems, changing job descriptions), external pressure was key. It is clear *Charting the Future* will serve as this external pressure for future collaborations and is an integral part of creating change within a large system such as MnSCU.

The Integrating Structures element was included in all case studies but one. For most of the case studies, integrating structures included: technology changes (i.e. designing a program to be delivered online), major systems redesigned (i.e. integrating financial aid systems), and discussions around how to work within the union contracts and still meet the goals of the collaboration. It is clear that the element of Integrating Structures was the most difficult, required the greatest amount of resources, and was clearly linked to the final element of Rewards (i.e. resources to accomplish the integration); however, integrating structures was a necessity in order for the collaboration to work.

Rewards within the case studies presented included some external rewards. Notably, most interviewees highlighted the internal rewards the collaboration utilized such as keeping costs down for students and enhancing efficiencies to do more with less. External rewards included providing resources to accomplish the work needing to be done whether it was the purchase of technology, release time, or hiring more personnel. The rewards appeared to align with the nature of the collaboration; that is, those collaborations that were more time intensive, included integrating systems, and carried the fear of job loss as a result of collaboration needed more external rewards for the collaboration to succeed. Specifically, the most prominent concern stated within the larger collaborations was the fear of losing one's job as a result of doing collaborative work. All of these elements were considered when making the following

recommendations for collaboration in academic program planning as *Charting the Future* strategies are implemented.

Recommendations for Collaboration in Academic Program Planning

Kezar (2006) provides a series of detailed recommendations, summarized and reorganized below, for individuals responsible for establishing a collaborative culture:

- Review the mission and underlying campus philosophy before finding ways to effectively communicate the new mission and philosophy to campus groups.
- Obtain support from senior executives and recommend that they publicly model collaboration.
- Review campus systems and processes with an eye toward revising computing and accounting systems.
- Examine and build campus networks to foster momentum for change and troubleshooting problems.
- Rethink traditional structures and add new ones such as cross-disciplinary institutions.
- Identify key values that support collaboration, such as innovation, and promote them.
- Build collaboration into all major campus documents such as strategic plans, accreditation reports and board memoranda.
- Provide sessions to inform individuals about collaboration benefits with faculty from multiple disciplines as spokespersons.
- Highlight external pressures for collaboration in speeches and campus announcements.
- Alter rewards structures and add new ones to include cross-disciplinary institutions.

Generally, these recommendations fall into four categories:

- **Planning:** including reviewing existing models and values before visualize new models and values.
- **Support:** gain support from each part of the system including administration, staff, faculty, and students.

- **Communication:** effectively communicate new models and values to all system parts.
- **Reward:** reward new models and values.

In a February 7, 2014 presentation at the Annual Luoma Leadership Gathering, Dan Olson, Vice President at the STAR Collaborative, outlined six key factors that contribute to effective change management (bit.ly/luoma2014). These contributing factors can be readily re-purposed when considering the collaborative process. The six factors are:

- Active and visible executive sponsorship
- Frequent and open communication
- Structured management
- Dedicated resources and funding
- Employee engagement and participation
- Engagement with and support from middle management

When viewed in association with Kezar's recommendations, one again sees the clear importance of communication, structured planning and participation from all levels of the institution, and reward and resources dedicated to the process.

Roadblocks to Collaboration in Academic Program Planning

Not surprisingly, very little research exists regarding information on *how* to develop successful academic program collaborations either inter or intra-institutionally.

In 2001, Stein & Short reported perceptions of faculty, administrators, students and state policy makers and analyzed them to provide understanding of the complexities of collaboration and the barriers and challenges in the design. Using grounded theory to analyze interviews, field notes, documents and observational data of one academic institution that successfully implemented a variety of academic collaborative

programming, Stein and Short reported essential characteristics of cooperation and collaboration and barriers to collaboration that will require consideration.

First, Stein and Short (2001) describe the importance of understanding the difference of cooperation versus collaboration. Many of the interviewees commented on the distinction of cooperation being short-term and collaboration being a long-term venture. Moreover, collaboration is more likely to require groundwork that includes assessing assumptions, values, and philosophical positions of group members before establishing goals and objectives.

Second, benefits of collaboration must be a win/win. For example, those participating in academic program collaboration must believe that doing so will benefit them, their students, or their program positively. Examples of these benefits may include increased access for students, professional development opportunities for faculty, or good will toward the larger community.

One of the major barriers to collaboration cited by Stein & Short (2001) include faculty feeling that they are giving up their autonomy or distinctiveness as most academic programs are designed to compete against each other and create a level of superiority over others even within the same academic system. In addition, Stein & Short note both faculty and administrators “fear of the unknown”, “fear of technology”, and “fear that we will look bad” (p. 427) as major obstacles to collaboration. Lastly, lack of incentives or rewards for engaging in collaborative work was a barrier; most noting it takes longer and is often harder work.

Again referencing Dan Olson’s Luoma presentation on change management, he outlined four of the greatest obstacles to effective change management (bit.ly/luoma2014). These obstacles can again be readily re-purposed when

considering the collaborative process and include:

- Ineffective sponsorship from senior leaders
- Insufficient change resources
- Resistance from employees and middle management
- Poor communication

In considering these, obstacles one can immediately return to the key factors necessary in engaging in collaboration and simply flip them to their opposite and see where the obstacles will invariably lay.

MnSCU SPECIFIC BARRIERS

After reviewing the case studies, research, and long-term team discussion, including discussions with team sponsors, a list of MnSCU specific barriers can be compiled. This list would include, but not be limited to the following:

- **Lack of trust.** This barrier lies between three primary groups: 1) administration and faculty, 2) institution to institution (including 2 year to 4 year), 3) faculty to faculty (including different bargaining units as well as competing disciplines, etc.).
- **Fear.** This barrier primarily focuses on two areas: 1) individual job security or the likelihood that one's job would be eliminated either as a result of the collaboration or at its conclusion if the collaboration fails, and 2) job consistency where job descriptions are not updated but rather devolve to "other duties as assigned".
- **Independence vs. interdependence.** This barrier is generated primarily from the nature of how the MnSCU system has evolved overtime from a series of competing institutions to one larger system with hierarchical divisions. Furthermore, some aspects of the system continue to support this barrier when institutions, programs, faculty, and students, are ranked against one another for the purposes of funding, attention, etc.

- **Campus identity.** This barrier is closely tied to the above issue in terms of how it came to be and its continued presence. Campus must necessarily compete with each other within the current educational model to attract students resulting in “us vs. them” marketing of programs, campus environment, transferability, etc.
- **Issues with definitions.** This barrier relates specifically to system wide metrics including success, retention, and completion between schools. This barrier is listed directly below the above two because of its similarity in scope and direct relationship to the competitive and yet cooperative nature of the MnSCU system with each individual campuses. Furthermore, these issues must be addressed at a system level and are directly related to the next barrier.
- **Legislative involvement.** Invariably our funding structure is highly dependent upon the Minnesota legislature and maintaining a positive relationship with this entity. However, much still needs to be done to educate legislators, especially in the need for new metrics that more accurately reflect the issues listed directly above.
- **Staff buy-in and inclusion.** Often in our discussions within and across programs and institutions faculty and students are targeted for intensive communication. However, a stronger attention needs to be paid to staff inclusion and buy-in, including rewards structures and job consistency.
- **Respect.** Although this issue is somewhat present between administration and faculty, this barrier is specifically raised in relationship to the two year institutions within the system and their perceived value by four year institutions. This gap in perception typically flows from a misconception that two year faculty, staff, and students are somehow inferior in quality, education, or value.
- **Space.** This barrier centers on the logistical growth and use of existing spaces within and between institutions within the overall system and the current system of adding needed space.
- **Participation willingness within a “revolving door” administrative culture.** This barrier was initially discussed directly with Luoma program members the first day of their participation in program, brought up by human resources staff at the system level. Given the large percentages of administrative turnover throughout the system, these individuals may find little incentive to participate in

collaborations that will not directly benefit them. Furthermore, since all change and collaboration involve a level of effort as well as perceived risk, this may be a further barrier to revolving administration involvement.

