

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
The Graduate School

Curricular Report from the Graduate Council to the Faculty Senate
Report No. 2006-2007 3A

At meeting No. 414 held on 17 November, 2006, the Graduate Council approved the following proposal for a Dual Degree Doctoral program jointly with the Technische Universität Braunschweig that is now submitted to the Faculty Senate.

SECTION I

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

ABSTRACT

The Graduate Council approved a proposal from the College of Engineering to offer a Dual Degree Doctoral program jointly with the Technische Universität Braunschweig. The program is an extension of an existing exchange program between the two universities at the Masters level. Candidates for the dual degree will satisfy the requirements of both institutions and will receive the Ph.D. from URI and the Dr.-Ing (or Dr. rer. Nat.) from TUB.

BACKGROUND

From the proposal:

Building on a successful ten-year history of innovative student exchange, the University of Rhode Island and the Technische Universität Braunschweig propose extending the existing exchange agreement to include a Dual Degree Program at the doctoral level. Having already exchanged over 300 students at the undergraduate and masters/ Diplom levels, the extension of the agreement to the doctoral level will mean that the two institutions are able to exchange qualified students at all academic levels. Both institutions are convinced that such a step is not only desirable, but necessary, if we wish to prepare the next generations of scientists and engineers for work at all levels of the global workplace.

The proposal was reviewed under the process established by the Faculty Senate in which the Graduate Council serves as the Coordinating and Review Committee. Announcements of the receipt of the proposal were sent to the Provost and the Council of Deans, the Budget Office, and Department Chairs and Graduate Directors. Recommendations were sought from each of these. Comments and recommendations have been kept on file in the Graduate School.

The Budget Office responded with the understanding that no additional University resources would be required for implementation of the program. With best wishes for the continued success of the activities associated with our International Engineering Program, the Council of Deans unanimously and enthusiastically endorsed the proposal.

SECTION II

RECOMMENDATION

The Graduate Council approved the proposal for the Dual Degree Doctoral Program at its meeting number 414 held on 17 November, 2006, and forwards it to the Faculty Senate with a recommendation for approval in the category of programs that require no additional University resources.

Agreement of Collaboration
between
the University of Rhode Island
and
the Technische Universität Braunschweig

Dual Degree Doctoral Program

A. Rationale:

Building upon a successful ten year history of innovative student exchange, the University of Rhode Island and the Technische Universität Braunschweig propose extending the existing exchange agreement to include a Dual Degree Program at the doctoral level. Having already exchanged over 300 students at the undergraduate and masters/Diplom levels, the extension of the agreement to the doctoral level will mean that the two institutions are able to exchange qualified students and candidates at all academic stages. Both institutions are convinced that such a step is not only desirable, but necessary, if we wish to prepare the next generations of scientists and engineers for work at all levels in the global workplace.

The Dual Degree Doctoral Program is based upon a clear understanding of the differences between the German doctoral degrees (Dr.-Ing. and Dr. rer. nat.) and the American Ph.D. and the conviction that today's doctoral candidates can benefit through significant exposure to both systems. While the American Ph.D. is driven by a combination of prescribed and guided coursework and research, the German Dr.-Ing. and Dr. rer. nat. are comprised of extensive independent research optionally with an individual selection of courses based on the candidates qualification and the prospective research area. The challenge in creating a Dual Doctorate, therefore, is the merging of these two systems, so that all candidates can register sufficient course credits to fulfill the American curriculum and, at the same time, demonstrate sufficient depth in research to meet the German standards at the thesis level.

The Technische Universität Braunschweig and the University of Rhode Island agree, as an extension of the existing exchange agreement between the two universities, to offer Ph.D. candidates the opportunity to complete at least one year of the doctorate of their home institution at the partner institution, and, in cases where the curricular requirements of both institutions are met, to receive both the Ph.D. degree from the University of Rhode Island and the *Dr.-Ing.* or *Dr. rer. nat.* from the Technische Universität Braunschweig.

B. Eligibility:

1. **Minimum Prior Study and Minimum Residency:** To be eligible to participate in this program of dual doctorate recognition, URI Ph.D. candidates must hold the masters degree and have successfully defended their master thesis; Braunschweig doctoral candidates must hold the *Diplom*, *Masters*, or an equivalent degree. In all cases, doctoral candidates seeking dual doctorate recognition will be expected to complete at least one year of full-time study and/or research at the partner institution and meet the requirements of the regulations of the respective Ph.D. programs (examination regulations/ *Promotionsordnung*). Candidates from universities other than URI or TU Braunschweig must choose one of the latter as their home university and fulfill its requirements before entering the program.

2. **Mutual Faculty Mentorship:** Participation in this program will furthermore depend upon the availability and willingness of faculty in the respective departments of both institutions to support, co-ordinate, evaluate, and approve the doctoral studies and research of the candidate in concert with each other and the requirements of each university. It is understood that the work done abroad will be accepted simultaneously by the home institution.

