

# **International Joint Degree Programs: Legal, Financial and Administrative Issues Breakout Session 3**

Our breakout discussion began with a focus on financial issues. Even before the administrative and legal aspects can be addressed, there needs to be one or more funding sources for the joint/dual degree program envisioned. One of the most fundamental issues is this: If it's a program, then it needs to be run with money. This is too frequently overlooked! The question then arises: Who are the players that are providing the money?

## **Where's the Money?**

- University of Rhode Island we heard has secured government (FIPSE) and private funding.
- National, provincial and private seed money would be helpful.
- Generally, institutions can leverage small private investments to get larger state investments: when private industry gets interested, generally state agencies are more excited about providing funding.
- Development efforts
  - For international joint degrees, it is important to get the fund-raising going as early as possible.
- When doing research on employer interests, it is important to ask the questions in a manner that engages employers and is phrased in terms of their business thinking:
  - How interested are you in expanding your markets?
  - How interested are you in building human capacity to innovate?
  - How interested are you in knowing and being aware of best practices in other areas?
  - Who is the leader in the world in your area, and what practices do they have?

## **Costs and Fees**

- Scholarships: If visa regulations prohibit students working or having paid internships in the host country, then it is important that they have scholarships, and this drives up costs.
- Problem of student fees: Some institutions have to charge the students fees by state law. They tell the students that they are doing that to make sure they can provide the infrastructure to maintain contact with the students when they are abroad.
- Another driver in the pursuit of joint degrees is the joint usage of facilities that it enables, and this drives down the costs (no new buildings!)

## **Budget Needed for Joint Degree Programs**

- 15-20K is the typical proposal budget that is received by the DAAD
- FIPSE Atlantis program will fund \$60K in program development, \$60K in travel, for a total in the region of \$120K.

- Many institutions use mostly their own extant resources to start up international joint-degree programs. Consider the marginal costs of developing a joint/dual degree and the amount of income or funding the institution would expect to receive.
- Georgia Tech International Plan: \$5 million over five years to get program started from the ground up. Group feeling was that \$1 million per year is not out of line for startup when all costs are considered. \$250K to set up a program was mentioned as a minimum, and this could be met (for example) by \$120K from FIPSE and \$130K from the institution.
- Budget should include provisions for staff requirements, research opportunities and incentives for faculty, release time from teaching for faculty.
- One hidden cost is the Indirect Costs of developing an international joint degree program. The involvement of senior tenured faculty drives this and makes such program development possible due to the lack of faculty rewards tailored to such efforts.

### **Internal Revenue Recognition and Marketing**

Colorado School of Mines has adopted several procedures that serve to recognize internationalization efforts:

- Tracking faculty travels to international venues and contacts with other faculty abroad, and indexing this information for use when new program development is considered.
- Tracking students who come from abroad and the number/percent of students who stay and become doctoral students; faculty support; stipends;
- The point is to recognize the revenue generated internally and externally by the presence of these students.

### **Legal aspects**

- Even though most of us have in-house legal counsel, most universities would need to bring in outside legal expertise to cope with the complexities of international law.
- The practice at one or more of the institutions attending is to look at the memoranda of understanding (MOUs) that come in, review them with legal counsel, and usually approve them with minor changes.
- The notion is that if it only concerns a study abroad program, many of the contracts are probably fine as is.
- Joint or dual degree programs, on the other hand, generate legal complexities that simple study abroad programs do not.

### **Faculty Motivation**

The question of how to ensure that such international degree programs are developed was discussed; faculty buy-in and motivation do develop such programs emerged as a central area for discussion.

- Faculty rewards: International education is the poor stepchild in terms of faculty rewards; they are only successful in the main if they are set

up by senior faculty who have the time, status, and enthusiasm to make it happen – people who have an established research program and what to “do something fun.”

- Passau has used this idea broadly to market their joint programs: they developed a Law and Language program, which has been a highly successful combination.
- Illinois Institute of Technology has double-degree programs (2 pieces of paper), where professors are very interested in getting students who are in these dual-degree programs to go into their research programs.
- At Colorado School of Mines, French and Spanish and other foreign students are invited to work in labs over the summer with faculty members. They use an exchange semester as a semester to “try the students out” to see if they are likely candidates to be asked to stay on and do research with professors there. Thus, research cooperation and attracting good foreign students was discussed as a key motivators for faculty.

### **Recognizing “International” as a Part of Core Strategy**

- Stop treating “international” as a separate issue. It has much more value as part of a comprehensive strategy to bring good students in, grow the program, and develop the global footprint. Let’s ask our employers:
  - Who do you employ?
  - Where do you send your products
- The issue of dual and joint degree programs and internationalization in general needs to be regarded as a part of the core strategy of the university – the work being done in
  - Research
  - Development
  - Teaching and Learning
- The issue of an international presence on campus is not “what are we going to do about internationalization” but rather “how are we going to make it better?” It is now an accepted dimension of university life.
- The ultimate success of internationalization is its **integration** into the curriculum. The question is this: To what extent do faculty get rewarded for good teaching, teaching that integrates intercultural viewpoints into the topic areas. Progress in this arena was regarded as quite positive over the past decade.

### **Administrative Issues**

Program Approval emerged as an area of discussion. The issue of obtaining approval for offering a joint or dual degree program was discussed. How do we facilitate that and make the process more flexible and simpler?

- State approval may be necessary in some systems.
- Colorado School of Mines: the same degree, even if it moves to a dual-degree or joint degree status, needs no new approval – they treat it like a transfer program.

- For regional accreditation, the notion of Substantive Change came up. Under Department of Education regulations, a change of delivery method or the beginning of a situation where over 50% of credits may be obtained through an alternative delivery mechanism or location will trigger the need for a substantive change review.
- Need to evaluate the courses beforehand to determine credit – also track student performance over time to identify problems as they emerge.

### **Next Steps**

Where do we go from here? This was the final topic area dealt with.

Participants expressed the hope that all the strands and information expressed at this meeting would be used in a productive manner.

- We are seeking to go to a higher synthesis of understanding between institutions, in this case within Engineering, one that will lead to a higher degree of cooperation among educators.
- The good news: We now expect this to be **normal**. We fully expect that it will happen. This is a hopeful development!!