

 <b>DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY</b>  <b>SENATE POLICY FOR JOINT DOCTORAL DEGREES WITH PARTNER UNIVERSITIES</b>	<i>Policy Sponsor:</i> Senate	<i>Approval Date:</i> Senate: May 14, 2012
	<i>Responsible Unit:</i> Faculty of Graduate Studies	<i>Revisions:</i> Senate: June 2019 – format and fees update

### **A. Background and Purpose**

Canadian and foreign universities have come to view education exchanges as a desirable part of higher education, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. In graduate education, an increasingly common method to promote exchange is through jointly supervised and awarded degrees, e.g., the cotutelle (France), the conjoint (Australia, New Zealand), the 2+2 Degree, etc.

A Joint Doctoral Program (JDP) refers to a bilateral doctoral co-enrolment agreement between two universities, hereafter the home university and the partner university. Under such an arrangement, a doctoral student completes the requirements of the Ph.D. program at both the home and partner universities and conducts his/her dissertation research collaboratively, sequentially, and for roughly equal amounts of time at both universities. The student is supervised by two faculty members, one from each of the universities. The dissertation is subsequently examined only once by a committee whose members are drawn from both institutions.

Students completing a joint program graduate with a single Ph.D. degree from both the home and partner institutions. The student receives a parchment from each university, with each parchment carrying a notation to the effect that the degree was obtained through a JDP with the partner explicitly noted.

A JDP is not joint supervision of a student performing work at only one institution, nor is it accessing another facility without contributing to that institution's research program, and neither is it earning two degrees for a single Ph.D. thesis.

### **B. Application**

This policy governs the framework for the creation and administration of joint doctoral degrees between Dalhousie University and a partner university.

### **C. Definitions**

1. "Home University" means the university where a JDP student is initially enrolled in their Doctoral program.

### **D. Policy Statements**

1. Joint Doctoral Programs shall be established with the objectives of providing:
  - a. An opportunity to enrich the research experience of doctoral candidates, including access to the best researchers and best research equipment in two countries and at two institutions;
  - b. An exposure to different cultural and scientific environments and as a result, increased student employability;
  - c. A mechanism to enhance cooperation and collaboration between researchers and institutions engaged in a JDP agreement through graduate student mobility; and
  - d. An opportunity to enhance the recruitment of highly-qualified international students to Dalhousie University and its partner, thus increasing the international profile and reputation of both institutions.
2. All full time students registered in a Ph.D. program are eligible to apply for a JDP if an MOU exists with the proposed partner university.
3. A student may apply to create a JPD arrangement at a recognized partner institution if the institution possesses expertise in his/her research field and if the student is within the first year of a Ph.D. program
4. A JDP initiated at Dalhousie should be proposed jointly by the Dalhousie student and his/her supervisor. Both must consult with the potential co-supervisor and the Chair/Director of the partner department to be involved in the JDP. A proposal must be submitted to and approved by the Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies, at Dalhousie.
5. JDP Agreements initiated by a partner institution will be considered under the guidelines established by the MOU/Agreement with that home university. In such cases, a copy of the proposal must also be submitted to the Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies, at Dalhousie University for approval. It is expected that partner institutions will have JDP policies consistent with those at Dalhousie.
6. Instruction shall normally be in English at Dalhousie. The student must be able to meet both Dalhousie's English-language proficiency requirements and the language proficiency requirement of the partner institution.
7. The admission requirements at Dalhousie are normally the same as those for a non-JDP, as given in the Dalhousie Graduate Studies Calendar. Where the foreign partner's degree designations are not equivalent to those at Dalhousie, the MOU will include an appendix/addendum/codicil, etc. laying out the minimum degree standards for admission.
8. Students participating in a JDP must fulfill the PhD-program requirements at both institutions. This will occur through a transfer of credit, where appropriate, with courses taken at the home

institution applied to the partner institution and vice-versa, in a manner where the requirements of both institutions can be met within the regular period of study.

