



Beyond the MOU: Building Meaningful Partnerships ----University Prospective

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- Established in 1894
- 3,900 total enrollment/ 450 international
- Private & Research Institution
- Comprehensive: Arts, Business, Engineering, Health Science and Law.
- Academic Strength in Energy (Ranked #3 for Petroleum Engineering) and Cyber Security (Ranked #23)
- Global Partnerships in over 40 countries



| A meaningful partnership leads to activities, ownership and outcomes.

A document-only MOU

- Broad language with no priority
- Little faculty ownership
- No funding or resource plan
- No timeline
- Activity dependent on one office or one champion

A meaningful partnership needs

- Shared institutional priorities
- Faculty and staff commitment
- Resource support
- Action plan/Timeline
- Measurable deliverables and review points

I Stages of Partnership Development

- Identification
- Selection
- Formalization
- Cultivation
- Continuous improvement

Global Partnerships Considerations

- Thematic Priority
Guiding challenges, purpose or theme for the collaboration
- Reciprocity
Clear value propositions for both partners, mutual benefit
- Collaborative Advantages
Outcomes that could not be reached independently
- Relationships
Faculty champions, level of interest and energy, support from key stakeholders
- Readiness
Institutional capacity and resources

■ The partnership is stronger when stakeholders are engaged..

U.S.

Provost / SIO / global engagement office

Deans and **faculty**

Students

Research office/Graduate College

Study abroad

Admission

International/Country specific

President/VC/ senior leadership

Deans and department chairs

Faculty champions

Students

Government

Funding agency

Industry

Faculty will engage when the partnership supports teaching, research, student success, or community engagement.

Early-Stage Activities

- Virtual guest lecture
- Joint seminar/research talk
- Virtual case competition
- Joint class project

Sustained High Impact Programs

- Co-authored publications
- Graduate student co-supervision
- Joint research proposal/grant
- Joint research centers/Research partnership
- Faculty-led study abroad course development
- Degree pathway programs
- Workforce development programs

First 1–3 Months: Align Internally

- Identify owners and champions
- Academic fit
- Confirm shared priorities
- Complete legal, financial, and risk reviews

Common Challenges: unclear ownership, slow approvals, limited faculty interest

First Year: Move to Action

- Hold regular virtual meetings
- Create a shared plan
- Launch one or two achievable activities/pilot program
- Use faculty, staff, and student visits to deepen engagement

Common Challenges: conversations fade without clear next steps or plans, lack of funding or staff capacity

Long Term: Sustain or Revitalize

- Review progress annually
- Refresh priorities and identify new champions
- Restart dormant partnerships with one practical, low-cost activity

Common Challenges: Sustaining engagement as leadership, priorities, and resources change.

- Began through faculty connections and shared interests in language learning in 2000
- Student exchange and internship opportunities for over 20 years
- Expanded into interdisciplinary engagement in health care and engineering in 2010
- Supported joint research and publications/Seed grants from both institutions
- Developed the JumpStart TU program in Siegen in 2024
- Secured institutional and external funding support
- Hosted Fulbright scholars and visiting faculty
- staff exchanges and professional learning
- Celebrated 25 years of partnership through joint events and renewed commitments



- Start with shared priorities
- Build trust through small, achievable activities
- Engage faculty, students, and leadership
- Turn agreements into clear action plans
- Measure mutual benefit and lasting impact.

Questions ?

Thank you!