- **Rewards.** This barrier directly relates to the compensation for administration, faculty, and staff that are directly involved with any new or existing collaboration efforts. Based on the research conducted by the team it is clear that rewards are not system-wide nor are they consistently present. Often, for example, faculty and staff are simply encouraged to add additional work to their loads for the benefit of students.

To further elaborate on this final barrier a longer discussion is provided. If all are in agreement that collaboration is a time-intensive endeavor, it is important to align rewards within the constraints of the MnSCU system with collaboration efforts. For example, a current member of the Luoma team is faculty member within the IFO contract. Her program includes 436 students and 20 graduate students. She is the only tenure-track person in her major and works with two fixed-term colleagues. She currently has 162 undergraduate advisees assigned to her and chairs over five masters theses. Eight-five percent of the program is taught by adjunct and fixed-term. Within this context rewards must align or something must be cut in order to permit the time to work on a bachelor completion program. Specifically, how is collaboration a part of the five areas of faculty member evaluation? Who awards the time for faculty members to work on collaboration and what is the cost? Most faculty indicated their concerns about the quality of their programs if given the release time to work on collaborations. That is, collaboration may come at the expense of undergraduate programs by hiring adjunct to back-fill the coursework. These issues will need to be addressed in order for collaborations to be successful and to function within the agreed upon parameters of union contracts and the MnSCU system.

The MnSCU System's Role in the Collaborative Process

The MnSCU system office has several key roles to play in ensuring the success of any continued or future collaboration efforts. Many of these have already been highlighted throughout this document but three are worth reiterating here:

- **System-level observation.** Primary among these is the system ability to look at things from the “10,000 foot” level. This means that where faculty and institutions must invariably look first to the needs of their individual students and campuses, the system office can look across the state and see areas where similar needs, opportunities, or projects are already underway. This can result in the generation of “heat maps” or areas of greatest need or opportunity or other system initiated tools.
- **Rewards and Adoption.** Secondary to system-level observation is the incorporation of system level rewards in addition to the structure in place at the individual institution level (which has been shown above to be a potential barrier area). Tied to this is a drive to then adopt the collaborations that have been created either systemically or at least at another location to see if results are repeatable. If these measures are placed at the top of the MnSCU hierarchy, then institutions throughout the system will adopt them into their own priorities. This could elevate peer to peer models from the department or program level to the college to college level. Similarly if rewards come directly from the system level this could relieve some of the perceived pressure on individual campuses to attempt to compensate faculty and staff that are directly involved. Furthermore, this system level role is directly tied to the third area below.
- **Ability to affect communication.** Communication has been shown to be one of the crucial factors in creating collaboration success. Although those involved at the ground level, especially those who generate initial collaboration ideas or models, are often united in purpose and values – in order for collaboration to ultimately succeed, it must be communicated throughout the chain of command within the institution. The above case studies showed that if administration was

not on board – communication was directly affected. System level communication could easily impact this area.

Recommendations for Academic Program Planning (Short Term)

While the list of MnSCU specific barriers to academic program planning collaboration is extensive, there are three barriers which seemed to stand out the most after compiling the interview data and comparing the case studies: 1) Fear; 2) Respect; and 3) Rewards. Thus, the Team felt it was important to provide more detail in hopes that these three barriers would be addressed early in the implementation process for *Charting the Future*.

Fear

While interviewing participants of successful collaborations, there was a recurring theme of discomfort about being completely honest about collaboration. In addition, there was additional fear that if the collaboration were successful participants would need to maintain the collaboration without additional resources (additional “other duties as assigned”). Perhaps an excellent starting point would be to carefully examine the fears that are associated with collaboration. If fears of the potential collaborators are not addressed, the work of collaboration has large potential to fail.

Respect

The main barrier of respect seemed to lie between the 2-year and 4-year institutions. The most common issue of respect was the 4-year faculty believing that the 2-year programs did not align with their expectations. The issue of online coursework came up as a potential problem in seamless 2-year to 4-year work within the system. This issue is part of a larger issue with distance learning, program development, and

communication across MnSCU institutions about transferability. There is also the problem that online courses are not capped consistently across the system, and this adds to the perception of quality in the online environment. For example, on some campuses, a course that would normally be capped at 20, if taught online, would be capped at 40. This assumes that quality does not suffer in an online environment when the class size is doubled. A hard look at excellent practice for distance learning should be taken in order to address this inconsistency. In addition, some individuals expressed the extreme pressure from their administration to teach courses online even if the faculty did not feel online education was the appropriate pedagogy for the content being delivered.

If the implementation teams of *Charting the Future* recommend strategies that move more programs and coursework online, the rationale for such, approach to it, communication concerning it, and training for distance learning delivery should be consistent across the system in order to assure quality. If the issue of respect is not addressed, it is likely that collaborative effort between 2-year and 4-year institutions (e.g., 2 + 2 programs) will not occur within the system and they will continue to occur with private and non-MnSCU institutions.

Rewards

Rewards for collaborating were not present in every case study; however, those collaborations that were more complex and required reimagining infrastructure rewards were essential. First, when interviewing successful collaboration participants, it was frequently mentioned that they feared maintaining the collaborations would be added to their workload without any reprieve or additional rewards in the form of personnel to assist with the added work. Second, collaboration was not seen as highly valued when

promotion and tenure decisions were made. Third, collaboration was viewed as going against the ethos of the MnSCU system in that programs and institutions compete with each other for students, funding, awards, etc. Thus, NOT collaborating is in the best interest of a program or institution wanting to stand out and identify itself as the “better program” in the state. These three barriers are substantial and probably cannot be completely eliminated but need to be addressed. We recommend *Charting the Future* implementation teams consider whether there is enough resources to conduct recommended collaborations, rethink systems of rewards so that collaboration is valued but still keeping the focus of the collaboration student-centered, and rethink how programs can maintain their identity while engaging in collaboration. For example, when programs report their retention statistics perhaps a student is considered “retained” if they stay within the MnSCU system.

Conclusions

While there is very little empirical research or models of excellence to draw upon to learn efficient ways to develop collaborative models to support the work set forth in the report *Charting the Future*, Kezar’s (2005) model of collaboration provides a framework to evaluate current structures and subsequent recommendations within the MnSCU system. Moreover, Stein and Short’s (2001) study provides important considerations of barriers the system may face from administrators and faculty as they move forward with collaborative academic program planning. Nevertheless, with thoughtful planning, resources and a serious evaluation of the mission/core business of MnSCU, it is clear the *system* will need to be redesigned to support collaboration.

Luoma Project #9 members focused their collective energies toward the

researching and examination of a series of collaboration efforts within MnSCU. These efforts resulted in the elucidation of a series of required components as well as barriers to collective opportunities. At the conclusion of their work, they presented a series of MnSCU specific barriers that one must overcome to make collaboration effective as well as areas where the system office can have the most impact. To that end, the tool that the team developed to facilitate their collaboration work as mentioned earlier has been included as a template for future initial efforts in Appendix A.

Finally, a project like this can never truly be complete. There are several areas where team members wanted to include additional materials or research but were limited by time and scope. Two areas were brought up by the team for inclusion in this report. The first would involve interviewing the other side of collaborations – specifically with privates in 2+2 programs – to be able to more fully understand their roles in collaboration efforts. Within this discussion it would be critical to discover specifically what they had to offer or give up to make the effort a reality. One final work is needed on the absolute necessity for documenting these processes specifically in areas of communication and buy in and the importance of system led rewards and assistance. It is the hope of the Luoma Team #9 that their efforts will be just one example of this.

