

# Information and Guidelines for Establishing Collaborative Graduate Education Programs with Institutions Outside of the United States

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## Introduction

Interest is increasing throughout the University in international collaborations that include activities related to graduate education. This document is intended to facilitate and guide such collaborations, and includes the following four main components:

- I. A listing of mechanisms available within existing institutional policies to support collaborative international graduate education activities, without the need for a formal agreement.
- II. Questions and information to consider before pursuing a Collaborative Graduate Education Program with an institution outside the U.S. These are intended to help guide programs and raise awareness of the complexity of issues that need to be considered, and should be reviewed well in advance of any discussions with a prospective collaborating institution.
- III. A delineation of the two available collaborative international graduate degree program models: Collaborative International – Concurrent Graduate Degree Programs (CI-CGDP) and Collaborative International – Integrated Undergraduate-Graduate Degree Programs (CIP-IUGDP).
- IV. Guidelines for the development of formal proposals to establish collaborative international graduate degree programs using the above two models.

## Background and Guiding Principles

In 2007, a Task Force on Globalization of Research and Graduate Education was jointly appointed by Eva J. Pell, then Senior Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School, and Michael A. Adewumi, Vice Provost for Global Programs, as part of the strategic planning process. The Task Force report (see <http://forms.gradsch.psu.edu/memos/tfrptGRGEGForACGE.pdf>) recognized three “motives” for international activity: “1) To enhance the quality of the scholarship in Penn State’s research activities; 2) To broaden the educational experiences of our graduate students who will live and work in an increasingly connected world; and 3) To reach out to other parts of the world and offer the benefits of our expertise and capabilities to all citizens of the globe.”

One of the specific recommendations of the task force was to increase Penn State’s visibility and impact outside the U.S. through mechanisms that target strategic graduate education partnerships. Such partnerships should be based upon a foundation of:

- 1) **Mutual interest and benefit** - The partnership should bring reasonable added value to both institutions.
- 2) **Strategic importance** - Prospective partner institutions and related collaborative programs should be considered in the context of Penn State’s strategic plan and in particular, how Penn State must

make a fundamental change in the way it engages overseas partner institutions by focusing on fewer and more strategic universities in a true partnership manner (see <http://strategicplan.psu.edu/partnershipsabroad>). Such universities will comprise a select and limited network with focused activities in key global areas such as Asia, Africa and Latin America. While the University's strategy does not preclude forming engagements outside of this global engagement network (GEN), new programs that are proposed should be evaluated with reference to any GEN relationships in the region to insure they do not interfere or conflict. Within this context, the academic unit's mission, long-range strategic planning, and potential for disciplinary synergy should also be considered (For example, does the partner institution/program provide curricular assets not otherwise available? Do individual faculty members have important research expertise/stature that may provide exceptional opportunities for research collaborations tied to graduate training? Would the collaboration provide access to unique research facilities/specialized resource centers that would enhance the training of graduate students and the research capabilities of faculty?).

- 3) **Ability to offer a high quality, sustainable program of reasonable magnitude** - Faculty/staff resources and commitment within the unit (and on the part of the partner institution) must be sufficient to establish and deliver the proposed program without compromising existing programs, for a sustained period. Such collaborative programs are generally very resource-intensive in terms of staff support, faculty and administrative oversight and central institutional processes (such as those administered by the University Office of Global Programs, the Graduate School, University Registrar, etc.), and should not be considered if the likelihood of a significant population of students participating in the program over a sustained period of time is not anticipated.

The information and guidelines contained herein for establishing collaborations with institutions outside the U.S. involving graduate education have been developed to facilitate such efforts, and best position those academic units interested in pursuing these opportunities. It is imperative that all necessary details be considered and issues addressed in advance, so there are no barriers to implement these programs and to ensure and maintain their academic quality and success.

## **I. MECHANISMS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT GRADUATE EDUCATION ACTIVITIES THAT DO NOT REQUIRE A FORMAL INSTITUTIONAL AGREEMENT**

Mechanisms are available within existing institutional policies to support graduate education activities with an institution outside the U.S., without the need for a formal institutional agreement, and within the existing institutional framework. Such mechanisms include the following:

- 1) Graduate students enrolled in a Penn State graduate degree program may register for SUBJ 603, FOREIGN ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE, for variable credits (up to 12) to temporarily engage in foreign study and/or research approved by the graduate program, while enrolled in a university outside the U.S., constituting progress towards the degree. SUBJ 603 carries a flat tuition rate, with the expectation that tuition is paid to the university outside the U.S. at which the student is engaged.
- 2) Graduate students enrolled in a Penn State graduate degree program and registered for credit courses at an institution outside the U.S. may transfer into their Penn State graduate degree up to 10 credits within established guidelines for transfer credits (see [http://bulletins.psu.edu/bulletins/whitebook/degree\\_requirements.cfm?section=masters](http://bulletins.psu.edu/bulletins/whitebook/degree_requirements.cfm?section=masters)). Programs should consult the above guidelines and Graduate Enrollment Services (GES) in the

Graduate School to ensure the transferability of credits before students are encouraged to enroll for credit courses outside of Penn State.

