

## GUIDELINES FOR SKIDMORE’S ACADEMIC AFFILIATIONS<sup>1</sup>

**The Purposes of an Academic Program Affiliation:** Affiliated programs offer students academic opportunities that are not available through the regular Skidmore curriculum – for example, through special programs abroad, domestic exchange programs, research facilities, courses, internships, and geographical and cultural resources. In addition, an affiliation may provide faculty with opportunities to develop teaching, research, or administrative interests.

**Standards for Affiliation Agreements:** Proposed and continuing affiliations must provide clear evidence of academic strength, of credible academic reputation, of appropriate study and other facilities, and of administrative and financial stability. Affiliations should enhance the academic mission of the College and should, over the course of time, sustain sufficient student and faculty participation. Proposals for an affiliation should include a schedule for regularly reviewing the above standards.

**Different Types of Affiliations:** We recognize four types of affiliations, distinguished from one another in the following ways:

- Skidmore Programs are those affiliations that include a significant Skidmore influence over the content and quality of the program: for example, through the on-site presence of Skidmore faculty or administration or through Skidmore-approved curricular or administrative structures. (See **OCSE**’s website for a current list of Skidmore Programs.)
- Approved Programs recognize the special academic value of another institution’s course offerings and other resources. In contrast to Skidmore Programs, the College does not shape or influence Approved Programs. Individual departments, in conjunction with the Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges, develop a list of international and/or domestic Approved Programs after careful consideration of a program’s credentials and reputation. Students attending an institution on the Approved Programs list pay tuition and fees to Skidmore and receive their financial aid or some portion of it. (See **OCSE**’s website for a current list of Approved Programs.)
- Articulation Agreements employ a combination of Skidmore courses and the courses of another institution to meet combined degree requirements. (See the Skidmore College Catalog, Preparation for Profession: Affiliated Programs and Other Agreements for active Articulation Agreements.)
- Exchange Programs are those affiliations in which students or faculty essentially trade places, usually on a “banking” system that assures equitable trades over the course of time. In order to receive academic credit, exchanges would need

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institutional review and approval and individual courses would need departmental review and approval. Typically the students pay tuition and fees to their home institution and receive their regular home-institution financial aid or some portion of it. (See **OCSE**'s website for a current list of Exchange Programs.)

### **Procedures for Proposing an Academic Affiliation:**

Members of the faculty or administration interested in establishing a new academic affiliation or making serious modifications to an existing affiliation should consult with the Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges and, for articulation agreements, with the Associate Dean of the Faculty for Academic Policy and Advising, who will coordinate information on all established or proposed academic affiliations. With the aid of the Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges or the Associate Dean of the Faculty for Academic Policy and Advising, the person or department proposing an affiliation will then present the proposal, consisting of the following, to CEPP:

- a) Full information on the proposed affiliated group or institution, including information on the institution's academic reputation, accreditation, faculty qualifications, and comparability of curriculum.
- b) A rationale for establishing the affiliation, including the need for, and potential student or faculty interest in, this particular program, the relationship of the program to the mission of the College, and the contributions the program would make to Skidmore's curricular offerings.
- c) Supporting opinion, as appropriate, from Skidmore faculty and departments and administrative offices.
- d) An outline of the proposed curricular and administrative structures, including the means of incorporating courses and grades into the Skidmore degree, financial costs to the student and to Skidmore, billing procedures, analysis of staffing implications (especially when faculty or staff are expected to coordinate, direct or teach in the program), and a description of the student application process and the selection criteria and procedures to be employed. Selection criteria should be commensurate with those administered for Skidmore by the Committee on Academic Standing or should present strong academic reasons for departing from these all-college criteria.
- e) A schedule for reviewing the program.

### **Approval and Review Process:**

CEPP will review all formal proposals for the four types of academic affiliations: Skidmore programs, approved programs, articulation agreements, and exchange programs. When supporting a proposed **Skidmore Program**, CEPP will take this proposal to the faculty for consideration and a faculty vote. CEPP may request that the faculty suspend the usual 30-day layover period to take advantage of an affiliation opportunity. CEPP will determine whether to take a major modification of an existing "Skidmore Program" to the faculty for a vote.

CEPP will review and approve proposals for **approved programs, articulation agreements, and exchange programs**, and will report these affiliations to the faculty. These three types of agreements do not require a faculty vote.

The appropriate department chairs, program directors, and the Curriculum Committee will review a proposal for affiliation for any Skidmore Program (or at least a substantial sample of these courses) before Skidmore acceptance. The Curriculum Committee will also review courses that a Skidmore Program wishes to add, within the constraints of unpredictable program changes at our host institutions. The Office of Off-Campus Study and Exchanges and/or the Office of the Dean of the Faculty and appropriate department chairs and program directors will give ongoing scrutiny to course changes within approved programs, articulation agreements, and exchange programs.

