

Florida State University Policy [Provost Number-xxx]

Title of Policy: International Reciprocal Student Exchange Agreements and Programs

Responsible Executives:

Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Approving Officials:

Dr. Sally McRorie, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dr. Mary B. Coburn, Vice President for Student Affairs

Effective Date:

I. INTRODUCTION

This document sets the general policies for implementing international reciprocal student exchange agreements for specific Florida State University (FSU) Colleges and Departments and for university-wide exchange partnerships, including the development of exchange partnerships. It also includes general policies for managing exchange programs, including the processing of applications for outgoing FSU students and incoming international students and supporting exchange participants during and after the exchange.

Procedures for implementing international reciprocal student exchange agreements are outlined in “International Reciprocal Student Exchange Agreements: Procedures.” The Procedure document includes the specific forms and documents referred to in this policy.

A complete list of FSU’s current International Reciprocal Student Exchange Agreement partners is available global.fsu.edu/exchanges.

II. STAFF AND FACULTY ROLES

The *Program Director, International Initiatives* supports FSU Colleges, Departments, or faculty in developing international exchange agreements.

The Program Director, Exchanges and Intercultural Programs (hereafter known as *Program Director, Exchanges*) provides liaison and support for outgoing and incoming exchange students and participating Departments.

The Center for Global Engagement J-1 Exchange Visitor Advisor (hereafter known as the *J-1 Advisor*) supports inbound international exchange students with the documents necessary for their visa applications. Immigration advising, initial orientation and ongoing support at FSU are also provided.

The *FSU Faculty Advisor* for International Exchange is the FSU Faculty member who represents the participating academic Department or College. The Faculty Advisor initiating an exchange agreement is responsible for reviewing 10-15 course offerings available at the partner institution and determining equivalent FSU courses as well as

providing a list of 10-15 FSU courses in the FSU Department/College which will be available for inbound exchange students to take. The FSU Faculty Advisor is expected to promote the exchange to FSU students, to support inbound and outbound students through the Department's selection process, and to assist inbound and outbound students with course selection, approvals, and determining course equivalencies. FSU Faculty Advisors are also expected to support university-wide exchange programs, by acting as a member of a selection committee, by reviewing applications of inbound and outbound students, by selecting nominees for the exchange, and by assisting inbound and outbound students enroll in courses and determining FSU course equivalencies.

The student's *Academic Advisor* (typically a staff member in the student's major Department) is responsible for reviewing transcripts for outgoing FSU students and for reviewing proposed course equivalencies to ensure that the exchange will not delay the student's graduation and that the courses registered for at FSU do not exceed the approved number of hours for specific courses, as listed in the General Bulletin. The student's Academic Advisor also verifies that the total credits that will be earned through participation in the exchange at each off-campus site is not 25% or more of the hours required for the student's degree. The 25% rule applies to each off-campus site independently not cumulatively.

FSU Department(s) and College(s) are expected to support reciprocal exchange programs. Departments/Colleges are responsible for developing procedures for approving course equivalencies for outbound students and/or designating a staff or faculty member to the role of reviewing and approving course equivalencies in line with existing policies and procedures. Departments/Colleges are also responsible for updating and expanding the list of courses that inbound and outbound students may take throughout the course of the exchange. The Chair of the Department or Dean of the College is responsible for appointing an alternate FSU Faculty Advisor/designee in the event the position becomes vacant.

III. POLICY

A. ESTABLISHING AN INTERNATIONAL RECIPROCAL STUDENT EXCHANGE AGREEMENT

Florida State University has two kinds of Reciprocal Exchange Agreements. The first is between an international university and specific FSU Department(s) and/or College(s), and the second is a university to university exchange agreement. In both cases the agreement is made with an international institution of similar academic standing that agrees, as approved by the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, to a formal exchange of students at the undergraduate and/or graduate level. This agreement outlines the responsibilities of the institutions as well as the responsibilities of the students. Students enroll in, earn credit hours and pay tuition and fees to their home institutions while studying at the host institutions.

