

Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University

**INTERNATIONAL AFFILIATION
AND ACCREDITATION**

PREFACE

International Affiliation and Accreditation Plan describes the role of international affiliations in achieving the PMU's educational objectives related to international studies and global understanding. Types of affiliation agreements are discussed and illustrated. Since affiliation, in many cases, depends on accreditation. The volume focuses on accreditation and the accreditation processes.

An understanding of a culture or region of the world other than one's own is an important part of a modern education and a key to developing future leaders in an increasingly interdependent global society. For this reason, Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University (PMU) seeks to make global studies an integral part of the university's mission. This is accomplished by providing opportunities for education through institutional affiliations that can provide study abroad, university exchange programs, and services for students and faculty in collaboration with international partners.

Since many collaborative efforts require accreditation by an independent accrediting organization, PMU initiates activities leading to the accreditation of programs.

Dr. Issa AlAnsari

University President

Prince Mohammed Bin Fahad University

Contents

I.	<u>INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION</u>	4
A.	<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	4
B.	<u>CREATING INTERNATIONAL AFFILIATIONS</u>	4
C.	<u>TYPES OF INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATIONS</u>	5
D.	<u>CONSIDERATIONS AND CONTRACTS</u>	7
E.	<u>TIMELINE FOR AFFILIATIONS</u>	9
F.	<u>CONCLUSION</u>	9
II.	<u>ACCREDITATION</u>	10
A.	<u>DEFINITION AND PURPOSE</u>	10
B.	<u>ACCREDITATION IN THE Saudi Arabia</u>	10
C.	<u>International Accreditation</u>	12
D.	<u>ACCREDITATION OF ENGINEERING AND IT PROGRAMS</u>	13
E.	<u>ACCREDITATION OF BUSINESS PROGRAMS</u>	14
F.	<u>ACCREDITATION OF INTERIOR DESIGN PROGRAMS</u>	18
III.	<u>SUMMARY</u>	19
IV.	<u>APPENDICES</u>	20
Appendix A:	<u>Memorandum of Understanding</u>	20
Appendix B:	<u>International Student Exchange Agreement</u>	22
Appendix C:	<u>Specific Double Degree Agreement between Universities</u>	25

I. INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION

A. INTRODUCTION

In today's world, our success as individuals and as professionals depends in large part on how well we understand other people, nations, cultures, and languages. It is imperative, therefore, that higher education institutions around the globe offer more international experiences, both on and off campus. Universities must focus, as part of their mission, on providing the international education students need to live and compete in the 21st century. An important part of the process is to develop partnerships with other universities around the globe. Such partnerships can enrich and expand the teaching, research, and service missions of the university. It can provide students and faculty an opportunity to broaden their educational experience by studying and working with individuals and within countries whose culture is one other than their own.

PMU benefits substantially by developing partnerships that enhance its mission and programs. With the globalization of commerce and industry, the university works to position itself to include an international dimension in its academic endeavors and strategic plans.

B. CREATING INTERNATIONAL AFFILIATIONS

1. Laying the Groundwork

The partnering process begins with the establishment of mutual interests between two institutions. This can occur for a variety of reasons including the commonality of institutional missions and programs or the desire for collaboration by individual faculty members or departments. Once the establishment of a partnership has been agreed upon, the link necessary to implement a shared program is an affiliation agreement. The agreement can include all institutional programs or it can address needs related to a specific college or department within the university.

Beyond a common ground of mission and programs, successful affiliations typically share a number of characteristics:

- Proposed affiliates must be institutions of unquestioned integrity and academic standing that will bring to the relationship educational experiences to enhance programs at the university and provide opportunities not available through on-campus programs alone.
- Affiliate institutions are usually similar in size, scope of programs, and quality.
- In many instances, programs of interest for affiliation and exchange may be accredited by a professional accreditation organization. Examples would be the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) and the Association of Advanced Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).

Other factors the university considers when establishing partnerships are the adequacy of facilities available to visiting faculty and students to ensure their success academically, socially, and culturally at the partner institution. The location and accessibility of the partner university is also considered.

2. Entering into Affiliations

An international affiliation is a formal or informal contract or agreement between one academic institution and another that provides for activities such as academic personnel exchanges, student exchanges, study abroad programs, collaborative research projects, or technical assistance. PMU enters into affiliation agreements only when the university leadership has determined that the benefits and contributions of such affiliations will substantially enrich and expand the teaching and research programs on the campus.

3. Formal and Informal Agreements

Affiliations typically are of two kinds: formal and informal.

Formal affiliations are those that include a commitment of university resources in support of the cooperative activities. Informal affiliations are direct collegial relationships among faculty, students, or administrators of the two institutions.

Informal affiliations can be extremely useful and are, like formal affiliations, authorized by appropriate administrators at participating institutions. It is formal affiliations, however, that are the subject of this report, as this type of arrangement involves an investment of resources and contractual obligations. It is the formal affiliation that requires the most planning from the administration and that must be carefully aligned with the university's goals and mission.

