



Guidelines for Establishing Formal Linkages between SJSU and International Institutions

Departments, Colleges, or the entire University may want to establish formal linkages with universities abroad. This document describes three levels of agreement, suggests the contents of these agreements, and notes the approval to establish the agreement.

General Guidelines:

SJSU does not consider exchange arrangements set up by individual faculty members as official linkage agreements by SJSU. Anyone planning to develop an international agreement should inform the appropriate college office, appropriate university officials, and the International and Extended Studies Office (IES) before proceeding to develop an agreement. A representative from IES must be present in any meetings with international visitors and delegations that include the signing of an agreement.

Agreements must be filed with the IES Office. IES maintains a database and file of all SJSU international agreements. This prevents duplication of efforts and maintains a record of university linkages and obligations. The database can be accessed at: <http://ies.sjsu.edu/international-database/>

IES (210 North Fourth Street) will make available outlines and samples of letters of intent, university-to-university agreements, MOUs, and contract agreements.

Level One – General Agreements

a. Letter of Intent

Description:

A department that wants to collaborate with an international partner may use a Letter of Intent to describe this relationship. A Letter of Intent places the least obligation on the parties. The Letter of Intent creates no legal, resource, or financial obligations.

Contents:

- Both organizations agree to establish ties of friendship and cooperation
- Both organizations agree to promote mutual understanding, academic collaboration, cultural and personal exchanges.
- Both organizations agree to work toward a more formal, complex, and binding agreement.

Approval Level:

The Department Chair and the College Dean sign the Letter of Intent. The AVP for International Studies signs the Letter of Intent.

b. University-to-University Agreement:**Description:**

A University-to-University Agreement links two institutions. It formally sets out a relationship between the institutions. The partners will describe their commitments in detail in further agreements and contracts. A University-to-University Agreement is an umbrella document that encompasses more than one college, though it may begin with an individual college linkage.

Contents:

- The University-to-University Agreement identifies initial common academic interests.
- It serves as the basis for collaboration in additional disciplines.
- The University-to-University Agreement states that a more detailed agreement will follow.
- The University-to-University Agreement states financial and resource commitments will follow.

Approval Level:

- The President signs the University-to-University Agreement because this agreement has strategic implications for the campus.
- The Provost signs the University-to-University Agreement.
- The AVP for International Studies signs the University-to-University Agreement.

These signatures ensure knowledge of the project and commitment to the project by all relevant parties at SJSU. Counterparts at each institution sign the University-to-University Agreement.

Level Two – Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**Description:**

The MOU originates from a College, a University, or equivalent unit. They link two similar academic units. The MOU outlines implementation plans for cooperative programs. It often grows out of a Letter of Intent or University-to-University agreement and represents a pre-contract stage of agreement. The MOU is created in consultation with the International and Extended Studies office.

Contents:

- The MOU has a disciplinary focus. It lays the groundwork for exploring more specific exchanges and collaborations.
- It addresses the potential for funding to support the proposed linkage, but makes no initial specific financial commitments on behalf of the institution.
- The MOU describes a project's objectives, scope, administrative structure, and source of funding.
- The MOU may cover student exchanges, faculty exchanges, and other collaborative projects. Projects related to students require the approval of the Study Abroad Office of International Programs and Services (second Floor Administration Building) and the approval of the AVP for the International Studies.
- The MOU states the length of time of the agreement. It states that the institutions will evaluate the agreement at the end of this time. It states that renewal, reformulation, or termination will depend on the evaluation outcome.

Approval Level:

- The Provost signs MOU because it has resource implications for the College and Academic Affairs.
- The College Dean signs the MOU.
- The Department Chair signs the MOU (where relevant)
- The AVP for Graduate Studies signs the MOU (where relevant)
- The AVP for International Studies signs the MOU.

These signatures ensure knowledge of the project and commitment to the project by all relevant parties at SJSU. Counterparts at each institution sign the MOU.

Level Three – Contract Agreements**Description:**

A contract agreement is the highest level of commitment between parties. It is usually preceded by a general agreement or an MOU. Contract agreements create legal, resource, and financial obligations for a specific program or project.

Contents:

- Contract agreements outlines the specific responsibilities for all parties
- Contract agreements state specific program costs and financial commitments
- Contract agreements list program terms and policies including curriculum, dates, location, number of participants, evaluation procedures, non-covered expense items.
- Contract agreements outline cancellation policies and liability

Approval Level:

- The Vice President of Administration signs a contract agreement
- The College Dean signs a contract agreement if it is for a specific program within that college
- The Department Chair or Director signs a contract agreement if the program is within their department or unit

These signatures ensure knowledge of the project and commitment to the project by all relevant parties at SJSU. Counterparts at each institution sign the contract agreement.