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Framework for the Minnesota State Collaborative Degree Programs (Recommendation)

A collaborative degree program is one in which several Minnesota State institutions work together to deliver a degree program. Please work through each Part below to develop a collaborative degree program. For assistance developing a collaborative degree program, please contact [name] at the System Office.

All collaborative programs must comply with Minnesota State Board Policy and applicable bargaining unit contracts.

Part I: Participating Institutions

List all Minnesota State institutions involved in the collaborative degree program. Indicate the contact information for the administrator responsible for overall operation of the collaborative program.

It is strongly recommended that at this point in the collaboration, institutions review the *Collaborative Academic Program Planning* report, in particular pp. 18–19, (http://www.hr.mnscu.edu/training_and_development/Leadership_Academy/documents/Cohort%20%20ALP%20Reports/Team_9_Report.pdf) which includes recommendations for establishing a successful collaborative culture.

Part II: Purpose of Collaborative Degree

Describe the reason institutions have decided to partner together, along with the goals for collaboration.

All collaborative degrees should have strong benefits for students, faculty, and the institutions, which should be articulated here.

Part III: Feasibility Study

Before developing a new program, all participating institutions should collaboratively conduct a feasibility study, including the following:

- 1) Consult the Minnesota State ASA Website on Program Planning.
http://asa.mnscu.edu/academicprograms/program_planning/.
 - a. Follow the flowchart for determining the feasibility of a program within the Minnesota State System.
http://asa.mnscu.edu/academicprograms/program_planning/docs/Program%20Approval%20Visio%20for%20Metro%20Alliance1.pdf
 - b. As a best practice, include public and private schools in the feasibility study.
- 2) Collect and analyze student interest data (liberal arts and technical/professional programs)
 - a. Guidelines for collecting student interest data can be found at the Minnesota State ASA Website:
http://www.asa.mnscu.edu/academicprograms/program_planning/docs/Student%20Interest%20Assessment%20Handbook%20-%20Final%20Draft%20-%20MnSCU.pdf
- 3) Conduct labor market analysis (technical/professional programs).

- a. Guidelines for this analysis can be found at the Minnesota State ASA Website:
http://www.academicaffairs.mnscu.edu/academicprograms/workforce_planning/index.html
- 4) Determine campus readiness for collaboration.
- a. Do the campuses have the appropriate resources to initiate and sustain the program?
 - i. Instructional support (e.g., faculty development, Brightsight D2L, library, tutoring, disability services)
 - ii. Operational support (e.g., marketing, recruitment, admissions, registration, financial aid, student account)—See *College University Partnership Baccalaureate Programs: Student Services* (http://www.asa.mnscu.edu/councils/studentaffairs/meeting_materials/2013/october/Report%2006052013.pdf) for an example of collaboration considerations for Student Services.
 - iii. Technical support (e.g., transcripts, DARS, ISRS, student success data reporting)
 - b. Do faculty support the collaboration?
 - c. Does Student Affairs support the collaboration?
 - d. Does administration support the collaboration?
- 5) Acquire the formal approvals for collaboration:
- a. Faculty Curriculum Committee
 - b. Advisory Boards
 - c. System Approval
 - d. HLC
 - e. Other as necessary

Part IV: Curriculum Development

It is important that **all** participating institutions are involved and support each step of the curriculum development process.

All course modifications must go through each participating institution's established curriculum process prior to offering courses in the new program.

Describe the degree/certificate:

- 1) Required Courses
 - a. Include any pre-requisites.
 - b. Indicate which campus(es) will typically offer the courses.
 - c. Indicate the frequency of the course offerings.
- 2) Elective Courses
 - a. Include any pre-requisites.
 - b. Indicate which campus(es) will typically offer the courses.
 - c. Indicate the frequency of the course offerings.
- 3) Other Degree/Certificate Considerations
 - a. Indicate if this degree/certificate stacks with any other degree/certificate
 - b. Indicate if there are any pre-requisites that must be completed before being admitted to the degree/certificate program.

Indicate whether this degree is collaborative (one institution grants the degree) or joint (all participating institutions grant the degree).

Faculty must drive the development of specific course-level curriculum according to the following guidelines:

- It is recommended that collaborative programs use common course outlines and numbers wherever possible and practical.
- If common course outlines and numbers will not be used, course equivalencies must be identified at this stage if a course can be taken at any participating institution to meet the degree requirement (for example, Normandale's HIST 1111 = NHCC's HIST 1200 = Bemidji's HST 1114).
- It is recommended that new courses use a common course number and course outline among all participating institutions; this course should be developed collaboratively among the appropriate faculty at each participating institution. New courses must go through the curriculum process on all participating campuses.
- It is recommended that faculty meet to discuss existing courses and determine if courses are already aligned or need to be modified through local curriculum process.
- It is recommended that the curriculum is structured to minimize the students' need to move back and forth between different institutions.

Develop a plan of study for students to complete the program. Determine whether the program will follow the cohort model.

Obtain the signatures of Chairs of curriculum committees of each participating campus approving the program.

Obtain the signatures of CAOs and Presidents approving the program.

Develop a plan to keep all constituents apprised of the collaborative/joint program, given the fluid nature of curriculum committees and administration.

Develop a plan to maintain the curriculum once it is approved. Consider the following:

- 1) Who is the point person to initiate conversations about the efficacy of the curriculum?
- 2) Who maintains the integrity of the curriculum?
- 3) Which institution(s) will lead curriculum-related record-keeping (DARS, ISRS, catalogs, etc)?

Part V: Operations

Subpart A: Recruitment & Marketing

Identify who is responsible for producing and providing recruiting and marketing materials. Identify how the cost of marketing and distribution will be coordinated.

Identify branding of program (use of logos, positions of logos, etc). Consider branding the program under the Minnesota State brand.

Subpart B: Admission Process

Identify how students will be admitted to the program. Issues to consider:

- 1) Do the students need to be admitted to all participating campuses?
- 2) Identify application process (is student admitted to program and then also admitted to all collaborating institutions, or does student have to apply to each institutions?)
- 3) How is the student admitted to the specific program? Is there a separate process? How will this be handled and communicated among participating campuses?
- 4) Are there any pre-requisites to the program? How are these handled?
- 5) If the program uses the cohort model, how will cohorts be tracked; what happens if a student falls behind the cohort?
- 6) How will waitlists be managed?

Subpart C: Academic Standards

Participating institutions must agree to and document the following:

- 1) GPA standards
- 2) SAP standards
- 3) Equivalent grading standards (for example, F, FA, FW, W, WA, NC, etc).

No program can establish standards that fall below established Minnesota State minimums.

Academic appeals will follow the established process/policy of the institution where the class was taken. Institutions must develop processes to address issues when the home campus of the course is not clear. For example, the course is cross-listed and simultaneously offered at multiple institutions, but it is taught by a single faculty located at specific home campus.

Subpart D: General Operations

Develop a plan to determine the scheduling of courses. Consider the following:

- 1) The location of each course. Consider rotating locations among participating campuses as well as neutral locations (work force development locations, for example).
- 2) Consider the delivery method of each course: face-to-face, blended/hybrid, online, and the frequency of each type of offering.
- 3) Determine how courses will be assigned to faculty, and the rights of credentialed UFT relative to the program courses.
- 4) If courses will be offered over summer, determine summer rotation language. MOUs may be necessary to address issues related to summer rotation and claiming.

Identify if students will have a home campus, and which campus it will be at which point in the degree (for example, student completes gen ed requirements at College A and specific degree requirements at College B).

Identify where financial aid is disbursed.

Identify how fees are allocated and collected.