4. Benefits to Faculty and Students

International linkages are an important way for PMU to establish academic and cultural relationships with institutions of higher education around the globe. Such affiliations enhance and promote a multicultural quality of life on each campus, while providing opportunities for students and faculty to spend time abroad as an integral part of their academic experience. For these reasons, the university pursues the development of affiliations with high quality universities around the world and promote arrangements for student and faculty exchange as part of the institutional mission. Since PMU's academic structure and curriculum are modeled after American universities, initial affiliation agreements are considered with universities in the United States, but the plan expands globally to reach a collaboration plan that is highly diverse and enriching.

C. TYPES OF INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATIONS

There are many varieties of formal agreements, but they generally fall into two categories:

1. Memorandum of Understanding

In a memorandum of understanding (MOU), institutions typically express an interest in fostering goodwill and furthering academic cooperation. While similar in some respects to program-specific agreements in that it does not involve financial obligations or specific targeted commitments, the MOU usually does involve a written statement of general cooperation across a range of disciplines. Memoranda of understanding often lead to more specific agreements in the future.

An example of a memorandum of understanding is shown in Appendix A.

2. Affiliation Agreement

The second type of agreement that may or may not be appended to a memorandum of understanding is an affiliation agreement related to a specific program. These are usually contractual agreements that specify commitments for collaboration, exchanges or special undertakings such as research, seminars, or clinics. The contracts entered into require careful consideration since they will define institutional commitments of resources and the acceptance of certain obligations. These agreements are most commonly used with a single partner institution, but they can, on occasion, involve a consortium of universities.

Several types of affiliation agreements exist, as follows:

a) Student Exchange/ Study Abroad Agreements

These agreements arise after detailed negotiation between two institutions. They generally provide for reciprocity in which more or less equal numbers of students are exchanged over a given time period. An additional provision will usually stipulate the academic qualifications required for the students accepted. In most circumstances, students will register and remain enrolled at their home institution during their study-abroad experience.

An example of a student exchange agreement is shown in Appendix B.

b) International Independent Student Exchange Program (ISEP)

The International Independent Student Exchange Program (ISEP) is an independent, non-profit organization incorporated in the District of Columbia in the United States. Its purpose is to coordinate and facilitate the reciprocal exchange of students among member institutions of higher education in the United States and other countries. In this case, rather than establishing an agreement with a single university for exchange of students, an ISEP member institution in the United States can arrange for student exchanges with any of the approved institutions in other countries. Participation in ISEP is open to accredited institutions (United States regional accreditation) in the United States and in other countries that have been approved for membership.

PMU aims for the possibility of becoming a member institution in ISEP. Information on the terms of participation in ISEP and a list of member institutions can be found at www.isep.org.

c) Credit Transfer Agreement

These agreements provide for the transfer for an agreed-upon number of credits for courses taken at a partner institution. Such agreements are subject to close scrutiny of the course content, faculty qualifications, and appropriate accreditation credentials. As a general rule, programs accredited by an official accrediting agency are able to affiliate only with programs that are similarly accredited.

d) Joint research agreements

International activity is often initiated by faculty for the purpose of cooperating on research projects that may or may not have an external sponsor. These projects may involve signed grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements under which the university undertakes a defined commitment according to specific terms and conditions and budgeted financial compensation. Research agreements can be negotiated and drawn up as required. Among other things, they must contain provisions for the course of the project and must stipulate the responsibilities of the parties for meeting costs. Also included should be a description of the need or desirability of the joint effort as well as qualifications of the participating faculty members. Other considerations are the location of the research activity, how publications will be authored, and a budget indicating source of funds. Additionally, parties will generally agree to the exchange of books, journals, and other official publications and research information generated by either of the parties in connection with the agreement.

e) Articulation agreements

An articulation agreement is one that exists between institutions in support of a joint or double degree involving a cooperative academic program. These agreements describe in detail the responsibilities of each institution and the specific degree requirements and plan of study for students registered in the program. In most cases a single diploma is awarded jointly by the two universities. Other programs may award two diplomas, one from each participating institution. Articulation agreements are usually not implemented until the institutions have worked together in various exchange programs for a number of years. An example articulation agreement between Texas Tech University and the

Technical University of Denmark is shown in Appendix C.

D. CONSIDERATIONS AND CONTRACTS

1. Considerations in Creating Affiliations

When developing any agreement or contract for university cooperation, a number of logistical and cost issues are considered. For example, agreements that include student or faculty visits must identify teaching and research obligations and outline carefully the procedures by which individuals are selected to participate. When travel between countries is involved, special attention must be given to the cost of transportation as well as other costs of participation.

Whether or not they become a part of the final agreement, there are several items which should always be considered for inclusion or, in some instances, specific exclusion. Examples are the following:

- Round trip international airfare
- In-country transportation
- Housing and dining
- Salaries, taxes, and fringe benefits
- Health insurance
- Passport and visa requirements and fees
- Immunizations
- Cost of accompanying dependents
- Moving expenses

Agreements to enable exchange of students also must address practical concerns such as tuition and fees, books and educational materials, academic credits, visitor status, and access to facilities and services.

