Agreement on Cooperation between
University of Rhode Island, USA
and
Technische Universität Darmstadt, Germany
Including Procedures for the Dual Master's Degree Program

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 Darmstadt (hereinafter referred to as TU Da), Darmstadt/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 Da. 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 Da. 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, Computer and Biomedical Engineering

TU Da:
- Electrical Engineering and Information Technology
- Mechanical Engineering (which comprises Chemical Engineering)
- Civil and Environmental Engineering
- Law and Economics (Industrial Engineering)
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 applicants. 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 require 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 about 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 Da, 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 Darmstadt, students have to, successfully, complete DSH1 or Testdaf 4x3 or the Language Proficiency Test of the TU Da Sprachenzentrum with 4 x B2 level at the minimum, and submit the respective proof of language proficiency.

TU Da Students

1. Students must successfully apply for participation in the program through the International Departmental Coordinator at their respective department of enrollment of
TU Da. 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 TUDa Master program.

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

2. TU Da 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 Da 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/deutsch-lernen/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 TUDa online study abroad application form for graduate exchange students, a proof of graduation, a transcript of records, a study plan and a learning agreement to the International Office of TU Darmstadt by May 31st for each winter semester and by November 30th for each summer semester at the latest.

It is strongly recommended that the application of non-U.S. citizens should be submitted two (2) months earlier.

TU Da Students

1. Potential participants should start the TU Da process 15 - 18 months prior to the proposed start of their program at URI. The formal application has to be submitted to the international departmental coordinator at the respective department by Nov. 30th,
each year. A first selection process, in which the IO is participating, 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.

2. Selected students will have to complete formal application to the 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 Da 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 Da. For students with a dual Bachelor’s degree from the German International Engineering Program, it is also possible to do the first year of their Master’s degree at TU Da and the second year at URI.

TU Da students spend their first year at TU Da and the second at URI.

URI Students

1. URI dual master students are recommended to arrive at Darmstadt in the beginning of September and participate in an Intensive Language Course as well as the Introductory Program operated by the IO.

2. At the latest, URI students must arrive at TU Da 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 Da professor for their program of study or field of specialization and finalize their study plan that is, decide on the courses they need to take while at TU Da. The student, the TU Da 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 Da.
4. Upon arrival at Darmstadt, with help from the TU Da International Office, URI students must enroll as students of TU Da 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 Da Students**

1. TU Da 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 formulate a “program of study” that lists the specific courses they plan to take to satisfy the requirements as specified in the appropriate appendices. The students should also sign up for a total of nine research credits for the 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 Da students, who will spend the second year of their Master’s at URI, should follow the following path. The student, the TU Da 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. More specifically, all incoming TU Da students should:

   - Seek a professor at URI who will be their thesis advisor and in consultation with him or her and the TU Da responsible professor
   - Decide on which courses to take and a thesis topic
   - Begin the research work, immediately, alongside the course work.
   - The TU Da 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). The student's thesis committee may include a faculty member from TUD. Selection of other members of the examining committee should follow the rules specified in the URI graduate manual. The thesis defense can be done in person or via video conferencing.

6. TU Da 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 TUD 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: Summer semester lecturing period
- Mid-July to end September: Summer semester examinations period

In some cases, TU Da students as well as URI students must request early examinations at TUD in summer so they may arrive at URI by the end of August in time for the start of the fall semester.

Financials

Both institutions agree, to the extent possible, to accept dual degree students annually from the partner university. The exact number will be determined on a yearly basis by October 1st for the following academic year. Dual degree students will be counted as exchange students within the exchange balance between both institutions.

URI will predominantly send undergraduate students enrolled in the German International Engineering Program (IEP) to TU Darmstadt. The normal length of the stay of exchange students shall be one semester. At TU Da, IEP-students should take courses in the German language (on different levels) provided by the TU Da Language Center and can also take engineering courses. Like the URI dual master students, URI undergraduates can participate in the Intensive Language Course as well as the Introductory Program in September.
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 Da, must register for OCSC999 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 pay the equivalent tuition and fees to URI. At TU Da, students have to pay the mandatory student semester fee/social fee required by TU Da, which includes free public transportation in the larger Darmstadt region.

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. URI students at TU Da are also eligible to apply for scholarships (STIBET) funded by the DAAD.

For URI students the intensive September language course at TU Da and the accompanying Experience Weeks (incl. social program and excursions) are free of charge.

**International Research Experience Program (IREP)**

TU Da offers URI students in good standing the ability to apply for a summer IREP project through which they can earn a minimum of 12 ECTS worth of academic credit for the research project. Students participating in the IREP summer program will be awarded a scholarship of totaling 1200 EUR. One student participating in the IREP summer program will be counted as 0.5 places within the exchange balance.

**TU Da Students**

For TU Da students, tuition will be waived for a maximum of two terms while attending URI in exchange for URI undergraduate and graduate students who plan to attend TUD. Both URI undergraduate and graduate students will pay tuition to URI (exchange program), which serves to create slots for TU Da students. TU Da 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 Da students are required to register at least for one research credit at the in-state rate.

TU Da 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 Da to apply to URI. The students could, in addition, look for financial assistance from other sources.
Liability

Neither institution shall be liable for any indirect, special or consequential damages, including without limitation, operating losses, lost earnings, profits, or other revenue.

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, by giving 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.

Before resorting to external dispute resolution mechanisms, the Parties shall attempt to settle by negotiation any dispute in relation to this Agreement.

This Agreement will be governed by the laws of the United States and the State of Rhode Island during the period that students are enrolled and studying at URI.

This Agreement will be governed by the laws of the Republic of Germany during the period that students are enrolled and studying at TU Darmstadt.

Signatures:

Dávid M. Dooley  
President  
University of Rhode Island  
Kingston, RI, USA  
Date: March 1, 2016

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Hans-Jürgen Prömel  
President  
Technische Universität Darmstadt  
Darmstadt, Germany  
Date: 29/03/16