Identify a common cohort number that can be used across all institutions.

Identify how student FTE/FYE will be allocated among collaborating institutions.

Identify how student advising will be provided (dedicated advisor at one campus, with remote advising? Cross-training? Advisor at each campus?)

Identify how the program will appear in the institutions' catalogs.

Identify which campuses will provide services to students on what basis (as visiting student, as home student, etc.)

- 1) IT/technology
- 2) Library Services
- 3) Printing
- 4) Parking
- 5) Email
- 6) Counseling
- 7) Emergency assistance
- 8) Learning Center (Writing Lab, Math Lab, Peer Tutoring)
- 9) Etc

Determine the process for graduation. Consider the following:

- 1) Identify which graduation ceremony/ceremonies the students may attend.
- 2) Identify how the student will file "Intent to Graduate" paperwork, and how associated fees will be paid and allocated among institutions.

Identify which institution will provide transcripts.

Identify how variance among campus/academic calendars will be negotiated.

Subpart E: Program Management

Identify how collaboration will be managed across institutions. (Best practice is to have a program coordinator with support staff allocated to the program.)

Identify how each participating institution will provide support to the program in terms of governance. Will there be a governing body with members from each participating institution? (If so, describe the make-up of the governing body and the scope of its authority.) It is best practice to have, at minimum, one point person from each participating campus.

If an Advisory Board is necessary, determine how will this be established and maintained.

Identify how program modifications will be determined.

Identify how faculty will be supported in their collaborative efforts to deliver the curriculum:

- 1) Professional development
- 2) Facilitation of department meetings
- 3) Development of department policies

Identify how faculty will be paid.

Identify how accreditation will be acquired and maintained at the program level.

Identify how program review will be conducted.

Identify who is responsible for overseeing assessment of student learning outcomes.

Identify who will monitor and evaluate the overall quality and effectiveness of the program.

Identify who will track student persistence and completion in the program.

Subpart F: Resources

Identify resources necessary for the program:

- 1) What are the personnel needs?
- 2) Are there existing resources be used?
- 3) What new resources are required?
- 4) What financial and personnel support is provided by the System Office?
- 5) What can come from other external sources? (Grants, etc)

Determine how all resources will be provided and shared (ie, grant award process, etc).

Subpart G: Issue & Grievance Resolution

Identify how complaints and issues will be resolved. Consider:

- 1) Program Issues (operations at the institutional level: policies, student complaints, etc)
- 2) Student Code of Conduct
- 3) Employee Code of Conduct
- 4) 1B1, 1B2, 1B3, and 1B4 Violations

Identify who is responsible for addressing grievances among participating institutions.

Part VI: Evaluation of Success of Collaboration

Identify the process for evaluating the collaboration. Who is responsible for providing/collecting data and conducting the evaluation?

Identify measures for evaluating the success of the collaborative degree. Consider:

- 1) Measures for the success of the curriculum.
- 2) Measures for the success of the degree.
- 3) Job placement (in field, if appropriate).
- 4) Transfer rates (if appropriate).
- 5) Measures for the success of the operations associated with the program.

Determine timelines for:

- 1) Length of the agreement
- 2) How often the collaboration will be evaluated and changed

Part VII: Changes to Collaboration Agreement

Determine how changes to this agreement will be made.

Indicate the process for an institution joining the collaborative degree after initial development of partnerships.

Determine the process for how an institution can exit from the partnership.

Indicate what happens in the event of program closure.

Proposed Changes to MnSCU Procedure 3.36.1. for the Jointly Conferred Degree

* Changes are highlighted in the text.

Procedure 3.36.1 Academic Programs

System Procedures

Chapter 3 - Educational Policies

Part 1. Purpose and Applicability.

Subpart A. Purpose. To establish standards, processes, and conditions that enable consistent implementation of academic program policy.

Subpart B. Applicability. These procedures implement Policy 3.36 Academic Programs.

Part 2. Definitions. The following definitions have the meanings indicated for all board policies unless the text clearly indicates otherwise.

Subpart A. Academic Award. A certificate, diploma or degree.

Subpart B. Academic Program. A cohesive arrangement of college level credit courses and experiences designed to accomplish predetermined objectives leading to the awarding of a degree, diploma, or certificate. Undergraduate degree programs include a general education component and purpose is to:

1. increase students' knowledge and understanding in a field of study or discipline,
2. qualify students for employment in an occupation or range of occupations, and/or
3. prepare students for advanced study.

Subpart C. Academic Program Characteristics. Attributes that operationally describe an approved academic program including:

1. name,
2. academic award,
3. federal Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) code,
4. credit length,
5. location(s),
6. emphases, if any,
7. articulation or collaborative agreements, if any, among colleges, universities or other parties, and
8. status (active, suspended, closed).

Subpart D. Academic Program Closure. An academic program change in status which permanently closes the academic program to new enrollment.

Subpart E. Academic Program Curriculum Component. Academic program curriculum component is a program element with set requirements.

Emphasis. A focused component of an academic program.

Major. A curriculum component of an academic program intended to provide in-depth study in a discipline, a professional field of study or an occupation. A major may include an academic program emphasis.

Minor. A curriculum component of limited depth and/or breadth within a baccalaureate academic program.

Other Components. Other components of an academic program may include electives, required courses, and general education.

Subpart F. Academic Program Inventory. The official list of academic programs offered by system colleges and universities.

Subpart G. Academic Program Redesign. A change to an existing academic program characteristic.

Subpart H. Academic Program Reinstatement. An academic program status change from suspended to active.

Subpart I. Academic Program Relocation. Academic program relocation occurs when an active academic program is closed at its present location and approved for delivery at a different location.

Subpart J. Academic Program Replication. Academic program replication occurs when an active academic program is offered at an additional location.

Subpart K. Academic Program Suspension. Academic program suspension is a change in status which temporarily closes the academic program to new enrollment.

Subpart L. Advisory Committee. A group established to provide guidance on academic program development and improvement including need, design, accountability, and closure.

Subpart M. Articulation Agreement. A formal agreement between two or more educational entities to accept courses in transfer toward a specific academic program using the system articulation agreement template or equivalent evidence of course transfer encoded into the degree audit reporting system.

Subpart N. Collaborative Agreement. A formal agreement between two or more parties, at least one of which is a system college or university, to co-deliver an academic program. Each system college or university may, as appropriate, confer the award. In the case of jointly conferred degree programs, all colleges or universities participating in the collaborative agreement confer the reward.

Subpart O. Course. A set of designed experiences with defined student learning outcomes.

Subpart P. Credit. A unit of measure assigned to a system college or university course offering or an equivalent learning experience that takes into consideration achieved student learning outcomes and instructional time.

Subpart Q. Credit Hour.

1. An amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than -
 - a. One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time, such as in distance learning environments; or
 - b. At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1.a.) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the system college or university including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.
2. Or, for a program that is subject to a clock/credit-hour conversion, the lesser of
 - a. Clock hours in the credit-hour program divided by 37.5 clock hours of instruction or
 - b. Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system approved credit hour.

Subpart R. Curriculum. A coherent set of instructional experiences designed through established system college and university procedures to achieve desired student learning outcomes. Curriculum may refer to an academic program, an academic program element such as the major, an instructional unit, the general education component, or the entirety of offerings of a system college or university.

Subpart S. Fine Arts. The disciplines of creative writing, dance, music, theatre, the visual arts, and performing arts in which artistic purposes are primary.

Subpart T. General Education. A cohesive curriculum defined by system college or university faculty to develop general knowledge and reasoning ability through an integration of learning experiences in the liberal arts and sciences.

Subpart U. Graduate Course Enrollment. There are four types of graduate course enrollment that specify which students are permitted to enroll in a graduate course.

