Procedures for Dual Master’s Degree Program

University of Rhode Island, USA
Technische Universität Braunschweig, Germany

Purpose of the Agreement

This Agreement of Academic Cooperation is made and entered into, by, and between the University of Rhode Island (hereinafter referred to as URI), Kingston/RI, USA, and the Technische Universität Carolo-Wilhelmina zu Braunschweig - Institute of Technology (hereinafter referred to as TU BS), Braunschweig/Germany.

The purpose of these special programs is to allow students of each university to acquire two Master of Science degrees simultaneously, one from URI and one from TU BS. This is accomplished through a formal exchange program in which students from either university will conduct program course work and thesis/project activity at both institutions. In view that both universities allow transfer of credits between their programs, the students will be able to complete the work for both degrees in less time required than if pursued separately. This program offers students an exceptional preparation to conduct engineering work in the expanding global market place.

Students pursuing this special dual degree program will follow a modified program of study at each institution. These modified requirements are described in this document and will differ from those prescribed for regular students pursuing a single degree either at URI or TU BS. These programs are operated under the authority of the following schools or departments at the two partner institutions:

URI:  - Mechanical Engineering
       - Industrial and Systems Engineering
       - Chemical Engineering
       - Civil Engineering
       - Ocean Engineering
       - Electrical, Biomedical and Computer Engineering

TU BS: - Carl-Friedrich-Gauß Fakultät, Department Wirtschaftswissenschaften
       (Carl-Friedrich-Gauß School, Department Business Administration)
       - Fakultät für Lebenswissenschaften (School for Life Sciences)
       - Fakultät Architektur, Bauingenieurwesen und Umweltwissenschaften
       (School for Architecture, Civil Engineering and Environmental Sciences)
       - Fakultät für Maschinenbau (School for Mechanical Engineering)
       - Fakultät für Elektrotechnik, Informationstechnik und Physik
       (School for Electrical Engineering, Information Technology and Physics)
**Mutual Provisions**

Each institution, respecting the admission requirements and program restrictions of the other, shall assume full responsibility in the assessment and selection of qualified candidates. The host institution shall then respect the selection so made. The two parties agree to terms and provisions set forth below:

Both parties will, respectively, determine the requirements of enrollment and inform each other in advance. Each party shall procure that its students shall use the application process of the other. Each university shall provide necessary admission documents for accepted students to apply for a student visa.

Both schools will recognize credits accomplished by students at their home universities. Both parties will discuss and determine the applicable courses and provide information of such courses to each other in program-specific addenda.

It is the responsibility of the students to ensure that the academic record of their academic performance is sent directly to his/her home institution at the conclusion of each semester. However, it shall be the sole responsibility of the home institution to decide on the application of those credits to the student's degree program.

**Eligibility**

**URI Students**

1. Students wishing to apply for this program must first be accepted to URI's graduate school. In addition, they are required to obtain approval from their thesis advisor, the IEP director, and be in good academic and social standing at URI before they can go to Germany.

2. When leaving URI for study at TU BS, language skills should be equivalent to 3rd-year college German with emphasis on listening and reading. Students without sufficient previous studies in the German language are expected to take additional course work to achieve proper competence. Assessment of German proficiency level will be made by a professor of the URI Foreign Languages Department (German Section).

   Before graduating from the Master's program at TU Braunschweig, students have to, successfully, complete DSH1 or Testdaf 4x3 or the Language Proficiency Test of the TU BS Sprachenzentrum with 4 x B2 level at the minimum, and submit the respective proof of language proficiency.

**German Students**

1. Students must successfully apply for participation in the program through the International Office (IO) of TU BS. They may first apply in their final Bachelor year. If
selected, they get conditional acceptance for the Dual Degree program. Before going to the U.S., they must be accepted to the TU BS Master program.

Students with a non-TU BS Bachelors degree may apply after being enrolled in the respective TU BS Master program.

2. TU BS students must submit an official test report from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) taken within the past two years to the URI Graduate School. They must arrange for ETS to report their scores directly to URI. Their scores must fall within the required minimum scores on the Internet-based (iBT) and/or paper-based TOEFL.

