

Approval Policy on International Education Agreements

Principal Types of International Agreements

Memorandum of Understanding
Student Exchange
Dual Degree
Faculty Development
Degree Program

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a statement of intent to work toward the development of specific collaborative educational projects. It is primarily for the benefit of the international partner who needs something formalized before being able to begin discussion of potential agreements. MOUs should only agree to consider possibilities with any substantive agreements being handled subsequently and evaluated on their own merits. The Office of the General Counsel will provide an approved boilerplate MOU which can then be signed by deans with a copy forwarded to the Provost's Office and to the Office of International Studies. **MOUs can be approved so long as there are no express or implied commitments other than to possibly develop agreements, each of which will be evaluated on its own merits.**

Student Exchanges are agreements with international universities by which we agree to allow their students to take classes at FIU for "free" (i.e., they are paying tuition to their home institution) and our students take classes at the international university while paying FIU tuition. This arrangement was historically unbalanced in that the international university sent more students to FIU than FIU sent to the partner university. Recently we have achieved a balance in exchanges. These are valuable for enhancing the international aspects of the student body at FIU. **Student Exchange agreements will be approved subject to an annual review of data provided by the Office of International Studies showing the balance in the numbers of exchange students.**

Dual Degrees are agreements that allow for students to receive an FIU degree and a separate degree from a foreign university after completing a single program of study. They take a variety of forms. An underlying theme in all of them is an agreement with the international university to allow more than the standard number of credits from that university to be transferred into an FIU degree program. Reciprocally, the international university allows more than the standard number of FIU credits to be transferred into degree programs at that university. The differences in the programs resides in (1) the number of transferrable credits, up to 90 in undergraduate programs and up to one-third of the total credits in graduate programs; and (2) the method of payment for the credits.

There are three methods of payment for the credits: (1) students coming to FIU pay regular non-resident tuition (these generate funded FTEs); (2) students coming to FIU pay a per course flat fee (these do not generate funded FTEs); and (3) students coming

to FIU pay a prorated (based on percentage of total program courses taken at FIU) flat degree program fee (these do or do not generate funded FTEs based on whether non-residents in that flat fee program receive waivers to produce funded FTEs). **Dual Degree agreements in which the credits taken at FIU result in funded FTEs will be approved. Dual Degree agreements that do not generate funded FTEs will require a demonstration of excess capacity and a track record linking loss leader unfunded FTEs into funded FTEs.**

Faculty Development agreements are ones in which a faculty member at an international university who holds a master's degree is given a leave of absence from his/her university to come to FIU for up to four semesters to take courses, prepare and defend a dissertation proposal, and then return to his/her university to continue teaching while working on the dissertation. For quality purposes, the student must meet with his/her committee at FIU twice a year and the major professor must go to the student's university once a year. While at FIU the student holds a Graduate Teaching Assistantship. While back at his/her university, the student/faculty member is given a reduced course load to facilitate completion of the dissertation. Normal fees are paid for the credits taken at FIU. **Faculty Development agreements following the standard model described above will be approved.**

Degree Programs offered abroad in collaboration with foreign universities generate non-fundable FTEs. FIU enters into an agreement with the university in which the university typically recruits the students, provides the classroom space and other teaching support, and often provides some of the faculty to teach in the program (depending on the agreement, these faculty are paid either by the international university or by FIU). FIU has established the quality control policy that 60% of the courses in these programs must be taught by regular FIU faculty. The partner university collects the money from the students and remits to FIU funds on a regular schedule. There is usually a basic program fee for a minimum number of students and then a tuition sharing agreement for students in excess of the minimum number for the program. These programs are run on a cohort basis.

There are two primary factors to consider in offering such programs: (1) these programs cannot detract from the primary research and fundable FTE credits required on campus; and (2) these programs must meet their full costs, including indirect costs. In order to meet criterion (1), the regular faculty teaching in the program must be ones who do not have an extensive research program that would be affected by their travel to, and participation in, the international program. These faculty can be identified as individuals who have an in-load teaching assignment of a minimum of three courses in the fall and three in the spring. Also the FIU department proposing to offer the program must be exceeding its fundable FTE credit goal for that academic year. In order to meet criterion (2), the programs must meet the established indirect cost rate of \$23 per credit. These programs require separate SACS approval and agreement clearance by the Graduate School or Undergraduate Education and the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, in addition to the usual clearance by International Studies and the General Counsel. Because SACS has a special interest in being assured that the

assessment of learning objectives is equal in these programs to the on-campus programs, units proposing a new or renewal agreement must provide documentation that the full assessment cycle—defining learning objectives, assessing whether or not these objectives have been met, and using that assessment to change program operation and offerings in order to improve student learning—has been implemented. **New or renewal agreements to offer degree programs in collaboration with a foreign university will be approved only when all the above criteria are met or a specific waiver has been granted by the Provost.**

International agreements other than those described in the preceding categories will be evaluated and approved or disapproved on their merits, in conformity with the University's general policy for international agreements.