Master's Dual-Enrollment. Master's dual-enrollment courses are open to undergraduate students and graduate students at the master's level.

Master's. Master's courses are open only to graduate students at the master's level.

Doctoral Dual-Enrollment. Doctoral dual-enrollment courses are open to graduate students at the master's and doctoral levels.

Doctoral. Doctoral courses are open only to graduate students at the doctoral level.

Subpart V. Joint Academic Degree Program. A program that is offered collaboratively by two or more accredited institutions and leads to the award of a single degree issued jointly by participating institutions. The transcript and diploma bear the names of all institutions.

Subpart VW. Liberal Arts and Sciences. Liberal arts and sciences include the humanities, mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences.

Subpart WX. Location. A geographic place where a system college or university has been approved to deliver an entire academic program.

Subpart XY. Minnesota Transfer Curriculum. The Minnesota Transfer Curriculum is curriculum comprised of general education courses and goal area definitions and competencies designed for transfer among Minnesota public colleges and universities.

Subpart YZ. Mission Statement. A mission statement conveys the broad intentions and distinctive character of a system college or university; describes its primary educational programs and their purposes; recognizes the diversity of its learners; identifies the students to be served, including particular constituents; defines a primary service area; and communicates a commitment to the advancement of society's values and common purposes and the advancement of excellence in higher learning. Use of this definition is restricted to this procedure and related guidelines, if any.

Subpart ZAA. New Academic Program. An academic program identified by curricular content and an academic award significantly different from other academic programs at a system college or university.

Subpart AABB. Occupational Program. An academic program designed to prepare program graduates for entry, retention, or advancement in a specific occupation or set of closely allied occupations.

Subpart BBCC. Online Academic Program. An academic program that is offered entirely or almost entirely over the Internet. When pedagogically necessary, limited portions of an online academic program may require face-to-face instruction, professional practice or applied activities that are not appropriate for online delivery. Two types of online academic programs are recognized by the system:

Online Exclusive. Online exclusive means an online program only offered online; no participation in face-to-face delivery is available.

Online Plus. Online plus means an online program is offered entirely online with face-to-face options available for one or more courses.

Subpart CCDD. Preparatory Course. A lower-division college-level course outside of an academic program that compensates for insufficient high school or equivalent preparation.

Subpart DDEE. Prerequisite Course. A college-level course within an academic program that all students must complete before enrolling in another college-level course or a major.

Subpart EEFF. Program Service Area. The region encompassing a significant majority of prospective or current students for a program location. The service area may be described as a list of communities, cities, counties, zip codes, states, number of miles from the program site, Minnesota planning or economic development regions, or by one or more employer sites.

Subpart FFGG. Program Transfer. All courses from a completed certificate, diploma, or degree that apply toward completion of another certificate, diploma, or degree but may not necessarily do so with equal course credits.

Subpart GGHH. Students with an Intellectual Disability. Students who:

1. have a developmental disability or cognitive impairment characterized by significant limitations in intellectual and cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills; or
2. are currently or were formerly eligible for special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 20 U.S.C. §1401, including students who were determined eligible for special education or related services under the IDEA but were homeschooled or attended private school.

Subpart HHIJ. System Colleges and Universities. System colleges and universities are colleges and universities governed by the Board of Trustees.

Colleges. Community colleges, technical colleges, and consolidated colleges that are separately accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. A consolidated

college refers to a community college and technical college that, under board direction, have formally organized into a single college.

Universities. System universities confer academic awards through the graduate level and are accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.

Subpart HJJ. Task Analysis. A process used to identify the knowledge, skills, tools, and abilities needed to perform an occupation.

Subpart HKK. Undergraduate Course Level. Course level reflects the degree of difficulty, the breadth and depth of learning expectations, or the sequential learning required of knowledge. Course content and level are determined by system college and university faculty through established procedures.

Developmental. Developmental course content prepares students for entry into college level courses. Developmental level course credits do not apply toward a certificate, diploma, or degree.

Lower-Division. Lower-division course content prepares students for specific academic program outcomes or for upper-division undergraduate coursework at a university.

Upper-Division. Upper-division course content builds upon or integrates knowledge gained in lower-division undergraduate courses. Content of upper-division courses is determined by the university faculty through established procedures.

Subpart KKL. Unnecessary Program Duplication. When two or more academic programs serve overlapping program service areas in which the number of prospective and enrolled students is insufficient to sustain one or more of the programs or, for occupational programs, the number of current and projected job openings is insufficient to maintain an acceptable related employment rate for graduates.

Subpart LMM. Work-Based Learning. Paid or unpaid applied work experiences designed to address one or more program learning outcomes in courses or programs designed and evaluated by faculty members. Work-based learning involves a method such as apprenticeship, clinical experience, cooperative education, experiential learning, externship, internship, or practicum.

Part 3. Authorized Academic Awards.

Subpart A. System College and University Award Authority. A system college or university may change its college or university type or become authorized to confer new academic awards by submitting an application to the chancellor and obtaining approval from the Board of Trustees. The application shall include demonstration of system college or university readiness and capacity to deliver the new award.

Subpart B. Academic Award Attributes. Academic awards shall have the following attributes.

- 1. Undergraduate Certificate.** An undergraduate certificate is awarded upon completion of a 9 to 30 credit academic program. An undergraduate certificate may have an occupational outcome or address a focused area of study.

An undergraduate certificate shall not have emphases.

At least one-third of the credits in the undergraduate certificate shall be taught by the faculty recommending the award. This requirement may be decreased upon recommendation by the faculty and approval by the president of the college or university.

An undergraduate certificate less than 9 or more than 30 credits in length may be approved when the academic program prepares an individual for employment and the length or the designation as a certificate is (1) required by an employer, a licensing body or other regulatory agency, accrediting association, or board, or (2) based on a formal task analysis conducted within the previous three years and the results endorsed by an advisory committee.

- 2. Diploma.** A diploma is awarded upon completion of a 31 to 72 credit undergraduate academic program that prepares students for employment. A minimum of 24 credits shall be in occupational or technical courses.

A diploma may have one or more emphases of at least 9 credits when there are at least 30 credits in the major that are common to the emphases.

A diploma may be individualized according to the standards outlined in Part 5. Subpart C, to provide a student an opportunity to design an academic program to meet specific occupational goals that cannot be met by current program offerings.

At least one-third of the credits in the diploma shall be taught by the faculty recommending the award. This requirement may be decreased upon recommendation by the faculty and approval by the president of the college.

A diploma of more than 72 credits in length may be approved when the academic program prepares an individual for employment and the length is (1) required by an employer, a licensing body or other regulatory agency, accrediting association, or board, or (2) based on a formal task analysis conducted within the previous three years and the results endorsed by an advisory committee.

- 3. Associate of Arts Degree.** An associate of arts degree is awarded upon completion of a 60 credit academic program in the liberal arts and sciences without a named field of study. It is designed for transfer to baccalaureate degree-granting college or university.

An associate of arts degree requires completion of at least a 40 credit curriculum that fulfills the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum goal areas.

The associate of arts degree program is named Liberal Arts and Sciences.

An associate of arts degree may have one or more emphases of at least 9 credits each in liberal arts and science fields, provided there is an articulation agreement with a related baccalaureate major offered by one or more system universities.

At least 15 credits in the associate of arts degree shall be taught by the faculty recommending the award. This requirement may be decreased upon recommendation of the faculty and approval by the president of the system college or university.

4. **Associate of Fine Arts Degree.** An associate of fine arts degree is a named degree awarded upon completion of a 60 credit academic program in particular disciplines in the fine arts.

An associate of fine arts degree is designed to transfer in its entirety to a related fine arts discipline baccalaureate degree program. An articulation agreement with a related baccalaureate degree program at a regionally accredited university is required. A system college shall pursue an articulation agreement with a system university before establishing an articulation agreement with a non-system university.

