

## Joint Degrees

**Background:** Joint degree programs provide students the opportunity to earn graduate degrees from two academic programs concurrently.

In addition to academic program requirements, joint degree programs provide for some cross-credit of a specified number of hours from each of the two degree programs. This enables students who are admitted and enrolled in two programs concurrently to, in effect, “save” on the number of total hours required versus those required when completing the two degrees separately. The development and initial approval of all joint degree programs resides with the program faculty in the specific schools and colleges involved.

Applicants must complete an application to the Office of Graduate Admissions and must be admitted to each academic program separately, meeting all of the admission requirements for that program, such as applicable entrance exams (e.g., GRE, GMAT, LSAT). Interested students contact the respective degree programs for specific admissions requirements and programs of study.

Students completing joint degrees receive two diplomas, one for each degree.

**Note:** Dual degrees are two degrees earned simultaneously when a student is accepted by both departments/programs and is approved by appropriate deans and the Dean of Graduate Studies. A student must be admitted to one academic program initially and after the first semester, may apply and be accepted to the second degree program. There is no formal relationship between the two degree program requirements in a dual degree situation.

**Proposal:** It is recommended that each joint degree program require a minimum combined total of 60 credit hours and a minimum of 24 credit hours in each of the two disciplines.

**Justification:** February 28, 2005, the GPC approved and recommended a statement regarding the credit hour requirements of joint degrees. The recommendation to the Faculty Steering Committee read as follows:

“The Deans of Graduate Studies, the Faculties, and the University Registrar all recommend that each joint degree program require a minimum of 18 credit hours in each of the two disciplines.”

The recommendation allowed a potential loophole, as a joint degree program could require a combined total of 36 credit hours for the degree (18 credit hours for one degree + 18 credit hours for the other degree).

It is proposed to increase the minimum one discipline must require to 24 credit hours since presently the fewest number of credit hours a discipline requires in any current FSU joint degree is 24 hours (e.g., JD-80 hours/Economics-24 hours). Similarly, it is proposed that a joint degree must require a combined total of 60 credit hours since the minimum combined total of 60 hours is the lowest combined total of any current FSU joint program (e.g., MPA-30 hours/MSW-30 hours, Advanced Program = 60 hours).

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