Partner Selection and Rationale

International Exchange Agreements are only made with excellent institutions that demonstrate appropriate resources, regional or national accreditation, and a suitable list of courses offered in English (or appropriate foreign language) in participating Department(s) or College(s).

Risk Mitigation

FSU does not develop exchange agreements with institutions in countries to which the U.S. Department of State has issued a travel warning or alert or with a restricted entity according to the U.S. government. In exceptional circumstances, where risk to students is deemed low, the Provost Office may authorize FSU's International Travel Oversight Committee or other committee to review the proposed partnerships and make recommendations to proceed with an exchange agreement.

Approval Process for new international reciprocal exchange agreements

The FSU Faculty Advisor initiating a Department/College exchange program will fill out the "Application of Intent to Establish an International Exchange Agreement" ("Intent") and other required forms. The Program Director, FSU International Initiatives provides support and assists with the review process. The "Intent" paperwork is endorsed by review and signature by the faculty member initiating the exchange, the Chair of the participating Department, the Dean of the participating College, the Dean of Undergraduate Studies and/or the Dean of Graduate Studies (depending upon the level of the students participating), and the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Proposals to develop a university-wide exchange program are submitted to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Provost for review and signature.

Balance

The basis for continuation of an exchange agreement rests with this principle of reciprocity; it is expected that the total number of incoming students and/or credit hours equal the number of outbound students and/or credit hours over a five year period. If the exchange becomes imbalanced in a given semester and remains imbalanced in the following semester(s), an attempt may be made to correct the imbalance by adjusting the number of nominations available in subsequent semester(s) in order to maintain reasonable balance over the duration of the agreement. Students currently enrolled in the program will not be affected by the attempt to restore balance.

Inclusions

Specific Department/College Exchange Agreement: Inclusions

International Agreements for a Reciprocal Student Exchange Program apply only to students studying in the area specified by the Department(s) or College(s) sponsoring the agreement at each institution. Students studying in different FSU Department(s) or College(s) may be considered for the exchange on a space available basis. The formal inclusion of other areas of study (Departments/Colleges) are to be addressed by addendum.

Courses available to inbound and outbound exchange students are mostly limited to the

academic departments sponsoring the exchange. In some cases, inbound students may also be able to select from lower-level General Studies/Liberal Studies (1000 or 2000-level) courses on a space available basis, even when they are not provided by the sponsoring FSU College. Upper level courses (3000 or 4000-level) outside of the specific Department or College may be considered on a case by case basis if there is availability, however, priority is given to degree-seeking FSU students enrolled in that major. The host institution reserves the right to exclude the student from specific courses based on enrollment constraints or specific course requirements.

University-to-University Exchange Agreement: Inclusions

In a university-wide reciprocal exchange agreement, students from all FSU Department(s) and College(s) may participate, and students from all majors at the partner institution may study at FSU provided the academic prerequisites have been met (with specific exceptions as stated in the agreement).

The chairs and deans that each Department/College will develop a process for approving FSU course equivalencies for courses falling under the Department/College's domain. Each Department/College is also responsible for providing a list of 10-15 FSU courses that will be made available for inbound exchange students to take.

Chairs and deans will make space made available for inbound students without having to receive special permission from each faculty member teaching the class. Departments will not be permitted to exclude inbound exchange students from classes without good cause, and they will be required to provide a reasonable alternative – giving priority to the students' list of desired courses.

The exception to this broad inclusion policy is for professional colleges at FSU, including the College of Law, College of Nursing, and College of Medicine as well as the Colleges of Film and Music and Departments of Dance and Theater in the College of Fine Arts, all of which are limited access by audition only.

Responsibilities of the Institutions

The host institutions agree to enroll exchange students and to provide tuition and fee exemptions according to the rules and regulations of their institution. The host institutions provide pre-departure and arrival information, visa and insurance requirements, information on housing options and other program-related assistance as deemed appropriate and as normally available to enrolled students. As full time students, exchange students have access to learning resources and services including the library, computer labs, health and fitness facilities, appropriate academic counseling and advising, assistance in selecting and enrolling in courses and the institution's grievance and complaint process.

