

# International Agreements

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Handbook of  
Procedures &  
Guidelines

2011

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Affairs**

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**Central Michigan University  
International Affiliation Agreements  
Handbook of Procedures and Guidelines**

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## Introduction

Since 2000, international education has been on the University's priority list and the number of active international agreements has continued to grow. This Handbook provides a useful and practical working reference and a framework for faculty, staff, and academic units who consider collaborative research, teaching, faculty and student exchange, joint degree or non-degree programs, training and/or other professional development programs with an international counterpart abroad. Inside this Handbook you will find detailed information to assist you as you begin the process of building international relationships and formalizing agreements.

Your role as the agreement initiator is to ensure that the placement site provides students with experiences that are appropriate to their programs of study. Once you determine that the educational component of a placement is valuable, it is your responsibility to work with the Office of International Affairs and Academic Affairs to make certain that the University, our students, and you are legally protected. An affiliation agreement provides that necessary legal protection. If you are thinking about establishing an international agreement, you should begin the process by contacting the Office of International Affairs or visiting their website at <http://www.cmich.edu/OIA.htm>.

It is critical that a CMU student be placed only after an agreement is signed between the placement site and the University. Agreements provide certain safeguards for CMU students, and ensure the University is protected from potential liability for events over which it has no control. It is important to note that those same safeguards and protections extend to you, as the CMU employee responsible for overseeing student placements in your program, as long as you adhere to University policy and comply with the guidelines described in this Handbook.

You are not authorized to sign these agreements on behalf of CMU. Agreements require the signature of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Provost or President.

As the initiator of an agreement, you will often be the individual responsible for defining the relationship that will exist between the University and the placement site or institution. You may serve as the only contact between the two organizations. Written agreements set the parameters for all parties and can protect the University, you and the student.

This Handbook focuses solely on international agreements. For guidance with affiliation agreements that will be between institutions within the United States, see the Affiliation Agreements Handbook of Procedures & Guidelines available at <https://academicaffairs.cmich.edu/agreements/pdfs/AgreementsHandbook.pdf>

## Role of Academic Affairs

The Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs monitors and facilitates the development of agreements that involve academic arrangements and/or which impact the academic division. Many resources are available on the Academic Affairs website at <https://academicaffairs.cmich.edu/agreements/>. From this website you may launch the Agreements Database Search Tool, retrieve a copy of this Handbook, and access electronic versions of the agreement templates that are included in the Appendices of this document.

The Affiliation Coordinator is the first point of contact for questions about affiliation agreements. The Coordinator will facilitate the development of new affiliation agreements and determine when modifications requested by the site are acceptable and when they need to be negotiated. The Vice Provost has final approval for all affiliation agreements.

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## Summary of Responsibilities

Below are bullets which briefly encapsulate the nature of the division of labor in the agreements process at CMU. There are two key actors in this process: the internship coordinator and the Office of Academic Affairs. Depending on circumstances, there may be other players as well. For example, Academic Affairs will consult with CMU's General Counsel, Risk Manager, Office of International Affairs and others when needed to resolve issues and answer questions. However, you will find that the agreements process will flow most smoothly when you understand the basic division of responsibilities shown below and displayed in the image on the next page.

### *Internship Coordinator*

- Inform the student of all academic requirements of the placement.
- Work with the student to identify a placement site.
- Require the student to demonstrate that s/he has hospitalization insurance.
- Inform the student of the limits of his/her responsibility and authority at the placement site.
- Inform the placement site of any information which will bear upon a student's capacity to perform the duties of the internship.
- Ensure an agreement is in place before the student is sent to the placement site.
- When the placement site submits its own agreement for signature, contact the Office of Academic Affairs for review and for signature(s).
- Acquire the signature of the placement site once the agreement terms are approved.
- Distribute fully signed copies of the agreement to the site and the Office of Academic Affairs

### *Office of Academic Affairs*

- Review agreements and acquire appropriate CMU signature(s).
- Negotiate the terms of the agreement when necessary.
- Consult with the General Counsel as needed.
- Maintain and manage the agreement master file system, the agreements database, and the Agreements Database Search Tool
- Maintain the agreements website including managing access to templates and other documents

Before initiating a new agreement, review the Agreements Database to determine whether an agreement might already be in place that would meet your needs. The database is available at <https://academicaffairs.cmich.edu/agreementsearch/Default.aspx>. A screenshot follows of the database using a search with the drop down box set to "International." You can search the database by college, agency, year of signing, country and so forth. Within the search list, you can sort in ascending or descending order by document ID, college, program, agency, start date or end date. If you find an agreement that meets your initial criteria you can view a pdf version of the document.

College: ALL ...  
 Agency: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Latest Year Signed: 1980 to 2020  
 State / Province: ALL ...  
 Search [Reset]

Academic Program: ALL ...  
 Purpose: ALL ...  
 USA or International: International  
 Country (if not USA): ALL ...

