



## Duplicate Degrees

On occasion academic programs seek to award the same student the same degree-major credential twice. In such cases, the student would see the identical credential appear twice on their transcript and they will receive two identical diplomas.

Such awards are inconsistent with the conditions under which programs are authorized. A single degree-major combination is authorized for a single curriculum. The awarding of the identical credential twice signifies that there are two or more distinct curricula within a single program.

The mechanism for awarding credentials for multiple strands of curricula within a single program (degree-major) is the formal option. The student earns the degree-major once, and can earn multiple options within the major as they complete different versions of the curriculum. (For example the Master of Engineering with its option structure was set up with this possibility in mind.) Many academic programs use informal tracks within their curriculum structure. Tracks are not formally approved through governance and are under local control. As such, they are appropriate as long as all of the activity or impact is within the major. When duplicate degrees are used as a way of signifying completion of multiple tracks, the impact moves beyond the program; in such cases academic programs will need to implement options or find another acceptable resolution.

Duplicate degrees are explicitly prohibited at the undergraduate level. No explicit policy exists at the graduate level beyond the general guidelines for authorization of academic programs. Duplicate degrees are treated as errors in our student record system and require hand-work outside the automated processing necessary in an institution that awards thousands of degrees every year.

**This administrative clarification of existing policy is supported by the Academic Planning and Analysis/Office of the Provost, Office of Graduate Education/The Graduate School, and Student Records/Office of the Registrar. November 2007. A prohibition on duplicate degrees was endorsed by the Graduate Faculty Executive Committee and the University Academic Planning Council at their respective December 2007 meetings (policy to be developed). Contact Jocelyn Milner, Director of Academic Planning and Analysis, with questions.**

When an academic program seeks to award a duplicate degree:

1. The first time that a program awards a student the same degree twice to the same student (duplicate degree) the program and the dean or dean's designee will be asked to confirm that the program faculty and the student understand that a duplicate credential, not two different credentials, are being awarded. The program faculty will be reminded that options are the appropriate mechanism and the program will be asked to implement options as a way to accommodate any subsequent cases.
2. If a program seeks to award a duplicate degree a second time, the program and the dean or designee will be asked to confirm that they understand that the student is getting a duplicate credential, not two different credentials. In addition, the program will be asked to implement options as a way to accommodate any subsequent cases.
3. If a program seeks to award a duplicate degree a third time, the program will be required to propose and implement options as a way to accommodate the third case and any subsequent cases.

The Registrar's Office will notify the director of the Office of Academic Planning and Analysis when cases of duplicate degrees arise. APA will coordinate the communication with the Office of the Registrar, the Graduate School, the school/college, and the program on the necessary steps.