If either institution becomes aware of any emergency situation involving an exchange student, the host institution further agrees to notify the home institution.

Upon request, the host institution informs the home institution of the student's enrollment status and promptly informs the home institution if any exchange student withdraws or

reduces the number of credits attempted. The host institution further agrees to immediately notify the home institution in writing of any changes in the academic status of the exchange student.

In the event that a FSU student at the host institution receives a stipend, scholarship, or other source of funding from the host institution, the host institution agrees to notify FSU of the nature, amount, and dates of such funding in order that FSU may comply with State of Florida, U.S. federal, and student home institution guidelines pertinent to the particular student.

Budgetary Authority

The Exchange Agreement may not encumber or expend university Educational and General (E&G) funds beyond faculty and staff support needed to operate the agreement as approved by the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Vice President for Student Affairs or commit the faculty member, Department or College to budgetary support of any nature without the approval of the appropriate budgetary authority and the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. Any funding required for this Agreement is subject to appropriations by the Legislature of the State of Florida for this purpose.

Validation

The International Reciprocal Exchange Agreement is validated by signature of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, the designee acting for and on behalf of the Florida State University Board of Trustees. The Exchange Agreement shall become effective from the date of the last signature, and shall remain in force until the sunset date – usually five years from the date of its validation – unless sooner terminated by the parties under the provisions stated within the agreement. Signed original agreements are retained in the office of the Program Director, International Initiatives.

B. MANAGEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RECIPROCAL STUDENT EXCHANGE AGREEMENTS

Each year the FSU Faculty Advisor completes an “International Exchange Annual Review”. The Program Director, International Initiatives makes appropriate recommendations to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

RENEWING AN INTERNATIONAL RECIPROCAL STUDENT EXCHANGE AGREEMENT

The FSU Faculty Advisor(s), Program Director, International Initiatives, and the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs assess the Exchange Program and determine whether it should be renewed.

ADDING AN ADDITIONAL DEPARTMENT/COLLEGE TO A DEPARTMENT/COLLEGE – WIDE STUDENT EXCHANGE AGREEMENT

Formal inclusion of other areas of study (Departments/Colleges) are addressed in an “International Agreement Addendum for a Reciprocal Student Exchange Program

between a Partner University and Florida State University.”

TERMINATING OR SUSPENDING AN INTERNATIONAL RECIPROCAL STUDENT EXCHANGE AGREEMENT

Agreements may be terminated prior to the sunset date under the provisions stated within the agreement, typically by either party giving 60 days' notice of termination in writing to the other party. Students already admitted to and participating in the exchange program must be allowed to complete the program.

Florida State University reserves the right to suspend an exchange program in a country that falls under a travel warning or alert from the Department of State. Florida State University may also refuse to grant permission for an FSU student to participate by denying the student's "Exemption Request for Travel to Locations on the U.S. Department of State Travel Warning or Alert List".

C. OUTGOING FSU STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN A RECIPROCAL EXCHANGE

University Requirements for Participation in an Exchange Program

All participants must be currently enrolled and degree-seeking students in good standing at their home institution. A student participating in the exchange must be in attendance at their home institution for one semester prior to the exchange. Students participating in the exchange must register at the home institution during the exchange period.

Exchange students must abide by all rules and regulations of the host institution, in addition to abiding by FSU's Student Conduct Code. Upon enrolling in the exchange program, the student must grant permission to the host institution to send a transcript of courses, credits, and grades to the home institution at the end of each term.

Participating FSU students must be in compliance with FSU's mandatory health insurance requirements for international experience, complete all of the required documents, and attend pre-departure preparation and orientation at the FSU Center for Global Engagement.

Participation in the reciprocal exchange program does not qualify the participant for automatic admission to the host institution's degree programs. In the event that a participating student seeks to become a degree earning student at the host institution that student must comply with all appropriate admissions and visa requirements.

