

Georgia Institute of Technology
Graduate Curriculum Committee
Minutes
March 6, 2014

Present: Breedveld (ChBE), Cozzens (Vice Provost-GE & FA), Ferri (ECE) Flowers (ARCH), Foley (CoC-IC), Jagoda (AE), Jayaraman (MSE), Kvam (ISyE), Neitzel (ME), Pikowsky (REG), Storici (BIOL), Wang (BMED)

Visitors: Laros (Registrar), Merkousko (Registrar), Hodges (Registrar), Sharp (Graduate Education and Faculty Affairs), Severa (COB), Uzer (Physics), Berger (Physics), Collins (Graduate Studies), Mathews (Graduate Studies), Couvillion (Graduate Studies), Berthelot (VP-International Initiatives), Sharp (Graduate Studies & Faculty Affairs), Chau (CSE)

Note: All action items in these minutes require approval by the Academic Senate. In some instances, items may require further approval by the Board of Regents or the University System of Georgia. If the Regents' approval is required, the change is not official until notification is received from the Board to that effect. Academic units should take no action on these items until USG and/or BOR approval is secured. In addition, units should take no action on any of the items below until these minutes have been approved by the Academic Senate or the Executive Board.

Academic Matters

1. A motion was made to approve a request from the Office of International Initiatives to approve Cotutelle Agreements for select students working with select institutions in France. The motion was seconded and approved.

The “cotutelle agreement” is a formal program of the French Ministry of Higher Education that aims at strengthening research collaborations between US (or other) universities and French universities through co-advising of doctoral theses. Several GT faculty have expressed strong interest in the program, so we are seeking input from IGCC.

The cotutelle agreement is essentially a dual doctoral program, whereby qualified students can earn a Ph.D. from Georgia Tech and a Doctorate from the French partner university, with a *single* thesis based on co-advising of the doctoral research. All requirements for the Ph.D. are met, with complete control of the quality of the Ph.D. remaining with GT.

The issue at stake is whether it is appropriate to “share” the doctoral thesis for the award of degrees from two separate institutions. The principle of shared work already exists with coursework of dual MS degrees, or with the BS/MS degree, but it has not been established for dual Ph.D. degrees.

We are asking IGCC feedback on the issue and whether “*it endorses the principle of the “cotutelle agreement” of doctoral research between Georgia Tech and selected French universities, whereby a qualified student may receive both the Ph.D. from Georgia Tech and the doctorate from the French university, with a single co-supervised doctoral thesis. Each cotutelle agreement will be reviewed and authorized by VPII and VPGEFA.*”

Additional information:

VPII viewpoint:

- The Cotutelle is an excellent mechanism to develop research collaborations with French laboratories. It may also lead to funding (e.g, scholarships by French ministry, EU , etc,...) that would benefit GT and make the collaboration sustainable. It is faculty-driven.
- Georgia Tech retains control of the quality of the Ph.D. degree.
- We want flexibility to avoid unnecessary administrative burden of creating a proliferation of dual (or even joint) doctoral degrees; so a blanket agreement of principle is desirable. Each specific agreement would then be approved separately by VPII and VPGEFA, but would not require approval at IGCC.
- The issue of IP is discussed in the cotutelle agreement. It has been implemented by SCAS accredited universities such as Duke, and several other US universities.

CoS Dean’s viewpoint:

- Cotutelle agreements are sought by a (currently modest) number of GT faculty members who are eager to cement their collaborations with France-based researchers via the co-advising of graduate students.
- Cotutelles encourage international experiences for GT graduate students and faculty, and provide mechanisms for credit for the activity to go to the France-based faculty members.
- They also enhance the likelihood of visits to GT by international researchers, who carry home with them the experience of working at GT; this would add to GT’s reputation abroad.
- The use of a single thesis to obtain two degrees in *distinct* academic fields would not be appropriate. However, the cotutelle leads to two degrees in the *same* field. Thus, the only professional advantage that a cotutelle gives to a student is that some employers may put greater stock in one or other of the degree-awarding institutions, and this could widen the employment opportunities for the student.
- The advantage to the France-based faculty member is institutional recognition of the advising work that he or she has done; the advantage to GT is enhanced international collaboration and opportunity to draw attention to GT.
- One can describe the program as “one shoe box with different labels on each end (and one shoe from each advisor)”.
- The mechanism for setting up a cotutelle agreement should be nimble and not place a heavy administrative burden on any party. There should be a vanilla agreement that is approved, once and for all, at the highest level required; this version would then be mildly (and quickly) tweaked locally at GT when a cotutelle opportunity arises between GT and a new institution. It would be advantageous if

a new cotutelle agreement were not required for a new student working between already-paired institutions.