- 3) An approved Penn State graduate course may be offered by a member of the graduate faculty or approved instructor (see <http://forms.gradsch.psu.edu/admin/500level.pdf>) at a location outside the U.S. with approval of the Graduate School, according to established policies for limited off-site course offerings. (See <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/poer.html>)
- 4) Visiting graduate students who are enrolled at a university outside the U.S. may register for graduate courses and research at Penn State, and may be appointed to a graduate assistantship (e.g., provided by a Penn State host graduate program/academic unit/faculty grant) by completing the online graduate application for the program in which the visiting student will be hosted, and with a request by the graduate program for admission as “Provisional No-Time Limit.”
- 5) Use of distance technology, in particular delivery of online courses, may provide unique opportunities for inclusion of students outside the U.S. in graduate education programming at Penn State and bring the added benefit, when such courses include resident students, for enriched learning environments. Programs should consider how specific courses that currently exist in an online or other distance-delivered format or that could be converted or developed for online/distance delivery might contribute to collaborative graduate education initiatives.
- 6) Participation of visiting faculty from an international institution in teaching courses, advising students, and serving on doctoral committees for a limited time. (See: <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/criteria.html>)

Although the above mechanisms afford significant opportunities for graduate education activities with institutions outside the U.S. without the need for formal agreements and special processes/approvals, in limited cases there may be justification to create formal collaborative graduate degree programs with other institutions that afford special privileges and allowances beyond existing graduate education policies at Penn State. Such collaborative international (CI) programs, described further below, are concurrent graduate degree programs (CGDP) and integrated undergraduate-graduate degree programs (IUGDP), that allow for courses from the participating institution to be double-counted toward two graduate degrees, or an undergraduate and a graduate degree, respectively. Current policy does not allow for the transfer of more than 10 credits from an external institution. However, approved collaborative programs may request allowance for more than 10 credits to be transferred into a Penn State graduate degree program, and for transferred courses to be identified on the Penn State transcript as part of the special, collaborative program. Because approval for a collaborative graduate program affords the participating institution special privileges not available otherwise, formal collaborative programs should only be considered for institutions of high stature that bring significant added value to the partnership.

Approval for establishment of such special, collaborative international graduate programs requires submission of a proposal through the program review process of Graduate Council, and justification for the program according to the criteria and guidelines detailed in Section IV. of this document. Preceding these guidelines, in Section II. below, are a series of guiding questions that have been developed to raise awareness regarding the many issues that should be considered in advance of pursuing such programs, and to assist units in developing collaborative programs that provide quality training to prospective students and value to both the academic unit and outside institution involved. To best facilitate their efforts, academic units are advised to consult with the Graduate School at the earliest possible stages when collaborations that might involve graduate education are first being envisioned, and prior to

pursuing a formal agreement or beginning to develop a proposal for a collaborative international program offering.

## **II. ISSUES TO CONSIDER PRIOR TO DEVELOPING A PROPOSAL FOR A COLLABORATIVE GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAM WITH AN INSTITUTION OUTSIDE THE U.S.**

The following guiding questions are intended to raise awareness of the complexity of issues that need to be considered in advance of pursuing a collaborative international graduate degree program, but are in no way an exhaustive list, nor will every question be applicable to every collaborative opportunity.

- 1) **Reconciliation of Program Policies** - Which policies take priority (those of Penn State or the international institution) and are there some aspects of the proposed graduate program where these cannot be reconciled?
- 2) **Academic Calendars and Residency** - How do the academic calendars relate (e.g., does the proposed partner institution follow a similar semester vs. term or other system)? What is the length of the semester/term at the international institution? Are there academic calendar inconsistencies that might affect a student's ability to come to Penn State at the beginning of the semester, and compromise advancement through the degree program in a continuous and seamless manner? How will any residency requirements applicable for the Penn State degree be met?
- 3) **Course Equivalency** - Are the courses at the international institution at the equivalent level as Penn State courses to be credited towards a graduate degree (e.g., 400-, 500-, and 800-level); are the credits equivalent; is the grading system equivalent? What is the potential for courses not being completed (and grades not being assigned) when a student originating at the collaborating institution is to be at Penn State (or vice versa)? Tracking students and their academic progress in such programs is challenging and resource-intensive. Currently, Penn State students admitted internally into an integrated program (i.e., an IUG) must have courses and grades obtained in the undergraduate program manually entered onto the student's graduate transcript, which requires close and continuous communication and consultation with the undergraduate program, and which is facilitated by access to a shared institutional student record system (i.e., ISIS). How will this be systematically coordinated and monitored for students in the collaborative program where the undergraduate record is not directly accessible and information related to the record, as well as direct oversight of the student's progress through the undergraduate portion of the program, is dependent upon individuals at another institution?
- 4) **Student Funding/Assistantship Requirements** - Will students admitted to the Penn State program be provided funding in the form of assistantships or other support? How will the program ensure that students who originate at a collaborating international institution and are provided teaching assistantships meet the English proficiency requirement?
- 5) **Faculty Participation** - If visiting faculty members are to serve on Penn State student committees, teach graduate courses at Penn State, or instruct in designated Penn State courses delivered at the cooperating institution (see policy related to "Expedited Review Process of Limited Off-Site Course Offerings," <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/poer.html>), how will they be evaluated? (See <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/criteria.html> for criteria for appointment of individuals as special members of doctoral committees and graduate faculty membership, and <http://forms.gradsch.psu.edu/admin/500level.pdf> for special approval to teach a graduate course.)

