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Creating a Dual Ph.D. Degree Program between Oklahoma State University & Universidad Popular Autonoma del Estado de Puebla, Mexico

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Abstract

Universidad Popular Autonoma del Estado de Puebla (UPAEP University) and Oklahoma State University (OSU) have developed a strong international academic relationship since 1992. Both institutions share and understand the importance of educating students to live in a global and multicultural society (Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992) and have developed, among other academic exchange opportunities, 25 dual degree programs at the Masters level. As part of the dual degree, students have the opportunity to earn two Masters Degrees, in two different countries, in approximately two years (Fabregas-Janeiro & Nuno de la Parra, 2011). American, Canadian, and Mexican students have benefited from these innovative international Master programs.

Overall, students' evaluation of the dual Masters Degree program has been very positive. Participating students perceived these programs as an opportunity to experience cultural immersion and language development in a challenging and international learning environment (Brandhorst, 2011).

Due to the extraordinary outcomes of the dual degree programs, UPAEP University and OSU expanded the degree to the doctoral level. The Department of Agricultural Education, Communications, and Leadership, OSU and the Department of Education of the Centro Interdisciplinario de Postgrados at UPAEP finalized a Memorandum of Understanding to offer a dual Ph.D. program. Students will earn two Ph.D. degrees, one in Agricultural Education at OSU and one in Education or Economic Development and Strategic Sectors at UPAEP (Oklahoma State University, 2010; UPAEP, 2011).

The purpose of the Ph.D. dual degree program is to provide students the opportunity to study in, and benefit from, the academic and cultural environment of OSU in the United States and UPAEP in Puebla, Mexico. Students enrolled in the dual Ph.D. program will earn 75 credit hours equating to 15 more than the current Ph.D. program at OSU. The students will have a home institution that awards the degree, and a host institution where the student studies abroad, taking courses in partial fulfillment of the host institution's degree requirements. All students enrolled in the dual degree should have the academic background and language skills to enable them to benefit from participating in regular university classes at each institution (English and Spanish proficiency). Each student must meet applicable admission requirements at both OSU and UPAEP (UPAEP & Oklahoma State University, 2011).

This presentation provides details on the successful relationship between OSU and UPAEP, how the degree plan will be executed at each institution, including the development of the agreement (Appendix A), and how students will progress toward completion of the degree, as well as the resources required to implement such a program at other institutions.

Keywords: immigration law, immigrant communities, immigrant labor

The Ph.D Development of the Program

The dual degree program has been divided in three phases:

1. First phase at home university (OSU or UPAEP University): Participating students spend one to two years at their home institution, taking 30 credit hours or more. An advisor will be assigned to each student from his or her home institution.
2. Second phase at the host university (UPAEP University or OSU): An advisor will be assigned to each student at the host university. With the aid of the advisor, the participating students will dedicate one to two years at the host institution,

taking 30 credit hours or more to complete the degree requirements at the host university. The university hosting the students in the second phase agrees to accept graduate transfer credit for the Ph.D. degree credit hours, earned during of the first phase, up to 30 credit hours. A list of such courses for each approved program will be created and maintained by faculty from OSU and UPAEP on an annual basis.

3. Third Phase Dissertation: In order to earn a dual-degree, the student must complete the dissertation degree requirements at OSU (15 dissertation-credit hours at OSU). OSU dissertation credits will be transferred to UPAEP University and will be considered when granting the UPAEP

Summary Procedures to Complete the Dual Ph.D. Program

Description	Dual Degree Students
Admission	Dual Ph.D Students meet the requirements to be admitted at both institutions
Number of Credit Hours	Total number of credit hours of the Dual Ph.D is 75
Phase One	30 credit hours in the home institution
Phase Two	30 credit hours in the host institution
Phase Three	15 credit hours / dissertation at OSU
UPAEP Dissertation	OSU dissertation credits will be transferred to UPAEP and will be considered when granting the UPAEP Ph.D

University Ph.D. degree. In order to transfer the dissertation credits from OSU to UPAEP University, the dissertation committee must include one member from UPAEP University, and four members from OSU approved by the Graduate Colleges for a total of five members (UPAEP & Oklahoma State University, 2011)

OSU and UPAEP encourage joint participation on each dissertation committee from faculty from both universities. The Deans of the Graduate Colleges agree to facilitate such assignments through appointments to the respective Graduate Faculties, consistent with applicable Graduate Faculty bylaws or regulations (UPAEP & Oklahoma State University, 2011).