**The Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges and the Associate Dean of the Faculty for Academic Policy & Advising will keep information on all international and domestic academic affiliations, including copies of signed agreements.** The Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges and/or the Associate Dean will provide progress reports to CEPP whenever they are considering a new affiliation or serious modification of an existing affiliation.

CEPP will bring any decision to terminate a “Skidmore Program” to the faculty for a vote. CEPP will decide on the termination of an exchange program, articulation agreement, or approved program and report such decisions to the faculty.

#### **Course Credits and Grades:**

All courses and grades from all affiliated programs will appear on the Skidmore transcript. Only those affiliations designated as “Skidmore Programs” may treat affiliate courses as though they were Skidmore campus courses and only grades from “Skidmore Programs” may be calculated in the Skidmore GPA. Skidmore will treat other affiliate courses (from approved programs, articulation agreements, and exchange programs) as privileged transfer credits: that is, with faculty and Registrar approval in advance of the student’s involvement in the program, the course credits will be applied, as appropriate, toward the Skidmore degree (major, minor, all-college requirements, electives, and maturity level); moreover, all pre-approved 300-level courses will count toward the Skidmore maturity-level requirement of 24 semester hours of 300-level work. [See Notes.]

#### **Financial Aid:**

Those affiliations designated as “Skidmore Programs”, “approved programs” and “exchange programs” will apply all financial aid, including Skidmore grants, to the student’s participation in the program. All “articulation agreements” are eligible for Skidmore aid according to the availability of Skidmore funds and the applicability of student loans. (Note that the articulation agreements with graduate programs carry little or no implication for Skidmore financial aid.) Individual students must consult early in the application process with the Financial Aid Office to determine their aid eligibility. The Financial Aid Office will make every effort to support the student’s participation in an affiliated academic program. In keeping with established Skidmore policy, the

Financial Aid Office will base awards solely on the student's demonstrated financial need in relation to the actual costs of the program. [See Notes.]

### **Reporting to the College on Student Participation:**

To facilitate the process of reporting anticipated student participation in the various affiliations (e.g., to Student Accounts, the Registrar, Residential Life, faculty advisors), the Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges will report decisions on student applicants to the Committee on Academic Standing to assist them in determining student "status." The dates for such reporting will generally be (a) April 1 for Summer, Fall Semester, or Full Year off-campus study and (b) November 1 for Spring Semester off-campus study. The Committee on Academic Standing will then notify all appropriate offices and individuals of the students' anticipated change in status. [See Notes.]

### **Coordination of Affiliate Information:**

The Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges and the Associate Dean of the Faculty of Academic Policy & Advising will gather and, when appropriate, disseminate information on all Skidmore academic affiliations. These informational communications are not decision-making functions. The two offices will provide the College with an overview of its affiliations, advise faculty who want to propose a new affiliation, retain up-to-date information on program content and on administrative arrangements and contracts, and help make the affiliation opportunities more visible at the College (through coordinating advertising efforts).

## **NOTES AND RATIONALE**

Course Credits and Grades: This distinction in the treatment of courses and credits is based on the view that Skidmore should embrace "as its own" only those academic experiences over which it has some shaping authority or influence. The College should also, however, privilege other faculty-approved affiliate courses (for exchange programs, articulation agreements, and approved programs) in order to recognize their special academic status while distinguishing them from the College's own programs — thus the phrase "privileged transfer credits" used in the Guidelines.

Financial Aid: Skidmore makes distinctions in the division of aid to reflect a careful and strategic use of our financial aid resources. Given the growth in the number of "Skidmore Programs" available to our students on aid, and the relatively generous posture of these "Guidelines" toward the application of aid to a number of other affiliated programs, the opportunities for our financial aid students to study in selected U.S. and abroad programs have increased substantially. The College's changing financial situation may, of course, require revisions to financial aid policies in the future.

As a point of clarification, note that students who participate in off-campus programs of study, whether or not the programs are affiliated with Skidmore, can usually re-designate their federal loans and Pell grants for use on the off-campus programs. Skidmore may apply TAP monies only to programs of study operating in New York State.

Reporting to the College on Student Participation: The CAS is the logical group for gathering and disseminating information on changes in student status and for maintaining accurate student records. Further, using CAS as the conduit for such information relieves individual affiliate coordinators from the trouble of sending multiple lists and letters to various offices and individuals, (for example, to Student Accounts, the Registrar, and Residential Life).