2. Contractual Issues

It is necessary for contracts that establish cooperative agreements between or among institutions to include specific points so that all issues are clearly understood and agreed upon. Some items that must be included are the following:

a. **Parties**

The agreement must specifically and accurately name the university and university units involved in the agreement as well as naming the international partner. Names of individuals responsible for oversight of the program, as well as those with approval authority, must be provided for each institution as well.

b. **Purpose**

The contract should include a precise statement of the purpose of the agreement and a clause specifying the benefits, responsibilities, and obligations of both parties in the agreement.

c. **Operation**

A description of the specific projects or exchanges which are to be carried out under the agreement must be specified along with a general plan of operation.

d. **Duration**

The agreement must state a finite duration of the cooperative arrangement and provide for a review leading to renewal for an additional period of time. Also included should be a timetable for specific activities.

e. **Costs**

A detailed budget must be provided which includes both sources of funds and an itemized list of expenditures for each participating university. Examples of budgeted items are given in section D.1, Considerations in Creating Affiliations, of this report.

f. **Limitations of financial commitment**

Agreements must include a statement limiting the financial commitments of the university to available funding and to the specific contractual terms of the agreement.

g. Adherence to university policy

The agreement should make clear that neither institution may take any action contrary to established academic policy, procedures, and practices of the other institution.

h. Amendments

Agreements also must include procedures for amending the terms of the contract if the parties agree that such amendments should be made. This would usually follow a periodic review to decide if the program is meeting its goals and objectives, or if revisions are required.

i. Termination

Any agreement should include a clause that describes in detail the procedures necessary and the notice time required for either party to exit the agreement.

3. Recommendations

PMU administration considers carefully the contractual issues involved in establishing international agreements. While all agreements are similar in form and address a number of common issues, there may be specific items related to PMU policies or the laws governing institutions in Saudi Arabia that must be included. These issues must be resolved before any agreement can be ratified.

E. TIMELINE FOR AFFILIATIONS

Whereas there are no specific restrictions on when or with whom affiliation agreements can be negotiated, certain practical issues must be considered. Initially, the university administration, working with the faculty, must establish policies and guidelines regarding the various types of international affiliations. In addition to this, consideration must be given to the accreditation of certain professional programs before the planning for collaborative efforts can proceed.

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that a timeline be established when establishing a strategic plan to guide the development of international exchange activities. An example of such a schedule is as follows:

- Within the first stage, a list of new potential exchange partners should be provided.
- Within the third and fourth years, memoranda of understanding with new institutions should be established. Also, the updates on accreditation status should guide further steps.
- Discussions of affiliation and specific agreements can be established with institutions that have been similar accreditation.

F. CONCLUSION

This section of the report has described the many ways that individuals and units of PMU and foreign academic institutions can cooperate. Most successful programs are driven by common academic interests between one department or college and a counterpart at a foreign university.

As cooperation require accreditation, the next section of the report describes the process of accreditation and the requirements for becoming an accredited institution or program.

II. ACCREDITATION

A. DEFINITION AND PURPOSE

Accreditation is an external review process whose purpose is to assess the qualitative characteristics of either a university as a whole, or to assess specific programs offered by the university. Accreditation provides a mechanism to measure the overall educational experience of a student in reference to a set of standards and criteria that pertain consistently to all other universities that have undergone an accreditation assessment. Accreditation not only evaluates quality assurance, but it is intended to stimulate quality improvement. The accreditation process may be applied to other organizations and institutions that offer educational programs such as museums and hospitals. Seeking accreditation is voluntary but lack of accreditation can have negative consequences.

B. ACCREDITATION IN THE Saudi Arabia

The National Center for Academic Accreditation and Evaluation (NCAAA) has been established in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with responsibility for determining standards and criteria for academic accreditation and assessment and for accrediting postsecondary institutions and the programs they offer. NCAAA is committed to a strategy of encouraging, supporting, and evaluating the quality assurance processes of postsecondary institutions to ensure that quality of learning and management of institutions are equivalent to the highest international standards.

1. Source of Authority

The NCAAA has responsibility under its By-Laws for establishing standards and for accreditation of all postsecondary institutions and all postsecondary programs other than military education. Its responsibility relates to both institutions as a whole and to the individual programs they offer.

NCAAA is an independent authority reporting directly to the Higher Council of Education. Its role is separate from that of the Ministries and other government agencies to which institutions are administratively accountable and which may establish regulations and reporting requirements for the institutions for which they are responsible.

