

California State University, Northridge

Policies and Procedures for Developing International MOUs that Include Faculty or Student Exchange Agreements

If after a “Friendship” MOU is in place with a given international partner institution, conversations lead to a plan to develop an exchange of students or faculty, a new MOU must be developed and approved through CSU processes using the required CSU MOU templates for exchange agreements. To begin this process, contact the CSUN Deputy Senior International Officer (DSIO) to discuss your plans and develop an appropriate approach.

When discussing the possibility of an exchange with an international partner institution keep the following principles in mind – they are essential components required for CSU and CSUN approval of any international exchange agreements.

- **The Duration of the Agreement:** All exchange agreements will be three to five years and then they will sunset (note: CSU international agreement policies now require that all international MOUs have a sunset date that is no more than three to five years from the signing date that initiated the MOU in question). If there is a proposal to renew the agreement, it will be reviewed by CSUN’s Senior International Officer (or designee) to determine if the agreement went as planned and produced the envisioned benefits to CSUN and its students and/or faculty. New exchange agreements will sunset in three years to allow CSUN to see if the new relationship is working well before considering a MOU of a longer duration (up to five years).
- **Defining All the Particulars of the Planned Exchange:** Each exchange agreement should provide very specific information about how the exchange will work. This will include but will not be limited to:
 - Identifying for whom the exchange is designed [such as, upper division undergraduate students, graduate students, students who are academically well prepared (particular GPA levels specified), faculty in their first five years in a faculty role, senior tenured faculty, students in particular majors, faculty in particular fields, faculty with a particular research interest and a particular publication record, etc.]
 - Describing the purpose of the exchange (such as, upper division students having a particular study experience in a particular program or field, students having a broader semester abroad experience, faculty working with CSUN faculty in particular research areas, a broader international experience for faculty hosted by a particular college and/or department).

- Specifying the courses and the articulation plan in the MOU if students in a particular exchange agreement are expected to take a specific set of courses while at the campus of the international partner institution (perhaps courses for which articulation arrangements have or will be made to smooth the moving of international courses and credits onto the CSUN transcript when a student returns for study in an exchange programs). Identifying who will select the student or faculty to participate in the exchanged and describing how the decision will be made and communicated. There should be specific agreements specified in the MOU about how an individual student or faculty member is proposed for the exchange agreement in question. The MOU should include specifics on issues such as the timeline for nominations each year, what information about the nominee the nominating institution provides (*it is recommended that something like a "nomination form" be developed as part of the MOU so the partner institutions each get the information they need about each nominated participant for the exchange agreement in question*), to what extent is the institution receiving the nomination able to evaluate the nomination and accept or decline the nomination, how the nominating institution is notified of the acceptance (or not) of their nominee (and a deadline for such notification), how the nominee is notified (is it the nominating institution that notifies or the accepting institution that notifies), which institution takes responsibility for overseeing the travel planning and funding of the exchange student or faculty (the nominating institution or the accepting institution), and the like. The plan for the exchange should be detailed and specific so there are no misunderstandings or confusion when the exchange is implemented.
- Providing detailed financial arrangements. The MOU should be very specific about what costs the nominating institution covers and what cost/services will the accepting institution covers. There should be an analysis provided of the equity in the agreement that shows that if CSUN sends a student or faculty to the international partner institution in question there is a balance of cost and value when compared to a similar analysis of the cost and value when the international partner institution sends a student or faculty member to CSUN. This is a demonstration of clear reciprocity for each one-for-one exchange.
- Providing very specific language about how many students or faculty members will be exchanged each year. There should also be specific language about the review of a balance in the exchange (the number of students or faculty coming into CSUN from the international partner

institution being in balance with the number of CSUN students or faculty going out to the international partner institution) at the end of each year for the duration of the MOU. The MOU should make clear that if there is an imbalance in the exchange at the end of any given year, CSUN may suspend the “incoming” component of the exchange until the number of “outgoing” CSUN students or faculty are in balance with the “incoming” student or faculty. Language in the MOU may give the international partner institution the same ability to suspend taking more CSUN students or faculty in the exchange if there is an imbalance in favor of CSUN (more CSUN students or faculty going to the international partner institution than there are of that institution’s students or faculty coming to CSUN).

