

RIT Guidelines for Jointly Administered Academic Programs

PREAMBLE

There are fields of study that are fundamentally interdisciplinary and exhibit a synergy with existing academic programs and research centers at RIT. For this purpose, two or more academic units may unite to create a jointly administered academic program (joint program). Such an academic program provides a holistic perspective by balancing the interdisciplinary underpinnings with a rigor in the fundamentals of domain specific tracks. As a result, the program's design would serve as a complement to existing programs and be accessible to students from diverse educational backgrounds.

Since joint programs, by their nature, will have complexities that do not exist within the structure and oversight of a program housed within a single academic unit, this document serves to provide guidance related to the development and general administration of a joint program. A Joint Program Agreement, which will clarify the responsibilities, expectations and level of participation of the academic units involved will be created at the outset of program development to avoid confusion regarding the development, implementation, and management of the program.

These guidelines apply to undergraduate and graduate jointly administered programs that meet the definition of a Jointly Administered Academic Program in Section A. Unlike undergraduate programs, graduate programs typically consist only of courses offered by a department or school. On occasion, it may be necessary for a graduate program to require a course that is offered outside the home department or school. This arrangement is agreed upon by the academic entities involved but is not considered to be a Jointly Administered Academic Program, unless it meets the definition in this document.

GUIDELINES

A. Definitions

1. An Academic Degree-Granting Unit (ADU) is an RIT college, institute, or school approved to award an academic degree.
2. Host Partner (HP) refers to the partner unit, housed in an ADU, under which the joint program will be administered. It is not required for the Joint Program Director to be a member of the Host Partner unit.
3. Partner units are academic departments or schools housed within the structure of an academic degree-granting unit. Partner units each play a significant role in the program as evidenced by participation in the offering of courses in the core curriculum, providing a cluster of courses in a specified focus area, concentration/option or elective in the program, or in the administration of the program. Although there may be more than one Partner Unit from any given Academic Degree Granting Unit, to be considered a Jointly Administered

Academic Program, not all Partner Units can be from the same Academic Degree Granting Unit.

4. Partner Unit Head is the administrative supervisor of the partner unit. The term used by the units may differ and may include, but is not limited to: school head, department head, program director, department chair. The partner unit head has the responsibility to fulfill the commitment of the partner unit to the Joint Program by complying with the expectations specified in the Joint Program Agreement. Examples of commitment include, but are not limited to instructional faculty, course offerings, administrative support, or space.
5. Joint programs (JP) are programs offered by two or more academic units (“partner units”) that play a significant role in the program as evidenced by equivalent participation in the offering of courses in the core curriculum, providing a cluster of courses in a specified focus area that could be used as concentration or electives in the program, or in the administration of the program. Details regarding the expectations and participation will be formalized in a Joint Program Agreement (see section B).

Graduate and undergraduate programs will follow the university requirements for the level of degree, e.g. undergraduate programs will follow university requirements for general education and open electives.

6. Joint Program Director (JPD): faculty member who oversees the administration of the program. The JPD does not have to be a member of the host partner unit.
7. Joint Program Liaison (JPL): faculty or staff member who oversees the administration of the participation specific to their ADU or partner unit.
8. Student Full Time Equivalency (FTE): The number of Full Time (FT) students plus 1/3 of the Part Time (PT) students. FT and PT is based on credit hours.

B. Joint Program Agreement

As stated in DO1.0 Policies for Curriculum Development, a new program can originate from different sources. When individuals from different ADUs work together to create a joint program it is important that a formal agreement is created. Each Joint Program Agreement will be developed with input from faculty representing each partner unit and will be approved by the heads of the partner units and the deans of the participating ADUs. Although each joint program will be unique, each agreement will include the expectations and responsibilities for each partner unit. The agreements will specify the details noted below, but are not limited to the following:

1. The administration of the program including its reporting structure.
2. The position of a JPD, term limits and lengths, and how changes associated with the position would occur.
3. The position of a joint program liaison (JPL) for each ADU or partner unit.

4. Details regarding when students identify their association with the program with respect to concentration, or option if appropriate. This identification will be used for the basis for enrollment count and determination from which partner ADU(s) the degree(s) will be conferred.
5. Details regarding the process to follow in case an ADU or partner unit wants to withdraw from participation in the Joint Program (JP). This process should include a timeline that may be needed for such a change to occur without causing detriment to the program as a whole or any student enrolled in the program.
6. Details related to the hiring of new faculty or staff for the joint program. These details include but are not limited to how the need of a new hire will be determined and, and if a shared position, how the support for the hire will be assigned to the partner units. All new hires for a joint program will be selected through a joint search process involving the Joint Program ADUs and partner units (see section E).