ID	College	Program	Agency	Start Date	End Date	PDF
88	ProfEd	MSA	Kingston College, Inc.	Jun 01, 2002	Jun 01, 2009	
95	ProfEd	MA in Education	Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto	Jul 16, 2007	Dec 31, 2007	
297	CST	Information and Communication Technology	Colombo Plan Staff College for Technical Education	Jan 10, 2006	Jan 10, 2011	
609	CHP	Exercise Science	Fitness First, Cannington	Apr 03, 2001	Apr 03, 2008	
788	HSBS	English Language Institute	Busan National University of Education	Dec 12, 2006	Dec 12, 2009	
910	EHS	Community Recreation	London Parks and Recreation Department	Sep 01, 1995	Sep 01, 2002	
1407	CHP	Speech-Language Pathology	Stanton Territorial Health Authority	Jan 01, 2006	Jan 01, 2013	
1409	CHP	Speech-Language Pathology	Niagara Peninsula Children's Centre	Oct 02, 2001	Oct 02, 2008	
1465	ProfEd	MA in Education	Durham College	May 01, 2007	May 01, 2017	
1480	EHS	Professional Counseling	Lambton and Kent	Oct 21, 1999	Oct 21, 2006	
1529	ProfEd	MSA	Universidad Autonoma de Guadalajara	May 01, 2004	May 01, 2011	
1544	ProfEd	BS and BAA Programs	Kingston College, Inc.	Aug 01, 2002	Aug 01, 2005	
1576	ProfEd	MA in Education	Loyalist College	Sep 12, 2008	Sep 12, 2015	
1582	ProfEd	MSA - Health Administration	Red River College, Board of Governors	Oct 01, 2007	Apr 15, 2017	

## Types of International Agreements

Agreements with international institutions may involve a variety of experiences. The most common types of linkages include Joint-degree Programs, Student Exchange, Faculty Collaboration, Non-degree or Non-academic Programs, Field Experiences, and articulation agreements that allow for the transfer of credit. These agreement types are further defined in Definitions of Types and Terms used in Affiliation Agreements.

## Principles and Planning Questions Initiating Agreements

### Principles

When considering any agreement with institutions or organizations abroad, one needs to keep in mind the following principles.

- The agreement must provide opportunities for faculty international development, for study abroad, or for attracting international students to CMU, or some combination of these;
- The agreement must complement the CMU effort to internationalize its campus; and
- The agreement must assure an appropriate return on investment if the agreement involves CMU financial and/or human resource commitment.

### Planning Questions

There are a number of preliminary questions that are important to answer as you begin to plan for an international agreement. Below is a list of questions for you to use as a reference. Consult with the Office of International Affairs as needed.

- Is this an appropriate country in which to establish a formal relationship?
- Is this an appropriate institution with which to cooperate?
- Does CMU maintain a similar relationship with a different institution but within the same country?
- Do opportunities already exist that would permit the proposed activities or that could be expanded to include them?
- Does the proposed agreement serve the mission and needs of the proposing unit and the university?
- Will the agreement positively impact students and faculty of the proposing unit?
- Does the agreement fit into the scholarly mission of the university?
- What risks, if any, might there be to the proposing unit and the university?

- How will the agreement impact the internationalization of the proposing unit and of the university?
- What costs to the unit proposing the agreement, to other units, and to the university, will be involved in the agreement?
- Will there be true mutual benefits from the agreement for the proposing unit as well as for the partner institution?
- Does the proposing unit have the necessary resources (human and material) to carry out the responsibilities that are part of the agreement?
- Does the dean of the college support this initiative?
- What other units of the university, besides the initiating unit, will be affected by the agreement?
- Do the deans of other affected units know about and support the agreement?

## Steps to Developing an Agreement

An international linkage agreement must serve the objective of internationalizing our university and be consistent with the goals of the unit or units that will be involved in the agreement. Knowledge of the international priority of the proposing unit and the university is important before starting the following steps toward the development of an agreement.

### 1. *Preliminary Consultation with Chair and Dean*

The Office of International Affairs (OIA) will provide advice and assistance to those exploring new international partners in terms of locations, types of programs, and the university international priorities. Visit them first. It is also important to talk with your department chair and to make sure he or she is truly supportive of the project. You or your chair should talk with the dean to assure support from the college.

### 2. *Choose a Partner*

In most cases, agreement initiators at CMU contact the individuals at potential partner institutions or organizations. It is important to consider factors such as site, type of academic institution, its academic strengths and weaknesses, assessment of its international interest and sources of financial support, etc.

### 3. *Identify Resources*

All agreements need human and/or financial resources. For example faculty may be needed to deliver programs either on-campus or abroad; staff may be needed to administer and support program delivery; and department and college budgets may require adjustment to provide necessary support. It is important to estimate resource needs early in the development of a potential agreement and to identify the source of those resources.