Results, Future Plans and Cost of The Program

The dual Ph.D. agreement between OSU and UPAEP University was signed in February of 2012. The first generation of students will enroll in the program in Mexico and the United States by fall of 2012. Ph.D dual-degree programs do not require additional institutional resources to be operated.

The success of International Ph.D. Dual-Degree programs will be based on the ability of advisors to develop plans of study that could be completed in both institutions, in a reasonable period of time, and the language skills of the students. The international Ph.D. dual-degree offers students more academic opportunities and experiences from working in international setting

Appendix A

Memorandum of understanding for dual Ph.D. degree programs between Oklahoma State University (OSU) and Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla (UPAEP).

In order to foster international understanding and academic cooperation, Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla (hereinafter referred to as UPAEP) and Oklahoma State University (hereinafter referred to as OSU) agree to estab-

lish the following foundations for a dual Ph.D. degree program.

I. Purpose of the Dual Ph.D. Program

The primary purpose of this agreement is to institute the foundations for a dual Ph.D. degree program between OSU and UPAEP. The program will provide student participants from each institution with an opportunity to study in and benefit from the academic and cultural environment of the other institution. For the dual Ph.D. degree, 75 credits are required. Students will have a “home” institution that awards the degree, and a “host” institution where they study abroad, taking courses in partial fulfillment of the “host” institution’s degree requirements.

II. Conditions of the Dual Ph.D. Program

1. *Exchange Type:* Participating students will pay applicable resident tuition and fees to each institution at which classes are taken. The students are responsible for all other costs related to the program, including lodging and meals, and other living expenses.
2. *Selection:* UPAEP and OSU agree to select students who have the academic background and language skills to enable them to benefit from participating in regular university classes at each institution. All students must meet applicable admission requirements at each institution.
3. *Participating Dual Program:* Only Ph.D. programs approved by the Deans of the Graduate Colleges at both OSU and UPAEP are covered under this memorandum of understanding.
4. *Dual Ph.D. Program’s Curriculum:* The dual Ph.D. program is divided in three phases:
 - a. First phase (at the “home university”: OSU or UPAEP): Participating students spend from one to two years at the home institution, taking 30 credit hours or more. Two advisers

will be assigned to each student in the program, one from each university.

- b. Second phase: At the partner (“host”) university (UPAEP or OSU). With the aid of the student’s advisers, the participating student would dedicate from one to two years at the host institution, taking 30 credit hours or more to complete the degree requirements at the host university. The university hosting the student in the second phase agrees to accept as graduate transfer credit for the Ph.D. degree program the credit hours of the first phase that correspond to equivalent courses, seminars, or thesis credits of the host institution, up to 30 credit hours determined by the faculty of the host institution, not to exceed one-half of the total credit hours required for the degree. A list of such courses for each approved program will be drawn up by faculty at the two institutions and maintained on an annual basis. Participating students may take extra classes at the host institution as desired to learn more or to meet course work requirements of the home university. However, resident tuition only applies to courses listed on the Plan of Study.
- c. Third Phase Dissertation: In order to earn a dual degree, the student must complete the dissertation degree requirements at OSU (15 dissertation-credit hours at OSU). OSU dissertation’s credits may transfer to UPAEP, if so desired. In order to transfer the dissertation credits from OSU to UPAEP the dissertation committee must include one graduate faculty member from UPAEP, and four or more graduate faculty members from OSU, for a total of five.
- d. OSU and UPAEP encourage joint participation on each dissertation committee from faculty from both universities, and the Deans of the Graduate Colleges agree to facilitate such assignments through appointments to

the respective Graduate Faculties, consistent with applicable Graduate Faculty by laws or regulations.

