

## **Policy on Joint Degrees**

### **Approved by the Academic Council**

**9/22/05**

Duke University engages in joint degree programs with other universities under certain conditions. The key principle underlying any joint degree program is that students in such programs are viewed as having earned a Duke degree. That is, the content of the program, the quality of students in the program, and the quality of the educational experience of the students (faculty qualifications and performance, standards of conduct, etc.) should be comparable to similar Duke University degrees. Further, any student receiving a joint degree with Duke's name on it should be treated as a full alumnus of Duke University.

Any joint degree program should generally involve no more than 50% of the instruction being provided by the partner school. Exceptions to this 50% rule might be imagined in the cases where partners bring extraordinary resources to the program. However, such exceptions are likely to be rare and will need to reflect very special circumstances.

#### **Criteria for Selecting a Joint Degree Partner**

Obviously, the selection of partner schools is critical. Any partner school must be carefully selected and should be based on such factors as the quality of the faculty of the potential partner school, a shared commitment to academic standards, and a potential for a research as well as a teaching relationship with the partner school. Below is a list of specific criteria that might be used:

##### Partner Characteristics

Partner has the quality teaching needed to deliver quality education

Partner has the facilities needed to deliver quality education

Partner can help deliver high quality students

Partner values Duke's skills & reputation highly

Partner is able to meet financial commitments

Partner shares Duke's values on a variety of issues, e.g., treatment of students

Partner possesses skills with high learning opportunities for other programs

Partner has credibility as a research peer (a comparable "academic standing) and offers research opportunities

### Market, program, and student characteristics

Large market size (# of people interested in the degree program), with potential to offer multiple sections & to repeat programs

Market values the degree

Safe location

Early entry to market, with limited initial competition

Market offers opportunities to learn about educational practices that we can incorporate in other programs & classes

Does not cannibalize existing Duke programs, taking competition into account

High likelihood of ongoing profitability

Places few constraints on Duke's expansion

Program would not divert Duke's resources from higher priority activities

Strong English language skills of potential students

Alliance will have positive long term impact on Duke's strategy as well as short term benefits

### **Approval Procedures**

The following procedures should be followed in approving a joint or dual degree program.

- a. The procedures must include the following:
  - i. Approval by initiating academic unit based on a detailed written agreements concerning the degree program and the partner schools
  - ii. Review by the Academic Programs Committee
  - iii. Approval by the Provost
  - iv. Review by the Executive Committee of the Academic Council
  - v. Approval by the Academic Council
  - vi. Review by the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees
  - vii. Approval by the Board of Trustees

viii. Notification of the Accrediting agency of the University. All the Universities involved in the joint degree must be officially recognized or accredited by the competent authorities in their countries.

### **Management of Joint Degree Programs**

The management of a joint degree program will involve substantial challenges. Thus, the procedures for management should include explicit (written) agreements on the extent of the program, student admission, the student's status and related rights, what is required for the awarding of the degree, each partner institution's responsibilities and the financing of the program. Further, a senior administrator in the relevant school should be assigned responsibility to ensure the quality of the program.