Graduate Level Internal Dual Degree Policy

Georgia College & State University

1.0 Purpose and Definition

The Graduate Level Internal Dual Degree Policy at Georgia College & State University (GCSU) allows high-achieving students to pursue two distinct graduate degrees concurrently or in close succession. This policy facilitates interdisciplinary study by allowing a limited number of "shared" credits to apply toward the requirements of both degrees, thereby reducing the total time and cost of completion without compromising the academic integrity of either program.

2.0 Types of Dual Degrees

- **Internal Dual Degree:** A program of study through which a student concurrently pursues and earns **two distinct master's degrees** at Georgia College & State University.
    - **Program Eligibility:** Dual-degree pathways may be established only between graduate programs that have an approved curriculum with existing shared coursework. The dual-degree structure must be based on courses already included in the approved curricula of both programs and may not be created through the development of new shared coursework solely for the purpose of a dual degree.
- **Accelerated Pathway (Double Bobcats):** An integrated 4+1 program allowing undergraduate students to begin graduate coursework that applies to both a GCSU bachelor's and master's degree.
- **External Dual Degree:** Collaborative arrangements with other University System of Georgia (USG) institutions (requires a formal Memorandum of Understanding).

3.0 Admission Requirements

Students must apply to and be accepted by both graduate programs independently.

- **Independent Review:** Admission to one program does not guarantee admission to the second.
- **Standardized Testing:** If applicable, students must meet the GRE/GMAT/MAT requirements for both programs.
- **Credit Applicability:** Only graduate coursework completed within seven (7) years prior to admission may be considered for application toward degree requirements unless otherwise approved. Any coursework completed before admission requires approval from the graduate program coordinator.
- **Timing:** Students interested in pursuing a dual degree are encouraged to apply and be admitted to both programs at the time of initial admission. Requests to add a second degree after enrollment may be considered on a case-by-case basis and require approval from both program coordinators.

4.0 Credit Sharing and Curriculum

To ensure the distinctness of each degree, the following limits apply to double-counted credits:

- **Credit Limit:** No more than 15 semester hours may be shared between two graduate programs, subject to the approval of both Graduate Coordinators.
- **Core Equivalence:** Shared credits must be relevant to both degrees. Common examples include research methods, statistics, or interdisciplinary electives.
- **Residency:** At least 18 semester hours for each degree must be completed in residence at GCSU.

5.0 Academic Progression

- **Dual-Degree Progression:** Students are expected to make continuous progress toward both degrees. Accordingly, students must enroll in coursework associated with each degree program during each semester of dual-degree enrollment. Any deviation from this requirement must receive prior approval from both program coordinators, except during a student's final semester of dual-degree enrollment when no remaining coursework exists in one of the two degree programs.
- **GPA Maintenance:** Students must maintain a minimum institutional GPA of 3.0. A grade lower than a **C** will not be counted toward degree credit in either program.
- **Time Limitation:** All requirements for both degrees must be completed within seven (7) years from the date of the first course enrollment in the dual program.
- **Conferral:** Degrees may be awarded simultaneously or sequentially. If sequential, the second degree must be completed within the remaining seven-year window.

6.0 Academic Standing and Graduation

- **Academic Standards:** Students enrolled in a dual degree program must maintain academic standing in accordance with institutional policies and the requirements of each degree program. A grade below C is not eligible for application toward degree requirements in either program.
- **Time Limitation:** All requirements for both degrees must be completed within seven (7) years from the date of the first course enrollment in the dual program.
- **Conferral:** Degrees may be awarded simultaneously or sequentially. If sequential, the second degree must be completed within the remaining seven-year window.

7.0 Administrative Procedures

1. **Program of Study:** A "Dual Degree Program of Study" form must be filed with the Office of the Registrar after admission to the second program. This form must clearly identify which courses are being "shared."
2. **Advising:** Dual degree students will be assigned an advisor from each program. Annual joint advising sessions are recommended to ensure the student remains on track for both sets of requirements.
3. **Tuition and Fees:** Students are charged graduate tuition rates based on their primary program of record. If tuition rates differ between programs, the higher rate will apply.

Approvals

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Mandy Jarriel, Ph.D. Date

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