

# Memorandum of Understanding

## Michigan Community College Association Michigan Colleges Online and Baccalaureate Completion Institutions

The well-being of our society and the foundation of our economy are well-educated citizens and workers, and as society becomes more global and complex, post-secondary education is increasingly vital to Michigan and its residents. Our state has set a goal of doubling the number of residents with baccalaureate degrees; doing so will be a considerable challenge for Michigan educators. By expanding the Michigan Colleges Online (MCO) to include baccalaureate completion partners, the collaborative will leverage the unique advantages afforded by technology to support baccalaureate completion opportunities to residents anywhere in Michigan.

### Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum of understanding is to establish the general framework for collaboration between Michigan community colleges and affiliated baccalaureate completion institutions and to serve as a formal consortium agreement among member colleges in order that students can receive financial assistance while enrolled in courses and programs offered through the collaborative.

### Membership

The MCO is a project of the Michigan Community College Association (MCCA), and only association members are eligible for general membership in the collaborative. Other colleges and universities may apply to become affiliate members of the MCO if the institution is accredited by a recognized regional accrediting agency (and the institutional accreditation includes authority to offer online degree programs). It is expected that affiliate partner institutions will offer baccalaureate completion programs that:

- recognize associate degree completion
- focus on upper division online courses.

Affiliate members may have representation on the MCO Advisory Council and may participate in all MCO activities. Affiliate members may attend MCCA Board of Directors meetings where issues related to the MCO will be considered.

### Governance

The Michigan Colleges Online will be sponsored by and operated under the legal authority of the Michigan Community College Association. The MCCA Executive Committee will have the authority to:

- Approve consortium agreement(s)

- Review MCO strategic plans, budgets and staffing; recommend any necessary approvals to the MCCA Board of Directors
- Consider issues of MCO policy and make policy recommendations to the MCCA Board of Directors
- Recommend the financial structure, including membership dues, to the MCCA Board of Directors

### Financial Support

Annual affiliate membership fees will be recommended by the MCO Executive Committee for adoption by the MCCA Board of Directors. Affiliate membership fees will be structured in a manner similar to MCCA membership dues. Affiliate membership fees will include both:

- Basic amount - \$5000 per year
- Enrollment-based amount - \$1.00 per institutional FTE per year  
(Note: the enrollment-based amount will be based on total institution full-time equated enrollment, not just online enrollment.)

Affiliate membership fees will not exceed \$15,000 per year, regardless of enrollment.

### Tuition Revenue Sharing

Inasmuch as it is anticipated that both the provider college and the home college will contribute significantly to the success of students enrolled through the collaborative, it is appropriate to share the revenue generated by those enrollments. Tuition revenue will be shared in the following proportions:

- Provider college     70%
- Home college         20%
- MCO                    10%

### Affiliate Member Participation

Affiliate members of the MCO are expected to participate in the collaborative in three distinct capacities:

**Provider institution:** make online classes available to students throughout Michigan via the MCO web site. Baccalaureate partner institutions will be limited to offering upper division courses on the collaborative web site. Provider institutions enroll students, collect tuition from students and participate in MCO tuition revenue sharing.

**Degree-granting institution:** offer programs of study to students anywhere in Michigan that may be completed entirely or mostly online. It is anticipated that students seeking degrees from member colleges may select courses from multiple provider colleges, and that credits earned for completion of such courses taken through the MCO will transfer to the degree-granting institution – to the extent that such courses meet program requirements. Degree-granting institutions will participate in the Financial Aid Consortium Agreement and make financial aid available to eligible students.

**Home institution:** experience has shown that learner support services are as critical to online student success as they are to traditional students. MCO students will select the most convenient institution to provide such services as:

- Access to library resources
- Test proctoring
- Access to and support for technology / computers
- Advising / counseling (general, not program-specific advising)

Every member college will be expected to serve as the home college for any student who would select it as their home college. The home institution for each student will participate in MCO tuition revenue sharing.

### Degrees and Certificates

It shall be a common goal of all members of the MCO to support students in the attainment of college credentials at all levels. Michigan community colleges will assist students in matriculating to baccalaureate completion programs; affiliate partners will likewise assist students in fulfilling requirements for associate degrees and provide community colleges with information about course completion that may result in the awarding of an associate degree from a community college.

