

Draft MOU in support of UNM/ NMSU Joint Ph.D. Program

Drafted 1 September 2015 by Christopher Brown, based on NMSU guidelines

Revised 9 September 2015 by Maria lane and Christopher Brown

Revised 19 September 2015 by Maria Lane

Revised 1 October 2015 and 5 October 2015 by Maria Lane and Christopher Brown

Revised 20 October 2015 by Maria Lane and Christopher Brown

Revised 7 January 2016 by Christopher Brown, with input from Maria Lane and NMSU Associate Dean Beth Pollack

Revised 8 February 2016 with input from NMSU's HLC person and NMSU's Graduate Catalog, with input from Maria Lane

Revised 15 February 2016 by Maria Lane with input from UNM Grad dean Julie Coonrod

Name and type of approved degree to be awarded - The New Mexico Joint Doctoral Program in Geography.

Accreditation status of the program and institution - NMSU and UNM are institutionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and have approval to offer any degree program appropriate to the missions of the two universities. No specific accreditation or licensure requirements exist for doctoral programs in Geography; however, both institutions commit to interface with HLC as the program is developed and proceeds through the approval process at NMSU and UNM.

Management structure - The New Mexico Joint Doctoral Program in Geography will be managed by the Doctoral Program Steering Committee (Steering Committee), and the Steering Committee will be responsible for screening applications; making admissions decisions; reviewing and advising curriculum; handling conflicts, grievances, and appeals that cannot be resolved within the student's research committee; and maintaining communication between both institutions on relevant issues as they arise. Composition of the Committee will reflect representation of faculty from both institutions, specifically including, at a minimum, the graduate program director and at least one additional faculty member from each department. Committee membership may change annually, based on teaching assignments, interest, sabbatical leave, and other fluctuations of effort among faculty members. Meetings of the Steering Committee may occur as face-to-face meetings or via Skype or other Web-assisted technologies.

Program curriculum - Each department maintains full responsibility for its own course offerings, but both departments commit to coordinate changes that would affect the program as a whole. Specifically, we agree to a three-week notice and comment period for any addition, removal or modification of doctoral-level courses in either university's catalog, during which input to proposed changes are accepted from the institution not making the change. Some courses will be offered at UNM, some will be offered at NMSU, and some will be offered at distance. See attached table for summary of proposed classes

and delivery formats.

Requirements for program completion

- Maintain an overall GPA of 3.0;
- Completion of 48 credit hours, 18 of which are dissertation credits;
- Completion of three core courses with a grade of B or better (the minimum acceptable grade of a B is the norm at UNM for core classes in the MS Geography program, and the joint PhD program will follow this as a minimum standard);
- Demonstrated competency in three subject areas: human geography, physical geography, and Geographic Information Science & Technology. The doctoral committee will evaluate existing competencies in a first-semester diagnostic interview and will then provide individualized guidelines for the student's program of study that lead to successful demonstration of these competencies. Final demonstration of these competencies will be established through performance on a written comprehensive exam, an oral exam, and the dissertation defense, as detailed below.
- Successful advancement to candidacy, which will be determined through (1) written comprehensive exams that demonstrate broad competency across the discipline of geography and, (2) an oral exam that requires the student to defend a research proposal, demonstrate research expertise, and address any concerns identified during the evaluation of the student's written exam.
- Completion of a written dissertation, with a successful oral defense. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the joint doctoral program, we expect that dissertations will exhibit variable formats, but in all cases a dissertation must comprise a unified body of original research, as guided by the joint doctoral committee. The preferred format of the oral defense would be a face to face meeting with all committee members present, but Skype or similar Web-assisted participation is acceptable, as is the case with both the MS program at UNM and the MAG program at NMSU.

Program and Graduation Requirements – Students are bound by the catalog requirements in effect at the home institution, and all required paperwork must be submitted in accordance with stated deadlines in that institution's catalog. At UNM, this includes the Program of Studies form, Advancement to Candidacy Form, Announcement of Examination, and Report of Examination, for example. Students for whom UNM is the home institution will publish their dissertations in the UNM dissertation repository, as required by UNM's Graduate Studies. For students that have NMSU as their home institution, these requirements include filing the Program of Study, Doctoral Qualifying Examination and Dissertation Title Submission forms. Students for whom NMSU is the home institution will submit their dissertation for approval at the Graduate School, according to NMSU policy, and file a final approved copy of the dissertation with the NMSU Library for archiving.

Transfer of credit policies – The New Mexico Joint Doctoral Program in Geography relies on the state’s “cross enrollment” protocol, which allows students to register seamlessly for courses on either campus, regardless of which is the home institution. When registering for courses at the secondary institution, the cross-enrollment protocol will provide an administrative process that allows the student to register at the home institution but attend the course at another campus. In the event that a student desires to switch to a new adviser who is not resident at the student’s home institution (thus necessitating a change in the student’s home institution), the registrars of the two institutions will work together to facilitate a transfer and change of adviser without any prejudice against the student’s standing or progress.

Financial arrangements – As discussed in the admissions portion of the full proposal, students will apply to the New Mexico Joint Doctoral Program in Geography at one of the two institutions, and the point of contact at that institution will route all relevant materials to a joint review committee composed of faculty from both institutions that will make admissions decisions. Payment of application fees will be handled via the intake portal at the home institution, and students that are admitted to and enroll in the program will handle all financial matters related to tuition, fees, financial aid, and stipend/salaries associated with graduate assistantships through the home institution. Only in the event that a student desires to switch advisers that would involve a change in the home institution would the two institutions need to discuss any cross-institutional interactions on financial matters involving student support.

