Georgia Perimeter College Guidelines and Procedures for International Academic Cooperation Agreements

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The following suggestions for considering an international partnership were developed by Angelina Anderson, Director of International Intercultural Education, Northcentral Technical College, Wisconsin, recommended by the American Council on International/Intercultural Education, and revised by Debra Denzer, Director of the Center for International Education, Georgia Perimeter College.

There are many benefits to developing a sister college partnership with an educational institution in another country: faculty, staff, and student exchanges; sharing of curriculum and teaching methodologies; potential for trade development between businesses in both service areas, etc. Before proceeding with the partnership, there are several points to consider.

Q: How do you go about choosing a country and an institution for your sister school?

Check to see if any of the communities in your district have a sister city in another country. How strong is the relationship? Does the city have an institution of higher education that has a similar mission or similar programs and services? Are there things your college could share with them and things you would gain from the partnership? In other words, would a partnership with this organization lead to mutual benefit for both institutions?

Q: Have you considered GPC’s Center for International Education Strategic Plan or the Strategic Plans of your department or campus?

By doing so, you may find that there are already efforts being made in the direction you are considering or that you may find additional support from those areas for developing an agreement.

Q: Have you researched existing partnerships between other USG institutions and the location/type that you are considering?

There are many existing arrangements between other USG partners that might be beneficial to GPC or may at least provide a model for a new one. If you have an idea and need assistance, please consult with the Center for International Education.

Q: Are there ethnic groups in your community who will support and gain from developing a relationship with a prospective sister school?

Do you have a large immigrant population from a particular region of the world? You may want to focus a sister school partnership in that world region as a means of developing a better community awareness of the history and culture of the immigrant group. Bringing visiting faculty to your college could lead to better community relations, economic development, and might also provide role models for youth.

06-13-06
Guidelines and Procedures for International Academic Cooperation Agreements

These guidelines for Georgia Perimeter College have been adapted, with permission, from those published at Georgia State University.

I. Purpose and Scope

The following guidelines are provided to assist the Georgia Perimeter College academic community in developing and implementing international cooperation agreements. These agreements involve faculty and student exchanges, study abroad programs, collaborative projects and other activities with higher education institutions in other parts of the world.

International education is an important strategic priority of Georgia Perimeter College. As such, international agreements should be concluded only in those instances where there is a demonstrated intent or commitment of the parties to initiate programs. Our aim is to enter into agreements that result in substantive activities.

These guidelines also

- Seek to achieve uniformity and consistency in the development, processing and implementation of international cooperation agreements.
- Establish parameters for Georgia Perimeter College international cooperation agreements at two levels—the discipline and the college.
- Create a process to ensure the timely and efficient processing of international cooperation agreements.

Please direct questions and request for assistance in preparing international cooperation agreements to the Center for International Education.

II. Types of Agreements

As noted above, these guidelines describe two different levels of cooperation agreements that reflect progressively higher degrees of collaboration between the partnering institutions. These agreements, concluded at the discipline or college level, are described in greater detail below.

At both levels, international agreements share the following common features

- **Title of Agreement**: This is the formal reference of the document. It is recommended that the title be presented in a centered format, with a bold typeface and capitalized.
• **Formal References**: Use the formal, legal names of the organizations listed and avoid acronyms on the title and first pages. Georgia Perimeter College’s legal name is “Georgia Perimeter College, a two-year unit of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.”

• **Location of the Institutions**: For tracking purposes and to avoid confusion, it is best to insert the location (city/town, state/province, country) of the institutions beside or beneath the formal references.

• **Date**: Day/Month/Year

**Level 1: Letter of Intent (LOI)**: This is a short document stating the intent of two or more parties to cooperate. In the LOI it is appropriate to reflect the desire of the parties to continue exploratory discussions and consultations. Typically, an LOI could be developed and signed at the conclusion of a first visit or following an initial series of discussions. It does not commit resources. The LOI should normally be entered into at the discipline or college level and does not require the signature of the President, except where the President’s counterpart in the partnering institution is a signatory.

**Format**: The following is the preferred presentation format:

- Title of Agreement
- Statement of Intent
- Areas of Collaboration
- Background to Letter of Intent
- Effective Date of Letter
- Signatories

**Level 2: Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC)**

This document reflects the parties’ agreement to cooperate generally or in specified areas. MOC’s can be developed at the discipline level or at the college level. College-to-college agreements should be signed by the Department chair(s), Center for International Education Director, Vice-President of Academic Affairs, and the President. This type of agreement may or may not commit resources.