An associate of fine arts degree program may be individualized according to the standards outlined in Part 5, Subpart F. Associate of fine arts individualized studies degree programs do not require an articulation agreement.

An associate of fine arts degree requires a minimum of 24 credits selected from at least six of the ten goal areas of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum. Requirements for the following disciplines have been adopted.

Art. An associate of fine arts degree in art requires the minimum of 24 credits selected from at least six of the ten goal areas of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum.

Music. An associate of fine arts degree in music requires at least 30 credits selected from at least six of the ten goal areas of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum.

Theatre arts. An associate of fine arts degree in theatre arts requires completion of the entire Minnesota Transfer Curriculum with a minimum of 40 credits.

An associate of fine arts degree shall not have emphases.

An associate of fine arts degree program may be individualized according to the

standards outlined in Part 5, Subpart F, to provide a student an opportunity to design an academic program to meet specific academic or occupational goals that cannot be met by current program offerings.

At least 15 credits in the **associate of fine arts degree** shall be taught by the faculty recommending the award. This requirement may be decreased upon recommendation of the faculty and approval by the president of the system college or university.

A waiver may be granted to exceed a length of 60 credits when (1) the waiver criteria in Part 3, Subpart C, are met and (2) an articulation agreement specifies the transfer of a greater number of credits.

- 5. Associate of Science Degree.** An associate of science degree is awarded upon completion of a 60 credit academic program in scientific, technological, or other professional fields.

The associate of science degree is designed to transfer in its entirety to one or more related baccalaureate degree programs. A college shall pursue an articulation agreement with one or more system universities before establishing an articulation agreement with a non-system university.

An associate of science degree program may be individualized according to the standards outlined in Part 5, Subpart F. Associate of science individualized studies programs do not require an articulation agreement.

An associate of science degree may address a single specialty or a set of allied specialties such as, but not limited to, (1) agriculture, (2) business, (3) computer and information sciences, (4) education, (5) engineering, (6) engineering technologies, (7) environmental sciences, (8) health sciences, and (9) natural sciences.

The associate of science degree requires a minimum of 30 credits selected from at least six of the ten goal areas of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum.

An associate of science degree shall not have emphases.

An associate of science degree may be individualized according to the standards outlined in Part 5, Subpart F, to provide a student an opportunity to design an academic program to meet specific occupational goals that cannot be met by current program offerings.

At least 15 credits in an associate of science degree shall be taught by the faculty recommending the award. This requirement may be decreased upon recommendation of the faculty and approval by the president of the system college or university.

A waiver may be granted to exceed a length of 60 credits when (1) the waiver criteria

in Part 3, Subpart C, are met and (2) an articulation agreement specifies the transfer of a greater number of credits.

- 6. Associate of Applied Science Degree.** An associate of applied science degree is awarded upon completion of a 60 credit academic program in a named field of study in scientific, technological or other professional fields.

An associate of applied science degree prepares students for employment in an occupation or range of occupations. An associate of applied science degree may also be accepted in transfer to a related baccalaureate program.

An associate of applied science degree requires a minimum of 15 credits selected from at least three of the ten goal areas of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum. At least 30 credits shall be in the academic program's occupational or technical field of preparation.

An associate of applied science degree may have one or more emphases of at least 9 credits each when there are at least 30 credits in the major that are common to the emphases.

An associate of applied science degree program may be individualized according to the standards outlined in Part 5, Subpart F, to provide a student an opportunity to design an academic program to meet specific occupational goals that cannot be met by current program offerings.

At least 15 credits in an associate of applied science shall be taught by the faculty recommending the award. This requirement may be decreased upon recommendation of the faculty and approval by the president of the system college or university.

A waiver may be granted to exceed a length of 60 credits when (1) the waiver criteria in Part 3, Subpart C, are met and (2) an articulation agreement, where applicable, specifies the transfer of a greater number of credits.

- 7. Baccalaureate Degree.** A baccalaureate degree is awarded upon completion of a 120 credit academic program incorporating general education, major requirements and, as appropriate, a minor.

The bachelor of arts degree is awarded upon completion of a curriculum with a major that focuses on study in the liberal or fine arts.

The bachelor of science degree is awarded upon completion of a curriculum with a major that prepares individuals to apply knowledge and skills in areas other than the liberal or fine arts.

A bachelor of applied science (BAS) degree features application of knowledge, skills, and abilities and includes at least 30 credits focused on an occupation or set of closely

allied occupations. A bachelor of applied science degree may incorporate a variety of methods to achieve its applied focus such as experiential learning or a capstone project. A bachelor of applied science degree may achieve its applied focus through an articulation agreement with an applied occupational certificate, diploma, or degree and may reflect a model such as:

- a. Career Ladder: A career ladder model adds additional technical course work to an applied certificate, diploma, or degree,
- b. Management: A management model adds business and administrative course work to an applied certificate, diploma, or degree, or
- c. Completion: A completion model adds general education course work to one or more applied certificates, diplomas, or degrees.

The chancellor may approve academic programs culminating in a more specific baccalaureate degree type, for example, bachelor of applied science, bachelor of fine arts, bachelor of music, bachelor of science in nursing, bachelor of social work, or another designated type.

At least 40 of the required credits for the baccalaureate degree shall be at the upper-division level.

A baccalaureate degree requires at least a 40 credit curriculum that fulfills all of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum.

A baccalaureate degree may have one or more emphases of at least 9 credits each when at least 18 credits in the major are common to all the emphases.

A baccalaureate degree program may be individualized according to the standards outlined in Part 5, Subpart F, to provide a student an opportunity to design an academic program to meet specific occupational goals that cannot be met by current program offerings.

At least 30 credits in a baccalaureate degree shall be taught by the faculty recommending the award. These requirements may be decreased upon recommendation by the faculty and approval by the president of the university.

A waiver may be granted to exceed a length of 120 credits when the waiver criteria in Part 3, Subpart C, are met.

8. Graduate Certificate. A graduate certificate is awarded upon completion of a 9 to 30 credit academic program in a focused area of study at the graduate level.

A graduate certificate shall not have an “emphasis.”

All credits in a graduate certificate shall be taught by the faculty recommending the

award. This requirement may be decreased upon recommendation of the faculty and approval by the president of the university.

9. Master's Degree. A master's degree is awarded upon completion of a 30 to 54 credit academic program at the graduate level in a discipline or professional field.

A master of arts degree is awarded upon completion of a curriculum with a major that focuses on study in the liberal or fine arts.

A master of science degree is awarded upon completion of a curriculum with a major that prepares individuals to apply knowledge and skill in areas other than the liberal or fine arts.

The chancellor may approve academic programs culminating in a more specifically named master's degree type, for example, master of arts in teaching, master of business administration, master of fine arts, master of public administration, or master of science in nursing.

At least one-half of the required credits in a master's degree, exclusive of a thesis, capstone, or similar culminating project, shall be credits restricted exclusively to graduate student enrollment.

A master's degree may have one or more emphases of at least 9 credits when at least 18 credits in the major are common to all the emphases.

All credits in the master's degree shall be taught by the faculty recommending the award. This requirement may be decreased upon recommendation of the faculty and approval by the president of the university.

A master's degree more than 54 credits in length may be approved by the chancellor when the length is (1) required by an employer, a licensing body or other regulatory agency, accrediting association, or board, or (2) consistent with nationwide common practice.

10. Education Specialist Degree. An education specialist degree is awarded upon completion of a 60 to 72 credit academic program at the graduate level in the professional education field. The education specialist degree may be awarded to a holder of a master's degree after the successful completion of a course of graduate study of at least 30 semester credits.