- 6) **Culture** – Are there cultural differences that could impact student success in the program? Differences in expectations and educational culture of international versus U.S. institutions need to be considered when proposing such a program.
- 7) **Student Admissions/Selectivity** - How will students be selected for admission into the collaborative program? Will there be a joint admissions committee with faculty from both institutions? How will the University Office of Global Programs’ requirements be handled, such as visa documents, etc.? Such collaborative programs are appropriate for some, but not all students who might otherwise formally meet the minimum standards for admission to the respective individual degree programs. (For example, a prospective student to a collaborative concurrent master’s degree program might qualify for admission to the Penn State master’s degree, but not have the capability to be successful in a concurrent program demanding greater effort, commitment, intellectual focus, cultural awareness, language skills, etc.). Programs should consider the issues of how students will be recruited, selectivity of admissions, and appropriateness of the program to individual students. Collaborative programs also require that mechanisms for evaluating students for admission, which ensure input by both institutions without compromising either institution’s standards, and for monitoring and mentoring students’ progress in the program be carefully considered.
- 8) **Consistent Standards and Expectations** – Are standards and expectations for undergraduate/graduate education at the collaborating institution consistent with undergraduate or graduate programs at Penn State? For example, a culminating or “capstone” experience (i.e., dissertation, thesis, scholarly paper, internship project, etc.) that goes beyond a collection of course credits to demonstrate evidence of analytical ability and synthesis of material is a requirement of all Penn State graduate degrees. If a concurrent graduate degree program is being proposed, does the collaborating graduate degree include such a culminating experience?

### III. TYPES OF COLLABORATIVE GRADUATE PROGRAM MODELS ALLOWED

The complexity of issues related to developing programmatic collaborations with other institutions, especially those involving international entities as reflected above, underline the significant challenges to establishing high quality, cost-effective, and sustainable programs. Considered together with feedback on successes and challenges experienced by other institutions, as well as benchmarking by national organizations (e.g., the Council of Graduate Schools), it has been concluded that only certain program models are viable for such collaborations. For these reasons, academic units have two options in developing collaborative graduate programs between Penn State and institutions outside the United States.

- 1) Collaborative International – Concurrent Graduate Degree Programs (CI-CGDP) – Students are enrolled concurrently in a master’s degree program at Penn State and a master’s degree program at the collaborating institution; or in a Penn State doctoral program and collaborating master’s degree program; or in a Penn State master’s and collaborating doctoral degree program. Under such programs, specified courses may be applicable to both degrees, i.e., double-counted. See Appendix A1 for a more detailed description and model guidelines.
- 2) Collaborative International - Integrated Undergraduate-Graduate Degree Programs (CIP-IUGDP) – Students are enrolled in a baccalaureate degree program at the collaborating institution and a master’s program at Penn State and may “double-count” specified courses towards both degrees. See Appendix A2 for a more detailed description and model guidelines.

For both models, a program proposal must be submitted for review and approval by Graduate Council. (See general guidelines: at <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/progprop.html> and proposal form: at [http://www.psu.edu/ufs/guide/grad\\_proposal\\_form.html](http://www.psu.edu/ufs/guide/grad_proposal_form.html)). In addition to Graduate Council review and approval, establishing a collaborative graduate degree program with an institution abroad requires the approval of the Vice Provost for Global Programs and a formal written agreement signed by both institutions. The University Office of Global Programs (UOGP) will assist with drafting the agreement, ensure appropriate review, and coordinate the approval. Proposers are advised to consult with UOGP advisers early in the development of a collaborative international graduate program.

Collaborative programs in which a single degree is awarded jointly by both Penn State and another institution (i.e., in which the student receives a single diploma reflecting both institutional identities) are NOT allowed, given the substantial logistical, academic, accreditation (in some cases) and other issues that this presents.

The Penn State dual-title degree is a unique internal degree model that integrates two fields of study within the Penn State system into a single program in terms of both course work and research/scholarship, so that a single diploma titled in both fields is issued. This model is also NOT appropriate for collaborative programs.

#### **IV. ELEMENTS OF PROPOSALS FOR COLLABORATIVE GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS**

Programs must first determine which of the two allowable models indicated above in Section III will be proposed for the collaborative international program. Once the model has been selected, a detailed proposal containing the information listed below must be developed and submitted for review and approval by Graduate Council. The proposal must include a justification for the offering; information on program administration and coordination; and program-specific recruitment, admission and degree requirements. The following elements, A to H, must be included in the proposal, adapted to either of the two models selected (CI-CGDP or CI-IUGDP):

##### **A. Cover Sheets**

Creation of a CI-CGDP or CI-IUGDP constitutes a program change which requires that a proposal be submitted for the curricular review process and approval by Graduate Council. (See general guidelines: at <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/progprop.html>) Required forms that must be included with the proposal to indicate a program change are available: at [http://www.psu.edu/ufs/guide/grad\\_proposal\\_form.html](http://www.psu.edu/ufs/guide/grad_proposal_form.html) .

##### **B. Justification**

The justification for proposing a collaborative program must include the following information:

- 1) Motivation for creating the collaborative program. This should include information that addresses:
  - a. Need for the offering and market demand. Provide estimates of how many students will participate in the offering per year and over the first five-year period of program operation if approved.
  - b. Statement on how the proposed collaborative offering fits into the mission of the graduate program and/or college.

- c. Explanation of the value added by having a formal collaboration beyond existing means to provide students with an international experience (e.g., items 1-6 in Section I above).
- d. A brief description of the academic nature of the collaborative program, including model selected, (i.e., Concurrent Degree or Integrated Undergraduate-Graduate Degree Program).

## 2) Program/Institution Quality:

NOTE: Because approval for a collaborative graduate program affords the international institution special privileges not available otherwise (e.g., double-counting of courses towards both degrees; exception to the limit of 10 credits that can be transferred into a graduate degree program), collaborative programs are limited to institutions of appropriate stature.