- a. The Graduate Studies Calendar for Dalhousie University stipulates that only 33% of a student's course work can consist of transferred credits. However, that document states that this limit can be exceeded via a Letter of Permission if there exists "a university-level agreement, governing specific cooperative arrangements, (that) has been negotiated and is in operation." Thus, an MOU between Dalhousie and a partner that explicitly deals with credit transfer arrangements can allow the total to exceed 33%; however in any case, that limit must not exceed 50%. (Note: All courses taken by a student need not be counted towards a degree program. Once course requirements are met, additional courses need not figure into the transfer limit as long as they are not included in the student's academic plan.)
  - b. The Graduate Studies Calendar for Dalhousie University also stipulates that courses used for credit for a previous degree cannot be re-used for credit for a new degree, i.e., the JDP. Thus all courses in a student's academic plan must not be credited to any other previous or concurrent degree.
  - c. Each agreement (MOU) with a partner will have an explicit scheme in an appendix/addendum/etc. to convert the foreign earned credits to equivalent Dalhousie class credits. Dalhousie expects the foreign partner to require the same translation of Dalhousie credits to their own credit model. The result should be a combined and mutually accepted transfer credit "table" for the specific program.
9. Students enrolled in PhD programs at Dalhousie are expected to pass one or more non-thesis/non-class examinations, which may include any of a Qualifying or Preliminary Examination, a Comprehensive Examination and a Thesis Proposal Defense. Detailed descriptions of these examinations can be found in the Graduate Calendar for Dalhousie University. Students in a JDP are expected to complete those examinations required of non-JDP students in their department of study at Dalhousie. (Simply put, a JDP is not a means to avoid such examinations.)
10. The maximum time limit to complete a JDP is set by agreement between the participating institutions, as detailed in the specific MOU/Institutional Agreement.
- a. Foreign universities often have much shorter degree completion-time limits than Dalhousie and extensions are often not permitted to those limits. These shorter limits may apply to a Dalhousie JDP.
  - b. Dalhousie-Based Students and supervisors should be fully aware that shorter time limits may apply to a JDP. In any event, students must be informed in their Agreement Form of the exact limits that apply in their case.
11. It is expected that a student will spend cumulatively half their time at Dalhousie and half their time at the partner institution. Dalhousie University normally requires that a PhD student who receives a PhD degree from Dalhousie must be registered at Dalhousie for at least 24 months, of which a PhD student must be in residence at Dalhousie for at least four (4) terms of full-time study (16 months). A JDP student is expected to be registered and in residence at Dalhousie for a minimum of 12 months as part of their PhD degree.
12. The supervisory committee for a JDP student will consist of at least the Dalhousie and partner co-supervisors, one other member of the FGS faculty from Dalhousie, and one other member of the

graduate faculty from the partner university. More committee members are possible at the discretion of the student and the co-supervisors, with agreement of the appropriate deans.

13. Thesis submission:

- a. Students will be required to write a single thesis (in terms of content), which will lead to a single oral defense, usually at the home institution.
- b. The language of the thesis will be English.
- c. Students using Dalhousie as their home, will use the Dalhousie format, as provided by the Faculty of Graduate Studies. Students from a partner university will be permitted to employ the format from their home institution.
- d. Regardless of home institution, all JDP students will be required to submit a copy to Dalhousie via e-thesis for submission to the Canadian National Library (Library and Achieves Canada); therefore, the copy submitted electronically to Dalhousie will contain the front pages suitable for that digital library. Students must contact Dalhousie Faculty of Graduate Studies to ensure that this format is correct.
- e. The title page of the thesis in either format will contain a notation that indicates that the thesis is submitted as part of a JDP and identify both institutions.
- f. A successfully defended thesis, at either university, will be posted electronically to DalSpace and Library and Archives Canada, before convocation/ graduation is permitted. This requires that the entire thesis be submitted to Dalhousie in PDF/A format. The partner institution may have their own, additional posting requirements.

14. Thesis evaluation:

- a. The thesis Examining Committee will be composed of examiners (all PhD holders or qualified professionals that are acceptable to the graduate deans or equivalent at both institutions) appointed by both institutions; these will include at least one professor (i.e., a Reader) from each institution in addition to the co-supervisors and an External Examiner, who is independent of both institutions.
- b. There shall be a Committee Chair, appointed by the Dean (or equivalent) at the university where the examination takes place, who shall direct the proceedings, but who will not have been involved in the thesis research and who will not act as an examiner.
- c. The home institution is responsible for arranging all the logistics of the defense.
- d. A written evaluation of the thesis shall be submitted by the External Examiner prior to the oral defense, according to the longer timeline of the two institutions.
- e. The regulations and procedures that govern the oral defense at both universities will be satisfied, regardless of institution where the exam takes place.

15. Upon completion of the appropriate requirements, students will receive a parchment from each university, with each parchment carrying a notation to the effect that the degree was obtained through a JDP agreement. In addition, a notation will be made on the student's transcript that indicates he/she has participated in a JDP agreement between the two institutions. The names of both participating institutions will be indicated on each transcript.