An education specialist degree may have one or more emphases of at least 9 credits each when at least 18 credits are required in the post-master's portion of the degree.

No more than 16 credits of an education specialist degree may be master's dual-enrollment courses.

All credits in the education specialist degree shall be taught by the faculty recommending the award. This requirement may be decreased upon recommendation of the faculty and approval by the president of the university.

- 11. Doctorate.** A doctorate is awarded upon completion of a graduate level academic program of at least 72 credits beyond the baccalaureate degree in an applied professional field.

Minnesota state universities are authorized to grant the doctorate in audiology, business, education, nursing, psychology, and physical therapy.

At least 45 credits in graduate level courses shall be taught by the faculty recommending the award, including up to 12 credits for a dissertation or equivalent project. At least 36 of these 45 credits shall be in doctoral only courses. This 45-credit requirement may be decreased upon recommendation of the faculty and approval of the president of the university.

No more than 16 credits of the doctorate may be master's dual enrollment courses. A doctorate may have one or more emphases of at least 9 credits when there are at least 18 credits in the post-master's portion of the academic program.

Subpart C. Program Credit Length Waivers for Associate and Baccalaureate Degrees.

- 1. Authority.** The system office determines the approval or disapproval of all requests for waivers to exceed program credit length limitations.
- 2. Criteria for Granting Waivers.** Credit length waivers may be granted when determined necessary to ensure that the degree provided meets industry or professional standards. Waivers shall be granted only when a need for a longer program credit length is demonstrated by one or more of the following:
 - a. Industry Standards**
 - (1) National or international program certification,
 - (2) National or international standards, including skill standards,
 - (3) Standards recommended by a primary employer or multiple employers within a program service area.
 - b. Professional Standards**
 - (1) National specialized program accreditation,
 - (2) State licensure requirements,
 - (3) National practices or standards.
- 3. Waiver Process for Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of Fine Arts, and Baccalaureate degrees.** The following process shall be followed to request a waiver:

- a. Preparation of a waiver application for submission to the system office shall be consistent with accepted system college or university curriculum approval processes. Waiver requests for similar academic programs may be pursued on a multi-college/university basis when recommended by faculty consistent with accepted processes at each participating system college or university.
 - b. Academic program advisory committees may provide recommendations on learning requirements. Program advisory committee recommendations that support the standards may be submitted with the waiver request. For student representation on college or university academic program advisory committees, see Board Policy 2.3 and System Procedure 2.3.1 Student Involvement in Decision-Making.
 - c. Waiver applications will be distributed for review and comment to state student associations, faculty union leadership, and system college and university administrators.
 - d. The system office will act on the waiver application and notify the applicant.
 - e. Appeals related to waiver decisions will be processed through the vice chancellor for academic and student affairs.
 - f. Public information regarding the waiver process, review criteria, rationale for decisions, and decisions reached will be available on the system office website.
- 4. Waiver Process for Associate of Applied Science degrees.** The following process shall be followed to request a waiver:
- a. Preparation of a waiver application for submission to the system office shall be consistent with accepted system college or university curriculum approval processes.
 - b. An associate of applied science waiver application shall compare and contrast credit lengths of comparable programs and provide a program analysis describing learning outcomes not found in shorter programs.
 - c. Academic program advisory committees shall provide recommendations on learning requirements. For student representation on college or university academic program advisory committees, see Board Policy 2.3 and System Procedure 2.3.1.
 - d. Waiver applications shall document the approval of the system college or university curriculum committee, the program advisory committee, and the system college or university student representative on the program advisory committee. If there was no student representative on the program advisory committee, the system college or university student association shall review and comment on the waiver application.

e. Waiver applications will be distributed for review and comment to state student associations, faculty union leadership, and system college and university administrators.

f. The system office will act on the waiver application and notify the applicant.

g. Appeals related to waiver decisions will be processed through the senior vice chancellor for academic and student affairs.

h. Public information regarding the waiver process, review criteria, rationale for decisions, and decisions reached will be available on the system office website.

i. Associate of applied science programs approved to exceed 60 credits shall include an explanation of why the program is longer than similar programs in the catalog description.

Subpart D. Clock Hour to Credit Equivalence. Student work-based learning experiences measured in clock hours may be equated to credits.

System colleges and universities shall collaborate to establish a common number of credits for a work-based learning experience when a state or federal agency or regulatory board requires a set number of clock hours.

Subpart E. Reporting Credit Hours for Federal Student Aid. For purposes of determining program eligibility for federal student aid, system colleges and universities shall report credit hours in conformance with requirements of U.S. Code of Federal Regulations 34 CFR 600.2 and 668.8 (k) and (l).

Part 4. Authority to Establish Academic Program Locations.

Subpart A. Approval of an Academic Program Location. Location approval is required for a system college or university to deliver a new, replicated or relocated academic program at a location where it is not currently delivering any academic program. Location approval requires academic program approval and lease approval, when applicable.

The academic program application shall specify the location name, postal address, and lease information as applicable. For a location not owned by the system, the location application shall include information regarding approval of the lease as required in System Procedure 6.7.2, Part 4.

Part 5. Academic Program Approval. The chancellor shall establish processes for academic program applications and continued maintenance and administration of programs.

Subpart A. Approval of New Academic Programs. A new academic program requires approval by the chancellor before it is offered by a system college or university or by a consortium of colleges or universities offering jointly conferred degrees.

All college-level courses required for academic program completion, with the exception of preparatory courses, shall be included in the total number of credits for an undergraduate academic program.

New program applications shall address the following items as detailed in the program application form available online:

1. Alignment with system college(s) or university(s) mission
2. Collaboration, agreements, and applicable approvals
3. Curriculum attributes
4. Enterprise system requirements
5. Program marketing
6. Program demand and unnecessary duplication
7. Resources

New collaborative degree programs shall address the items outlined in the Collaborative Degree Program Framework available online.

The chancellor may conditionally approve an academic program.

Subpart B. Maintenance of Academic Program Records. System colleges and universities shall maintain their academic program records in the system program inventory to inform students, address consumer disclosure requirements, and support system college or university business practices. Program information to be maintained includes the following:

1. Accreditation for the program, if applicable
2. Career clusters, pathways, and assessments (system colleges)
3. Center of excellence affiliation, if applicable
4. Closed enrollment status and organization(s) served
5. Delivery mode
6. Effective begin and end terms
7. Emphases, if applicable
8. Green designation, if applicable
9. Locations
10. Name, description, student learning outcomes, and URL
11. Time to completion
12. Type, Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) code, and level
13. Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes, if applicable

Subpart C. Approval of Individualized Names for Academic Programs and Emphases. System colleges and universities have considerable latitude to name an

academic program consistent with its content and purpose, although consideration should be made for clarity, brevity, and professionalism.