Selection of Participants

Specific Department/College Exchange Agreement: Selection Process

Each Department/College is responsible for developing a selection criteria and process and for reviewing and approving inbound student nominations for its Department/College exchange programs. The partner institution may impose specific application deadlines and procedures for nominating exchanges students.

University-to-University Exchange Agreement: Selection Process

All outbound students interested in going on the exchange will submit an application to the Program Director, Exchanges. When qualified applicants exceed the number of exchange slots, selection committee members will review applications and develop a list of nominees, as well as a prioritized waiting list in case a nominated student is unable to go on the exchange.

Coursework Management and Review

Pre-Approval of Proposed Coursework

Students will review the host institution's course offerings and develop a list of preferred courses and alternates. The student is responsible for providing web links to the syllabi or other appropriate written documentation for the courses.

The Department/College designee reviews proposed foreign courses and approves FSU course equivalencies following Department/College procedures. The student's Academic Advisor also reviews and approves proposed coursework. (See Staff and Faculty Roles for additional detail).

Courses not preapproved will be reviewed upon the student's return to FSU.

FSU Placeholder Course

The Program Director, Exchanges notifies the FSU Office of the Registrar that the student has been approved for an exchange. The Registrar's Office designee enrolls the student in a placeholder course(s), which has been approved for students participating in an FSU exchange. The placeholder course(s) remain on the students' FSU record throughout the exchange and until they receive their final transcripts from the host institution. Students are enrolled in 1-16 credit hours depending on the total number of FSU credits the student plans to transfer from the host institution. The placeholder course(s) allow students to access their financial aid.

Should students receive fewer FSU credits on the exchange than projected, they are responsible for paying back the portion of financial aid they are not entitled to receive (see below, Financial Aid).

Should students receive more FSU credits on the exchange than projected, they are responsible for paying the additional tuition. If financial aid has already been disbursed, it may not be possible for students to receive additional financial aid to cover the cost of the additional credit hours.

Transcript Review and Credit Posting

The Department/College designee is responsible for determining the equivalence of a course taken on an exchange to a course offered at FSU following Department/College procedures. If the courses on the student's transcript were preapproved, no further action is needed. After the student completes the exchange and the transcript has been received from the exchange partner, the Program Director, Exchanges reviews the student's transcript and assigns grades and number of credit hours earned for each course taken on the exchange based on the established grade scale and credit conversion rate for the exchange program and guidance below. If a transcript contains courses that were not

preapproved, the student is responsible for working with the Department/College designee and his/her Academic Advisor to determine FSU course equivalencies.

The Registrar's Office designee builds the FSU courses, coding courses as part of the international exchange program and including in the course comments: Student Exchange at [international partner, country]. Questions: [Program Director, Exchanges, email].

The student's FSU transcript will read "Articulated credits earned on exchange at [international institution, country]" for the semester in which the student participated in an international exchange. "NG" no grade is assigned if the transcript has not arrived prior to the end of the FSU semester. Transcripts for FSU graduate students are processed using the same procedure.

FSU reports these courses to the Board of Governors on the SIF file with a student section funding flag of "R" (for reciprocal) on data element 01103. Outbound students do not generate FTEs.

Guidance for International Credit Conversion

FSU's student-centered philosophy has an important role in determining how international credit will be converted to FSU credit. Students should receive a reasonable amount of FSU credit for the work they do abroad, based on the following guidelines:

*The Florida State University Faculty Handbook*¹ provides faculty the definition of course credit: "In most undergraduate and graduate courses, one semester hour of student credit represents approximately 50 minutes of faculty-student contact per week, or two or more hours of regularly scheduled laboratory, practice, directed independent study, or other formal course activity per week within the 15 weeks of scheduled class time per semester."

When determining course hour equivalencies, courses at the host institution may not be combined to be the equivalent of a single FSU course.

In accordance with World Education Services(WES), a well-respected evaluator for international academic credit, the following conversion rate is used as a guideline for host institutions that use the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits: 1 ECTS=.67 FSU credits). FSU course credits will be rounded to a whole number.

