The nature of exchange programs is to allow students to travel abroad but remain registered on their respective home campuses, thereby paying their home in-state tuition/fees and maintaining any financial aid. Let’s use an example of a partnership with UM-Flint and Institution-X.

The Mechanics

When UM-Flint students go to Institution-X, they will not pay Institution-X any tuition, because they are registered at and paying UM-Flint. Likewise, when Institution-X students come to UM-Flint, they will not pay UM-Flint tuition, because they are registered at and paying Institution-X. Because the tuition costs stay at the respective home universities, it is important to keep the numbers of students going and coming as even as possible for each exchange cycle (or academic year). UM-Flint will be offering courses "for free" to Institution-X students. To make up for those "free" courses offered to Institution-X students, UM-Flint will send an UM-Flint students to Institution-X who offer classes "for free" to UM-Flint students.

Regarding Courses

Typically, a course or set or courses are identified for UM-Flint students; these are the course(s) of which UM-Flint students participating in the exchange program register. Whichever UM-Flint department(s) is establishing the exchange program and absorbing the tuition revenue of UM-Flint students registering for these course(s) should be the same department offering courses to Institution-X students.

Short-term faculty-led programs can also be established between partner institutions. In such cases, UM-Flint students register for a course(s) and pay a program fee. This program fee is established in advance by the program leader and includes expenses such as airfare, housing, meals, in-country transportation, health insurance, and cultural activities.

Steps to Establish an Exchange Program

1. Identify the institution (and more specifically, the department(s)) with which you would like to establish an exchange program

2. If there is a mutual interest with the institution, initiate contact with appropriate department liaison within the institution
   - Review relevant courses and how they will transfer between institutions

3. Contact the International Center (IC) at UM-Flint and discuss exchange procedure with IC staff

4. Designate an Academic Coordinator at each respective institution
   - The Academic Coordinator will be responsible for working with students to select courses and sign the students Learning Agreement (document that identifies the course(s) students will enroll for at the host institution)
   - May also be responsible for posting grades on students' transcripts

5. Identify or create course(s) that UM-Flint students will register for as participants of the exchange program

6. Sign a general university Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and an Exchange Agreement
   - If general university MOU already exists, sign an Exchange Agreement
   - Generally, an Executive Officer's signature is required on all MOUs and/or Agreements

7. Collaborate with the Education Abroad Office (EAO) to market the exchange program

8. Collaborate with EAO to send students/accept students

9. Assess and evaluate program
Roles of IC/EAO and Faculty/Department

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>International Center and/or Education Abroad Office</th>
<th>Faculty and/or Department</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establish enrollment procedures, set application dates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promote &amp; recruit students for outbound program</td>
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<td>Review course selection of outbound and incoming students</td>
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<td>Approve outbound and inbound students participating in exchange programs</td>
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<td>Process applications of outbound &amp; inbound students</td>
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<td>Submit out-of-state tuition waiver requests</td>
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<td>Monitor exchange balances</td>
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<td>Facilitate arrival of inbound students</td>
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<td>Provide general orientation for inbound &amp; outbound students</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assign grades for courses taken by inbound &amp; outbound students</td>
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Factors to Consider

1. **How does the institution’s academic calendar fit with UM-Flint’s academic calendar?**
   When researching potential exchange institutions, compare the host institution’s academic calendar, particularly the final exam timetable, with UM-Flint. Ideally, the foreign institution’s semesters would coincide with U-Flint’s fall and winter semesters, allowing students to study abroad either for a semester or for the academic year. Many times, however, one of the exchange partner’s semesters runs longer, overlapping into the following UM-Flint semester. Given this, students would only be able to study at that institution for one semester or for the academic year. These situations do not preclude the arrangement of a direct exchange with such institutions, however, partnerships that increase students’ exchange options for both fall and spring semesters are preferable.

2. **How does the host institution’s curriculum compare with UM-Flint’s curriculum?**
   It is important that exchange partner institutions offer courses that closely correspond to courses offered at UM-Flint. While taking classes abroad that are not offered on campus is a great benefit of studying abroad, most students will need to take at least some courses overseas that fulfill major, minor, or general education requirements. Researching course offerings is key to determining whether or not many students would be able to take advantage of the exchange program.

3. **What is the language of instruction?**
   If the primary language of the host institution is not English, are there courses offered in English specifically for international students? If this is the case, check to make sure there are enough courses offered each semester to appeal to a broad range of students and meet major, minor, and/or general education requirements.

   If all courses are taught in a foreign language, is there a minimum language proficiency requirement that could feasibly be met by UM-Flint students? If there are few students currently on campus that could meet the language pre-requisites, the likelihood of finding enough linguistically proficient students to take part in the exchange program could prove to be very difficult. Such a situation would eventually lead to an unhealthy exchange relationship.

