**Guidance for Creating Dual Degree Programs**

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Overview

Dual Degree programs allow a student to earn both a bachelor’s and a master’s degree in less time than it would normally take to complete each degree separately. The course requirements, degree options, and culminating experiences in the dual degree must be identical to the approved degree programs - no alterations are permitted.

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) defines three types of degree programs:

1. Programs to prepare candidates for teacher, educational leader, or pupil personnel services certification (these are **professional programs**)
2. Programs to prepare candidates for a professional license (these are **professional programs**)
3. All other programs (these are **general academic programs**)

Dual degree programs (BS/MS or BS/ME) can be created from existing bachelor’s and master’s programs or may be originally developed as a dual degree program (e.g., RIT’s BS/MS Physician Assistant program).

Required Approvals for All Dual Degree Programs

Depending upon the type and status of programs involved in the dual degree, the approvals vary. See the above section for definitions of professional programs and general academic programs.

* **Existing Programs** - if the new degree is comprised of programs that exist:   
  + If both the undergraduate and graduate programs are considered *general academic program*s, then RIT does not need to register the new dual degree with NYSED.   
    Instead, please follow the [RIT Approval Process for Creating Dual Degrees from Existing General Academic Programs](#RIT_Approval_Process) in this document.
  + If either the undergraduate or graduate program is considered a *professional program and/or prepares candidates for a professional license*, the dual degree requires NYSED approval and registration using the [NYSED Application to Change or Adapt a Registered Professional Education Program](https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/academicprogrammgmnt/NYSED_Form_Change_OP_Program).
* **New Programs** - if the new dual degree is comprised of programs that do not exist, then registration with NYSED is required. New program proposals must first go through the standard [RIT curricular action approval process](https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/academicprogrammgmnt/sites/rit.edu.academicaffairs.academicprogrammgmnt/files/docs/Curricular_Action_Approval_Process.pdf) and then be submitted to [Academic Program and Curriculum Management](mailto:programmgmt@rit.edu?subject=Dual%20Degree%20Proposal), along with a request to register the dual degree using one of the following forms:  
  + If both the undergraduate and graduate programs are considered *general academic programs*, use the [NYSED Change or Adapt a Registered Program](https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/academicprogrammgmnt/NYSED_Form_Change_OCUE_Program) form.
  + If either the undergraduate or graduate program is considered a *professional program and/or prepares candidates for a professional license*, use the [NYSED Application for Registration of a New Program in a Licensed Profession](https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/academicprogrammgmnt/NYSED_Form_Registration_of_New_OP_Program).

Quick links to the applicable dual degree forms are provided on the [next page](#Quick_Links_to_Dual_Degree_Forms).  
  
In all cases, RIT is responsible for ensuring that dual degrees are subject to internal curriculum review and approval, and that they adhere to established guidance from NYSED on the use of double counting credit in these degrees (see [next section](#Double_Counting_Credits)).

**Quick Links to Dual Degree Forms:**

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| **Program Type**  (see [definitions](#Overview)) | Dual Degree is comprised of **Existing** BS and MS programs | Dual Degree is comprised of **New** BS program and/or  **New** MS program |
| General Academic Programs | [RIT Dual Degree Proposal Form](#Proposal_Form) | *Complete a separate application for new BS program and/or new MS program:*  [NYSED Application for Registration of a New Degree Program](https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/academicprogrammgmnt/NYSED_Form_Registration_of_New_OCUE_Program)  *New Dual Degree program:*  [NYSED Change or Adapt a Registered Program](https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/academicprogrammgmnt/NYSED_Form_Change_OCUE_Program) |
| Professional Programs and/or Programs that Prepare Candidates for a Professional License | [NYSED Application for Registration to Change or Adapt a Registered Professional Education Program](https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/academicprogrammgmnt/NYSED_Form_Change_OP_Program) | *Complete a separate application for new BS and/or new MS, and new Dual Degree program:*  [NYSED Application for Registration of a New Program in a Licensed Profession](https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/academicprogrammgmnt/NYSED_Form_Registration_of_New_OP_Program) |

RIT Approval Process for Creating Dual Degrees from Existing General Academic Programs

