



To: Dr. David Dalton, Chair Graduate Council

From: Dr. Katherine Hall Hertel, Associate Dean for Graduate Academic and Student Affairs
Sandra Krause, Assistant Dean for Graduate Academic Services
Janet Morse, Director of Graduate Academic Services

Date: October 27, 2022

Re: Proposal to revise the Dual Degree policy

As we prepare for the upcoming SACSCOC reaffirmation, we are reviewing graduate policies to ensure compliance. We found that the dual degree policy does not fully meet the guidelines and expectations as outlined by SACSCOC and the UNC System Office. The three most common issues include:

- Courses contained in the dual degree that don't meet a requirement in either individual degree
- Core or capstone requirements not being met
- Shared courses between programs not being clearly identified

Our evaluation process included a review of SACSCOC and UNC System compliance regulations, benchmarking of peer and aspirational institutions, and a comprehensive review of each published dual degree program in the Graduate Catalog.

To better align with our sister institutions, we propose reducing the number of unique credits for each degree from 75% to 70%, leaving 30% that can be met with courses from the other degree. Students will be required to complete all individual degree requirements with the advantage of a limited number of shared credits between the two programs. Please see the attached policy revision.



Proposal: Revise Dual Degree policy

Location: Degree Requirements and Academic Policies/ Registration/Dual Master's Degrees

Current catalog copy: Dual Master's Degrees

In certain instances, it may be possible for a student to obtain dual degrees in two master's programs through the development of an integrated curriculum. A dual master's degree requires a special arrangement and should be viewed as atypical to standard practice. No degree program is obligated to enter into such an arrangement.

Although other restrictions may apply, basic admission and degree requirements are specified below:

The student must apply to each program separately and be admitted to both by the start of the third semester. No admission requirements established by the Graduate School or by either individual program may be waived. For example, if one degree requires acceptable scores for the GRE and the other the MAT, the applicant must take each standardized exam to be considered for admission to both degrees.

1. Once admitted, the student must develop a suitable plan of study that is acceptable to both programs and to the Graduate School. This plan of study must be done within the first semester of a student's matriculation in the Graduate School and in conjunction with Graduate Program Directors. The plan of study must be forwarded to the Graduate School for review and approval.
2. In cases where one program offers a concentration, the dual degree will replace the concentration and no concentration will appear on the student's transcript.
3. The student's advisory committee must have representation from both degree programs. If there is no advisory committee, the student must have two advisors; one from each program.
4. The number of required credit hours for both degrees must not be less than 75% of the total minimum hours required to complete each degree separately. For instance, if degree program X requires 30 credit hours and Y 30 credit hours, a proposed dual degree should at a minimum require 45 credit hours.
5. The director of each degree program must agree on which courses may be applied to both sets of graduation requirements.
6. The student must complete the capstone requirements for both programs. For example, if program X requires a written thesis and program Y requires a comprehensive exam, the student must meet both degree obligations.
7. If there is a compulsory qualifying exam in each curriculum, it may be possible for the student to take a single exam as long as the examination committee agrees that the assessment covers sufficient background information for each discipline. If only one program requires a qualifying exam, the student is obligated to take the exam.
8. If the student withdraws or is suspended from one of the participating programs, the dual degree arrangement is automatically nullified.
9. All standard policies relating to transfer of and minimum GPA required to graduate, apply to any dual degree arrangement.
10. All of the coursework in the combined program of study must be completed before the student can apply for either of the degrees.
11. No dual degrees will be awarded retroactively



Proposed Policy: Dual Master's Degrees

Students can simultaneously complete two complementary graduate degree programs through an established integrated curriculum. This curriculum meets the unique requirements of both degree programs, while allowing for shared credit for a specified set of courses.

Although other restrictions may apply, basic admission and degree requirements are specified below:

The student must apply to each program separately and be admitted to both by the published census date of the third semester (including Summer). No admission requirements established by the Graduate School or by either individual program may be waived.

1. Once admitted, the Graduate School must be notified by the Graduate Program Directors of the student's intent to pursue the dual degree.
2. All students pursuing a dual degree must have a graduate advisor who is a regular member of the graduate faculty from each program.
3. 70% of the credits required for each individual degree must be unique, leaving 30% that can be shared based on the approved integrated curriculum.
4. The student must complete the capstone requirement for each program.
5. If the student withdraws or is suspended from one of the participating programs, the dual degree arrangement is automatically nullified.
6. All graduate degree requirements and academic policies apply to dual degree arrangements.
7. Students must graduate from both programs in the same semester.
8. No dual degrees will be awarded retroactively.
9. In cases where the dual degree has not been formally approved and published in the Graduate Catalog, the Graduate Program Directors must develop an integrated plan of study meeting all dual degree policies including articulation of shared courses. This plan of study must be signed by both Graduate Program Directors and submitted to the Graduate School within the first semester of a student's matriculation.

If approved, this policy would go into effect for the Fall 2024 catalog.