3. **Language Fluency:** Participation will furthermore depend upon the ability of the

doctoral candidates to carry out their course of study or research in the English language. URI Ph.D. candidates are not expected to be fluent in German. They must, however, complete at least one German course level at URI and commit to further language coursework in Braunschweig in order to reach the B1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF) in order to be admitted to the final doctoral examination. For Braunschweig candidates the same level of proficiency in English is required as is for participants in the Masters/Diplom Dual Degree Program.

C. General Regulations

1. **Learning Agreement:** Both universities will conclude an individual co-operation and learning agreement for every doctoral candidate participating in the program. This agreement will determine the conditions and terms for the individual dual doctorate project and the members of the committee at both institutions.
2. **Coursework:** Participants of the Dual Degree Doctoral Program will be able to transfer up to 12 credits of coursework from Braunschweig to the URI doctoral program in the form of appropriate guided research projects completed and published or submitted for publication and/or presented at major conferences prior to the doctoral dissertation. The additional required coursework (12 credits) will be taken at URI at the doctoral course level. Course credits and research credits must be balanced with the thematic focus of the dissertation and the variety of the discipline.
3. **Tuition and fees:** Participants of the Dual Degree Doctoral Program will attend the host university according to the financial arrangements of the exchange program currently in place. Doctoral candidates will be expected to satisfy all tuition and fee requirements at the home institution, and not at the host institution, except for mandatory service charges (exchange student rate), and then to participate in the exchange on a one-to-one exchange basis. It will not be required that the exchange takes place on equal levels, that is, in some cases doctoral candidates will function inter-institutionally as exchange partners with undergraduate students.
4. **Financial Support:** Though exchange students are technically responsible for their own expenses, including travel and living costs, every effort will be made to support doctoral candidates through institutional, grant, or research funds.
5. **Research Supervision:** Participants of the Dual Degree Doctoral Program will conduct appropriate thesis research at both partner institutions, with the option of pursuing guided research in conjunction with local faculty, leading to publication and/or conference presentations. Project and thesis work will be jointly supervised and evaluated by faculty from both universities.
6. **Thesis language:** The thesis will be written in English.
7. **Examination regulations:** Before participating in the Dual Degree Doctoral Program the Ph.D. candidates have to decide at which department of TU Braunschweig they will complete their doctorate. The requirements of the examination regulations of the respective Ph.D. programs (*Promotionsordnungen*) have to be respected.
8. **Doctoral Committees and Thesis Defense:** Dual Degree Doctoral candidates will be expected to complete a doctoral dissertation to the satisfaction of faculty at both institutions. There will be a major advisor and a doctoral committee at each institution in accordance with the respective regulations of this institution and/or department, with representation of the two major advisors on both committees. The thesis defense will take place at the university where the bulk of the research is completed. Both committees will participate by means of videoconference technology.

9. Certificates of Doctoral Degree and Use of Title: After fulfilling the requirements of both institutions candidates will receive separate degree certificates for the Ph.D. and the Dr.-Ing. (or Dr. rer. nat.). Both certificates will make reference to the Dual Degree Program. Candidates may choose which title to use, but may not use both titles simultaneously.

C. Procedures for Braunschweig doctoral candidates:

1. Braunschweig doctoral candidates planning to complete the Dual Degree Doctoral Program will formally apply for admission to the Graduate School of the University Rhode Island according to the procedures currently in place for the Masters/Diplom Dual Degree Program. A record of all prior studies shall be submitted in English.
2. It is understood that Braunschweig Ph.D. candidates participating in this program will have completed studies equivalent to a Diplom or Master of Science degree. The study and research program at URI is to be established by the faculty of both institutions in accordance with the agreement.

D. Procedures for Rhode Island Candidates:

1. Rhode Island Ph.D. candidates planning to complete the Dual Degree Doctoral Program will formally apply for admission to the Technische Universität Braunschweig through the URI/Braunschweig exchange coordinator. The exchange coordinator is responsible for following all relevant procedures.
2. It is understood that URI Ph.D. candidates participating in this program will have completed studies equivalent to a Master of Science degree, successfully defended their master thesis, and earned additional 12 credits of doctoral coursework, all prior to any doctoral work in Braunschweig. An additional 12 credits will be earned through research projects conducted in Braunschweig. The study and research program at TU Braunschweig is to be established by the faculty of both institutions in accordance with the agreement.

E. Applicability of Agreement

This agreement shall apply to doctoral candidates in the fields of engineering and the natural sciences. It is the framework for an individual co-operation and learning agreement for every doctoral candidate participating in the Dual Degree Doctoral Program.

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Date

Date

