

# Freie Universität Berlin

## International Network University

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## Joint & Double Degree Programs

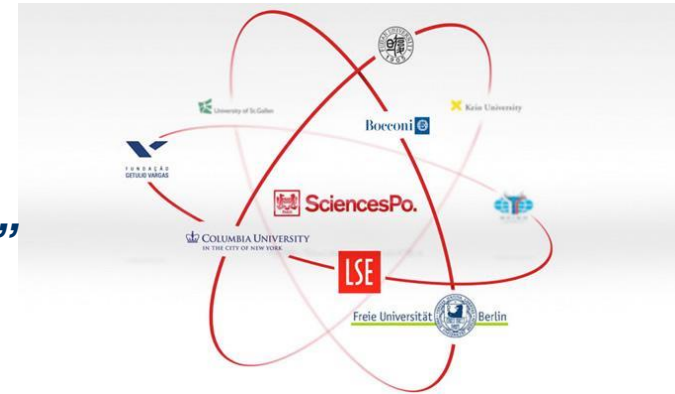
Lessons learned based on

- experience of Freie Universität Berlin
- empirical research conducted by FUB together with Institute of International Education, and by other institutions

# A Global Trend

***„Dual-Degree Programs Are Gathering Steam”***

New York Times, March 2011



***„A future trend will be towards the establishment of institutional partnerships and joint-degree programs that will attract students and researchers alike to the combined strengths of multiple universities working in partnership.”***

The Observatory on Borderless Higher Education: „Borderless 2011: Perspectives on the Future”

# Definition?

*„A review of the literature, university web pages, survey reports and research articles shows a plethora of terms used to describe international collaborative programs, such as double and joint degrees. These terms include:*

*double, multiple, tri-national, joint, integrated, collaborative, international, consecutive, concurrent, co-tutelle, overlapping, conjoint, parallel, simultaneous, and common degrees.*

*They mean different things to different people within and across countries, thereby, causing mass confusion about the real meaning and use of these terms....”*

Knight, Jane (2011). “Doubts and Dilemmas with Double Degree Programs”.  
In: “Globalisation and Internationalisation of Higher Education” [online monograph]. *Revista de Universidad y Sociedad del Conocimiento (RUSC)*. Vol. 8, No 2, pp. 297-312. UOC.

## (one basic) Definition

International joint or double degree programs are study programs collaboratively offered by two (or more) HEIs located in different countries. They typically feature a jointly developed / integrated curriculum and agreed upon credit recognition. Students typically study at the two (or more) partnering HEIs.

Joint Degree Programs: Upon completion of the study program students are awarded a single degree certificate issued and signed jointly by all institutions involved in the program.

Double Degree Programs: Upon completion of the study program students receive degree certificates issued separately by each of the institutions involved in the program.

Source: Joint and Double Degree Programs in the Global Context, IIE & FUB, September 2011

# Collaborative Degree Programs at FUB

Double degree programs, Bachelor level:

- Social Sciences, with Sciences Po Paris
- Literature & Cultural Studies, with Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris

„Integrated programs“, Bachelor level:

- Integrated China-Studies, with Zhejiang University, China
- Integrated Korea-Studies, with Ewha Woman's University; Sogang University; Yonsei University, Korea
- Integrated Japan-Studies, with International Christian University (ICU) Tokio, Japan

# Collaborative Degree Programs at FUB

## Double degree programs at Master's level

- Political Science / Affaires Internationales / Affaires Européennes, with Sciences Po Paris, France
- Environmental Earth Science, with Nanjing University, China
- Global Communication and International Journalism, with St. Petersburg State University, Russia
- Physics, with École Polytechnique, Paris, France
- Public Policy and Management, École des Hautes Etudes Commerciales (HEC) Paris, France

# Developing Collaborative Degree Programs

Some common features & experiences with collaborative degree programs:

- Most are bottom-up initiatives, based on faculty interest and contacts
- More often developed on the graduate level (MA)
- Most are designed as double degree programs (joint degree programs seem to be often legally more complicated in some countries)
- Most are developed with already existing partner institutions, based on previous cooperation – not as a first step of cooperation!
- Most require the involvement of several
  - Faculty members and
  - Administrative units within the institution



# Important Questions (from very beginning!)

- What are the (national or institutional) legal frameworks and regulations? Can a joint or double degree be at all awarded?
- Is there a complementarity of curricula & modules?
- Do academic calendars fit?
- What is the language of tuition - but also the language of administration?
- What are the (additional) short/long term costs of launching & running the program?
- How is the process of credit recognition organized?
- How is the process of quality assurance & accreditation organized?
- Are tuition fees addressed?
- Is there a unit that guides the development of such programs?
- Which students is the program aimed at and will there be enough demand?
- Are the admission requirements sufficiently addressed?

# Greatest Challenges

***„Generally, sustainability is a priority item in [collaborative programs] which is obviously disastrously underestimated or even ignored.“***

“Good Practice Report for the Management and Administration of Joint Programmes”, JOIMAN Network, 2010 [www.joiman.eu](http://www.joiman.eu)

# Sustainability & Strategy

- Collaborative degree programs need long-term institutional commitment and support just as much as the backing and engagement of individual professors.
- Institutions should have a clear policy on such programs, ideally embedded in an institutional strategy, and identify a unit that can guide faculty or institutes in developing them.
- Such programs always need additional resources: Is the institution able and willing to provide them (also in case external seed funding ceases to flow)?
- What is the value added that the program provides to students and to the institutions involved?
- Has the institution any particular marketing or recruitment measures in place for the program? And will there be enough participants?

# Motivations and Benefits

- Offering students attractive international programs and unique study conditions
- Advancing campus internationalization / attracting more international students
- Broadening educational offerings through use of synergies
- Improving competitiveness by teaming up with partner institutions
- Raising international visibility & prestige of institution
- Fostering collaboration with partner faculty, leading also to new research cooperation

*Thank you!*

