

Chair: Linda Miller – SGPS

Members:

Akis Psygkas – Law
 Andrew Hawkes – SGPS/Social Science
 Arthur Brown – Schulich
 Arzie Chant – Engineering
 Ayman El Ansary – Engineering
 Busra Copuroglu – SGPS/Arts
 Carrie Marshall – Health Sciences
 Cindi Ryde – Health Sciences
 Courtney Harper – Engineering
 Dianne Bryant – Health Sciences
 Doug Woolford – Science
 Emi Iwaizumi – SGPS/Education
 Genevieve De Viveiros – French Studies
 Hubert Pun – Ivey
 Immaculate Namukasa – Education
 Jamie Baxter – Social Science
 Joanna Blom – Engineering
 Joseph Gilroy – Science
 Kaleigh Campbell – SGPS/Law
 Kamran Siddiqui – Engineering
 Karine Dufresne – PAW
 Kevin Mooney – Music
 Leah Blackwood – SGPS/FIMS
 Lina Dagnino – Schulich
 Lisa Hodgetts – Social Science
 Liz Webb – Science
 Lorraine Davies – SGPS
 Lyn Purdy – Ivey
 Marguerite Lengyell – Education
 Matheus Sanita Lima – Science
 Matthew Hyginus – SGPS/Ivey
 Melissa Adler – Information & Media Studies
 Michael Milde – POLICY Chair
 Nandi Bhatia – Arts & Humanities
 Pam McKenzie – Information & Media Studies
 Peter Donahue – Kings
 Robert Glushko – University Librarian
 Ruth Martin – SGPS
 Seyram Afealete – SGPS/Music
 Shabir Razavi – SGPS/Eng
 Sharon Wei – Music
 Shawn Whitehead – Schulich
 Stephen McClatchie – Huron
 Tobias Nagl – Arts
 Tom Drysdale – Schulich
 Tony Adebero – SGPS/Health Sciences
 Vasudeva Bhat – PAW
 Victor Chu – SGPS/Schulich
 Waliu Alaka – SOGS
 Yolanda Babenko-Mould – Health Sciences
 Zoe Sinel – Law

AGENDA

1. Interdisciplinary Combined PhD Option

1.1. NEW Policy

1.2. NEW Procedures

Process:

Please provide any questions you may have regarding this item by 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 9, 2023, to lmiller@uwo.ca (copy ahoffer@uwo.ca).

Any questions and answers will be shared with the Graduate Education Council by 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 10, 2023.

Voting members will receive an individual personal link to the Ballot (in Qualtrics) under separate cover. Voting members are asked to please provide their vote in respect of the motion by 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 17, 2023.

 Appendix Attached

Future Meetings

Graduate Education Council	Senate Sub-Committee	Senate
October 6, 2022	Varied - Typically, Agenda items are due 15 business days prior to Senate	Nov. 11, 2022 Dec. 2, 2022
December 1, 2022		Jan. 20, 2023 Feb. 16, 2023 Mar. 17, 2023
April 3, 2023		Apr. 21, 2023
May 2, 2023		May 19, 2023
May 17 EVOTE		June 9, 2023
Fall of 2023		Oct. 14, 2022

NEW Policy – Interdisciplinary Combined PhD Option

ACTION:	Recommended: Graduate Education Council approve and recommend the introduction of a new policy on Interdisciplinary Combined PhD option to the Senate Committee on Academic Policy.
<input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> UPDATE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISCUSSION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APPROVAL	

BACKGROUND:

Many current and emerging areas of research/professional practice are at the intersection of existing disciplines. Advanced knowledge and research expertise that spans disciplinary boundaries is needed to effectively respond to emerging social and scientific needs. In addition, students are increasingly seeking interdisciplinary opportunities to leverage their research interests and to broaden their career options.

The creation of new interdisciplinary programs would not provide the flexibility or responsiveness to address these growing needs and would limit students to predetermined interdisciplinary needs. Ideally, interdisciplinary graduate education must include the flexibility to support unique combinations of disciplines to enable students to acquire both the depth of disciplinary learning expected at the doctoral level and the synthesis of knowledge across disciplines to produce scholars equipped to focus on increasingly complex challenges.

This combined PhD option will be unique in Canada and will provide an innovative and competitive advantage for Western in the recruitment of outstanding, innovative doctoral candidates.