1. Names for academic programs shall:
 - a. represent program learning outcomes as reflected by core content of the curriculum,
 - b. reflect the assigned Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code unless a suitable CIP code is not available,
 - c. be less than or equal to 50 characters in length, including spaces so that a name can appear on student awards and transcripts. If this title exceeds 50 characters (including spaces), a short title must also be identified due to ISRS field limitations,
 - d. include the word “advanced only” when justified relative to preceding programs, comparison to entry level job standards, or special admissions criteria,
 - e. be permitted to use the prefix “pre-” when
 - i. the program prepares individuals for an associate of science degree that a graduate must complete to be admitted to a baccalaureate-level program that is the minimum necessary qualification for practice, such as any of the engineering specialties,
 - ii. marketing a baccalaureate degree for a post-baccalaureate professional field such as pre-dentistry, pre-medicine, pre-pharmacy, pre-veterinary medicine, pre-nursing, pre-chiropractic medicine, pre-occupational therapy, pre-optometry, and pre-physical therapy.
2. Academic program names shall not include ampersands or references to:
 - a. the words “program,” “awards” (certificate, diploma, associate, baccalaureate, master’s, doctorate), “delivery mode,” “pathway,” “emphasis,” “option,” or other curricular descriptors,
 - b. words such as “basic,” “careers,” “concepts,” “core,” “foundations,” “fundamentals,” “general,” “introduction,” and “orientation” when the program is intended for occupational preparation,
 - c. accreditation or external curriculum approvals, such as AACSB, ABET, ACS, or NCATE. An acronym, if essential, may be used in conjunction with relevant text to communicate program content,
 - d. licensure when licensure is granted by an external agency and not a system college or university. An emphasis title may include the word “non-licensure” to indicate that the program does not prepare a student to apply for licensure,
 - e. certified or registered when this recognition is granted by an external agency and not a system college or university. Either term is allowed in an academic program name if doing so is required by an external agency.Nursing program titles recommended by the Minnesota Board of Nursing shall exclude use of the words “certification” and “registered”, for example:
 - “Nursing Assistant” for nursing assistant certification and home health aide certification,
 - “Practical Nursing” for licensed practical nursing, or
 - “Nursing” for registered nursing.

Subpart D. Approval of Changes to Existing Academic Programs.

- 1. Closure.** Closure of an academic program must be approved by the chancellor. Approval will only be granted under the following circumstances:

- a. the closure is requested by a system college or university, and the chancellor determines that the documentation provided supports closure;
- b. the chancellor determines that closure is warranted; or
- c. the academic program has not been reinstated following a suspension.

The academic program closure application must be documented, as applicable, regarding:

- a. academic program need,
- b. student enrollment trends,
- c. employment of graduates,
- d. the financial circumstances affecting the academic program, system college or university,
- e. the plan to accommodate students currently enrolled in the academic program,
- f. impact on faculty and support staff,
- g. consultation with appropriate constituent groups including students, faculty and community,
- h. alternatives considered, and
- i. other factors affecting academic program operation.

A closed academic program cannot be relocated, replicated or reinstated.

- 2. Redesign.** Prior approval shall be obtained from the chancellor for academic program redesigns that affect the approved name, CIP code, the addition of emphases, a change in award, change to or from jointly conferred programs, or a change in credit length when the change exceeds the maximum or fails to meet the minimum credit lengths defined in policy.

Prior approval is not required for deletion of emphases or changes in credit length when the change is within the limits established by board policy. System colleges and universities shall report these changes to the chancellor.

- 3. Suspension and reinstatement.** A system college or university may suspend an academic program for three years. The system college or university shall apply to the chancellor for suspension of an academic program. The application shall include documented reasons for suspension and a reinstatement plan with a date for reinstatement. The suspension may be extended for up to one year with notification to the chancellor. The chancellor shall close an academic program that has not been reinstated following a suspension.

Reinstatement requires approval of the chancellor based on review of required documentation. The reinstatement plan must describe reasons for the suspension, identify specific actions to resolve the problems and address the following factors, as applicable:

- a. academic program need,
- b. student enrollment trends,
- c. employment of graduates,
- d. financial circumstances affecting the academic program, system college or university,
- e. the plan to accommodate students currently enrolled in the academic program,
- f. impact on faculty and support staff,
- g. consultation with appropriate constituent groups including students, faculty and community,
- h. academic program accreditation or licensure,
- i. alternatives considered, and
- j. other factors affecting academic program operation.

A suspended academic program shall not be relocated or replicated until it is reinstated.

4. Academic Program Replication or Relocation. Replication and/or relocation of an academic program requires approval by the chancellor when the replication or relocation:

- a. is offered at a location that is new to the system college or university,
- b. affects an existing agreement between colleges and/or universities,
- c. is in the same service area or within a reasonable commute of a similar academic program offered by another system college or university , or
- d. involves leasing non-system property.

If none of the above applies, only notification by the president to the chancellor of the location is required.

Relocation to another system college or university requires approval of the chancellor. The system college or university to which an academic program is reassigned must provide for the viability of the academic program.

Subpart E. Student Consultation and Review Regarding Academic Program Decisions. When academic program changes are proposed as described in Part 5, Subpart D, students must be provided an opportunity to be involved as required by Board Policy 2.3 and System Procedure 2.3.1.

Subpart F. Approval of Individualized Academic Programs.

1. Guidelines. Individualized studies programs shall:

- a. not have emphases,
- b. be called "Individualized Studies" and use the CIP code 30.9999 and
- c. transfer in their entirety (when designed for transfer) to a specific or individualized baccalaureate degree program.

2. Student Program Plan. Individualized studies programs require system colleges and universities to manage student program plans such that each student prepares their plan with guidance from a faculty advisor and with approvals as required by the system college or university. The student program plan shall be kept on file by each participating system college and university:

- a. For associate degree programs designed for transfer, the student program plan will include:
 1. a statement of the student's intent to transfer to a specific baccalaureate degree program at one or more universities,
 2. a statement of the intended program outcomes,
 3. identification of the courses to be completed in the associate degree program, and
 4. when applicable, assessment of student job prospects upon program completion.
- b. For non-transfer programs, the student program plan will include:
 1. a statement of the intended program outcomes,
 2. identification of the courses to be completed in the program, and
 3. when applicable, assessment of student job prospects upon program completion.

3. Minnesota Transfer Curriculum. Individualized studies programs offered by a system college or university must meet the minimum number of Minnesota Transfer Curriculum goal areas as specified for the academic award in this procedure.

4. Program Design. Students may consider the following program designs:

- a. thematic focus indicates coursework is in two or more disciplines organized around a theme, for example, food safety, from the perspectives of sociology, economics and health.
- b. interdisciplinary focus indicates coursework is in two disciplines, such as gerontology and exercise science.
- c. disciplinary focus indicates that coursework is all in the same discipline, for example, computer science.

Subpart G. Expedited Approval of 9-16 Credit Certificate Programs. Approval of certificate programs designed to meet a near-term workforce training need requested by employer(s), workforce center(s), or other entities can be expedited depending upon the

potential for unnecessary program duplication. Documentation must demonstrate training need for the current or next semester, but evidence of other labor market information and student interest is not required.

- 1. Potential Duplication.** When another system college or university offers a similar program online or within an overlapping program service area or within a 45 mile commute distance, a notice of intent must be distributed to other system colleges or universities through Program Navigator with a five-day waiting period. Upon approval, the proposed program can be offered for one or more cohorts within a 12-month period from the start of the first cohort. Subsequently, a new program application must be submitted for the program to be considered for continuation.
- 2. Non-Duplicative.** When another system college or university does not offer a similar program online or within the program service area, a notice of intent is not required. Upon approval, the proposed program may be offered without conditions.

Part 6. Student Options when Academic Programs are Suspended, Closed, Relocated, or Changed. A system college or university shall establish plans to address students' opportunities to complete an academic program when it has been suspended, closed, relocated, or when the requirements have changed.

Subpart A. Academic Program Suspension, Closure, or Relocation. A system college or university shall develop a plan to serve students who were admitted to an academic program proposed for suspension, closure, or relocation. The plan shall identify admitted students who are covered by the plan and their options to complete the academic program. The system college or university shall notify students about their options and assist them with their individual plans. Students covered by the plan shall maintain full-time enrollment status unless the system college or university makes other provisions.

Subpart B. Academic Program Changes. A system college or university shall notify students who have been admitted to an academic program of any changes to the academic program. Students shall be given an opportunity to graduate under the catalog requirements at the time of their admission to the system college or university or under any subsequent catalog requirements.

Part 7. Academic Review. Periodic review of academic programs is the responsibility of the system college or university. The review shall encompass all instructional areas and be structured according to discipline, academic program or program cluster, department, or other academic unit.