THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Cross-College Stacked Master's Degree & Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Requirements

A cross-college stacked master's degree is one that includes one or more graduate certificates that are administratively housed in different schools, colleges, or campuses. This document is intended to assist units in developing curriculum and collaborative agreements between the different units associated with the cross-college stacked master's degree.

GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

CURRICULUM:

- All stacked master's degrees and associated graduate certificates must align with Graduate School Policies 1.1, 1.2, and 1.4.
- The curriculum for each graduate certificate and the master's degree must be distinct. Courses listed for one credential may not appear in the curriculum of any other credential within the cross-college stacked master's degree.

ADMISSIONS:

- Admissions into each graduate certificate and into the master's degree must be made independently. A student's application to a master's degree program should not serve as a primary criterion for admission to any graduate certificate. If a certificate program chooses to consider a student's intent to pursue an associated stacked degree as part of its admissions process, this expectation must be clearly stated in the program's published admissions materials.
- Students must be admitted into the relevant graduate certificate(s) prior to, or concurrently with, admission into the stacked master's degree.

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ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE:

- Each credential in the program must be housed within an academic department to provide local administrative support and clearly identified governance stakeholders.
- Per Graduate School Policy 1.4, cross-college stacked master's degrees that intentionally integrate content from multiple disciplines—such as those described as "interdisciplinary" or "multidisciplinary"—must establish an interdisciplinary curriculum oversight committee. This committee should include representatives from each unit contributing graduate certificates to the degree, ensuring coordinated governance and academic quality.
- All units offering a credential within the cross-college stacked master's degree should be included in a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that describes the sharing of responsibilities to, and revenue from, the program. A draft MOU must be submitted with the stacked master's degree proposal, along with standard program proposal requirements found on the Graduate School website.
    - An updated MOU must also be submitted when new graduate certificates are added to an existing cross-college stacked master's degree. In cases where an existing single-college/unit stacked master's degree would like to add a graduate certificate from another college, therefore becoming a cross-college stacked master's degree, an MOU must be developed.

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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) REQUIREMENTS

MOUs must include the following elements:

PROGRAM LOCATION AND GOVERNANCE:

- How faculty oversight will be structured for the master's degree and each associated graduate certificate.
- How curriculum, program, or administrative changes will be communicated across all participating units.
- How major decisions will be made and by which governing bodies or committees, particularly for actions such as adding certificates, suspending admissions, or relocating or discontinuing programs.

RESOURCES:

- How program and course revenue will be distributed among participating units.
- How staff and advising responsibilities will be divided across units.
- Expectations for cross-college faculty support for master's culminating experience.
- How course capacity will be managed in graduate certificate programs, especially when courses serve both certificate-only students and those in the stacked master's program.

STUDENT SUPPORT:

- Advising responsibilities at different stages (e.g., while enrolled in a certificate, the master's program, or both).
- Specific unit policies and procedures (including academic grievance procedures) that apply to students as they work towards each credential.
- Plans for advising students if one or more preferred graduate certificate program is unavailable at the time of application or enrollment.

ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS

- Admissions Coordination: How applications will be managed across units, including timelines and communication with applicants and which unit will employ the Slate Program Detail Editors (PDE) for each credential application. It is recommended that staff users of Slate and MyGrad who are affiliated with any credential associated with the stacked degree be granted view access to the application and student records of all credentials associated with the stacked degree. As such, establish the terms under which all units involved in the stacked degree may access and use application data.
- Marketing and Recruitment: Expectations for joint or separate marketing efforts, and branding.
- Data Sharing and FERPA Compliance: How student data and information will be shared securely between units.
- Program Review and Assessment: How program data and outcomes will be tracked, evaluated and reported across participating units.
- Conflict Resolution: A process for resolving disagreements between units regarding program operations or student issues (e.g. which unit/program grievance policies will be followed and when).
- Other: additional areas of coordination may need to be described at the discretion of unit leaders.