C. Joint Program Administration

All ADUs will collaborate and share in the administration of the program including the development, implementation, and monitoring of its operating and capital budgets. In the context of the process outlined in this document, joint programs will be governed by the principles below.

1. *Student Admissions:* Students will meet the admission requirements of the JP and if appropriate, the partner unit concentration or option into which they choose to matriculate. Student could be associated with the ADU of the host partner or the ADU in which their concentration or option is housed.
2. *The Degree Conferred:* Could be from the host partner ADU or the ADU in which the student's research (i.e. senior project, thesis, capstone, dissertation, etc.) is housed if the student chooses. The process for degree conferral should be outlined in the JP Agreement.
3. *Budget and Finance:* Program Proposal expense projections will be developed based on needs of the joint program.
 - a. Each partner unit will support the budget needs for the courses it offers. This support includes faculty salary and any associated space or administrative support.
 - b. There will be a budget for the JP that will be managed by the JPD. The details and content of the budget should be defined in the JPA. Specifics of the budget will be developed based on the needs of the program and will be approved by the ADU partner deans, the Provost and the SVP of Finance & Administration. It is the program's responsibility to carefully manage the costs and budget for the joint program, including payments made to colleges or programs supporting the joint program. The allocation of funds and management of the budget should be addressed in the joint program agreement.

4. *Academic Program Review:* Any academic program review will be the joint responsibility of all ADUs involved. The basic methodology to calculate the APR financial metric will be consistent with programs that are not jointly administered. The joint program will appear on the dashboard of each participating ADU. It is expected that all partner units and ADUs affiliated with the joint program would respond to any program review and work collaboratively to address any triggers in a review.
5. *Student FTEs:* The assignment of student FTEs and the division of credit hours should be specified in the JPA and in general should match the division of budget and workload for the JP.
6. *Program Oversight:* Partner units are all responsible to the joint program and will contribute to implementing the program, identifying and assessing student learning outcomes, developing recruitment goals, defining program capacity, assessing program success, and ensuring faculty engagement as agreed to in the joint program agreement.

The deans of the ADUs in consultation with the heads of the partner units, will appoint faculty members, with relevant expertise, to assessment committees who will conduct both internal and external assessment.

7. *Host Partner and Staff Support:* Every JP will be hosted by one of the partner units. The host partner, along with its ADU infrastructure will provide the administrative and staff support related to the joint program.
8. *Advertisement and Communications:* All advertisement and communication related to a JP, shall include representation of all partner units. Also, the JP shall be included in each ADU or partner unit's communication (e.g. website, promotional materials, bulletins, etc.) of academic programs within their college or unit.
9. *Conflicts:* Any conflicts related to a JP that cannot be resolved by the partner unit heads, or ADU deans will be addressed and resolved by the Provost or provost's designee.

D. Program Administrative Structure

1. General Structure

A Joint Program Director (JPD) will oversee the administration of the program. Each academic degree-granting unit (ADU) will have a Joint Program Liaison (JPL) to oversee the administration of the participation and contributions of the ADU and its partner units.

2. Joint Program Director (JPD)

Each JP is led by a JPD who is designated as specified by the joint program agreement. The JPD may be elected by program faculty or appointed by the deans of the ADUs. It is not required for the JPD to be a faculty member in the host unit. The term of appointment shall be specified in the joint program

agreement and can be renewable. It is expected that the appointment will rotate among the partner units. The JPD reports on activities related to the program to each of the deans of the ADUs and the partner unit heads.

The JPD oversees the administration of the program, including oversight of the students of the JP and its course offerings. The JPD will work closely with the JPLs to ensure, at a minimum, the following for all options, concentrations, or elective courses in the JP: students receive academic advisement; courses are scheduled; faculty are assigned to courses in a timely fashion and prior to the opening of course registration shopping carts; adjunct instructors are hired as needed; policy and processes are followed. In addition, the JPD will be the designated administrator to certify degrees.

If the JP is a graduate program, JPD responsibilities, will also include but are not limited to the following: coordinating with enrollment management; screening applications; selecting the incoming graduate students; assisting students with the selection of their thesis committee and advisor; program marketing; and allocating graduate scholarships and stipends. The JP Graduate Committee comprised of members of the JP faculty will assist the JPD with these responsibilities.

3. Joint Program Liaison (JPL)

The JPL is a faculty member who serves as the point person for the JP course offerings specific to their ADU. Each JPL will report to the JPD and assist the JPD in the scheduling of courses, monitoring of students within their track or concentration, and additional responsibilities as appropriate. The role and responsibilities of the JPL should be addressed in the faculty member's plan-of-work. The JPL will be selected by the faculty participating in the JP from within the ADU. The term of a JPL shall be specified in the joint program agreement and can be renewable. The ADU and PU of the JPL should provide the necessary support and space for the JPL.