As noted in the full proposal, the funding for the joint program coordinator will be provided by UNM, and both institutions will benefit from and be served by this staff person. Although UNM faculty will have the primary responsibility for screening, hiring, and managing this staff person, NMSU faculty will provide input into these processes. Specifically, UNM will select finalists for the staff position and invite comment from NMSU before making any final decision. The UNM department chair will be the direct supervisor, but the Steering Committee will be asked to provide input to the official annual review process.

Statement on faculty hiring – Each department maintains full responsibility for its own faculty hiring, but both departments commit to communicate about any searches for faculty that would be expected to participate in the joint doctoral program. Specifically, we agree that the institution planning the faculty search will provide a three-week notice and comment period to the partner institution before finalizing and posting a faculty job advertisement unless prohibited by the timeline necessary to conduct a successful hire. We also agree that upon successful completion of a faculty search, the institution conducting the hire will notify the partner institution in a timely manner of the search results, and will initiate a discussion about the role of the new faculty member in the joint doctoral program.

Statement on who is responsible for advising students – Successful applicants to the program will research potential advisors prior to applying, establish a relationship with a likely advisor, and speak to this relationship in their application materials. During the process of reviewing the applications, the review committee will interact with likely advisors, ask them to review the file, and ask for a commitment to be interim advisor if the applicant is admitted to the program. The interim advisor will assist the student in assembling and finalizing a joint doctoral committee, preparing and submitting an appropriate program of study, and conducting the first semester diagnostic interview. Primary responsibility for advising rests with the joint doctoral committee chair at the home institution; the program coordinator will assist as needed.

Statements on faculty supervision of dissertations – Upon enrollment of the student in the program, the interim advisor at the home institution will work with the student and faculty at both institutions to develop a joint doctoral committee, which will necessarily include two faculty members from each institution and one external member. We expect the external member will typically be a faculty member who is from the home institution but outside the home department. Eligibility to serve on doctoral committees is defined in the graduate catalogs at UNM and NMSU, and each institution will therefore follow its own procedures for evaluating graduate committees and qualifying “graduate” faculty. The committee formation described above is in accord with both universities’ existing requirements for committee formation.

The committee structure we propose is meant primarily to ensure that students engage with faculty from both institutions, and this will also provide the broadest umbrella for advising possible to guide the student in developing their program of study and research proposal, preparing for their qualifying exams and proposal defense, and dealing with any issues that arise in their time in the program. The joint doctoral committee discussed in the previous section will be responsible for all facets of supervising dissertation research, including:

- developing the preliminary research proposal and external funding proposals (where applicable),
- developing expertise needed to conduct the proposed research,
- preparing for comprehensive and oral exams,
- preparing for the final research proposal defense,
- conducting needed field and laboratory analysis,
- preparing for the final defense of the dissertation, and
- writing and revising the articles or other written documents that will summarize the research completed and comprise the finished product of the dissertation process.

Primary responsibility for supervising the dissertation rests with the home institution due to the primacy of the joint doctoral committee chair, but we envision a fully joint supervisory structure that ensures dissertations will be completed to meet standards at both

institutions. Meetings of the joint doctoral committee will be handled both through face-to-face meetings and the use of interactive teleconferencing tools that both institutions currently support.

Statement on Library Access

In order to guarantee that all students in the New Mexico Joint Doctoral Program in Geography have equitable access to academic resources, the registrars at UNM and NMSU will devise an ID-granting system to ensure that all students are granted access to both universities' library collections while enrolled, regardless of the campus on which enrollment occurs in any given semester.

Program Assessment

The Steering Committee composed of faculty from both institutions will be tasked with conducting regular reviews of student learning and program quality in three distinct phases: entrance interviews, annual student reviews, and exit surveys. In general, this assessment structure is designed to evaluate both employment placement and the quality of student research products. Each academic year, the Steering Committee will synthesize the results these assessments and will share them with the entire program faculty (across both institutions). A joint faculty meeting will then be held to discuss the assessment outcomes for purposes of guiding improvements to the program or affirming successes. This "internal" review will be conducted on an annual basis, with an external review commissioned after 5 years. The New Mexico Joint Doctoral Program in Geography will additionally be assessed within the regular cycle of Academic Program Review at each institution.

Signature sheet of approval by senior administration of participating institutions - See the attached draft signature page that will be deployed as the proposal and MOU moves forward.

Process of adding participating institutions - As the New Mexico Joint Doctoral Program in Geography is a focused joint Ph.D. program proposed solely by the faculty in the NMSU Department of Geography and the UNM Department of Geography & Environmental Studies, there is no expectation that new participating institutions will be added.

Signature Page for NMSU Approvals of Joint Program MOU	
Relevant Campus Unit	Signature
Department Head, Dept. of Geography Christopher Brown, with tally of vote of Department faculty attached)	
Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences Enrico Pontelli	
NMSU Graduate Council Chair, Amadu Gopalan	
NMSU Graduate Dean Loui Reyes	
Associate Deans Advisory Council Chair, Sonya Cooper	
Academic Deans Council Chair, Daniel Howard	
Faculty Senate Chair, Stuart Munson McGee	
Office of the Executive Vice President/ Provost, Daniel Howard	
Office of the President/Chancellor Garrey Carruthers	
NMSU Board of Regents, Chair, Mike Cheney	

Signature Page for UNM Approvals of Joint Program MOU	
Relevant Campus Unit	Signature
Department of Geography & Environmental Studies, Chair, K. Maria D. Lane, (with tally of vote of Department faculty attached)	
College of Arts and Sciences Dean, Mark Peceny	
Office of Graduate Studies Dean, Julie Coonrod	
Office of the Registrar Alexander Gonzalez	
Office of the Executive Vice President, Chaouki T. Abdallah	
Office of the President Robert G. Frank	