NCAAA's responsibilities relate to quality issues, which include the resources available, processes followed, the quality of services provided and the quality of student learning. NCAAA has established required standards in broad areas of activity, and has developed a national qualifications framework that specifies foundational standards of learning outcomes for each level of qualifications. It expects institutions to establish internal quality assurance systems that ensure high levels of quality in all of these areas. Quality assurance internal systems must include processes of strategic planning in relation to appropriately defined institutional mission statements, and short term and long term planning and reporting procedures based on evidence of quality of performance. Evidence-based self-studies must be undertaken to assess performance and plan for improvement. These self-studies are followed by independent external peer reviews that verify the conclusions of the self-studies and consider performance in relation to international standards. NCAAA considers the reports from these independent external reviews in making its decisions on accreditation. Institutions and programs, after they have achieved full recognition and accreditation, will be reviewed once every seven years.

2. Institutional Accreditation

At the institutional level, the accreditation process is developed and administered by NCAAA. All accreditation reviews involve these common elements:

- **Standards:** The accrediting agency, in collaboration with educational institutions, establishes standards of performance and evaluation criteria. NCAAA institutional quality assurance and academic accreditation standards, include the following standards:
 - 1) Mission, Vision, and Strategic Planning
 - 2) Governance, leadership, and Management
 - 3) Teaching and Learning
 - 4) Students
 - 5) Faculty and Staff
 - 6) Institutional Resources
 - 7) Research and Innovation
 - 8) Community Partnership
- **Self-Study:** The institution or program seeking accreditation prepares an in-depth self-evaluation study that measures its performance against the standards established by the NCAAA. It also provides an opportunity for the institution or program to describe its objectives, its various activities, and level of progress it has attained.
- **Peer Review:** The actual evaluation of the institution or program is conducted by faculty, administrators, and others such as practicing professionals who have knowledge of the criteria and the program characteristics.
- **On-site Evaluation:** A team of knowledgeable reviewers, selected by the accrediting agency, visits the institution or program in order to establish an independent assessment of the program quality through interviews, review of documents, and visual observations.
- **Action and Publication:** Upon being satisfied that the applicant meets its standards, NCAAA makes a final judgment of the situation based on the recommendations of the review team and other documentation. NCAAA will list the status of the institution or program in an official publication with other similarly accredited or pre-accredited institutions or programs. Accreditation is given for a fixed length of time.
- **Monitoring:** NCAAA provides ongoing monitoring and oversight of each accredited institution or program to verify that it continues to meet the agency's standards and to examine substantive changes and quality improvements.
- **Reevaluation:** NCAAA periodically reevaluates each institution or program for continued recognition of its accreditation status.

3. Program Accreditation

In order to emphasize the vital role played by NCAAA in supporting higher education institutions and programs, and in enhancing their ability to meet the standards of quality assurance and academic accreditation, NCAAA has prepared standards for programs to conduct evaluation objectively based on the Center's quality assurance standards for higher education programs.

Programmatic quality assurance and academic accreditation standards, include the following standards:

- 1) MISSION AND GOALS
- 2) PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE
- 3) TEACHING AND LEARNING
- 4) STUDENTS
- 5) TEACHING STAFF
- 6) LEARNING RESOURCES, FACILITIES, AND EQUIPMENT

The quality assurance and continuous improvement of educational programs is based on the self-evaluation carried out by the program and its various units based on the quality performance criteria. The faculty and staff responsible for the various activities in the program evaluate the level of performance according to these criteria and based on suitable evidence and proofs, with the support of performance indicators and benchmark comparisons with other programs of high-quality performance, especially in areas of high importance. This self-evaluation is supported by independent opinion through an independent evaluator or evaluators from outside the institution; to enhance the credibility, objectivity and accuracy of the evaluation.

Discipline-specific or program accreditation is generally conducted by the profession involved.

C. International Accreditation

In engineering and information technology, 27 of the various engineering and IT professional societies have developed an accreditation system through the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET).

For business-related programs, two organizations provide accreditation. These are the Association of Advanced Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB-International), and the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). Since accreditation is a voluntary process, the program administrators can choose which type of accreditation they wish to pursue, if any.

For interior design programs, the accrediting organization is the Foundation for Interior Design Education Research (FIDER). This organization restricts its accreditation activities to the U.S. and Canada.

All professional program accreditation systems have common elements that are very similar to the factors used for institutional accreditation. These are:

- A self-study to be completed prior to evaluation
- Submission of the supporting data required
- An on-site visit by a review team of knowledgeable evaluators
- Preparation of a report on the program by the reviewers
- A due-process component providing the institution or program with an opportunity to correct any factual errors in the initial draft report
- A final report that is submitted to the accreditation organization
- Action by the accreditation organization on the accreditation status of the program. This action could require the institution or program to submit more information at a later date or be revisited after a time less than the full accreditation term.
- The institution is given the final report.

D. ACCREDITATION OF ENGINEERING AND IT PROGRAMS

1. Programs Accredited by ABET

The Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET), founded in 1932 as the Engineers Council for Professional Development, is the only organization in the U.S that accredits:

- Engineering programs
- Engineering technology programs
- Computer-related areas such as computer science, computer engineering, information systems, software engineering and similar titles
- Applied science programs such as industrial management, safety, surveying, health physics and industrial hygiene

The institution can choose which programs it wishes to have reviewed for accreditation, and not all must be examined at the same time. ABET is recognized by both USED and CHEA, and currently accredits some 2,700 programs at over 550 colleges and universities in the U.S.