**Format**: The following is the preferred presentation format:

- Title of Agreement
- Introductory statement
- Joint Declaration
- Statement of Continued Efforts
- Life of Agreement
- Statement of Alteration
- Effective Date of Agreement
- Signatories
Level 3: Program-Specific Agreements

This document is used to provide the details of the specific areas and terms of collaboration including the roles, responsibilities, activities and contributions of the respective parties. The agreement could elaborate the details of a student or faculty exchange program or a collaborative project, etc. The Program-Specific Agreement can be executed as a stand-alone document or it can be developed within the scope of a broader, less detailed MOC. The Program-Specific Agreement should be signed by the program director, if any, the department chair, the Center for International Education Director, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Format: The following is the preferred presentation format:

- Title of Agreement
- Introductory statement
- Institutional Declaration
- Joint Declaration
- Life of Agreement
- Statement of Alteration
- Effective Date of Agreement
- Signatories

III. Financial Commitments

To the extent that resources are committed, agreements must contain language that clearly states that any financial commitments are subject to the availability of funds and are negotiated in each case, annually, and under separate cover.

IV. Language

International Cooperation Agreements should be executed in the official languages of the cooperating institutions unless agreed otherwise. Two original copies per language should be signed.

V. Approval Process

The GPC International Cooperation Approval Form is used to route the international cooperation document through the internal approval process. This form is initiated by the program director or sponsor of the cooperation initiative and submitted, along with the draft agreement, to the Center for International Education, in coordination with the sponsoring office makes the necessary revisions to the document, obtains clearance for the Office of Legal Affairs, arranges for translation, and prepares the documents for final GPC signatures and the college seal, in the case of College-to-College agreements. The Center for International Education also coordinates the transmittal of the approved copies to the partner institution(s) for their signatures. When duly signed by all parties, CIE distributes the agreement.
VI. Records Management

The original documents (one in each official language per cooperating institution will be retained in a central file at the Center for International Education on behalf of Georgia Perimeter College.

VII. International Cooperation Database

The Center for International Education maintains an International Cooperation Database. The database will track and manage GPC agreements for the purposes of providing data for planning and communication. The database will also be used to coordinate and maintain information on relationships with international partners; inform inter- and intra-collegiate partnerships; facilitate and develop multidisciplinary teams both locally and globally; and assist GPC in achieving its goal of internationalizing education.

VIII. Agreement Renewal

It is recommended that the renewal process be initiated at least six months prior to expiration of the agreement to allow sufficient time to negotiate and finalize the renewal document. In considering renewal of a cooperation agreement, the parties should assess effectiveness and progress toward achieving the objectives of the original agreement. Only active, vibrant agreements that are achieving stated objectives, and have concrete plans for future collaboration, should be continued.

IX. Agreement Termination

All agreements should contain a termination clause giving either party the right to terminate the agreement within a specified time frame. The agreements should also specify the process by which programs will be ended with the least amount of disruption in the event of a termination. Upon termination of an agreement, all relevant GPC offices reflected on the International Cooperation Approval Form will be notified in writing by the program director or by the head of the sponsoring department or college.

X. Agreement Amendment

Amending agreements should be a mutual decision of the signatories. The Center for International Education, in coordination with the sponsoring office, will facilitate agreement amendments following the program approval process described under item IV.

XI. Other Institution Proposal

The above guidelines apply to agreements initiated by Georgia Perimeter College. However, potential collaborators may initiate proposal to enter into cooperation agreements and present their documentation to GPC for consideration and signature. When this occurs, it is college policy to work with such proposals to assure the GPC interest, concerns, and priorities are adequately addressed.
PROGRAM APPROVAL FORM

Type pf Program:  LOI □  MOC □  Program-Specific Agreement □

Program Title:______________________________________________________________________________

Countries Included in Program:________________________________________________________________

Program Director(s):________________________________________________________________________

Telephone:__________________ Fax:__________________ E-mail:__________________

Sponsoring Discipline:________________________________________________________________________

Office Responsible for Budget:__________________________

Agreement Scope (check all that apply): Faculty □  Staff □  Student □

Information □  Research □  Other □

Signatures:

Date ____________________  Program Director (please type name)

Date ____________________  Department Chair (please type name)

Date ____________________  Academic Dean (please type name)

Date ____________________  Director, Center for International Education (please type name)

Date ____________________  Vice President for Academic Affairs (please type name)

Date ____________________  President (please type name)

N/A (if agreement is at the discipline level)