INTRODUCED BY: UAC

DATE: May 2, 2005

RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR JOINT DEGREE PROGRAMS

IT IS HEREBY PROPOSED THAT THE FOLLOWING BE ADOPTED:

1. That the attached policies concerning University residence requirements for students in joint degree programs be approved for immediate implementation.

2. That these change be forwarded to the President for approval.
Proposal

For the following joint degree programs, it is proposed that the given two policies shall apply:

- 3+2 Engineering programs with RPI, Clarkson, Binghamton, and New Paltz
- 3+3 Law program with Albany Law School
- 7 year joint program with Goldman Dental School
- Joint program with SUNY State College of Optometry

Policy 1: Only students with an admission status of “freshman” (not transfer student) are eligible to participate in these joint programs. Students following joint degree programs shall be held to the same requirements that apply to students completing their entire degree on campus. This means that students need to complete 30 of their last 69 credits on this campus (residency requirement), and may transfer in up to 90 credits toward their degree (transfer limit).

Policy 2: All Albany requirements need to be completed by the time the bachelor’s degree will be awarded. Therefore students pursuing these degree programs can continue to take courses, on campus or off, that will apply to the requirements they need to complete at Albany (in compliance with residency and transfer limit policies). For example, in the summers following the student’s third and fourth years, the student can return to Albany to take additional coursework. Additionally, requirements at Albany might be satisfied by particular coursework at the partnering institution.

Rationale

The University has several agreements with other institutions regarding joint degree programs. These programs have been in existence for many years. However, the current general education requirements have presented new challenges for the students attempting to pursue some of these opportunities. In particular, it is very difficult to satisfy all general education requirements as well as major and minor requirements in three years. For example, the Physics 3+2 major requires 72 credits; the Chemistry 3+2 major requires 73 credits.

Past practice in administering these programs honored certain traditions, specifically requiring that 90 credits be completed at the University at Albany. Careful reading of the relevant articulation agreements suggests that while this practice may have some logic, it is not policy. In light of the challenge presented by the general education requirements, the above policies are proposed.

Background

The 3+2 Engineering programs provide an opportunity for motivated students to complete both a B.S. degree in Physics or Chemistry from the University at Albany and a Bachelor of Engineering degree from one of our partnering institutions. In these programs, students must complete all general education requirements as well as a modified Physics or Chemistry major at the University at Albany in three years. In the spring of the junior year, the student applies to the partner school. Upon acceptance, the student enrolls at the engineering school for the next two years. Completion of the recommended course of study during those two years
satisfies the remaining graduation requirements at Albany. At the end of five years, the student is awarded both degrees.

Currently, the University at Albany participates with four engineering schools to offer this educational option. These are Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Clarkson University, Binghamton, and New Paltz.

The 3+3 Law program allows admitted students to begin studies at Albany Law School after three years at the University at Albany. Students must complete all major, minor and general education requirements at the University at Albany in three years. After the student successfully completes the first year of law school, the bachelor’s degree is awarded from the University at Albany.

The joint program with SUNY State College of Optometry provides a joint program that allows students to earn both a bachelor’s degree in Biology and a Doctorate of Optometry in seven years.

The joint degree program with Boston University’s Goldman Dental School allows students to earn a Bachelor’s degree in Biology and a Doctor of Medical Dentistry degree in seven years.

There is a question about how literally the requirement that “the student completes three years at the University at Albany” should be interpreted. Does this require 90 credits at Albany, or can AP credits and other transfer credits be used to complete this three year requirement? At the time these agreements were made, students did tend to take all their coursework on campus. However, AP and other transfer credits are now commonplace, especially in light of the current general education requirements. The proposed policies clarify the interpretation of this requirement.

Additionally, students are having increased difficulty completing all general education requirements by the end of their third year. Can they continue to satisfy Albany requirements following their three years at Albany – i.e., take General Education courses at the partner school or during the summers? The proposed policies will enable them to do so.

The restriction of the named programs to students admitted as “freshman” clarifies a requirement that has been in force since it had been written into each of the existing agreements signed with the partner institutions.