

## Expectations for FEM Partnership Agreement (7/19/2021)

### Requirements in the FEM Standards related to partnerships:

- Partnership must include a college or university located in the U.S. or its territories, accredited to offer a graduate degree by a U.S. regional institutional accrediting body for higher education and in good standing with that accrediting body. (RE 1.1)
- Must have a formal written agreement to sponsor a single program. (RE 1.1.a)
- An organization chart must clearly show the relationship of the graduate degree program to other programs/services offered by the sponsoring organizations and the relationship among the sponsoring organizations. (RE 1.1.b)
- Partnerships must document the responsibilities of and resources provided by each partnership organization. (RE 1.2.a.1)
- Program Director must be a full-time employee of the sponsoring organization. (RE 1.4.b.3)
- In a partnership, one individual must serve as program director and have primary responsibility for the program and communication with ACEND. (RE 1.4.b.5)

In addition:

Each member organization in the partnership must designate a coordinator (who may be the program director) for the program within that organization who is employed by the organization

### Guidance for programs about the partnership agreement:

The partnership agreement must be detailed in a memorandum of understanding (MOU). At a minimum, the MOU must:

- Be a written agreement that includes duration of the agreement and provisions for review, renewal, change, perceived breach and termination of the agreement to sponsor a future education model program signed by the:
  - program director and include address and contact information;
  - program coordinator and include address and contact information; and
  - administrators with authority to sign for each partner organization
- Identify the official program name and official address
- State the responsibilities of the educational institution (college or university), including but not limited to:
  - Be responsible for the didactic coursework/academic education, and academic credential (conferral of the degree).
  - Comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Public Law 104-191, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and all related regulations regarding administering federal student aid.
  - Sponsor the program director as a full-time employee as defined by the academic institution, or a full-time employee of the partner organization (non-academic

institution) that has been contracted by the academic institution to serve as the full-time program director:

- Detail the responsibilities of each partnering institution. For each item listed below, separately identify the responsibilities for each partner:
  - Faculty and Preceptors
    - responsibilities of the designated program coordinator
    - appointment and assignment of faculty responsible for teaching
    - appointment of preceptors who will provide supervised experiential learning
    - orientation for new faculty and preceptors
  - Finances and Resources
    - resources available to students, faculty and preceptors (i.e., administrative/clerical support, IT support, facilities, student support services, financial aid).
    - Financial management arrangement (i.e., fees/tuition paid by students to each partner for time/credit hours spent at each institution; financial resources/obligations of each partner including ACEND fees)
  - Policies and Procedures
    - How policies and procedures will be managed and shared between partners to develop program policies and procedures. Refer to Standard 9 for each policy and procedure that must be addressed.
  - Program/Curriculum including Evaluation and Improvement
    - oversight and administration of the academic portion of the program
    - oversight and administration of the SEL portion of the program
    - how data will be shared between partners
- Terms:
  - Describe the protection afforded to students if the partnership agreement is changed or dissolved

**Additional Considerations:**

- At least 75% of the credits (or time spent with students) must be offered by the university/college/partner offering access to federal financial aid (A substantive change request must be made to ACEND when an institution not certified to participate in the Title IV, HEA programs offers more than 25% and up to 50% of the program.) (USDE requirement)
- An institution may house more than one ACEND-accredited program and more than one partnership; however, each program/partnership is responsible for separate ACEND fees and each partner institution must participate in the program's site visit process.
- The appointed program director can only direct one partnership (one ACEND-accredited program), whereas the coordinator who is not the program director may serve on several partnerships.
- As the program has components in both partnering institutions, the program director and coordinator may determine who will perform the assessment of education including, but not limited to, program curricula, general academic supervision, assignment of rotations, evaluation of student's performance and feedback of faculty and preceptors. The program director has primary responsibility for the program and communication with ACEND.

The responsibilities outlined in the following table is only one possible example of how partners may wish to split responsibilities between institutions. This is not a recommendation but one of many possible examples. In this example, the program director is contracted by the university and housed in the SEL site. It outlines the responsibilities between the partnering institutions detailed in a possible Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

<b>MOU Responsibilities of Partnering Institutions ‘The Program’</b>	
<b>Academic Institution</b>	<b>Non-Academic Institution</b>
<b>Terms</b>	
This MOU is in force until <b>DATE</b> . It may be reviewed, renewed, changed under mutual agreement 6 months prior to the expiration.	
Either party may terminate this agreement with at least 6 months written notice leading to the development of a teach out plan. Both parties agree that all activities in progress at the time of the notice of termination will be concluded in accordance with this agreement and the teach out plan that will be instituted at the time of the written notice of termination.	
Comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Public Law 104-191, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and all related regulations receiving federal student aid.	
<b>Resources</b>	
Will sponsor ‘the program’ and contract the program director from non-academic institution.	Will partner with university with regional institutional accreditation.
Will provide resources including facilities, IT, library, administrative/clerical support and student support services.	Will provide resources including facilities, IT, student support services, and administrative/clerical support.
Will confer the degree.	Will provide the verification statement once program requirements are completed.
Will name program coordinator.	Designated full-time program director contracted by academic institution.
Will pay site visit fee for program reviewer(s) to visit the academic institution (e.g., June 2021-May 2024 fee is \$1,710-\$3,420 - See ACEND Fee Schedule)	Will pay accreditation fee and site visit fee (e.g., June 2021-May 2024 fee is \$7,100- See ACEND Fee Schedule)
<b>Faculty and Preceptors</b>	
Program coordinator will oversee academic portion of the program.	Program director will oversee the SEL portion of the program and all other program director responsibilities as specified by ACEND.
Will appoint and assign faculty responsible for teaching.	Will appoint preceptors who will provide SEL.
Will provide student monitoring of progress and performance with academic advising for didactic courses.	Will provide orientation to faculty and preceptors.
Will ensure continued competence of faculty.	Will ensure continued competence of preceptors.
	Will provide orientation to students.
	Will establish and maintain affiliation agreements for SEL sites.

<b>Program/ Curriculum Evaluation and Improvement</b>	
Will share academic student data with program director.	Will share SEL student data with program coordinator.
<b>Policies and Procedures</b>	
Will assist in student recruitment, when needed.	Will recruit, select and admit students into the program; student must meet university admission requirements.
Will agree to the policy and procedure handbook created for 'the program'.	Will agree to the policy and procedure handbook created for 'the program'.
Will notify program director of any changes to institutional policies and procedures that may impact 'the program' and its policy and procedure manual.	Will keep program coordinator abreast of changes in 'the program' and its policy and procedure manual.

EXAMPLE