5. *Housing and Other Assistance:* The Host Institution will assist the student in securing appropriate housing in university residence halls. The Host Institution will provide participating students appropriate admissions certificates and visa documents and lodging information and will offer an on-site orientation. Both UPAEP and OSU will provide the information and guidance necessary for participating students to participate in the lectures, seminars, and research programs best suited to their program of study and their level of achievement.
6. *Institutional Responsibilities:*
 - a. Each institution will provide the other institution with a list of educationally related costs, including, but not limited to, books, supplies, local transportation, and such other incidental expenses that students can expect to incur during their program of studies. Each institution will provide the other institution with the exact dates of enrollment for their programs, including the beginning and ending dates of each of the semester/terms in their academic year.
 - b. For each term of a student’s enrollment at a host institution, each institution will provide an assessment of each student’s course participation and examination performance to the Host Institution. Upon completion of the program of study, the Host Institution will provide to the Home Institution, in a timely manner, academic transcripts on behalf of participating students.
7. *Participating Student Responsibilities:*
 - a. Participating students are responsible for round trip transportation, lodging and meals,

books and supplies, local travel, medical insurance, and personal expenditures. Neither institution shall be held responsible for such charges. Applicants will be expected to provide a written guarantee of sufficient funds, as determined by the Host Institution, to support themselves during the exchange period.

- b. UPAEP participating students may be expected to pay the fees required of all international students at OSU.
- c. It is understood that all participating students must purchase at their Host Institution comprehensive health insurance for their time abroad, including medical evacuation and repatriation benefits, unless they can present evidence of comparable or better coverage.
- d. Participating students will be subject to and must abide by all the rules and regulations of the Host Institution, including the same institutional regulations regarding academic performance as pertains to regularly enrolled students at the Host Institution.
- e. Participating students who are accepted must satisfactorily complete their first semester program at the Host Institution, in accordance with the Host Institution's academic requirements for its regularly enrolled students. If the first semester program has not been satisfactorily completed, the Host Institution may ask the participating student to return to his/her Home Institution.

8. *Coordination: UPAEP and OSU Designate the Following Offices to Coordinate the Programs:*

For UPAEP: Martha Cabanas
Centro Interdisciplinario de Posgrado, Investigación y Consultoría (CIP)
21 Sur 1103, C.P. 72160 Puebla, Puebla México
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For OSU:
Graduate College
Oklahoma State University, Stillwater,
OK 74078 USA
Telephone: +405-744-6368 E-mail: graduate.college@okstate.edu
Web site: <http://grad.okstate.edu>

The offices will serve as a liaison between the two institutions, and will be responsible for overseeing the selection of students to participate in the dual programs, ensuring appropriate reporting, and assisting with the students' adjustment.

III. Conditions for OSU Students Receiving Financial Aid

In order for OSU participating student(s) to be eligible for federal financial aid under the Federal Title IV Student Aid programs, the following conditions are agreed upon:

1. Participating OSU students who are enrolled full-time at UPAEP will be considered full-time at OSU, which will be considered their home institution and which will process federal and state (if applicable) financial aid.
2. OSU will use the cost of education information and the enrollment dates provided by UPAEP to determine financial aid eligibility and to schedule disbursements, see Section II, paragraph 6 a and b.
3. OSU is responsible for monitoring students' satisfactory academic progress relative to the federal and state financial aid assistance programs, using the student's grades or statement of academic progress supplied by UPAEP, see Section II, paragraph 6c.

IV. Enactment, Renewal and Termination

1. This agreement carries no financial implica-

tions for the signatory institutions, except for the above-mentioned exemption from nonresident tuition, if applicable.

2. It is understood that this agreement in no way supersedes any other agreement that either institution may have with other universities or academic organizations.
3. This agreement will take effect when signed by both parties. It will continue thereafter, subject to review every five years by the involved parties or modification by mutual agreement, until terminated by either of the parties hereto. Either institution may give notice of intention to terminate participation. Such notice shall be given in writing at least twelve (12) months before the beginning of the academic year in which it will take effect and the agreement will terminate at that point. If the dual Ph.D. program is terminated, all enrolled students will be allowed to complete their degree requirements.

The Agreement is executed by the authorized representatives of UPAEP and Oklahoma State University in duplicate copies, each of which shall be deemed an original.

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