- a. Name, location, and nature of the institution and specific academic unit with which the Penn State graduate program is proposing to collaborate.
- b. Quality of the collaborating institution (documented evidence of the quality of the international institution; include any ranking or rating by a recognized, qualified, independent entity or accrediting body).
- c. Quality of the specific academic program to be included in the collaboration. Include specific metrics/indicators, for example: how selective is the program in admitting graduates/undergraduates (i.e., number of applications versus number of offers of admission)? What is the yield (number of acceptances versus number of offers)? What is the median GPA of admitted students? What are the median standardized test scores (if appropriate) of admitted students? Other quality indicators?
- d. Indicators of faculty quality at the collaborating institution.

NOTE: Faculty serving on Penn State graduate student committees must be approved as Special Members or qualified for graduate faculty membership (see criteria for graduate faculty membership at <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/criteria.html>); and if teaching Penn State graduate courses must members of the Graduate Faculty or receive special approval to teach a graduate course (see <http://forms.gradsch.psu.edu/admin/500level.pdf>).

## C. Compatibility between the collaborating institution and the Penn State system

- 1) Verification from Graduate Enrollment Services (<http://forms.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/collaboratedegreeverification.pdf>) of the equivalency of the undergraduate degree offered by the collaborating institution (i.e., does the collaborating institution offer an a four-year undergraduate degree program equivalent to a Penn State baccalaureate degree? Is the institution accredited or recognized by the appropriate body within their country?).
- 2) Equivalency of course credits in terms of class contact hours, out-of-class effort, grading scale, etc.
- 3) Alignment of the academic calendars. For example, is the collaborating institution on a semester versus term or other system (if so, what system), and what is the comparability in terms of length of the instructional period and starting/ending dates for each?
- 4) Curricular description of the relevant programs of study offered at the collaborating institution.
- 5) Compatibility/potential for integration of the programs: Identify any significant cultural and educational differences, if any; address how these may affect students' success in the program and how these will be managed/reconciled.

#### D. Program Administration and Coordination

- 1) Outline plans for administration and coordination of the program. (The proposal must include a designated coordinator to oversee the collaborative program, and specify a procedure to ensure the terms of the agreement are met.) Programs are cautioned that failure to sustain detailed oversight and record keeping of such complex entities may compromise students' ability to complete the program.
- 2) Describe resources needed to create and maintain the program (staffing, administrative costs, student funding, etc.), including any additional fees or differential tuition rate that may be justified given the need for greater, more complex institutional support.
- 3) Describe the marketing plan for the collaborative program.
- 4) Describe the general nature of participation of faculty from the collaborating institution, including teaching responsibilities for Penn State courses, serving on graduate student committees, etc.
- 5) Describe mechanisms for sustaining the collaborative program and a pre-planned schedule and criteria for assessment of success/limitations.

NOTE: A "sunset clause" for the collaborative program should be established; i.e., it is recommended that agreements be established for a five-year period, with periodic review and renewal.

- 6) Specify the delivery method for the program (e.g., in residence; distance learning (describe method of delivery such as video-conferencing); blended (describe); fully online via the World Campus; etc.).

NOTE: Programs not previously approved for off-campus delivery of the graduate degree program must address required guidelines for approval of such delivery as well. (See <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/proposalsubmit.html> and <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/offcampus.html>)

#### E. Model-Specific Program Recruitment, Admissions and Degree Requirements

Specify the model selected for the program collaboration and provide information related to recruitment, admissions and degree requirements for that particular model, i.e., either a Collaborative International-Concurrent Graduate Degree Program (CI-CGDP) or a Collaborative International-Integrated Undergraduate-Graduate Degree Program (CI-IUGDP). *It is important to carefully and thoroughly review the specific guidelines for the respective model selected (CI-CGDP, Appendix A1; CI-IUGDP, Appendix A2), and include all of the information required, as appropriate for that model.* A summary of the elements to be included for each model are as follows:

- 1) Timing of Recruitment and Admission
- 2) Criteria for Admission
- 3) Degree Requirements and Plan of Study  
(<http://forms.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/collaborativeplanofstudy.pdf>)
- 4) Other Program Requirements
- 5) List of Courses to be Transferred From the Collaborating Institution to the Penn State Degree  
(<http://forms.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/collaborativecredittransfer.pdf>)
- 6) Student-Specific Expectations
- 7) Degree Conferral
- 8) Graduate Student Handbook Statement

## **IMPORTANT NOTES:**

For admission to the Graduate School, an applicant must hold either (1) a bachelor's degree from a U.S. regionally accredited institution or (2) a postsecondary degree that is equivalent to a U.S. baccalaureate degree earned from an officially recognized degree-granting international institution. An academic unit proposing a CI-IUGDP program must consult with the Office of Graduate Enrollment Services in the Graduate School and include a confirmation from that office that the degree offered by the collaborating institution meets this requirement. Similarly, the baccalaureate/post-secondary degree held by applicants to a CI-CGDP must meet this requirement.

International applicants must take and submit scores for the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or the IELTS (International English Language Testing System), and meet the established minimum scores required by the Graduate School and graduate program with the exception of individuals who have received a baccalaureate or a master's degree from a college/university/institution in any of the following: Australia, Belize, British Caribbean and British West Indies, Canada (except Quebec), England, Guyana, Republic of Ireland, Liberia, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Scotland, the United States, and Wales, per Graduate Council policies. (See [http://bulletins.psu.edu/bulletins/whitebook/general\\_information.cfm?section=admission2](http://bulletins.psu.edu/bulletins/whitebook/general_information.cfm?section=admission2))

For both program models, the proposal to be submitted refers to a standing offering that will be created within an existing Penn State graduate program, and that must be approved through curricular review by Graduate Council.