2. ABET and International Programs

ABET does not specifically accredit international programs. However, it has a process known as “Substantial Equivalency” whereby ABET evaluates and recognizes international programs in engineering, engineering technology, and computing. The Substantial Equivalency designation means that the program has been judged to meet the general standards expected of a similar program in the U.S., and that the graduates of such a program have the knowledge and skills that are equivalent to graduates of an accredited U.S. program. The Substantial Equivalency process is designed to acknowledge that many countries do not have the same educational systems at the primary and secondary levels as the U.S., and thus, this process allows for recognizing such differences.

For programs that have not undergone a Substantial Equivalency review, ABET will provide a consultant who is a highly experienced program reviewer to examine the characteristics of the program. The consultant will study the nature of the program and compare the program to the criteria used for U.S. accreditation. The consultant will make suggestions relative to how well the program appears to meet the criteria used in a Substantial Equivalency formal review. The consultant will usually spend from three to five days on the campus discussing the program with the administration, interviewing faculty and students, reviewing course materials and examining facilities, especially laboratories and support facilities such as computer systems and the library. The consultant will provide the university a report of findings and a list of suggestions for improvement.

ABET will not consider evaluating a program for Substantial Equivalency without at least one graduating class having completed the curriculum. One issue the reviewer would examine is whether the graduates actually do take the prescribed curriculum and what exceptions are made, if any. Thus, it is essential for at least one graduating class to have completed the degree requirements in order to make this assessment. Substantial Equivalency, if granted, will be for a set term not to exceed six years.

E. ACCREDITATION OF BUSINESS PROGRAMS

Two organizations in the U.S. accredit business programs. They are AACSB International (*The Association of Advance Collegiate Schools of Business*) and ACBSP (*The Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs*). AACSB also has a separate accreditation process for accounting programs. Both AACSB and ACBSP are recognized by both the USDE and CHEA.

1. AACSB International (The Association of Advance Collegiate Schools of Business)

AACSB International has been accrediting business programs since 1919. As of January, 2005, a total of 494 institutions hold AACSB accreditation including 166 that have both business and accounting accreditation. Sixty-nine institutions outside of the U.S. hold AACSB accreditation.

Most of the prominent business schools in the U.S. have AACSB accreditation. It is designed for those institutions that have research interests and programs. AACSB does not accredit institutions that award collegiate degrees at the associate level only (commonly two-year programs) and does not review associate level degrees at any institution.

a) Accreditation for both undergraduate and graduate programs

Unless specifically excluded by AACSB, all programs offered by the institution will be reviewed for accreditation in which at least 25% of the teaching of undergraduate programs or 50% or more of the teaching of graduate programs is in traditional business programs.

AACSB does not permit institutions to choose only certain programs to be reviewed for accreditation. It requires all programs to be reviewed that fit the above criteria. Degree programs offered by distance education would also be required to be reviewed.

Another condition of eligibility for AACSB accreditation is that, “a majority of business graduates shall be from programs that have produced graduates during at least two years.” This means that new programs must have at least two consecutive years of graduates to be considered for accreditation.

b) The AACSB Process

The AACSB accreditation process incorporates an advisor who assists the university in preparing the materials for evaluation by the peer review team. This individual works with both the university and the review team to assure that the right materials are produced and that an accurate evaluation of the program is made.

c) AACSB in Saudi Arabia

The following university in Saudi Arabia is accredited by AACSB for its business programs:

- King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals

d) Obtaining Information from AACSB

Further information on AACSB accreditation can be obtained from:

AACSB International

777 South Harbour Blvd., Suite 750

Tampa, FL 33602-5729

Telephone: 813-769-6500

Fax: 813-769-6559

Website: www.aacsb.edu

Information on accreditation standards is available for download in PDF format at the following site:

<http://www.aacsb.edu/accreditation/standards.asp>

Information on the accreditation process is posted at the following site:

<http://www.aacsb.edu/accreditation/standards.asp>

Documents for the accreditation process in PDF format can be downloaded at the following site:

<http://www.aacsb.edu/accreditation/standards.asp>

Accreditation guidelines in PDF format can be downloaded at the following site:

<http://www.aacsb.edu/accreditation/process/accreditation-guidelines.asp>

2. ACBSP (The Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs)

ACBSP was founded in 1988 for the purpose of providing an accreditation process for colleges and universities whose primary purpose was teaching and education with much less emphasis than AACSB on research and scholarly activities. ACBSP will accredit both two-year and four-year institutions, and thus will accredit associate degree programs as well as bachelors and masters degrees. Currently, about 150 two-year institutions and 145 four-year institutions have their business programs accredited by ACBSP.

a) The ACBSP Process for New Programs

ACBSP has a candidacy process which is designed to aid new programs in the preparation of application for accreditation. It involves a mentor assigned to the university by ACBSP who helps the institution with understanding the accreditation process and how the criteria are applied. The candidacy process can extend from a few months to several years depending on the level of development of the business programs.