4. **Are there restrictions regarding areas of study? Would a potential exchange be limited to students in a particular department, or could students from any discipline participate?**
   In an effort to appeal to as many students as possible, it is important to look for exchange partners who make a wide variety of courses available to exchange students. This could be within a specific discipline, like history or business, or across disciplines. When considering a direct exchange program, determine if UM-Flint students could take courses from the full course catalog or if they will be limited to specific courses or academic departments. Generally, an exchange partnership is more appealing if students from all disciplines are eligible to participate, as sometimes it is difficult to fill available placements for a particular exchange if it is restricted to certain majors. However, strong support from the academic department(s) involved can positively influence application rates for department/major specific exchanges.

5. **What services does the host institution’s international office provide to UM-Flint students?**
   It is essential that the host institution be able to provide a high level of student support services as UM-Flint students complete paperwork for the host institution, ask questions concerning arrival dates, course registration, and housing, and eventually arrive on campus. The prospective exchange partner should be able to provide detailed information for their incoming exchange students as well as assistance with the housing placement and course registration process. The information available on the institution’s web site...
6. What other exchange partners does the potential host institution have in the US and/or in other countries?
By looking at an institution’s existing exchange partners, one can better determine if such an exchange would be a good fit for UM-Flint. If an institution has exchanges with US institutions that are similar to UM-Flint, it is more likely that this institution would be a good match. A potential partner who has exchange relationships with foreign institutions with whom UM-Flint also has exchanges is likely a good fit as well.

7. What types of housing are available for exchange students, and how much support does the host institution provide in terms of securing housing?
Guaranteed on-campus housing for exchange students is preferable, or if on-campus housing cannot be guaranteed it should at least be a viable option for students. Those exchange programs that do not provide on-campus housing can be problematic, especially if they provide little assistance to incoming exchange students. However, if an exchange partner cannot provide on-campus housing for incoming exchange students (sometimes on-campus housing doesn’t exist), some level of housing assistance is necessary.

8. What is the campus culture and local community like?
When investigating this matter, consider: what kinds of cultural events and activities are available to students; what student life is like on campus; and how easily UM-Flint students could get involved on campus, meet local students, and integrate into the community. By defining the campus culture and local community, a better understanding of how UM-Flint students could potentially get involved abroad and get the most out of their experience can be ascertained.

9. Where is the host institution located and does UM-Flint already have existing exchange partners in this city/country/region of the world?
First, check to see if UM-Flint already has an existing exchange partnership with other institutions in that city, country, or region. If so, look at what the academic focus of that exchange is and ask if there is a need for an additional exchange site in the same city or country. A new exchange program in a city or country where an exchange program currently does not exist is more likely to attract new students to study abroad. Offering two exchange programs in the same city or country (especially if both offer similar coursework) is likely to result in one program cannibalizing the participation rates of the other – weakening both programs.

Second, when considering the location, question whether or not it is relatively accessible to students traveling there. For example, can the host city be reached by public transportation? Also, would it be easy for students to travel from the host city to other parts of the country/region once they are abroad? Third, investigate whether or not the location in general would likely appeal to students. Ask your current students how many of them would study in this location. Lastly, in terms of student safety, has a travel or health warning been issued for this country by the US State Department? If so, it will be impossible to gain institutional approval for such an exchange.

10. Overall, to what degree would this exchange program appeal to UM-Flint students?
The bottom line is that an exchange partnership cannot be successful if not enough students are interested in studying at that particular host institution. With this in mind, it is important to establish the selling points of the exchange which will attract UM-Flint students. Take some time to determine the unique features of the host university’s curriculum, campus, and location, and consider how these attributes could be used to promote the exchange to Rhodes students.

11. What crisis/risk management protocols are in place for handling exchange student emergencies? For example, are students given contact information or guidance on handling emergencies in orientation, is there a 24-hour emergency contact number, etc.? As emergencies do happen, both to UM-Flint students studying abroad and to exchange students studying here on campus, it is of utmost importance that any potential exchange partner institutions have emergency management protocols in place to deal with such situations. That may be having a 24-hour phone number that students can call if an emergency happens outside of office hours, or it may be that students contact another entity (ex. campus police) and that information is filtered to the appropriate parties. Regardless, when considering a university as a potential exchange partner, it is important to know how much support is provided to students in emergency situations, ranging from personal injury, illness and assault to natural disasters or political unrest.

Ready to explore exchange program opportunities? Take a look at existing exchange programs here and contact the International Center to program implementation.

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