

Approval Date: December 10, 2010

Shared Credentials Policy

Office of Accountability:	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Office of Administrative Responsibility:	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Approver:	Board of Governors
Scope:	Compliance with University policy extends to all members of the University community.

Purpose

This policy regulates the process through which Faculties and departments of the University of Alberta will approach establishing shared-credential programs with other institutions where institutional names are to be cited on all degree parchments. The policy does not endorse any particular model for shared-credential programming or delivery.

POLICY

The University of Alberta is committed to providing high-quality innovative programs, including collaborative, multi- and inter-disciplinary, and multi-institutional programs and degrees. Agreements with key partner institutions are an essential component of the University enterprise.

Shared-credential programs are defined to be those multi-institutional arrangements where the name of the University of Alberta is cited on the degree parchment awarded by another institution, and/or the name of another institution is cited on a University of Alberta degree parchment. Setting up a shared-credential program requires an appropriate formal Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Alberta and the partner institution(s). Memorandums of Understanding are vetted in accordance with the Contract Review and Signing Authority Policy and its procedures. The Shared Credentials Policy applies to shared-credential programs and degrees only, and does not apply to existing or future undergraduate transfer credit agreements, or other types of multi-institutional arrangement that are not shared-credential programs according to the above definition.

The development of shared-credential program proposals begins with departments or Faculties at the University of Alberta and at partner institution(s) discussing the possibility of creating an educational opportunity for undergraduate or graduate students, where the elements of the proposed program (courses, facilities, supervision, etc, as appropriate) are offered by all the partner institutions in a cooperative way. University of Alberta International, the Office of the Registrar, and the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research are available as resource units as the academic proposal is developed. This policy becomes operative if the proposal being developed requires the institutional names to be cited on all degree parchments.

The approval details of a shared-credential program depend on its structure. Shared-credential programs can be classified according to their academic structure as overlapping or integrated, defined below. Further, shared-credential programs, whether overlapping or integrated, can lead to the awarding of either a single degree/parchment or multiple degrees/parchments.

1. OVERLAPPING PROGRAMS

Overlapping programs are those where the student satisfies the requirements of existing degrees at their home institution, and possibly all the partner institutions, through the agreed-upon institutional mechanism of accepting a certain portion of the work done by the student at the partner institution(s) under a formal agreement. Overlapping programs only use existing mechanisms such as credit transfer, joint supervision, and visiting student registration. The proposal must be explicit as to the manner in which the programs and facilities at the various partner institutions are intended to be used to provide educational value beyond that provided by a single institution.

2. INTEGRATED PROGRAMS

Integrated programs are those where the various elements of the degree (such as courses) are jointly designed and delivered by the partner institutions. These programs are logistically complex to develop, and the numerous administrative details must be articulated carefully before the proposal can be approved.

3. APPROVAL OF SHARED-CREDENTIAL PROPOSALS

The University will approve the establishment of shared-credential programs using a five-part process:

- a. Partner institution(s) will be approved by the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) as a part of the vetting process for the *Memorandum of Understanding*, in accordance with the *Contract Review and Signing Authority Policy*, its procedures, and existing processes for the approval of partner institutions.
- b. References to partner institutions on the degree parchment will be approved in accordance with the *Parchment Procedure*.
- c. Whether the program will result in a single degree or multiple degrees will be decided in accordance with the normal program approval process within the University of Alberta.
- d. The academic program proposal must be approved in accordance with the normal program approval process within the University of Alberta. Programs may also need to be approved by the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology.
- e. Resource commitments required from the University's administration must be approved by the Provost.

DEFINITIONS

Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only with no implied or intended institution-wide use. [▲Top](#)

Shared-credential Program	A program of study that leads to degree(s) where the name of the University of Alberta is cited on the degree parchment awarded by another institution, and/or the name of another institution is cited on a University of Alberta degree parchment, in accordance with the University's <i>Parchment Procedure</i> .
Overlapping Program	A program in which the student satisfies the requirements of existing degrees at their home institution, and possibly all the partner institutions, through the agreed-upon institutional mechanism of accepting a certain amount of the work done by the student at the partner institution(s) under a formal agreement.
Integrated Program	A program for which the partner institutions collectively design and deliver the curriculum and a significant number of the courses and content.

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PUBLISHED PROCEDURES OF THIS POLICY

[Overlapping Programs Proposal Procedure](#)