POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR DEVELOPING AND EVALUATING CONSORTIAL AND CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENTS FOR ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND COURSES

Definitions:
Consortial relationship: a formal arrangement between the University and one or more other institutions of higher education to share in the responsibility to deliver courses or programs meeting mutually agreed upon academic quality standards

Contractual agreement: a formal arrangement between the University and another institution for receipt of courses, programs, or other academic credit delivered by the other institution

This policy refers to substantial academic contracts. Not included are agreements related to clinical training, internships, transfer/articulation agreements, and most study abroad programs.

Process for Developing Agreements
Approvals: All agreements must be approved by the Provost.

Criteria for Approval: All approvals will be based on the following criteria:

1. Congruence with the academic, research, and service priorities and plans of the University and of the unit proposing the agreement;

2. Congruence with Mercer’s mission;

3. Anticipated benefits to students, faculty members, the University, and university stakeholders;

4. Evidence of institutional quality, including, for example, reputation, international ranking, and accreditation status;

5. Cost, feasibility, and sustainability of proposed activities;

6. Possible risks to students, faculty members, the University, and university stakeholders (including, but not limited to, legal and financial risks, threats to safety and security, reputation, etc.).

An agreement involving a joint or dual degree is considered a substantive change by SACSCOC and will trigger additional reporting responsibilities and procedures. Consult Mercer University’s Substantive Change policy.
Periodic Evaluation of an Agreement:
Six months prior to an agreement’s date of expiration, the sponsor will complete a Partnership Assessment report and submit it to the Provost. The report will describe significant activities since the agreement’s signing (or, if the agreement has been renewed, since the last renewal), will assess the partnership’s effectiveness and relevance to Mercer University’s mission, will recommend whether to renew the agreement or allow it to expire, and will provide a rationale for the recommendation. For institutions that are not accredited by SACSCOC, the evaluation will also include a review of the partner institution to ensure ongoing compliance with the SACSCOC Principles. Agreements that do not have a date of expiration will be reviewed at least every five years.

Approved February 23, 2014
Provost D. Scott Davis