1. Departments should prepare requests for a dual degree program using the [proposal form](#Proposal_Form) on the following page of this document. A [Table 1](#Table1) must be included.
2. Proposed dual degrees must be reviewed and approved by:
3. The department faculty and department chair(s) from the contributing undergraduate and graduate degree programs
4. The Department Curriculum Committee
5. The College Curriculum Committee
6. Dean of the College (or Deans, if undergraduate and graduate programs are from different colleges)
7. Once steps #1 and #2 are completed, the completed dual degree [proposal form](#Proposal_Form) should be forwarded by the Dean(s) to [Academic Program and Curriculum Management](mailto:programmgmt@rit.edu?subject=Dual%20Degree%20Proposal).   
   Academic Program and Curriculum Management will review the proposal and secure Provost approval.
8. The final decision for approval of a dual degree resides with the Provost.

Determining How Many Credits can be Double Counted

**Dual Degrees where the undergraduate component is a Non-Engineering Program**

* For programs that are 120 semester credits for the bachelor’s degree and 30 or more semester credits for the master’s degree, up to 6 credit hours from the master’s degree can be double counted in the bachelor’s degree.
* For programs that are 123 semester credits or more for the bachelor’s degree and 30 or more semester credits for the master’s degree, up to 9 credits can be double counted.
* The number of double counted credits is dependent upon the number of credits in the standalone bachelor’s program, not the number of credits in the standalone master's program. If a master's program has more than 30 credits, it does not increase the number of credits than can be double counted in a dual degree program.

**Dual Degrees that include an undergraduate Engineering Program (requirements from the NYS Engineering Board)**

* To double count credits, the number of credits double counted must align to the number of credits in the bachelor program that exceed 120 semester credits. For example: if the bachelor is 126 semester credits, then 6 credits from the master can be double counted. If the bachelor program is 120 semester credits, no master’s courses can be double counted.
* Therefore, the number of double counted credits will have to be determined on a program by program basis dependent upon the number of credits in the standalone bachelor’s program.

Prescribing, Substituting, and Double Counting Courses

Consistent with [RIT’s Strategic Plan](https://www.rit.edu/strategicplan/dimensions/programs) curricular flexibility goal to provide undergraduates with 12 credit hours of open electives, students can choose to use open electives to complete a dual degree program.

Wherever possible, dual degree programs should make every effort to leave the 12 credit hours of open electives in place and **find other courses within the undergraduate program where a graduate course can substitute for a comparable undergraduate course**. The graduate course will then be **double counted** because it will be in both the undergraduate and graduate program masks. [Students may double count between 6-9 credits, depending on the program](#Double_Counting_Credits). In situations where a comparable course is not available, the following guidance should be followed:

* Open electives may be **prescribed** as the place in an undergraduate program where a graduate course is used for double counting. Prescribing an open elective should use this format on the curriculum table: *Open elective 1: XXXX-567 Title (graduate course)*. When the prescribing of open electives occurs, a student will have fewer open elective credits.  If a student wishes to keep the open electives intact, they will need to add to their undergraduate program the graduate courses that were designated to be double counted.  This will result in the student increasing the total credit hours taken in the undergraduate program. Sample language for the program’s curriculum table: *If a class other than XXX is chosen as an open elective, the student will need to take XXX as a separate class.*
* If programs use open electives as the place where double counting is achieved, a **rationale** must be provided in the dual degree proposal that explains why program-specific electives, professional electives, and required courses were not used for double counting.
* To identify double counted courses on the curriculum table, put the number of double counted credits in the “DCC” column (DCC = double counted credits). These credits should then be totaled in the DCC column at the bottom of the Table 1.
* The double counted credits should also be placed in the applicable column on the Table 1 (MAJ or OPEN) for the undergraduate course they represent. Examples:
  + If a graduate course is being substituted for a comparable course in the undergraduate program, and double counted, the course credits should go in the “MAJ” column and be included in the “MAJ” total at the bottom of the Table 1.
  + If an open elective is being prescribed with a graduate course and double counted, the course credits should go in the “OPEN” column and be included in the “OPEN” total at the bottom of the Table 1.

Additional Guidance

Additional guidance regarding dual degree programs is available on the [Academic Program and Curriculum Management website](https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/academicprogrammgmnt/accelerated-dual-degree-programs).

Questions?