Equivalently, the students may submit a report from the TU BS Sprachenzentrum verifying that the student has reached the B2 level and the C1 level or higher in two skills each in the English test given by the Sprachenzentrum in accordance with the Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEF), or any other equivalent accepted by URI. Find descriptions of levels at http://www.daad.de/deutschlernen/wo-deutsch-lernen/13848.en.html

Application Procedures

URI Students

1. Candidates must apply to their respective Graduate School at URI. In their “Statement of Purpose,” they should indicate that they are interested in pursuing a Dual MS degree. Soon after they arrive on campus for the start of their studies, students should contact the URI Director of the International Engineering Program, the Director of the URI International Center, and their Major Professor to work on their plans for a Dual MS degree to initiate the process.

Participants have to submit the TU BS online study abroad application form for graduate exchange students, a proof of graduation, a transcript of records, a Studienplan and a learning agreement to the International Office of TU Braunschweig by July 15th for each winter semester and by January 15th for each summer semester at latest.

It is strongly recommended that the applications of non-US citizens should be submitted two months earlier.

TU BS Students

1. Potential participants should start the TU BS process 15 - 18 months prior to the propose start of their program at URI. The formal application has to be submitted to the TU BS IO by Nov. 30, each year. A first selection process at TU BS’s IO is based on application material, followed by individual interviews in December. Once selected, students have to get formal approval for their plan of study including their exchange plan by the program representative of their respective departments. The detailed procedures are elaborated in the program-specific requirements listed in the appendices to this agreement.
2. Selected students will have to complete formal application to URI Graduate School by Jan. 31. A completed on-line application includes: an on-line application form, up-to-date transcripts (grades), statement of purpose, two letters of recommendation (three for Department of Chemical Engineering) and an English proficiency report.

The URI Graduate School will process the application. After admission is secured from URI, TU BS student must submit a copy of their biographical passport page and proof of funding to the Office of International Students & Scholars who will then issue the DS-2019 form needed to apply for a J-1 visa.

Program Requirements

In most cases, URI students spend their first year of the Master’s program at URI and the second year at TU BS. For students with a Bachelor’s degree from URI, it is also possible to do the first year of their Master’s degree at TU BS and the second year at URI.

TU BS students have the choice to spend their first year at TU BS and the second at URI or vice versa. Students who have earned their Bachelor’s degrees at other universities must spend at least one semester of studies at TU BS.

Program participants who spend their final study semester at TUBS are required to complete the research for their master thesis within their respective school.

URI Students

1. URI students are recommended to arrive at Braunschweig in June or July and participate in a summer language course or attend an International Summer School operated by the International Office of TU BS. Tuition for summer courses can only be waived if they count +0.5 semesters in the exchange balance.

2. At the latest, URI students must arrive at TU BS by the beginning of October to attend the winter semester courses. After successful completion of the examinations in spring of the following year, they will then proceed with a 6 month period designated for the Master’s thesis work and graduate in September/mid October.

3. Prior to the start of the winter lecture period, URI students must get in touch with the responsible TU BS professor for their program of study or field of specialization and finalize their Studienplan, that is, decide on the courses they need to take while at TU BS. The student, the TU BS responsible professor and the student’s thesis advisor at URI must discuss and decide on the student’s Master’s thesis work to be done during the summer semester at TU BS.

4. Upon arrival at Braunschweig, with help from the TU BS International Office, URI students must enroll as students of TU BS and obtain full health insurance coverage and
the appropriate visa and permission to stay to allow them to do the industrial internship, if required.

5. The health insurance secured by students must comply with German federal requirements as well as those of the local immigration office for a temporary residence permit.

TU BS Students

1. TU BS students should arrive at URI in time for the orientation sessions arranged by their academic department and the Office of International Students & Scholars. In consultation with their URI thesis advisor, they should select at least the three courses they will be taking during the fall semester and the remaining courses they will be taking during the spring semester. One of these courses must be from the list of core courses, see respective appendices. The students should also sign up for a total of nine research credits for the two year they will be at URI.

2. As per US federal immigration regulations, students must register for no less than 9 credits per semester. If and when students cannot register for 9 credits per semester, they must obtain clearance from the Office of International Students & Scholars before completing the semester registration.

3. TU BS students, who will spend the second year of their Master's at URI, should follow the following path. The student, the TU BS responsible professor and the student's thesis advisor at URI must discuss and decide on the student's master's thesis work to be done at URI, which begins with the start of the school year in early September and will end in August of the following year.

