A cotutelle or dual-awarded PhD is a joint doctoral supervision agreement through which a student pursues doctoral studies at two universities, satisfying each institution’s admission and degree requirements, and with a thesis/dissertation supervisor at each institution. The student receives a degree from both universities, with a notation on the final transcript (and usually on the parchments) stating the degree was obtained under a cotutelle agreement.

Simon Fraser University (SFU) students interested in a cotutelle should declare their interest and identify a partner institution no later than the completion of four terms in the PhD program. Many PhD programs outside North America (e.g., the European Union (EU), Australia) that require candidates to complete their thesis/dissertation in three years are research only. When negotiating a cotutelle arrangement for a student going from Canada into this model, we recommend that students complete their course work and comprehensive examinations at the home institution before entering into the cotutelle arrangement.

When developing a cotutelle arrangement the following checklist can be used as a planning resource:

1. Participating institutions and programs
   The opening section of the agreement identifies the universities signing the agreement, represented by a senior administrator of each institution (president, academic vice-president, etc)

   This is followed by the section that identifies the specific university units and individuals participating in the cotutelle: the academic program/Department, and/or Faculty; the doctoral supervisors at each institution; the student, their area of specialization; and the thesis topic/title. Mailing addresses, email addresses, telephone and fax numbers are included.

2. Administrative details
   For clarity, the following items can appear as a series of separate articles or clustered thematically under a series of headings:

   - start date and anticipated duration of the joint supervision agreement
   - anticipated division of the student’s studies, i.e., dates and duration of the student’s attendance in the home and host institutions. The minimum stay at SFU is 4 terms (16 months).
   - details on payment of tuition fees. The student normally is registered at both universities, with the student paying tuition to only one university in any term (similar to how exchanges are handled). The institution waiving the fees can vary throughout the term of the agreement; one model is to have the fees paid to the university where the student is physically present, with the other university waiving its fees for those terms. Another model is to have the student only pay fees at their primary institution with the fees waived at the partner institution.
   - details on financial support for the doctoral student. This section should include information related to any collective agreements in place for students who are employees of the university and how seniority for graduate student employment will be calculated for a student entering into a cotutelle agreement.
• funding arrangements for supervisors and examiners, including funding for the thesis defense including travel costs for the supervisor(s) (when applicable).

• identification of who assumes responsibility for arranging housing, paying travel expenses and ensuring insurance coverage for the student.

• information on the admission requirements, application process and visa requirements for study at the host institution.

• a clause stating that the decision to award the degree by one of the institutions is not binding upon the other.

• a clause outlining how to proceed should the supervisory relationship at either institution break down

• a statement addressing procedures to be followed in the event of any disruption in the academic activity of either institution.

• A clause outlining minimum residency at each institution

• a clause addressing authorship and IP issues

3. Pedagogical details

For clarity, the following items can appear as a series of separate articles or clustered thematically under a series of headings:

• designation of the thesis supervisor in each institution and any other members of the supervisory committee; explanation of the process leading to the development, submission and approval of the research plan and thesis proposal, including all ethics and risk management approvals

• listing of any degree requirements beyond the thesis/dissertation for the home and host institutions (courses, comprehensive examinations, etc)

• statement on expectations around the preparation of regular progress reports for or by the candidate, and supervisors

• the procedures at each institution for the submission and examination of the thesis/dissertation

• the composition of the thesis examination committee and the institution(s) where the thesis/dissertation defense is to be held

• the language in which the thesis/dissertation will be written and defended; the language in which the abstract will be written; the language in which the oral defense statement will be given; the language of examination comments/reports
• statement of the candidate, the supervisors and both institutions will comply with their relevant Intellectual Property policies and dispute resolution procedures, should there be any inconsistencies between the two institutions

• information on code of conduct expectations and procedures for student misconduct (personal and research); information on guidelines related to grievance, appeal, and termination

• statement on the regulations at each institution regarding the filing, registration of copyright, and reproduction of the thesis

• the degree that will be awarded by each institution

• a statement of anticipated/expected learning outcomes/publication norms/expectations

• a statement verifying the student’s transcript from each institution will acknowledge that the degree is part of a cotutelle agreement. At SFU, the Dean of Graduate Studies Convocation memo will include a box, labeled Cotutelle Transcript Notation that can be checked when applicable. The wording to appear on the transcript is: “This PhD was awarded within a cotutelle agreement. The student was jointly enrolled at University xxx and Simon Fraser University and successfully completed the degree requirements at both institutions.”

4. Signature Page
The following sign and date the agreement for and on behalf of each institution:

the president or their designate (e.g. vice-president academic/vice-president research/ Dean of Graduate Studies)

the dean of the faculty or their designate

the graduate program director or department head

the primary supervisor at each institution

the candidate

Prepared by the Dean of Graduate Studies
Simon Fraser University
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