PROPOSED CHANGE TO CURRENT REGULATION:

See attachments

PRIMARY CONTACT:

Linda Miller ▪ Vice-Provost (Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies) ▪ lmiller@uwo.ca

CONSULTATION:

GEC Academic Policy Committee ▪ April 27, 2023
Graduate Education Council ▪ May 2, 2023 ▪ mmm dd, yyy

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Combined PhD Overview](#)

[Combined PhD Option Guide](#)

Policy Category:

Subject: Interdisciplinary Combined PhD Option

Subsections:

Approving Authority: Senate

Responsible Committee: Graduate Education Council Academic Policy Committee, Graduate Education Council, Senate Academic Policy Committee

Related Procedures: Guideline for Creating the Interdisciplinary Combined PhD Degree Agreement

Officer(s) Responsible for Procedures: School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Graduate Education Council

Related Policies:

Effective Date: Upon Approval

Supersedes:

N.B., Appendix A, at the end of this policy draft, provides a copy of the Interdisciplinary Combined PhD Degree Agreement form

DEFINITIONS

Western Interdisciplinary Combined PhD

A Western Interdisciplinary Combined PhD entails the completion of the combined degree requirements of two Western doctoral programs simultaneously under the supervision of a faculty member from each program.

POLICY

1. Rationale for an Interdisciplinary Combined PhD Option

- 1.1. Many current and emerging areas of research and professional practice are at the intersection of existing disciplines.
- 1.2. Advanced knowledge and research expertise that spans disciplinary boundaries is needed to effectively respond to emerging cultural, social, and scientific needs.
- 1.3. The creation of new interdisciplinary graduate programs would not provide the flexibility or responsiveness required to address these growing needs.
- 1.4. This option will be unique in Canada and will provide an innovative and competitive advantage for Western and its graduates.

2. Program Structure

- 2.1. The student will have two supervisors - one from each graduate program. In exceptional circumstances, a single supervisor, with doctoral membership in both programs may be approved by SGPS, conditional upon the supervisory committee representing both programs.
- 2.2. One of the two programs will be identified as the "Home Program" for the purpose of registration and administration.
- 2.3. Programs are encouraged to "share" or "merge" some of their usual requirements.
 - For example, a required course in one program can also be counted as an optional or elective course in the second program.
- 2.4. One thesis is to be completed; the thesis must meet the expectations of both programs, the content topics of the thesis should represent an interdisciplinary blending of the disciplines.

- 2.5. The composition of the examining board for the dissertation will include representation of both participating programs and disciplines.
- Some variation from the usual PhD Examination Board structure may be needed to achieve this; such variation must be approved by SGPS.
- 2.6. The student's individual program (structured to support completion in 4 years) must be determined and agreed upon by the two programs, including:
- All courses to be completed to meet the learning outcomes of both programs
 - The nature and timing of comprehensive(s) to satisfy both programs (if feasible, the comprehensive exam requirements of the two programs can be merged into one exam)
 - Any additional milestones required to meet the learning outcomes of both programs
 - The topic of the dissertation/research

3. Enrolling in an **Interdisciplinary** Combined PhD Option

- 3.1. The student is accepted first into a “Home Program” and then requests admission to the “Partnering Program” no later than by the second term after beginning in the “Home Program”.
- The student must meet the entrance requirements of both graduate programs and must be admitted by both programs.

- 3.2. Following completion and approval of the “Interdisciplinary Combined PhD Degree Agreement” and admission to the Partnering Program, the student is transferred into the combined degree program.
- Normally the Interdisciplinary Combined PhD Agreement will be completed prior to the student’s first term of registration but no later than two terms into the student’s registration in the Home Program.
- 3.3. The student must have a supervisor who holds doctoral membership in each of the programs who is willing to supervise the student in the Interdisciplinary Combined PhD option.

4. Inclusion on Transcripts and Degrees

- 4.1. One degree/parchment will be awarded; it will list both graduate programs.
- 4.2. The student’s transcript will note registration in both graduate programs, with one degree awarded upon completion of all requirements.
- 4.3. The student’s transcript will read under “Academic Program History”:
- Program: Home Program
- Plan: Interdisciplinary Combined Doctor of Philosophy
Home Program and Partnering Program
- Status: Active in Program (or later, “Completed Program”)
- 4.4. The final degree awarded will appear on the parchment as: DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY, *Home Program and Partnering Program*

APPENDIX A

Interdisciplinary Combined PhD Degree Agreement Form

	Home Program	Partnering Program	<u>Interdisciplinary</u> Combined Program
Student Name: _____			
Entrance requirements:			
Duration of degree:			
Supervisory committee structure:			
Course and milestone requirements:			
Comprehensive examination(s) / Candidacy Examination milestones <u>and format</u> :			
Additional program requirements:			
Thesis requirements:			
Thesis examination committee <u>and format</u> :			
Supervisor(s):			
Funding and Teaching Assistantship:			

APPROVALS:

Student			
	Student: Name	Student: Signature	Date
Home Program			
	Supervisor Graduate Chair: Name	Supervisor Graduate Chair: Signature	Date
Home Program			
	Graduate Chair Supervisor: Name	Graduate Chair Supervisor: Signature	Date
Partnering Program			
	Graduate Chair Supervisor: Name	Graduate Chair Supervisor: Signature	Date
Partnering Program			
	Graduate Chair Supervisor: Name	Graduate Chair Supervisor: Signature	Date
Home Program			
	Associate Dean- Graduate: Name	Associate Dean- Graduate: Signature	Date
Partnering Program <i>(if different from Home)</i>			
	Associate Dean- Graduate: Name	Associate Dean- Graduate: Signature	Date
SGPS			
	Vice-Provost: Name	Vice-Provost: Signature	Date

PROCEDURE FOR THE POLICY ON INTERDISCIPLINARY COMBINED PHD OPTION: Guideline for Creating PhD Degree Agreement

PREAMBLE

The creation of an Interdisciplinary Combined PhD Option requires completing the Interdisciplinary Combined PhD Degree Agreement form. This procedure document serves to clarify and provide guidelines for doing so, as well as to highlight important considerations.

DEFINITIONS

Home Program: For the purposes of the Interdisciplinary Combined PhD Degree Agreement Form, “Home Program” will refer to the graduate program that has administrative responsibility for the student, including providing work/office space, assignment of GTAs, completion of annual progress reports, etc.

The Home Program is also the “fall-back” program in the event that the student wishes to discontinue in the combined option.

Partnering Program: For the purposes of the Interdisciplinary Combined PhD Degree Agreement Form, “Partnering Program” will refer to the second graduate program.

PROCEDURE

1. The following table provides comments and additional considerations for each of the subsections of the Interdisciplinary Combined PhD Degree Agreement form:

Subsection	Comments & considerations
Student name:	(No additional comments)
Entrance requirements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The student is accepted first into the Home Program and then applies for admission to the Partnering Program.• The student must meet the entrance requirements of both programs and must be admitted by both programs.• If there is a variation from the normal requirements (e.g., if one Program is allowing a variation from their usual requirements), describe the variation.
Duration of degree:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Interdisciplinary</u> Combined Program duration is 4 years• If the student is expected to exceed the normal 4 year duration with an additional year, describe later in the funding section how the student will be supported financially for the additional year.

Supervisory committee structure:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The structure of the supervisory committee for the <u>Interdisciplinary</u> Combined Program may vary from the structure of each of the participating program. • Such variation must be clearly described and must be in alignment with SGPS Regulations.
Course and milestone requirements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List the courses and milestones required for the combined program. • Describe how the course requirements of the two programs will be combined or varied. • If any courses or milestones will be required beyond the usual requirements of either program, they must be listed, along with any recommended or required timing of when such additional courses or milestones should be completed.
Comprehensive examination(s) / Candidacy Examination milestones:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideally, the student should not be required to complete the comprehensive exam requirements of both programs <u>separately.</u>; • Rather, efforts should be made to combine or blend the requirements in a manner that supports the learning expectations of each program while avoiding separate comprehensive examinations.
Additional program requirements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how any of the additional requirements from either program may be combined or waived for the <u>Interdisciplinary</u> Combined <u>PhD</u> Program. • In combining or waiving any additional requirements, information should be provided to explain how the learning expectations of the two programs will still be met. • Mandatory lab or safety training cannot be waived.
Thesis requirements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All thesis submission and examination related forms must be completed and submitted to SGPS by the Home Program. • Composition and approval of the thesis examination board, the public lecture, and examination date will be administered by the Home Program, in consultation with the Partnering Program.
Thesis examination committee <u>format</u>:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar to dual-degree examination committees, Some variation from SGPS Regulations is expected in order to ensure that the examination board appropriate represents the research conducted in the <u>Interdisciplinary</u> Combined <u>PhD</u> Program.; • However, it is strongly encouraged that the examination board not include more than one additional member (i.e., the usual PhD examination board includes 4 examiners; the <u>Interdisciplinary</u> Combined PhD examination board should not exceed 5 members).

Supervisor(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supervisors, one from each program, are required for the combined program.• The supervisor from the Home Program will have responsibility for ensuring that annual progress reports are submitted via the Home Program and for ensuring that thesis submission and examination forms are submitted to SGPS.
Funding and Teaching Assistantship:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Detail the funding commitments from each Program (eg, GTAships, scholarships, Graduate Fellowships), breaking the details down by year if the funding sources are expected to change on a yearly basis.• <u>Although the Partnering Program should reasonably contribute to the student’s funding package, the Home Program has ultimate responsibility for the student’s funding.</u>• <u>If one program has a higher funding level, the student should receive the higher level, shared appropriately by Home and Partner Programs.</u>