### F. Funding Mechanisms and Logistics

Describe how students enrolled in the collaborative program will be supported. Is the collaborative program projected to be fully revenue-generating? Are assistantships available for student support at both institutions?

### G. Consultation

Evidence of consultation with other relevant Penn State units also may be required. Collaborations involving incoming international students should be reviewed at an early stage by the UOGP's Directorate of International Student Advising. Other offices which can provide valuable advice, and whose approval may be required, are the University Registrar, Office of the Bursar, Office of Undergraduate Education, and the World Campus (in particular, the Director of Academic Affairs for Graduate Programs). In some cases, such as where issues of technology transfer or intellectual property are implicated, review by the Office of Sponsored Programs or General Counsel's office also may be required. If the proposed program may affect another academic unit at Penn State, such as when there is an existing Penn State collaboration at the overseas institution, that unit also should be consulted. The UOGP and Graduate School can provide guidance on appropriate review and consultation.

### H. Optional Proposal Checklist (Appendix B)

## APPENDIX A1

### GUIDELINES FOR COLLABORATIVE INTERNATIONAL-CONCURRENT GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS (CI-CGDP)

#### Background and General Model-Specific Information

Concurrent graduate degrees recognize training in two fields of study in the form of two graduate degrees, each with a separate thesis/dissertation/culminating experience, as well as other program specific requirements for each degree. A master's degree with a concurrent doctorate or second master's are allowed; however, concurrent doctorates are not allowed. Programs must recognize that concurrent degrees may increase time to degree. Collaborative international concurrent graduate degree programs (CI-CGDP) may allow a student in a master's degree program at Penn State to begin work for either a master's in a second field or a doctoral degree in their current field or a second field at a collaborating institution outside the U.S., or vice versa, while concurrently completing the first graduate degree. Such programs must meet the guidelines delineated below, and receive curricular approval from Graduate Council.

#### Admission Process

Students selected to participate in concurrent candidacies must be recommended and endorsed in writing by appropriate faculty of the international institution and must complete Penn State's graduate application, pay the application fee, meet the Graduate School's minimum requirements for admission (see: <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/prospective/apply.html>) and the admission requirements of the graduate program to which the student is applying, and be approved for admission at Penn State. Faculty from Penn State should participate in the selection procedure at the point where the students are considered for the cooperative program. *Again, concurrent doctoral degrees are not allowed.* Any common agreements, such as the required completion of a specific portion/sequence of courses for one program before advancing to begin the other, should be noted in the agreed upon plan of study.

#### Transfer Credits

Courses accepted from the cooperating institution to satisfy the Penn State graduate degree need to be equivalent in academic rigor and level to Penn State's graduate courses. Transferred academic work must be equivalent to B quality on Penn State's grading system; and must appear on an official graduate transcript of an official degree-granting institution, as recognized by the appropriate governmental agency of the country. Students admitted to the concurrent program will be allowed to transfer up to the specified number of course credits identified and approved in the proposal to establish the CI-CGDP. The suitability of courses for transfer credit will be evaluated on an individual basis. For students who are enrolled in the CI-CGDP first at the outside institution, transfer courses from that institution to be double-counted towards the Penn State degree must be completed within the first semester of enrollment at Penn State. Otherwise, additional requests for transfer of credit should occur within the semester immediately following their completion at the outside institution. For students who are enrolled in the CI-CGDP first at Penn State, transfer courses from the outside institution to be double-counted towards the Penn State degree should occur within the semester immediately following their completion at the outside institution. Courses from a collaborating international institution to be consistently transferred into the Penn State graduate degree and double-counted must be specified and pre-approved by completing the "Collaborative International Graduate Degree Program Transfer of Credit Form" (<http://forms.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/collaborativecredittransfer.pdf>) and attaching to the CI-CGDP proposal.

## Credit/Degree Requirements

The complete plan of study for each degree, including which specific courses will be double-counted (applied to both degrees), should be detailed in full by completing the “Collaborative International-Graduate Degree Program Plan of Study Form” (<http://forms.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/collaborativeplanofstudy.pdf>) and attaching the form to the proposal.

***The sum of required credits for both degrees in the CI-CGDP should not be reduced by more than 20 percent as a result of double-counting courses when the two degrees are taken concurrently, with no more than 1/3 of the credits required for the Penn State degree (up to the limit of 20% of the total credits that may be double-counted for both degrees) transferred in from the collaborating institution.***

For example, if a Penn State master’s degree requires a minimum of 30 credits, and a degree from a collaborating institution requires a minimum of 45 credits, the total required credits for both degrees taken as part of a CI-CGDP cannot be reduced by more than 15 credits, with no more than 10 credits transferred into the Penn State degree and double-counted. As another example, for a Penn State master’s degree requiring 60 credits and a degree from a collaborating international institution requiring 30 credits, the total required credits for both degrees cannot be reduced by more than 18 credits, with no more than 18 credits transferred into the Penn State degree and double counted. Additional examples are provided in the table below:

	<u>Example Degree Scenarios (Credits)</u>			
Penn State Degree:	30	30	60	45
International Collaborator Degree:	60	30	30	45
Total Credits (both degrees):	90	60	90	90
Maximum Total Credits Allowable for Double-Counting (both degrees) <sup>1</sup> :	18	12	18	18
Maximum Credits Allowable for Transfer To Penn State Degree <sup>2</sup> :	10	10	18	15

<sup>1</sup> Calculated as 20% of the total credits required for both degrees.