- **Required Reciprocity in International Exchange Agreements:** The CSU (and CSUN) requires that all international exchange MOUs must be based on a very specific and detailed plan as described above for how the exchange will take place and how reciprocity will be achieved – a balanced/equal value for each one-for-one exchange between CSUN and the international partner institution in question AND a balance in the period of the MOU for the number of “incoming” and “outgoing” students or faculty in the exchange. CSUN will review each exchange MOU each year to check if it is in balance so that there is an opportunity to achieve balance before the end of the MOU or, at minimum, to prevent the imbalance from becoming greater before the MOU sunsets.
- **Suspending a Component of an Exchange MOU when Reciprocity is Not Achieved:** Following the yearly CSUN review of international exchange MOUs, CSUN, through its Senior International Officer, may suspend the “incoming” component of the MOU if the “outgoing” component lags behind. The exchange can be fully reactivated by CSUN when the “outgoing” component catches up with the “incoming” component. It is expected that the international partner institution would do the same if there were more CSUN students or faculty coming to their campus than there were of their students or faculty coming to CSUN.
- **Student Exchange Agreements and Fee Waivers:** Exchange agreements can be based on the students or faculty being exchanged covering the full cost of their time at the international partner institution (including travel expenses, housing and living expenses at the international site, and for students -- full tuition as an international student). If the planned exchange proposed to include any form of fee waiver at CSUN for incoming international students or CSUN covering specific costs for a faculty exchange, that proposed use of a waiver has to be proposed in advance of drafting the exchange MOU, must be submitted to the Associate Dean of the Tseng College, and approved by CSUN’s Provost. A

strong case must be made for the full reciprocity of the proposed plan and the value of it to CSUN and its research and teaching priorities.

- **Engaging CSUN Student Affairs in the Planning of Any Student Exchange:** All CSUN student exchange agreements must be developed in close consultation with the CSUN Vice President for Student Affairs (or designee). CSUN Student Affairs will be responsible for managing all CSUN international student exchange programs for both incoming and outgoing students. In that light, the plans developed must provide correct information and guidance so that once implemented the exchange MOU is easily manageable by CSUN Student Affairs. The DSIO will refer those who need to work with Student Affairs to develop the student exchange MOU plan to the appropriate person in CSUN Student Affairs.
- **Faculty Exchange Agreements, Hosting Expectations, and Costs:** Any proposed faculty exchange should be very specific about what services are being provided both by the sending and the receiving institutions and the cost of those services to each to ensure a balance of responsibility and financial burden that provides a fair and equitable exchange. It is also important to be sure that the expected services are defined so that “outgoing” CSUN faculty or “incoming” international faculty are appropriately welcomed, hosted, supported, and engaged in the academic life of the institution as expected by the partners in the MOU.
- **Review of and International Exchange MOU for Possible Renewal:** As described above, the CSU requires that each MOU have a sunset date of no more than five years. For CSUN, new exchange agreements will be sunset in three years. If there is a wish to renew the MOU, that request for renewal should be made at least six months before the sunset date of the MOU in question. This will allow the CSUN Senior International Officer (or designee) time to review the consistency, balance, and scope of the exchanges during the period of the MOU and to make recommendations about renewing the MOU, modifying the MOU before renewing, or not renewing the MOU. The CSUN international priority guidelines will be used as a starting point for considering the value of a particular international agreement for CSUN.
- **Operation of International Exchange MOU:** The International and Exchange Student Center (IESC) supports campus-based exchange programs by overseeing outgoing student application and selection processes as well as by providing pre-departure orientation advising to students. In addition, IESC facilitates the exchange process through coordinated efforts with departmental faculty, Tseng College, campus-wide offices (e.g. Financial Aid Office and Admissions and Records) as well as host campus contacts for all MOU exchange

students.

- **Record Retention for International Student Exchange:** The IESC also maintains students' records and ensures that each file includes risk management relevant information, such as release of liability, program agreement and emergency contact information, appropriate health insurance documentation as well as documentation of attendance of the pre-departure orientation.