b) The ACBSP Process for Existing Programs

Programs must have been in existence at least two years to be considered for accreditation. Accreditation, if granted, extends up to 10 years depending on the circumstances found during the evaluation process.

c) ACBSP in Saudi Arabia

ACBSP has an International Council which is responsible for the management of the accreditation process for universities beyond the U.S. Currently, no programs in Saudi Arabia are accredited by ACBSP. The closest accredited programs are associated with the Higher Colleges of Technology in the United Arab Emirates.

d) Obtaining Information from AACSB

More information on the ACBSP accreditation system can be obtained from:

Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs

7007 College Blvd., Suite 420

Overland Park, KS 66211

Telephone: 913-339-9356

Fax: 913-339-6226

Website: www.acbsp.org

Information on outcomes-based assessment (including downloadable documents in PDF format) is posted at the following site:

http://www.acbsp.org/index.php?mo=st&op=ld&sid=s1_020acc&stpg=225

Documents in PDF format on topics including accreditation process, cost, and standards for baccalaureate and graduate programs can be downloaded at the following site:

http://www.acbsp.org/index.php?mo=st&op=ld&sid=s1_020acc&stpg=23

Downloadable documents in PDF format regarding site visits by evaluators can be downloaded at the following site:

http://www.acbsp.org/index.php?mo=st&op=ld&sid=s1_020acc&stpg=247

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the PMU prepare to seek accreditation of its business-related program from AACSB-Intern-

tional. Such accreditation will position the PMU with the major business colleges in the U.S. and provides the opportunity for PMU students to have courses taken at PMU transfer to major U.S. universities. This would be especially helpful for PMU graduates who seek admission to U.S. university graduate programs.

To qualify for AACSB accreditation, the faculty members of College of Business Administration will need to have research programs that result in publication of significant results in appropriate journals, and other evidence of scholarly activities.

If the PMU does not intend to have research as a part of its business-related programs, then the recommendation would be for the PMU to seek accreditation through ACBSP.

To simplify the accreditation process, it is recommended that the PMU College of Business Administration modify its degree offerings to have a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree with majors in Business Administration, Finance, and Management Information Systems rather than a separate degree in each of the above fields. The purpose of this recommendation is that only one review team would be required for examining the accreditation of the single B.S. degree, whereas a separate review team is required by AACSB if separate degrees are offered. This recommendation will greatly reduce the time and effort required by the PMU to have these programs evaluated and should not change the nature of the programs themselves. The different majors can be established at different times and need not all be initiated simultaneously.

The Executive MBA program will be evaluated concurrently with the B.S. degree programs since AACSB requires accreditation review for all programs with 50% or more of graduate teaching in traditional business programs.

The B.S. degree in Accounting will be reviewed separately from those in other areas of business administration.

AACSB requires two graduating classes to have occurred before a new program will be considered for accreditation. It is recommended, however, that the PMU designate one or more administrators or faculty to become familiar with AACSB process and procedures as the programs are being generated. This is to make sure that these graduates will have the course work and other educational experiences necessary for an accredited program.

F. ACCREDITATION OF INTERIOR DESIGN PROGRAMS

The Foundation for Interior Design Education Research (FIDER) was established in 1970 to develop standards and a process for accreditation of interior design programs. FIDER limits its accreditation activities to the U.S. and Canada. No other U.S. interior design accreditation organization exists. Information related to FIDER accreditation can be obtained from:

Foundation for Interior Design Education Research

146 Monroe Center NW, Suite 1318

Grand Rapids, MI 49503-2822

Telephone: 616-458-0400

Fax: 616-458-0460

Website: www.fider.org

A brief description of the FIDER accreditation process is posted at the following site:

<http://www.fider.org/accreditation.htm>

1. Recommendations

Although FIDER does not accredit programs beyond the U.S. and Canada, it is recommended that the PMU administration and faculty associated with the interior design program become familiar with the criteria and conditions used by FIDER for accreditation, and that they use these characteristics to guide the development of the PMU program. This will position the university to seek FIDER accreditation if in the future FIDER establishes an international accreditation system.

III. SUMMARY

The international education community is more closely linked today than ever before. There are essentially two reasons this has occurred. The first is related to need. The other is related to ease of access.

With respect to need, it has become essential in today's world that students are exposed to international business, economics, technology, and culture, and it is expected that this need will only increase with time. The other factor is the availability and ease of communication resulting from the establishment of the Internet. This environment has provided easy access among universities around the globe and among professional colleagues who staff these institutions.

By establishing global institutional affiliations, PMU can become an integral part of the international community of institutions of higher education by participating in cooperative programs of teaching and research and exchanging both faculty and students in the process.

By pursuing accreditation for its professional programs, the university can ensure its students of an education that prepares them to meet global professional standards. It also can facilitate its institutional affiliations, since many of these collaborations are dependent upon appropriate program accreditation.