<sup>2</sup> Calculated as 1/3 of the credits required for the Penn State degree, up to the limit of 20% of the total credits that may be double-counted for both degrees.

**There must be a separate culminating experience (e.g., thesis; scholarly paper; project; etc.) for each degree, and credits related to the culminating experience (e.g., SUBJECT 600, THESIS RESEARCH) cannot be double-counted.**

A Penn State doctoral student pursuing a concurrent master’s degree at an outside institution must have representation from both programs of study on his/her doctoral committee. Faculty intended to serve on Penn State doctoral committees in a CI-CGDP who are from the collaborating institution must be qualified for Penn State graduate faculty membership and if appointed to the graduate faculty may be identified as adjunct graduate faculty members, or else should be qualified and approved as Special Members of the committee (see: <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/criteria.html>).

The curricular review process will verify that degree requirements for the Penn State degree program will be met, and that overlap between the programs (i.e., double-counting of credits) is within the above-stated allowable limits. The program proposal must include a list of courses required for the graduate program at the collaborating international institution, and a list of courses required for the graduate program at Penn State. Courses specified to be used for both degrees must be consistently adhered to if the program is approved. Changes to previously approved CI-CGDPs (e.g., change in courses to be transferred in for double-counting) must be submitted as a program change and approved through the curricular review process.

Course syllabi with detailed information regarding course requirements and content must be shared among institutions in order to coordinate the transfer of credits and the planning of programs of studies for the recommended students in the collaborative program.

### Conferral of Degrees

Proposals should state that the expected timing of degree conferral for both degrees is at the completion of the entire CI-CGDP, and articulate a statement to be included in all program materials, including the Graduate Student Handbook, that confirms that if all of the requirements for one degree are satisfied before those of the other degree, and if these meet the requirements for the degree when not offered as a concurrent program, then that degree may be conferred in cases where the student may not be able to complete the second degree.

### Periodic Review of the CI-CGDP Agreement

The signed CI-CGDP agreement should be reviewed periodically (e.g., annually) by participating representatives from both institutions. Any changes or modifications (beyond updating course information) must be approved by both institutions.

### Specific Elements to be Included in Section IV. E of Program Proposal.

In addition to the other information specified in Section IV that must be included in the proposal for a collaborative international graduate degree program, each point below should be addressed in Section IV E. in the proposal and in the graduate student handbook for the CI-CGDP program, along with any other relevant information.

- 1) **Timing of Recruitment & Admission:** Indicate the timing for recruitment to the CI-CGDP (e.g., will the concurrent program be marketed to prospective students as a “package” or will applicants to each institution be admitted to the respective degree program first and then recruited into the CI-CGDP?). What will be the sequence/timing of attendance at Penn State versus the collaborating institution? If admission is not on a rolling basis, indicate the timing of admission of new CI-CGDP students into the Penn State degree (e.g., fall semester each year). Specify how and when Penn State faculty will participate in the admissions process at the collaborating institution and vice versa.
- 2) **Criteria for Admission to the CI-CGDP:** Describe the requirements for admission into the CI-CGDP, consistent with a high degree of selectivity in the admissions process. Admission criteria must specify that students must apply to and meet admission requirements of the Penn State graduate program in which they intend to receive their graduate degree.

- 3) **Degree Requirements & Plan of Study:** Provide a side-by-side comparison of the graduate degree requirements for students in the Penn State graduate program alone versus the Penn State graduate program in the context of the CI-CGDP, including a clear indication of the specific courses and number of credits derived from the collaborative graduate degree that will be double-counted for the Penn State degree. *The complete plan of study for both the Penn State and collaborator concurrent degrees, including which specific courses will be double-counted (applied to both degrees), should be delineated by completing the “Collaborative International-Graduate Degree Program Plan of Study Form”* (<http://forms.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/collaborativeplanofstudy.pdf>) and attaching the form to the proposal. Any common agreements, such as the required completion of a specific portion/sequence of courses for one program before advancing to begin the other, should be noted in the stated plan of study.
- 4) **Other Program Requirements:** Delineate any other program requirements (beyond courses) that involve or are contributed by the collaborating institution (e.g., if concurrent Penn State Ph.D. and collaborator M.S. degrees are to be offered, what is the culminating experience [thesis, scholarly paper, etc.] required for the partner M.S.?).
- 5) **List of Courses:** Include a list of courses required for both collaborating institutions for the CI-CGDP. Courses from a collaborating international institution to be consistently transferred into the Penn State graduate degree and double-counted must be specified by completing the “Collaborative International Graduate Degree Program Transfer of Credit Form” (<http://forms.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/collaborativecredittransfer.pdf>) and attaching the form to the CI-CGDP proposal. **Course credits from the collaborating institution to be double-counted must be equivalent to course credits at Penn State.**
- 6) **Student-Specific Expectations:** Specify student-specific expectations, including expected time to degree for the entire collaborative program. (Note: Student-specific expectations of units offering a collaborative program must be included in the program’s Graduate Student Handbook).
- 7) **Degree Conferral:** Proposals should state that the expected timing of degree conferral for both degrees is at the completion of the entire CI-CGDP, and articulate a statement to be included in all program materials, including the Graduate Student Handbook, that confirm that if all of the requirements for one degree are satisfied before those of the other degree, and if these meet the requirements for the degree when not offered as a concurrent program, then that degree may be conferred in cases where the student may not be able to complete the second degree.
- 8) **Graduate Student Handbook:** Proposals for CI-CGDPs should include the section of the Graduate Student Handbook related to the CI-CGDP, and should articulate a statement to be included in all program materials that confirm that if all of the requirements for one degree are satisfied before those of the other degree and if these meet the requirements for the degree when not offered as a concurrent program, then that degree may be conferred in cases where the student may not be able to complete the second degree.