16. Fee Structure and Funding Arrangements:

- a. The details of the fee/tuition structure for a JDP will be set at the time of the establishment of the specific JDP Agreement.
  - b. A general principle is that fees/tuition should reflect physical presence at a given institution. An example is provided in Appendix B – JPD Agreement.
  - c. Financial agreements with Dalhousie supervisors to pay a JDP student's tuition and/or fees are arranged directly between the student and supervisor, and Dalhousie University is not part of those negotiations. However, Dalhousie University Financial Services should be consulted in making payment to students in this case.
  - d. Dalhousie students not in residence at Dalhousie are not considered to be registered at Dalhousie under Statistics Canada regulations. This has implications on payment of stipends for the Dalhousie-based supervisor and taxation for the students. Again, Dalhousie Financial Services needs to be consulted in order to continue some form of financial support to a student when he/she is hosted abroad, or even in another province.
  - e. Foreign students with exceptional records may apply to Dalhousie for independent scholarship/fellowship support for which they might qualify.
17. An intellectual property agreement will be mutually agreed and signed before a student either leaves or arrives at Dalhousie University. Because all students in a JDP are Dalhousie students, they are entitled to the IP rights common to all Dalhousie students and are subject to all the associated IP responsibilities.
18. Before entering into a JDP agreement, the student and his/her supervisors from the two institutions will determine a detailed academic plan.
- a. This plan will include program periods that take place at the home and partner institutions and include the time and location of learning activities.
  - b. In every case, the minimum duration of residency at Dalhousie University is three full terms for students coming from abroad. For students for whom Dalhousie University is the home institution, the total duration of residency at Dalhousie is six full time terms are included.
  - c. This plan cannot be altered without the consent of both universities, via their respective deans (or equivalent).
  - d. Students should complete as much of their coursework as possible at their home institution. Any additional course requirements that need to be met at the host institution must be laid out in the academic path of the JDP agreement.
  - e. Qualifying or comprehensive exams will not be completed in advance of engaging in a JDP agreement and will be administered at the home university.
  - f. The thesis proposal defense, if applicable, will be completed no later than the end of the second year of study, without exception, at the home university.
  - g. Thesis-based work will occur at both institutions as defined in the JDP agreement.
19. A student who is in good academic standing may remove themselves from a JDP into a regular PhD at their home university by seeking the permission of the home dean of graduate studies (or equivalent);

- a. Permission in such cases will not be unreasonably withheld.
  - b. Credits gained at the other institution and accepted at Dalhousie shall remain valid credits for the new degree program.
  - c. Additional course credits may be required for the new degree program.
20. All students participating in JDP agreements must follow the rules and regulations, including those relating to research ethics, of both participating universities.
- a. Recognizing that regulations and practices relating to academic integrity and intellectual property, as well as the culture related to their enforcement, may vary, all graduate students are required to review, comprehend and adhere to the Dalhousie University Academic Integrity Policy upon commencing a JDP agreement and upon submitting a Ph.D. thesis.
  - b. A breach of academic integrity will be brought to the attention of the Academic Integrity Officers (or equivalents) of both institutions, via a formal written letter, immediately upon its discovery by the instructor of a class where the offence has occurred or the co-supervisor at that university if it is not related to a class.
  - c. In the event of contradictory AI regulations between the home and partner institution, the rules at the university where the offense occurred shall prevail.
21. An academic or behavioral (student code of conduct) offence or lack of academic progress may result in dismissal, i.e., involuntary termination of enrolment, at either institution in a JDP. In such an event, the JDP agreement is also immediately terminated.
- a. A Dalhousie-based, academically dismissed student may re-apply, in this situation, for re-admission to a regular PhD program at Dalhousie, as per the conditions detailed in the Graduate Studies Calendar.
  - b. Re-admitted students will not be permitted to enter into a new JDP, with either the previous or a new partner institution.
22. The two universities entering into a JDP will agree explicitly in their MOU to share academic records of students in a joint program, within the privacy constraints set by the legal jurisdictions in which they reside.
- a. Each institution will agree to share transcripts and to transmit academically relevant facts, such as Academic Integrity issues, in writing with their partner on a timely basis.
  - b. Co-supervisors will be bound to share academically relevant facts, issues, exam/test results, etc., that affect the progress of a student in a JDP with the co-supervisor at the other university.
  - c. At the beginning of a JDP, a student will sign a document giving permission to share their academic records between the partner institutions.
23. Research that involves humans or higher-order organisms requires research ethics review and formal, signed statements of agreement as to research conditions and protocols.
- a. Students and supervisors in a JDP who conduct such research will follow all the requirements of both institutions.
  - b. The more stringent of such regulations will apply to both universities.

- c. At Dalhousie, detailed information on policies and procedures to follow with respect to research ethics can be obtained from the Office of Research Services.
  - d. Research Ethics statements will be signed at the beginning of a JDP, before any research commences.
24. Health insurance coverage for students enrolled at Dalhousie will follow the standard rules for those benefits.
- a. Foreign students in residence will also follow these rules, as they represent obligations under Provincial and Insurer rules.
  - b. Dalhousie home students need to arrange for health insurance while abroad.
25. A JDP cannot be utilized as a degree of convenience for programs that do not award a PhD.
- a. A JDP can only be created in a PhD program of study at Dalhousie University that already exists in an academic unit; that is to say, the PhD program must pre-exist at Dalhousie and the other institution. Thus, a JDP cannot be the basis for creating a new program.
  - b. With respect to the IDPhD program at Dalhousie, an interdisciplinary JDP can be created within the IDPhD with an external interdisciplinary partner; however, the unit in such an arrangement at Dalhousie must be a PhD granting program, i.e., a pre-existing PhD program.

**E. Administrative Structure**

1. Authority: This policy is administered by the Faculty of Graduate Studies in collaboration with the Provost (Office of International Relations).
2. Record-keeping: The Office of International Relations is responsible for maintaining all files associated with MOU's with a Partner University. The Faculty of Graduate Studies is responsible for approval and retention of JPD Agreements for individual students.
3. Policy Review and Modification: This Policy will be reviewed no later than by the end of the fifth year of its operation. Any interim modifications shall be approved by FGS Faculty Council and the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee. Modifications to any of the appendices shall be approved by FGS Faculty Council.