IV. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Memorandum of Understanding

Memorandum of Understanding

Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University

Al-Khobar, Saudi Arabia

and

Representatives of **Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University** and _____ have discussed the desirability and feasibility of an interactive relationship designed to strengthen the bonds between the two institutions. This memorandum of understanding is intended to help facilitate an international exchange of faculty and students, research data, and educational and development programs. Conceived as a continuing relationship, the agreement is expected to be formally reviewed periodically to assure that all parties are sufficiently benefiting and that desirable modifications are introduced:

OBJECTIVES:

1. To cooperate in the further development of the institutions, especially with regard to academic programs and research activities.
2. To broaden the experience of faculty and students of the institutions, providing them with opportunities for increased cultural understanding.

OPERATION:

1. The institutions mutually agree to exchange information, faculty, and students in both academic and research programs.
2. The institutions will formulate specific action agreements to assist in creating and operating academic and research programs.
3. The institutions will explore ways and means to finance joint projects through special government and other funding sources.

This Memorandum of Understanding, as well as succeeding plans of cooperation, shall be effective after approval by the appropriate authorities of both institutions. Either party may terminate the agreement by serving written notice one year prior to the anticipated termination date.

Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University

Partner Institution

Rector

President

Date

Date

Appendix B: International Student Exchange Agreement

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE AGREEMENT ADDENDUM TO MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Agreement is made and entered into on the date of the final signature hereto, by and between Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University and the University of _____.

Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University and the University of _____ hereby agree to an exchange of students for the purposes of furthering the inter-cultural education of our students. The faculty coordinator of this exchange at Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University is _____ and the faculty coordinator at the University of _____ is _____.

I. Selection of Participants

- A. All students shall be bona fide students of the home institution and be engaged in a degree-oriented course of study. Prospective students will be selected for the exchange by the faculty coordinator at the participant's home institution. The host institution will reserve the right to make the final decision regarding the admission of each student nominated for the exchange. Selection for or participation in the exchange does not confer the right to pursue a degree at the host institution.
- B. At least six months before the anticipated date of enrollment, the number of students exchanged that particular year will be decided mutually.
- C. The Universities agree that the exchange program shall operate on a reciprocal basis. Parity in numbers of exchange students is required over the term of the agreement. However, each party should be prepared to consider a disparity in any given semester or year during the term of agreement. Any imbalances should be resolved by the end of the following academic year.

II. Admission

- A. Exchange participants hosted by each institution will be admitted as visiting, non-degree-seeking students, will have the undergraduate admissions application fee waived, and must submit all documents requested by the respective institutions.
- B. Students must possess the language ability necessary to fulfill their academic plan.
- C. The cooperating universities should receive participants' applications and all supporting documents six months prior to their expected date of enrollment.

III. Fee Payment and Accommodation

- A. Students will pay the normal tuition fees at their home university for the period of the exchange. The host institution will waive tuition fees for participating students. If students of unlike academic status are exchanged (for example, undergraduate for graduate) and there is a cost differential, the student whose tuition is greater is responsible for paying the difference.

- B. Students participating in the exchange will be required to pay any international student fees required of all international students.
- C. The host university will assist the exchange students in finding housing in residence halls or alternative accommodation as may be necessary. Students are responsible for the cost of their accommodation.
- D. Exchange participants are responsible for arranging and paying for their own in-country and international travel, medical insurance, passport and visa application fees, textbooks, and personal items.

IV. Other Related Articles

- A. Exchange participants hosted by each institution will be required to comply with the insurance policies and procedures for international students.
- B. Exchange participants shall be entitled to participate in any course offered by the host institution in accordance with university policies and procedures.
- C. Selected students shall abide by all applicable rules and regulations of the home and host universities and by all applicable laws, rules and regulations of the home and host countries. In case of violation, either university has the right to terminate the student's participation in the exchange or the host university has the right to expel the student in question.

V. Validity of Agreement

- A. All modifications to this agreement must be in writing and signed by both parties.
- B. This addendum becomes effect when signed by representatives of the two universities and shall remain effective until the termination date of the *International Student Exchange Agreement* between the two parties. During the final year of the agreement, renewal for an additional five-year period will be considered. If the exchange is out-of-balance at the time any notice of renewal is given, a mutually agreed upon means of "balancing" the exchange must be achieved before the agreement can be renewed.
- C. Either party giving ninety (90) days written notice to the other party may terminate this addendum provided that such termination will not affect the completion of any activity underway at the time. If future activity has been advertised and either party has made commitments to students concerning such activity, such termination will not affect that activity. If the exchange is out-of-balance at the time the notice of termination is given, a mutually agreed upon means of "balancing" the agreement must be achieved before the agreement can be terminated.