4. Joint Program Committee (JPC)

Each JP will have a joint program committee charged with carrying out faculty responsibilities for the JP including curriculum management. In most cases, the JPC will consist of the joint program liaisons. Any alternative structures will be specified in the joint program agreement.

E. Joint Program Faculty

JP faculty members include representatives from each of the partner units who have an interest, relevant expertise in the area of the collaborative specialization, and will actively contribute to the needs of the program.

1. *Definition and Term:* JP faculty members are RIT faculty (tenure, tenure-track, non-tenure track) who are assigned through their plan of work to be actively engaged with a joint program and who offer courses that are included within the program. The term of JP faculty assignments shall be specified in the joint program agreement and can be renewable. The primary criterion for renewal of

- an assignment is that the individual has been contributing, and is likely to continue contributing, to the joint program in ways outlined in the responsibilities identified within this document and the Joint Program Agreement.
2. *Assignment to a JP:* Faculty from across the university can become affiliated with the JP program using a process identified in the Joint Program Agreement, which ensures a balance of representation from the ADUs.
 3. *Reporting Structure:* Faculty with a JP assignment shall report to the head of the partner unit in which their primary or home appointment resides.
 4. *Location of faculty:* Faculty, including administrative positions, shall be assigned within the space of their respective partner unit.
 5. *Responsibilities:* The responsibilities of a JP faculty assignment include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Teach courses in the program;
 - b. Advise and supervise undergraduate/graduate student research projects;
 - c. Serve on capstone/thesis/dissertation committees;
 - d. Participate in curriculum development;
 - e. Integrate participation in the joint program into their annual plan-of-work approved by their partner unit head;
 - f. Retain affiliation and responsibilities with their home partner unit and ADU for scholarship, learning environment, and service expectations;
 - g. Follow tenure and promotion processes in their home partner unit and ADU with appropriate input from the director of the joint program.
 6. *Evaluation:* Faculty or staff with joint program assignments are evaluated by their partner unit head during the annual review process with input from the JPD and JPL, as appropriate.
 7. *Tenure and Promotion:* Faculty follow the university tenure and promotion policies as well as the tenure and promotion policies of the partner unit into which they were appointed. If a faculty member has a joint appointment, for purposes of tenure and promotion, policies E05.0, E06.0 and any other pertinent related policies will be followed.
 8. *Hiring:* The hiring process for a joint program faculty member is administered through the appropriate partner unit and ADU. The hiring of faculty will follow the normal RIT hiring policies and procedures. If the central administration provides the funds in support of the hiring of a faculty member for the purpose of the Joint Program, the creation of a faculty line, or any funding toward an existing faculty appointment, that funding or position remains with the JP. The JPD will oversee the workload and evaluation of this faculty member as it

pertains to participation in the joint program. The JPA will specify the supervision of all faculty hired through funding attached to the joint program.

If an academic unit receives a faculty line in support of a Joint Program, the line remains with the academic unit with the understanding that the line is to be used to ensure appropriate coverage for the JP as identified in the joint program agreement.

F. Curriculum – Development and Revision

1. The initial curriculum development activities for a joint program will be through a collaborative and inclusive process driven by a task force comprised of representatives from each of the partner units.
 - a. Joint programs will follow the steps outlined in University Policy D01.0 section IV Academic Programs, and will have the requirement of including each partner unit in the process.
 - b. The initial degree proposal must follow university requirements and be approved by the following: the joint-program task force (if applicable); the curriculum committees (if applicable), of all partner units; the curriculum committees of each ADU; and the deans of each ADU. All constituents should be kept informed throughout this process to minimize complications during the approval process.
2. The joint program committee and director work with departments and colleges on any needed changes to courses. In the event of a program modification, the joint program committee and director take the required courses through the relevant department, college, and university curricular committees as specified in D1.0.
 - a. Program Modifications
 - i. Minor program modifications will be submitted to the JP faculty, JP director and the JP program committee. Once approved, the modification will be forwarded to deans of all JP ADUs, and if there is a budgetary impact recommendations and supporting documentation will be forwarded to the provost for approval.
 - ii. Major program modifications will be submitted to the JP program committee, JP faculty, JP director, the curriculum committees (if applicable) of all partner units and ADUs and the deans of each ADU. The proposed modifications will then be forwarded to the Intercollege Curriculum Committee (ICC) or Graduate Council (GC) for review. Following approval by ICC or GC the proposed modifications will be presented to faculty senate for review. Faculty Senate will forward their recommendation to the provost for approval before the modification is sent to NYSED.