

## Requirements to Develop an Educational Partnership Agreement

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) enters into formal agreements with external entities to advance the mission of the institution and to offer enhanced educational opportunities. These guidelines establish the institutional procedures for the development, approval, monitoring, and review of educational partnership agreements with external entities.

Educational partnerships should reflect UTRGV's commitment to integrity, academic quality, and compliance with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and program accreditation requirements. Educational partnerships may include, but are not limited to, joint or educational degree programs, articulation agreements, and agreements with local education agencies.

Each educational partnership agreement will have a UTRGV Sponsor responsible for developing and/or negotiating the initial terms and operational details of the agreement on behalf of the University and the person responsible for providing information and reports on the outcomes of the program. Before negotiating the terms of an educational partnership agreement with a partner, the UTRGV Sponsor will follow the approval process set forth below. This includes timely notification of the intent to enter into an educational partnership agreement to the University's employee designated as its SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison.

All educational partnerships presented for approval must document a plan for regularly assessing the outcomes of the agreement and for periodically evaluating the agreement's continued alignment to the University's mission. The University's Associate Vice President for Academic and Institutional Excellence (AVPAIE) is responsible for ensuring that the UTRGV Sponsor documents the annual assessment of the agreement's program outcomes and the periodic evaluation of the agreement against the University's mission and intended purpose of the agreement. Through this evaluation process, the University may choose to continue, modify, and discontinue the agreement.

Any UTRGV Sponsor contemplating activities with an educational partner should contact the Senior Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs (SAVPAA) for assistance at the earliest possible point in the planning process. The SAVPAA will help guide the UTRGV Sponsor on the requirements of entering into an educational partnership agreement.

The UTRGV Sponsor of an educational partnership agreement should follow the steps below:

Notification:

1. Notify their appropriate divisional college Dean of the purpose of the agreement and the commitments of entering into the agreement. Approval of the college Dean is required before the UTRGV Sponsor can initiate negotiation of the agreement.
2. Notify the UTRGV SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison about the proposed agreement.

Formal Agreement:

3. Complete the [Educational Partnerships Justification Form](#).
4. Prepare the agreement packet, including the actual agreement and justification, and send it via email to the Office of the SAVPAA. The Accreditation Liaison, the SAVPAA, and the Chief Legal Officer will review the agreement packet as needed.
5. Incorporate any feedback provided by the Accreditation Liaison, the SAVPAA, and the Chief Legal Officer.
6. After the final version of the agreement has been approved, send a copy of the approved, unsigned agreement to the educational partner for their review and signature.
7. After the educational partner returns the agreement with signatures, send the agreement to the SAVPAA assistant. The SAVPAA will obtain the signature of Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. Once signed, the SAVPAA will return the copy of the agreement to the UTRGV Sponsor. Only the UTRGV Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs has the authority to sign these agreements.
8. Send a copy of the signed agreement to the educational partner.

Evaluation of the Agreement:

9. On no less than an annual basis, submit an annual assessment report to the AVPAIE summarizing agreement outcomes, including student learning outcomes if applicable. The annual assessment report will be submitted using the [Educational Partnerships Report Form](#).
10. On a periodic basis, submit an evaluation to the AVPAIE showing whether the outcomes and activities of the educational partnership agreement remain aligned to the University's mission and intended purpose of the agreement. The annual assessment report will be submitted using the *Educational Partnerships Report* form on a logical schedule determined by the Associate Vice President for Institutional Accreditation.