## APPENDIX A2

### GUIDELINES FOR COLLABORATIVE INTERNATIONAL-INTEGRATED UNDERGRADUATE-GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS (CI-IUGDP)

#### Background and General Model-Specific Information

Integrated undergraduate-graduate (IUG) study provides several advantages for qualifying students: (1) It permits coherent planning of studies through the graduate degree, with advising informed not only by the requirements of the baccalaureate program, but also the longer-range goals of the graduate degree; (2) For most students, the total time required to reach completion of the higher degree will be shortened; (3) The student will have earlier contact with the rigors of graduate study and with graduate faculty; (4) The resources of the Graduate School are accessible to these students; and (5) While still undergraduates, highly qualified students with IUG status benefit from their association with graduate students with similar levels of intensity of interest and commitment parallel their own.

Participation in IUG programs is appropriate for some, but not all students who formally meet the minimum standards for admission to the graduate program. In particular, minimal performance in the graduate degree portion of an IUG program serves no particular purpose, and marginally prepared students undertake such a program at great risk of failure. Consequently, only a small subset of undergraduates who have demonstrated the high level of academic achievement, maturity and commitment necessary to be successful, should be considered for the program, given the greater demands of an IUG. Such greater selectivity of IUGs is reflected in the small proportion of students who enroll each year in Penn State's internal IUG programs (e.g., less than 3% of those undergraduate students enrolled in Penn State's University Scholars Program, a population of students who are already highly selected, pursue an IUG).

Whereas all of the above information applies equally to students in a collaborative international IUG degree program (CI-IUGDP), additional benefits and challenges exist when a student is pursuing his/her undergraduate degree from an institution outside the U.S., as described earlier in this document.

Given the greater demands required of a student to be successful in a CI-IUGDP, such program proposals must articulate clearly the mechanisms for evaluating students for admission and for monitoring and mentoring their progress in the program. Although there are many advantages to CI-IUGDPs, care must be taken to properly develop and coordinate the plans of students to ensure proper admissions procedures, an adequate level of rigor, efficient sequencing of courses, and expedient completion of the program of study. Proposals for CI-IUGDPs should include a draft version of the section of the Graduate Student Handbook related to the CI-IUGDP that will provide guidance for prospective students, as indicated below.

Course syllabi, with detailed information regarding course requirements and content, must be shared among institutions to form the collaborative plan of study and coordinate credit transfer.

## Periodic Review of the CI-IUGDP Agreement

The CI-IUGDP agreement, signed by both institutions, should be reviewed periodically (e.g., annually) by representatives from both institutions. Any changes or modifications (beyond updating course information) must be approved by both institutions.

## Specific Elements to be Included in Section IV. E of the Program Proposal

In addition to the other information specified in Section IV that must be included in the proposal for a collaborative international graduate education program, each point below should be addressed in Section IV. E. (Model-Specific Program Recruitment, Admissions and Degree Requirements) in the proposal and in the Graduate Student Handbook for the program. Any other points relevant to a specific CI-IUGDP program and not specified below should also be addressed.

- 1) **Timing of Recruitment & Admission:** Indicate when in the undergraduate degree program students will be recruited and admitted to the CI-IUGDP. Students should have progressed sufficiently in their undergraduate programs to demonstrate their potential to successfully meet the considerable demands of a CI-IUGDP, typically after completing at least two years of undergraduate study. In order to avoid expectations that admission into the undergraduate degree program guarantees admission into the graduate program, students should not be recruited into a CI-IUGDP prior to admission into the undergraduate program. If admission is not on a rolling basis, indicate the timing of admission of new students into the CI-IUGDP (e.g., fall semester each year). Specify how Penn State faculty will participate in the admissions process at the point where the students are to be considered for the collaborative program.
- 1) **Criteria for Admission:** Describe the requirements for admission into the CI-IUGDP, consistent with a high degree of selectivity. Admission criteria must specify that students must apply to and meet admission requirements of the Penn State graduate program in which they intend to receive their graduate degree. Students selected to participate in the CI-IUGDP must be recommended and endorsed in writing by appropriate faculty of the international institution and must complete Penn State's graduate application, pay the application fee, meet the Graduate School's minimum requirements for admission (see: <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/prospective/apply.html>) and the admission requirements of the graduate program to which the student is applying, and be approved for admission at Penn State.
- 2) **Degree Requirements and Plan of Study:** Provide a side-by-side comparison of the graduate degree requirements for students in the graduate program alone versus in the CI-IUGDP, including a clear indication of the specific courses and number of credits derived from the undergraduate degree and graduate degree respectively, which will be double-counted for both degrees. In the case of courses to be double-counted from the undergraduate program, specify the designated course number and title at the collaborating institution; the equivalent Penn State course level (e.g., 400- or graduate (500/800) level) and if graduate level, whether equivalent to 500 or 800 (professionally oriented) graduate courses; and equivalent credits on a semester basis.

**NOTE:** Course credits from the collaborating institution to be double-counted must be equivalent to course credits at Penn State. As many as twelve of the credits required for the master's degree may be double-counted (applied to both undergraduate and graduate degree programs), with a minimum of 6 credits required to be double-counted. At least 50% of the course credits proposed to count for both degrees must be at the graduate (500- or 800-) level. The thesis or other

culminating/capstone experience and any related credits (e.g., SUBJECT 600, THESIS RESEARCH) may not be double-counted.