¹ The Florida State University Faculty Handbook 2008, rev. 5/20/2014, pg. 147, available at: <http://facultyhandbook.fsu.edu/content/download/58347/676035/FacHandbook5-20-14.pdf>

ECTS Conversion Scale

1 ECTS	= .67 (rounded to 1)
2 ECTS	= 1.34 (rounded to 1)
3 ECTS	= 2.01 (rounded to 2)
4 ECTS	= 2.68 (rounded to 3)
5 ECTS	= 3.35 (rounded to 3)
6 ECTS	= 4.02 (rounded to 4)
7 ECTS	= 4.69 (rounded to 5)
8 ECTS	= 5.36 (rounded to 5)
9 ECTS	= 6.03 (rounded to 6)
10 ECTS	= 6.7 (rounded to 7)
11 ECTS	= 7.37 (rounded to 7)
12 ECTS	= 8.04 (rounded to 8)
13 ECTS	= 8.71 (rounded to 9)
14 ECTS	= 9.38 (rounded to 9)
15 ECTS	= 10.05 (rounded to 10)
16 ECTS	= 10.72 (rounded to 11)
17 ECTS	= 11.39 (rounded to 11)
18 ECTS	= 12.06 (rounded to 12)
19 ECTS	= 12.73 (rounded to 13)
20 ECTS	= 13.4 (rounded to 13)

In special cases, where more work is done on the exchange than is reflected in the FSU course equivalencies, the Program Director, Exchanges and the FSU Faculty Advisor or Department/College Designee will work with the registrar's office to ensure that the student receives a reasonable amount of FSU credit for the work being done on the exchange. For instance, the student may be enrolled in DIS, special topics, or supervised research credits as appropriate when credit hour differences are significant enough to warrant schedule adjustments for the student.

Percentage of Credit Hours Required for Student's

The total credits of the exchange experience may not be 25% or more of the credit hours required for the degree. The 25% rule applies to each off-campus site independently not cumulatively. This is reviewed by the student's Academic Advisor.

FSU Residency Requirements

Because students are enrolled at FSU during the semester(s) they participate on the exchange, they meet FSU's residency requirement.

Financial Aid

All fees and financial aid for outbound exchange students go through Florida State University following normal procedures. The only delay for students entitled to receive financial aid during the exchange is the start date of the exchange program, when it has a different start date from FSU's academic calendar.

Financial Aid: Disbursement Schedule

For students going to host institutions that start classes before the last week of FSU's classes (the same semester for which they are registered for FSU classes), and who have been awarded financial aid, awards are available for disbursement as follows: at the start

date of the host institution. If classes start more than ten days after FSU's start date FSU tuition costs are deferred until the financial aid is disbursed. Student Business Services (SBS) adds a batch tuition deferment to all outbound students enrolled based on their dates of attendance at the host university.

Financial Aid: Repayment Clock

If a student goes to a host institution in the Fall semester and that term interferes with the student's ability to attend FSU's Spring semester, his/her repayment clock with the financial aid lenders starts that Spring semester. A student can stop the repayment clock when they enroll in the subsequent summer or fall semester, but the spring months are counted in the total amount of time before loan repayment starts.

Financial Aid: Certifying Eligibility

If the host institution's academic calendar does not coincide with FSU's academic calendar, it may affect financial aid certification as the student may earn "NG" no grade until his/her transcript arrives. The student can receive recertification after their official transcript, with acceptable grades, arrives from the host institution.

Financial Aid: Student Fee Responsibility

The student will refund to Bright Futures the award amount received for course(s) which are dropped or withdrawn at the host institution after FSU's drop and add period. All courses posted on the student's transcript from the host institution are transferred to FSU permanent record and additional fees may be required for courses added after FSU tuition is paid.

Readmission to the University

Undergraduate students who are not enrolled at FSU for three or more consecutive terms will need to apply for readmission.

Graduate students who are not enrolled at FSU for two or more consecutive terms will need to apply for readmission.