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact:

Academic Program Management: [programmgmt@rit.edu](mailto:programmgmt@rit.edu)

Dual Degree Proposal Form for Existing General Academic Programs

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| **Create a dual degree program** from existing general academic programs that have been approved by NYSED. Do not use this form If either the undergraduate or graduate portion of the degree is considered a professional program and/or prepares candidates for a professional license.  Complete the following table to identify the existing programs:   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | **Program Title and RIT Plan Code** | **Degree Award** | **NYSED Program Code\*** | | Program 1 |  |  |  | | Program 2 |  |  |  |   *\* NYSED Program Code is listed on* [*NYSED Inventory of Registered Programs web page*](http://www.nysed.gov/heds/IRPSL1.html)*.*   1. Proposed dual degree program (title and award): 2. Courses and credits that will be counted toward both awards (if open electives are double counted, please provide [rationale](#Rationale_for_Double_Counting_Open) as to why major courses were not used for double counting): 3. Explain how the two fields in this proposed dual degree are related and how they complement each other with regard to career opportunities: 4. Provide an explanation of the benefits for students who choose to enroll in this proposed dual degree program with respect to advanced educational opportunities, premium career paths, and improved job outlook: 5. Length of time for candidates to complete the proposed program: 6. Use Sample Program Schedule from [Table 1](#Table1) to show the sequencing and scheduling of courses in the dual degree program. |

Required RIT Approvals

**Signature and Date – College Dean (undergraduate program)**

**Signature and Date – College Dean (graduate program – if different from undergraduate program)**

**Signature and Date - Provost**

**Table 1:**  **Dual Degree Program Schedule**

*Calendar Type:* Semester

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| **Term: Fall 1** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Course Number & Title** | **CR** | **GE** | **MAJ** | **OPEN** | **NEW** | **DCC** | **Prerequisite(s)** |
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| **Term: Spring 1** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Course Number & Title** | **CR** | **GE** | **MAJ** | **OPEN** | **NEW** | **DCC** | **Prerequisite(s)** |
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| **Term: Summer 1** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Course Number & Title** | **CR** | **GE** | **MAJ** | **OPEN** | **NEW** | **DCC** | **Prerequisite(s)** |
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| **Term: Fall 2** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Course Number & Title** | **CR** | **GE** | **MAJ** | **OPEN** | **NEW** | **DCC** | **Prerequisite(s)** |
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| **Term: Spring 2** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Course Number & Title** | **CR** | **GE** | **MAJ** | **OPEN** | **NEW** | **DCC** | **Prerequisite(s)** |
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| **Term: Summer 2** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Course Number & Title** | **CR** | **GE** | **MAJ** | **OPEN** | **NEW** | **DCC** | **Prerequisite(s)** |
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| **Term: Fall 3** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Course Number & Title** | **CR** | **GE** | **MAJ** | **OPEN** | **NEW** | **DCC** | **Prerequisite(s)** |
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| **Term: Spring 3** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Course Number & Title** | **CR** | **GE** | **MAJ** | **OPEN** | **NEW** | **DCC** | **Prerequisite(s)** |
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| **Term: Summer 3** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Course Number & Title** | **CR** | **GE** | **MAJ** | **OPEN** | **NEW** | **DCC** | **Prerequisite(s)** |
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| **Term: Fall 4** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Course Number & Title** | **CR** | **GE** | **MAJ** | **OPEN** | **NEW** | **DCC** | **Prerequisite(s)** |
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| **Term: Spring 4** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Course Number & Title** | **CR** | **GE** | **MAJ** | **OPEN** | **NEW** | **DCC** | **Prerequisite(s)** |
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| **Term: Summer 4** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Course Number & Title** | **CR** | **GE** | **MAJ** | **OPEN** | **NEW** | **DCC** | **Prerequisite(s)** |
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| **Term: Fall 5** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Course Number & Title** | **CR** | **GE** | **MAJ** | **OPEN** | **NEW** | **DCC** | **Prerequisite(s)** |
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| **Term: Spring 5** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Course Number & Title** | **CR** | **GE** | **MAJ** | **OPEN** | **NEW** | **DCC** | **Prerequisite(s)** |
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|  | **Total Credits (CR)** | **Liberal Arts & Science/General Education (GE)** | **Major**  **(MAJ)** | **Electives & Other**  **(OPEN)** | **Double Counted Credits (DCC)** |
| **Program Totals** |  |  |  |  |  |

***Notes:***