### 4. *Ensuring Consensus*

OIA personnel will meet with the initiators and other key CMU participants to determine how to move forward. Key points for discussion include a) considering whether there is a good match between the outcomes desired by CMU and the other university; b) considering long-term as well as short-term goals and objectives; c) matching the proposed activities with the internationalization priorities of the university; d) reviewing human and financial commitments of the department, college or other units and the time within which the commitments can be delivered; and 7) aligning the goals of the agreement with CMU's mission, values and academic programs.

### 5. *Drafting an Agreement*

OIA and Academic Affairs will determine who will draft the agreement and points in need of clarification. It is absolutely critical not to make any firm commitments that the program will take place until the written agreement has been finalized. CMU has limits on what it can

promise, and some international partners have similar limits and requirements for the language of the agreement. The language that is thought of as “boilerplate” is usually more than a mere formality, and an inability to agree on that may mean the program cannot go forward. For example, some countries are asking that CMU be subject to the laws of that country in ways that might subject individual faculty or students to suit by or liability to the partner institution in that country. The persons initiating the linkage must also read the written agreement carefully to be sure that CMU can fulfill all of the commitments it makes. It is important that the written document accurately states what has been agreed upon.

In some cases, prospective partner institutions or organizations may offer a draft agreement. As long as the written document accurately relates the terms agreed upon, most formats are acceptable.

## Components of Most Agreements

All agreements are between the Central Michigan University Board of Trustees and another institution or organization. Most agreements contain the following components:

- *Institutional and/or organizational information:* Briefly describes both institutions including information about the history, major academic components, size of student body, strengths, ranking/accreditation, program specific information (if applicable), or other information as appropriate.
- *Goal(s) and objectives of the agreement:* Summarizes the overall purpose of the agreement.
- *Terms and conditions:* Details the precise items to which the partners are agreeing. This may include timelines, physical or research resources to be provided by each party, frequency and size of exchanges, qualifications of students who will participate, and other details so that it is clear to the reader what is required of each institution. This section also includes a brief description of the specific project or exchange and outlines the related activities.
- *Institution responsibilities:* Describes the responsibilities each party will assume within the agreement period. Mutual responsibilities have to be spelled out in enough detail so that there is no ambiguity about who is responsible for what. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following items: 1) costs such as tuition and fee rate, international and/or local transportation, housing, health insurance; 2) programs such as content, grading criteria, length of delivery, credit or no-credit bearing; and 3) transfer of credit and English language testing.
- *Contact information:* Lists the names and/or offices from both parties for the on-going management of the agreement after both sides sign it. The contacts from both parties will be responsible for communications and for administering the agreement.
- *Abiding by institutional policies:* States that neither partner institution may take any action contrary to established policies, procedures, and practices of the other institution.
- *Agreement modification:* Describes the process by which the agreement can be modified, amended, or supplemented including who would be authorized to modify, amend, or supplement the agreement.
- *Duration:* Describes how long the agreement will be in effect. Agreements must have an expiration date. Most agreements should have a life of three to five years before being renewed for similar periods of time. CMU will evaluate the success of the objectives of the agreement at least annually.
- *Extension or renewal:* Describes the procedure for extending or renewing the agreement, including the minimum length of time that should be used for giving notice by either partner.
- *Termination:* Details the procedure for terminating the agreement before the expiration date, including the minimum length of time that should be used for giving notice by either partner of early termination. Some agreements may state that an agreement will automatically terminate if no activity takes place for a semester or a year or some specified time.

- *Signatures:* All international affiliation agreements, letters of Intent or MOUs at CMU must be signed by either the University President or the Executive Vice President/Provost after the appropriate agreement reviews are complete.

## Final Agreement Review and Approval

The Office of International Affairs (OIA) functions as the coordinating and facilitating body throughout the process of developing and implementing an international affiliation agreement. Department chairpersons or academic program directors evaluate any proposed agreement that involves that department or program. The chairperson or program director must communicate with the college dean as the college dean is the gatekeeper in evaluating any proposed agreement that relates to the college programs and resources.

The Office of Academic Affairs reviews all international linkage agreements to ensure that they comply with internal University policies and are consistent with accreditation requirements. They will consult with university counsel if necessary and will secure appropriate institutional signatures.

## Evaluation and Renewal

CMU should evaluate the outcomes of each agreement annually. If the decision is reached to terminate an agreement, that decision must be communicated to our international counterpart in a timely manner. If a decision is made to renew the agreement, the conditions and outcomes should be reviewed by the program participants, department chair and dean. All extensions of an agreement require an amendment to the original agreement signed by both parties. OIA will facilitate the process of renewing or revising the agreement.