4. TU BS students, who will spend the first year of their Master's at URI, should follow the same path as first year URI students with regards to course work and research. More specifically, they should:

   - Seek a professor at URI who will be their thesis advisor and in consultation with him or her and the TU BS responsible professor
   - Decide on which courses to take and a thesis topic
   - Begin the research work, immediately, alongside the course work.
   - The TU BS students should be aware that, unlike the German system, students taking a course in the US must do homework, be prepared for quizzes, the midterm exam and the final exam.
   - As a rule of thumb, for graduate level courses in engineering and the sciences, a student should plan to work two to three additional hours for each hour of lecture. Also, the students are expected to do research work towards their Master's thesis.
5. The student must write up their thesis in the proper format and also arrange for a thesis defense (see http://www.uri.edu/gsadmis/formatting.html). For the defense, the student must select at least three additional faculty members, besides the student's URI thesis advisor, one or more of which could be from TU BS and at least one must be from outside the department. The thesis defense can be done in person or via video conferencing.

6. TU BS students must register for their master thesis within the respective school of their home university in a timely manner.

Calendar

The academic calendar of URI follows the scheme:
- Early September to mid December: Fall term
- Mid to late December: Fall term examinations
- Mid January to early May: Spring term
- Early May to mid May: Final examinations
- Late May to end of July: Summer terms

The academic calendar at TU BS follows the scheme:
- Mid October to mid February: Winter semester lecturing period
- Mid February to mid April: Winter semester examinations period
- Mid April to mid July:
- Mid July to end September: Summer semester lecturing period

In some cases, TU BS students as well as URI students must request early examinations at TU BS in summer so they may arrive at URI by the end of August when the fall semester starts.

Financials

Both institutions agree, to the extent possible, to accept dual students annually from the partner university. The exact number will be determined on a yearly basis by the end of May/beginning of June for the following academic year. Dual degree students will be counted as exchange students within the exchange balance between both institutions.

The number of all students exchanged each year should be approximately equal. If the number is not equal, a balance should be achieved in the following year.

URI Students
URI students, while at TU BS, must register for OCSG999 and pay the Off-Campus Study Fee (equivalent to the Continuous Registration fee) and tuition and fees when appropriate to URI. For the semester when they will be defending their thesis, they must register for at least one
research credit and paid the equivalent tuition and fees to URI. There is an enrollment fee they must pay to TU BS while attending TU Braunschweig.

Financial support for travel and living expenses may be available from the student’s URI major professor and the Director of the International Engineering Program. For the year they will spend at URI, students should apply for a research or teaching assistantship. The students are encouraged to seek additional financial aid from other sources as well, such as DAAD study grants.

**TU BS Students**

For TU BS students, tuition will be waived for a maximum of two terms while attending URI in exchange for URI undergraduate and graduate students would plan to attend TU BS. Both URI undergraduate and graduate students will pay tuition to URI (exchange program), which serves to created slots for TU BS students. TU BS students in excess of the exchange balance are required to pay in-state tuition during the spring and fall semesters. During the summer term TU BS students are required to register at least for one research credit at the regional rate.

TU BS students, who require financial assistance for either tuition or living expenses, or both, may request a research assistantship from their major professor at URI. This could be done formally as soon as the student receives the acceptance letter from the URI graduate school or informally after the student has been selected by TU BS to apply to URI. The students could, in addition, look for financial assistance from other sources.

**Duration and renewal of the agreement**

The agreement shall become effective on the day representatives of both universities affix their signatures and seals. It will be in force for a period of 5 years, and will automatically extend for another three years without written notice. The agreement is subject to revision or modification by mutual agreement. It is also understood that either institution may terminate the agreement at any time, which shall give notice to the other party in writing six months in advance of the next academic year. In case of termination, the academic programs of students currently participating in the exchange will not be affected.

**Signatures:**

[Signature]

David M. Dooley  
President  
University of Rhode Island  
Kingston, RI, USA  
Date May 7th, 2012

[Signature]

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Dr. h.c. Jürgen Hesselebach  
President  
Technische Universität Braunschweig  
Braunschweig, Germany  
Date May 7th, 2012