

Guidelines and procedures for International Inter-Institutional Agreements

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**I. INTRODUCTION**

- A. A major facet of the academic mission of the University of North Texas is its active participation in international programs that provide avenues for teaching, research, and service in unique environments. These major thrusts of the University can be supported and extended through the selective involvement of students, faculty, departments, and colleges with academic institutions and governmental agencies in other nations. To facilitate and encourage this participation, the University has established these guidelines and procedures to assist faculty, departments, and colleges in the establishment of formal linkages with institutions and agencies abroad.
- B. The Office of International Studies and Programs (ISP) serves as a resource and coordination center for the development of inter-institutional agreements originating from individual departments and programs. The ISP may also propose exchange possibilities that might arise from its continuing efforts to foster appropriate international linkages for the University.
- C. Inter-institutional agreements will focus on the relevant issues of planned cooperative activities (e.g. mutual exchange programs; exchanges of scholars, students, and/or consultants; collaborative research; etc.) General agreements should provide a framework for the subsequent elaboration and formalization of specific activities between UNT and the foreign institution or agency.
- D. The stimulus for consideration of an agreement may come directly from a foreign institution, or it may result from the interest of UNT faculty or administrators desirous of developing exchange or research opportunities for students and faculty. Whatever the stimulus, each proposed undertaking must be carefully examined in terms of resource requirements, overall institutional impact, and related institutional priorities and values.
- E. The actual development of such agreements involves careful planning, consultation, and negotiation. Consideration must be given to the responsibilities of all parties toward prospective exchange and research participants, to the need for coordination of internal services and programs, to adherence to University and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board policies and regulations, and to the requirements of protocol.
- F. Linkage and/or exchange agreements will be executed and budgeted at the level of university hierarchy appropriate for the activities to be undertaken. Agreements must receive the specific written approval of deans and directors of all colleges, programs, and offices affected prior to formal review by the International Education Committee. When the proposed activities are university-wide in scope, or if the agreement requires the signature of the chief executive office of the university (e.g. for protocol reasons), the Provost or the President must sign the formal agreement.

## II. THE AGREEMENT

- A. Formal agreements should be built upon existing informal linkages whenever possible. Cooperative ventures informally developed must receive formal approval before implementation when extensive collaboration in research or in exchange of scholars, students, or consultants is undertaken, and whenever significant institutional resources are required.
- B. An initial agreement may be either general or activity-specific.
  1. A **GENERAL AGREEMENT**, termed a "Memorandum of Understanding," (see example format) provides a framework under which the cooperating institutions may develop specific exchange activities. A general agreement may be used simply to satisfy institutional protocol requirements or it may be elaborated in subsequent agreements specifying detailed exchange activities.
  2. An **ACTIVITY-SPECIFIC AGREEMENT** may be subsequent to a General Agreement or it may be free standing. In either case, the agreement is jointly prepared through negotiation by designated parties representing the participating institutions and is signed by the appropriate administrative officers.
    - a) Because the specific terms of cooperation may vary according to the amounts of funding available to participants, the vagaries of specialized academic areas, program development priorities, and other concerns, individual activity-specific agreements should state the particular matters of agreement that have been worked out during the period(s) of prior informal cooperation and/or discussion.
    - b) A **STUDENT EXCHANGE AGREEMENT is a particular instance of an activity-specific agreement. Because student exchanges must comply with state regulations regarding tuition and credit exchange, they must conform to the UNT standard format and terms (see example format).**
- C. To ensure timely implementation of each institutional agreement, a single individual must be designated as coordinator of the agreement, normally the person initiating the agreement. This person is responsible for maintaining communication with the foreign institution/agency and its designated representative, coordinating campus activities related to the agreement, budgeting and monitoring funds related to agreement activities, and providing appropriate reports on agreement activities.
- D. Each memorandum of understanding or agreement will be written for a definite time period, normally five years and a minimum of two years, and will include provisions for appropriate and timely review and termination of the agreement by either party.
- E. The coordinator of the agreement is responsible for submitting activity reports at least every two years to International Studies and Programs for inclusion in campus-wide international exchange reports. Bi-annual reports should be submitted through department heads and deans who initially approved the exchange.
- F. Memoranda of understanding and agreements may be renewed at the request of the initiating unit, but are subject to sunset review before being renewed.

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### III. PROCEDURES

- A. All inter-institutional agreements between UNT and foreign institutions and agencies will originate from individual academic, research, or administrative departments, programs, or offices with a common interest in a particular foreign linkage.
- B. The originator(s) of each proposed agreement will complete the "Worksheet for International Inter-Institutional Agreements" and obtain necessary approvals on the Worksheet.
- C. The completed Worksheet will be submitted to International Studies and Programs (ISP). The ISP director or designee will assist in drafting the formal agreement for further review by university legal counsel and the UNT International Education Committee. Draft agreements will be submitted with the completed Worksheet and other appropriate written documentation supporting the proposed agreement.
- D. The International Education Committee will review each proposal and make its recommendations in writing either for approval to the Provost, or for further refinement to the originator(s). The Director of the ISP will convey the proposed agreement and the IEC recommendations to the Provost for consideration and action, or to the originator(s) for further action.
- E. Requests and justifications for approval of renewal will be submitted to the International Education Committee through International Studies and Programs on the "Worksheet." Justifications for renewals will address the same criteria as for new agreements.

### I. CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL

In proposing a formal agreement (s) between UNT and foreign institutions and agencies, originators should describe the following: (in the Worksheet and/or with supportive documentation)

- A. The Cooperating Institution/Agency: What is its nature and role? What is its size and academic ranking and/or quality? What is its stature within its own country, region and in the world?
- B. The Programmatic Linkage: What are the mutual programmatic areas that would initiate the linkage? What are other potential areas of future cooperation? Are specific programs within current departmental and/or collegiate thrusts, or will the linkage lead to new and important emphases in teaching, research, and service?
- C. The Benefits: What are the anticipated scholarly, programmatic, and, if appropriate, mutual monetary benefits of the proposed linkage?
- D. The Commitments: What are the initial and projected commitments of the University in the implementation of the proposed agreement? What departmental, collegiate, and university costs are required, including those of local administration, liaison, travel, and hospitality? Which units will be responsible for meeting budgetary and other financial commitments of the agreement?
- E. The Coordinator: Who is to serve as the UNT coordinator of the agreement? What are his/her specific responsibilities and duties in implementing and maintaining the agreement?

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