

BANGOR UNIVERSITY (BU)
and
CENTRO AGRONÓMICO TROPICAL DE INVESTIGACIÓN Y ENSEÑANZA, COSTA RICA
(CATIE)

COLLABORATION AGREEMENT
JOINT DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN TROPICAL AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY,
AGROFORESTRY AND CONSERVATION BIOLOGY

1. APPLICATION, ADMISSION AND LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

Students may be admitted to the joint PhD program in the fields of tropical agriculture, forestry, agroforestry and conservation biology through either CATIE or BU. Both CATIE and BU admission requirements must be satisfied.

Admission requirements

- Master's degree in a relevant subject
- Full financial support to cover applicable tuition fees and living costs for at least 36 months of the doctoral program and air travel
- Evidence of proficiency in English (for those whose first language is no English) (IELTS 6.0, TOEFL 560)
- Evidence of a working level of Spanish for non-native speakers. Applicants will be required to submit the results of either a standardized test or a certified letter indicating their proficiency level from an officially

Admission procedure

The application form is to be submitted to either CATIE or BU admission officer. The following documents are to be appended to the completed application form:

- Financial guarantee
- Statement of research topic
- Transcripts of first degree and Masters courses
- Certified copy of each degree certificate
- TOEFL/IELTS certificates
- Evidence of a working knowledge of Spanish for non-native speakers. As indicated above, applicants will be required to submit the results of either a standardized test or a certified letter indicating their proficiency level from an officially recognized institution or person.

All admission documents are to be completed before a copy is sent to the other institution. When both institutions agree to accept a student, the offer of admission to the joint University CATIE PhD program is to

be made by the institution to which the application was submitted. The decision will be transmitted to an applicant within two months of receiving the application.

2. DATES OF REGISTRATION

Students admitted via CATIE should normally register and initiate their study program in early January, although in CATIE doctoral students may begin their program in January, April, July or September. Students admitted via BU are recommended to register in the autumn semester (late September) or at the beginning of April in order to take advantage of the induction and the transferrable skills and health and safety modules at BU.

3. SUPERVISION

A supervisory committee for each student shall comprise a minimum of four persons comprising one supervisor from each institution plus an internal but independent reviewer and a chair of the supervisory committee. The chair of the supervisory committee shall be a senior staff member of the admitting institution who is not a supervisor of the student. Supervisors must qualify for the position under BU Code of Practice and CATIE Graduate Faculty Rules, Section 5, Appendix 1, respectively. Curricula vitae of all committee members will be held on file at both BU and CATIE. Other qualified professionals, from either institution, or from outside BU/CATIE, can be invited to advise the student either informally or by joining the committee.

4. STUDY PLAN

Upon admission, each student, together with the supervisors from CATIE and BU, will develop an individual study plan, as prescribed by BU College of Natural Sciences Graduate School or by CATIE. This will give a general overview of his/her PhD program, including dates of registration, academic activities, timetable (to include travel and study abroad), development of research proposal, field research and budget. The study plan must be approved by the supervisory committee, and will form part of the formal first year evaluation of progress. Risk assessments must be conducted before any laboratory or field work commences, approved by the principal supervisor at either CATIE or BU, and held on the file at both BU and CATIE utilizing standard procedures.

5. COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS

In addition to completing the study plan, all students must follow the relevant first year transferable skills and health and safety module at either BU or CATIE, and may also attend other postgraduate-level subject-specific courses if considered desirable. Such courses, which will be listed in the individual study plan, will be agreed in consultation with both co-supervisors and will be decided in the light of the individual requirements of each student.

6. EVALUATION OF PROGRESS

Students will be evaluated annually during the study period. Students will be required to produce a report at the end of the first (probationary) year which will be used in the preliminary evaluation, sometimes referred to as a candidacy exam, detailed below. Subsequently they will be evaluated by the supervisory committee at the end of their second year and if necessary, third year, and take a final examination, in the form of a viva voce, after submission of the thesis. Students will also be required to give a public presentation of their thesis. Both evaluations will be carried out jointly between BU and CATIE on their campus, whichever is most appropriate. They may be conducted with the aid of electronic communications systems available at BU and CATIE. Students will also be invited to submit comments in confidence to the Dean at CATIE or the Academic Registrar at BU on aspects of their program including, inter alia:

- Efficiency of the admissions procedures
- Adequacy of resources
- Quality and effectiveness of supervision
- Quality and value of information produced for the joint program.

Preliminary evaluation (candidacy exam) and first year report

During the first (probationary) year, each student is required to demonstrate a minimum level of competence in carrying out independent research. Assessment is made on the basis of the report written by the student (which must be presented and defended orally), which should include a research plan plus any results of research completed in the first year. Each student must also fulfill any other assessments as specified by the supervisory committee. Students who are unable to satisfy the supervisory committee in the first year assessment may either not be allowed to proceed to complete the PhD program or be transferred onto an MPhil program. The preliminary evaluation will be made by the supervisory committee, which will be report to the Doctoral Committee at CATIE and the Director of Postgraduate Studies, School of Environment, Natural Resources and Geography at BU.

Students are also required to give a public presentation of their research project to the scientific and/or academic community. This presentation should take place during the first year of the doctoral program.

7. SUBMISSION OF THESIS AND FINAL EXAMINATION

Submission and format

By the end of the doctoral program, students must meet the requirements for a qualification at level 8 as set out in the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (2009). In summary, a postgraduate research degree shows that a student can conduct rigorous and intellectually demanding research. At doctoral level, he/she will also have made an original and independent contribution to the understanding of a particular discipline.

The candidate must submit a thesis for examination no earlier than 30 months after the initial registration date and no later than 12 months after the end of the 36 month registration period, unless other circumstances prevent this deadline being met, and approval for an extension on these groups is granted by both CATIE and BU. The thesis must be written in English. The thesis should be produced as a logical series of publishable papers with two additional chapters added to provide a general introduction and a unified discussion, which will include an extended summary and conclusion section. Annexes may also be included with relevant analysis and supporting documentation.

Final examination

The student will be required to submit to a viva voce examination at which he/she will present an oral defense of the thesis to the examining board. The Examining Board may also require the student to submit to a written examination. The Examining Board comprises four persons: chair, external examiner and two internal examiners, one from each institution, who are not supervisors of the student being examined. The chair will be a senior member of BU or CATIE staff depending on which institution hosts the examination. The external examiner will be appointed from an institution other than CATIE or BU. The supervisors will recommend an external examiner to the institutions' administrations, which will formally appoint the external examiner in accordance with BU quality assurance procedures. The appointment must be approved by both institutions. The two institutions will bear an equal share of the examiners' fees and expenses.

8. RESIDENCE AND REGISTRATION PERIODS

Each student must be resident for a minimum period of six months at each of the two institutions and must be registered for the program on a full time basis for a period of 36 months. When resident at each institution, the student will be allocated a suitable desk or bench space and such access to IT facilities as to enable them to conduct their research without hindrance.

9. THE CERTIFICATE

The degree title shall be Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or Master of Philosophy (MPhil), as appropriate. A certificate issued jointly will bear the name of both CATIE and BU. The certificate will be assigned by the appropriate officers of CATIE and BU. Until such time as the authority of BU to award joint degrees is confirmed, the certificate will bear the name of the University of Wales and will be signed by an officer of the University of Wales.

10. QUALITY ASSURANCE

The quality of the joint program shall be maintained by respecting CATIE's existing standards as laid down in its Graduate Faculty Rules and by invoking BU quality assurance procedures. BU Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards of Postgraduate Research Programs will apply to the joint program.