Emergency Response

Prior to their departure FSU students participating in an international student exchange are required to inform the U.S. Embassy of their location in the country and also sign the "Acknowledgement of Risk and General Release Form" by which the student agrees to hold harmless and to indemnify Florida State University from any liability for injury related to their participation in the program (including periods in transit to or from the destination.) This is monitored by the Program Director, Exchanges. The Program Director, Exchanges enters FSU students' dates, location and home emergency contacts information into a secure database.

If the student and/or partner institution notifies the Program Director, Exchanges of a medical or other emergency situation involving the student, the Program Director, Exchanges will notify the Dean of Students and Vice President for Student Affairs so that a response to the emergency can be coordinated. The Program Director, Exchanges will also notify the student's emergency contact person and contact the U.S. Embassy to assist the student if appropriate.

D. INCOMING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN A RECIPROCAL EXCHANGE

Student Eligibility

Incoming international exchange students will meet the following requirements: be degree seeking students in good standing at their home university; provide proof of financial support by submitting the Certification of Financial Responsibility; meet international student health insurance requirements; meet health history requirements of all enrolled FSU students; and provide an original university transcript. In addition, all students will provide required scores for language proficiency as set by FSU Office of Admissions, unless exempted by FSU's Office of Admissions. Students from a country exempt from the English language proficiency requirement do not need to provide English proficiency scores. In some cases, a student may be exempted from providing the English proficiency scores if English is the language of instruction at his/her home university. In such cases, the student's transcript must state that English is the language of instruction.

FSU waives tuition and fees for inbound exchange by adding the 'EXCHANGE' waiver and removes any late registration fees. Incoming students do not generate FTEs.

Student Application and Coursework Registration

The FSU Faculty Advisor or Selection Committee reviews and approves the nominated student's application, including course selection. In the event that courses listed by students are not available for the semester or the course is full, the FSU Faculty Advisor or designee provides alternate courses or requests an override. If the student requests a course outside of the participating FSU Department(s)/College(s), the student will need approval from the Department/College they wish to study in.

University-wide reciprocal exchange programs do not require the Chair/Dean's approval to register the student for an FSU class, because the Provost authorizes that space will be made available for inbound students without having to receive special permission from each faculty member teaching the class.

Immigration Support

FSU's Center for Global Engagement (CGE) assists incoming students with FSU admission and registration processes (including health insurance requirements) and provides immigration documents required to apply for a U.S. J-1 Student Visa. CGE staff provide students with orientation on immigration, health insurance and other topics to help students succeed in their exchange experience.

IV. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Florida State University International Reciprocal Student Exchange Agreements have followed parts of this policy and the attendant procedures since February 2008. The policy and procedures are hereby revised to accommodate updated university requirements. The implementation date of the current policy is XXX.

This policy is the purview of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Provost is responsible for announcing and publicizing the policy among Florida State University constituents and for monitoring mandatory compliance.

Constituents are informed as each component is implemented. The Vice President for Student Affairs is responsible for all immigration services and support to inbound and outbound students through the Center for Global Engagement as well as coordinating FSU's response to an emergency involving an FSU student on an exchange program. The Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Program Director, International Initiatives are responsible for implementing and monitoring the policy.

V. LEGAL SUPPORT, JUSTIFICATION, AND REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

Florida Constitution, Article IX, Section 7, BOG Regulation 1.001(4) BOT Delegation to President, President Delegation to individual Vice Presidents. FSU Policy 2-1, Development of Policies.

Additional authorities.

Florida Statutes: 1007.01. [Articulation]

1009.24, [SUS Fees]

1009.26(9) [Fee Waivers]

1009.40 [Student Financial Aid]

Board of Governors Regulation: 3.009 [Student Financial Aid]

6.001[General Admissions].

6.009 [Admission of International Students to State University System (SUS) Institutions].

Dr. Mary B. Coburn
Vice President for Student Affairs

Date: _____

Dr. Sally McRorie
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Date: _____