- The structure of the thesis committee needs to be addressed. It should be decomposable into two (possibly overlapping) committees so that the requirements of both sides are met. In principle, it should be possible to pass with one committee and fail with the other, but this is expected to be unlikely.
- The GT open-access (and any other) requirements must be met in the normal way.
- The French academic community *wants* these partnerships; Chateaubriand Fellowships (and perhaps others) will come to GT students, once the process of setting up cotutelle agreements is streamlined.

SUMMARY of Key Points

- A formal program of the French Ministry of Higher Education to strengthen research collaborations with US (or other) universities.
 - A dual doctoral program, whereby qualified students can earn both a Ph.D. from GT and a doctorate from the French university with a single co-advised thesis.
 - Faculty-driven; small number expected
 - The thesis committee includes members from both institutions
 - The agreement specifies the duration of stay of the doctoral student at the French university. (9-12 months is typical)
 - All Ph.D. requirements for GT are met.
 - Only between GT and select French universities
 - Promotes faculty driven research collaborations
 - Encourages international experience for GT students and faculty
 - Promotes long term lab-to-lab collaboration
 - Puts GT on par with other US universities who participate in the cotutelle program (e.g., Duke)
 - Enables the co-advising to be counted in the French system
 - Questions to IGCC
 - Principle of shared thesis at the doctoral level.
 - Principle of a pre-approved template agreement with each specific agreement approved by Dean, VPPII, and VPGEFA *for flexibility and to avoid proliferation of dual Ph.D.*
2. A motion was made to approve a request from the School of Computational Science and Engineering for new courses. The request was seconded and approved.
- CSE 6010: Computational Prob Solv 2-3-3
CSE 6040: Computing for Data Analy 3-0-3
CSE 6141: Massive Graph Analysis 3-0-3
CSE 6243: Adv Top Machine Learning 3-0-3
3. A motion was made to approve a request from the College of Business for a posthumous MBA degree. The motion was seconded and approved.

4. The staff of Graduate Studies shared with the Committee sample application qualifications from recent applicants that did not meet the precise definition of an “undergraduate degree” that is required at the Institute level for graduation admission. The Office of Graduate Studies sought some counsel from the Committee as to what are the appropriate steps for review of these cases when the minimum degree equivalent is not apparent. The question ranges from applicants who hold a Master’s degree from an accredited institution, but who do not hold a Bachelor’s degree, to those who hold 3-year degrees that are not considered equivalent to a U.S. Bachelor’s degree, to applicants whose credentials are even more unusual.

The Committee determined that no decision to admit could be made by the major School without a review by the Graduate Committee. If the major school wishes to have one of these applicants, who did not have a four-year degree or higher from an accredited institution, considered for admission a petition to the faculty would be necessary. It is acceptable for Graduate Studies to confer with the Schools on these applicants and to decline them unless the School wishes to request an exception. Graduate Studies will note on the application for admission that the minimum degree requirement appears to NOT be present so that the application will be flagged appropriately when the School reviews it.

Graduate Studies & Admissions was given leeway by the Committee to “waive” the requirement of a four-year bachelors when there was a demonstrated higher bar met, i.e. master’s earned plus undergraduate coursework or PhD from an accredited school.

The possible need to change the wording in the admission policy to state that a bachelor’s degree *or higher* is required for admission was discussed. It was unclear after the meeting whether a formal motion had been placed to approve this change. Therefore, this will be added to the next agenda and a formal vote will be called.

5. The follow-up discussion on doctoral minor requirements was tabled. It will be put on the next agenda.

Student Petitions

1. A motion was made to deny a petition requesting an exception to the enrollment requirement for the MS degree (registration for more than one term in one credit). The motion was seconded and approved.

The Committee noted that this case is very confusing. The Committee would like to see a path forward for the student and will await a plan to address the numerous issues related to this student’s completion of the program.

2. A motion was made to approve Petitions Subcommittee actions in the following areas. The motion was seconded and approved.

The following petitions were reviewed administratively by the Registrar's office. (All approved except where noted.)

Petitions reviewed from 01/17/14 to 02/04/14.

- 6- Full Graduate Standing
- 6- Late registration
- 3- Change registration for research courses
- 1- Use PHD thesis hours as MS thesis hours
- 1- Six -year rule waiver
- 1- Seven-year rule waiver
- 1- Adjust registration hours in current term
- 3- Count courses taken on Special status toward degree
- 1- Count ISYE8900 taken pass-fail toward degree
- 2- Readmit after first dismissal
- 1- Graduate with 29 hours (**1 Denied**)

Adjourned,
Reta Pikowsky
Registrar