On behalf of Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University

Rector

Date

On behalf of the University of _____

President

Date

Appendix C: Specific Double Degree Agreement between Universities

SPECIFIC DOUBLE DEGREE AGREEMENT IN ELECTRONIC AND ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

BETWEEN

THE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF DENMARK

AND

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY (USA)

Preamble

With reference to the General Agreement between the parties The Technical University of Denmark (henceforth named DTU) and the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, the Graduate School at Texas Tech University (henceforth named TTU) hereby agree to proceed with the exchange of students leading to double degrees under the following conditions:

Article 1. Aim of the agreement

The aim of the present agreement is to define the conditions and the modalities according to which the possibility is offered to students from both institutions to accomplish a part of their studies at the other institution and simultaneously obtain both diplomas.

Article 2. For the students of TTU

The students of TTU have to be admitted to the Master of Science Degree Program in Electrical Engineering at the Graduate School of TTU.

These students are allowed to perform the last 12-15 months of their study at DTU following a program leading to a master's degree in Electronic and Electrical Engineering. The work performed at DTU will be validated as 12 of the required semester hours of credit plus the M.Sc. thesis for obtaining the M.Sc. degree at TTU as long as faculty members of both institutions jointly supervise the thesis project performed at DTU.

In order to obtain the title of "Civilingeniør" with the subtitle "Elektroingeniør", the students from TTU are required to meet the following general conditions:

- The student must obtain at least 90 ECTS credit points at DTU
- The thesis project must be of at least 30 ECTS credit point and not more than 50 ECTS credit points. With the approval of the student's thesis supervisors, part of the thesis points can be accomplished at TTU.
- The subject for the thesis project must lie within the topic of Electronic and Electrical Engineering. The subject will be established in agreement of the two institutions. A professor at DTU is appointed as supervisor and a professor at TTU is appointed by TTU as co-supervisor.
- The thesis project must be carried out under the joint supervision and evaluation by the faculty members of both institutions. The thesis project is documented in a report, which is presented and defended before a panel of examiners consisting of a professor at DTU, an external examiner chosen by the Danish Committee of Examiners, and two members of the Graduate Faculty from TTU.
- The remaining 40-60 ECTS credit points must be chosen among courses defined for an appropriate specialization at DTU.

Article 3. For the Students of DTU

The students of DTU, who follow a five-year program leading to a master's degree in Electronic and Electrical Engineering and who have succeeded in their examinations of the first four years of their studies, are allowed to finalize their study by performing a 12-month program at the Graduate School at TTU leading to a master's degree in Electrical Engineering. These 12 months will be validated as 60 of the required ECT credit points for obtaining the title "Civilingeniør" with the subtitle "Electroingeniør" at DTU as long as the thesis project performed at TTU is jointly supervised and evaluated by the faculty members of both institutions.

In order to obtain the title of "M.Sc. in Electrical Engineering", the students from DTU are required to meet the following general conditions:

- The students have to be admitted to the Master of Science Degree Program in Electrical Engineering of the Graduate School of TTU.
- The students must obtain at least 12 semester hours of course work approved by the student's supervisors.
- The size of the thesis project must correspond to at least 30 and not more 50 ECTS credit points. With the approval of the student's supervisors, part of the thesis credit points can be accomplished at DTU.
- The subject for the thesis project must lie within the topic of Electronic and Electrical Engineering. The subject will be established in agreement of the two institutions. A professor at TTU is appointed by TTU as supervisor and a professor at DTU is appointed by DTU as co-supervisor.
- The thesis project must be carried out under the joint supervision and evaluation by faculty members of both institutions, and documented in a report, which is presented and defended before an advisory committee consisting of at least two members of the Graduate Faculty at TTU, a professor at DTU, and an external examiner chosen by the Danish Committee of Examiners.

Article 4. Selection of the candidates

Selection of the candidates will be done on the grounds of the academic records and, if necessary, by an interview performed by a mixed committee acting at the home university and chaired by a professor.

Article 5. Tutorage

The host university will appoint a person responsible for each student, acting as the main interlocutor during the stay.

Article 6. Program support

DTU and TTU will make the necessary measures in order to obtain the best possible financial support for the exchanges, e.g. from national and international authorities, foundations, and industrial sponsors.

The host university is responsible for helping the students to obtain the permissions to stay and study, etc. from their national authorities. This includes, if necessary, the permission to receive economical support from a sponsoring industrial company.

Article 7. Follow up

Responsible persons of both institutions will meet once a year in order to:

- Check the efficiency of the pedagogical action performed at both institutions.
- Draw up the results of the cooperation performed at both institutions.
- Propose new actions.

Article 8. Particular cases

The modalities of implementation will be stated explicitly for each particular double degree student. This statement encompasses both the administrative organization and the study program planned for each student.

Article 9. Duration of the agreement

This agreement will come into effect from the date of signature by both parties. It will remain in effect for a term of four years and shall be automatically renewed for successive terms of four years unless terminated by either

part by six months advance written notice. In this case, persons still engaged in activities begun before such a notice was given shall retain all rights conferred under this agreement until the activity in question is ended.

Article 10. **Budget**

No previous engagement is taken concerning the expenses involved in the program.

Article 11. **Governing language**

The governing language is English. Four copies of this agreement have been signed.

City / Day / Month / Year

By the DTU

The Rector

By the TTU

The President