- 3) **Other Program Requirements:** Delineate any other program requirements (beyond courses) that involve or are contributed by the collaborating institution. (For example, if an undergraduate thesis or other culminating experience is required for the undergraduate degree, describe.)
- 4) **List of Courses:** Include a list of courses required for both collaborating institutions for the CI-IUGDP. Courses from a collaborating international institution to be consistently transferred into the Penn State graduate degree and double-counted must be specified by completing the “Collaborative International Graduate Degree Program Transfer of Credit Form” (<http://forms.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/collaborativecredittransfer.pdf>) and attaching the form to the CI-IUGDP proposal. **Course credits from the collaborating institution to be double-counted must be equivalent to course credits at Penn State.** Students should be directed to first fulfill basic undergraduate requirements so that if, for some reason, they cannot continue in the integrated program they will be able to receive their undergraduate degree without a significant loss of time.
- 5) **Student-Specific Expectations:** Specify student-specific expectations including expected time to degree for the entire collaborative program. (Note: Student-specific expectations of units offering a collaborative program must be included in the program’s Graduate Student Handbook.)
- 6) **Degree Conferral:** Proposals must reflect that the undergraduate degree must be conferred at least one semester prior to the conferral of the graduate degree, and the original undergraduate diploma must be presented to Graduate Enrollment Services for verification. Proposals must also articulate a statement to be included in all program materials, including the Graduate Student Handbook, that confirms that if all of the requirements for the undergraduate degree are satisfied before those of the graduate degree, and if these meet the requirements for the undergraduate degree when not offered as an integrated program, then the undergraduate degree may be conferred in cases where the student may not be able to complete the graduate degree.
- 7) **Graduate Student Handbook:** Proposals for CI-IUGDPs should include the text for the section of the Graduate Student Handbook related to the CI-IUGDP, which should articulate a statement to be included in all program materials that confirms that if all of the requirements for the undergraduate degree are satisfied before those of the graduate degree, and if these meet the requirements for the undergraduate degree when not offered as an integrated program, then the undergraduate degree may be conferred in cases where the student may not be able to complete the graduate degree.

## APPENDIX B

### CHECKLIST FOR COLLABORATIVE INTERNATIONAL-CONCURRENT GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS (CI-CGDP)

#### A. Cover Sheet

Required forms that must be included with the proposal to indicate a program change ([http://www.psu.edu/ufs/guide/grad\\_proposal\\_form.html](http://www.psu.edu/ufs/guide/grad_proposal_form.html)).

#### B. Justification

The justification for proposing a collaborative program must include the following information:

- 3) Motivation for creating the collaborative program. This should include information that addresses:
  - a. Need for the offering and market demand. Provide estimates of how many students will participate in the offering per year and over the first five-year period of program operation if approved.
  - b. Statement on how the proposed collaborative offering fits into the mission of the graduate program and/or college.
  - c. Explanation of the value added by having a formal collaboration beyond existing means to provide students with an international experience (items 1-6 in Section I above).
  - d. A brief description of the academic nature of the collaborative program, including model selected, (i.e., Concurrent Degree or Integrated Undergraduate-Graduate Degree Program).
- 4) Program/Institution Quality:
  - a. Name, location, and nature of the institution and specific academic unit with which the Penn State graduate program is proposing to collaborate.
  - b. Quality of the collaborating institution (documented evidence of the quality of the international institution; include any ranking or rating by a recognized, qualified, independent entity or accrediting body).
  - c. Quality of the specific academic program to be included in the collaboration. Include specific metrics/indicators, for example: how selective is the program in admitting graduates/undergraduates (i.e., number of applications versus number of offers of admission)? What is the yield (number of acceptances versus number of offers)? What is the median GPA of admitted students? What are the median standardized test scores (if appropriate) of admitted students? Other quality indicators?
  - d. Indicators of faculty quality at the collaborating institution.

#### C. Compatibility between the collaborating institution and the Penn State system

- 6) Verification from Graduate Enrollment Services (<http://forms.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/collaboratedegreeverification.pdf>).
- 7) Equivalency of course credits in terms of class contact hours, out-of-class effort, grading scale, etc.
- 8) Alignment of the academic calendars.
- 9) Curricular description of the relevant programs of study offered at the collaborating institution.
- 10) Compatibility/potential for integration of the programs

#### D. Program Administration and Coordination

- 7) Outline plans for administration and coordination of the program.
- 8) Resources needed to create and maintain the program.
- 9) Marketing plan for the collaborative program.
- 10) General nature of participation of faculty from the collaborating institution
- 11) Mechanisms for sustaining the collaborative program; and a pre-planned schedule and method of assessment of success/limitations.
- 12) Delivery method for the program.

#### E. Model-Specific Program Recruitment, Admissions and Degree Requirements

- 1) Timing of Recruitment and Admission
- 2) Criteria for Admission
- 3) Degree Requirements and Plan of Study (<http://forms.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/collaborativeplanofstudy.pdf>)
- 4) Other Program Requirements
- 5) List of Courses to be Transferred From the Collaborating Institution to the Penn State Degree (<http://forms.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/collaborativecredittransfer.pdf>)
- 6) Student-Specific Expectations
- 7) Degree Conferral
- 8) Graduate Student Handbook Statement

#### F. Funding Mechanisms and Logistics

- 1) Types of Student Support
- 2) Collaborative Program Funding

#### G. Consultation

#### H. Checklist Completed