### Articulation Agreement

As a condition of this memorandum of understanding, all member colleges will participate in an articulation agreement as described in the attached appendix. In order to effect this agreement, each member college will participate in a collaborative process to establish and maintain an on-line database of courses to be offered by provider colleges through the collaborative and the equivalent course at each MCO member college.

### Financial Aid Agreement

As a condition of this memorandum of understanding, all member colleges will participate in a financial aid consortium agreement as describe in the attached appendix. Federal student aid eligibility regulations (34 CFR & 600.9, April 5, 1988) require this agreement. Financial aid enrollment status for MCO students shall be calculated and reported on the basis of the total credits in which the student is enrolled – from the degree-granting college as well as online courses from all provider colleges. The financial aid consortium agreement will take effect on the date this memorandum is signed. The financial aid consortium agreement detailed in the appendix may be amended from time to time by the Michigan Community College Association Board of Directors upon recommendation of the MCCA Executive Committee, the MCO staff and the Michigan Community College Student Services Association and/or the Michigan Student Financial Aid Association.

### Promotion of the Collaborative

Affiliate members agree to recognize the quality and affordability of community college courses and promote the MCO as a viable option for completing lower division coursework. Affiliate members agree to permit dual-enrollment and provide the necessary support (including financial aid) for dual-enrollment when that is in the best interest of the student.

## Terms of this Agreement

This agreement will serve as the basis for affiliate membership in the MCO through .

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Appendix

### MCO Financial Aid Consortium Agreement

This agreement among the general and affiliate members of the Michigan Colleges Online is to facilitate concurrently enrolled students receipt of student financial assistance funds – both internal and external. Federal eligibility regulations (34 CFR & 600.9, April 5, 1988) require this agreement. This consortium agreement will take effect upon the signature of the President or designee of each participating member college and will govern the terms of delivery of student aid funds to students seeking financial assistance. This consortium agreement will be modified as required by any changes to Federal eligibility requirements or regulations or by mutual agreement of the participating member colleges.

The MCO financial aid consortium agreement includes the following provisions:

1. A student seeking financial aid under this agreement must designate the educational credential and program that they are seeking and the institution from which they are seeking the credential. Such an institution shall be designated as the “degree-granting” college;
2. The institution providing the instruction for such courses as covered under this agreement shall be designated as the “provider” college;
3. The provider college shall provide timely information on student enrollment, expense budgets, academic performance by term, and other information as requested related to these matters to the degree-granting college;
4. Student Status Confirmation Reporting (SSCR) to the national Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) shall be the responsibility of the degree-granting college; Enrollment status shall be calculated and reported on the basis of the total credits accepted by the degree-granting college in which the student is enrolled at participating institutions – including all lower division coursework from

- MCO provider colleges. Enrollment status information will be exchanged at a time and in a manner agreed upon through the auspices of the Michigan Colleges Online;
5. Students shall submit all required forms for financial assistance to the degree-granting college. The degree-granting college shall determine special circumstances and be responsible for all professional judgment decisions and determinations related to the student, and may request the collaboration and assistance of the provider college(s) where appropriate;
  6. Materials for required student loan interviews shall be provided by the degree-granting college;
  7. Satisfactory academic progress standards shall be those of the degree-granting college;
  8. Institutional refund procedures shall be those of the provider for each course enrolled in at the provider college(s). Federal refund calculations and reporting shall be the responsibility of the degree-granting college for each student enrolled;
  9. Disbursement of financial aid funds shall be the responsibility of the degree-granting college. Financial aid will be disbursed by semester on the basis of the student's enrolled status as of the date designated by the degree-granting college;
  10. The degree-granting college for each student is responsible for verification. Verification policies and procedures shall be those of the degree-granting college.
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## Michigan Colleges Online Articulation Agreement

This agreement among the general and affiliate members of the Michigan Colleges Online is to facilitate the transfer of courses that students may take through the collaborative. The college or university identified as the degree-granting institution for each student (the college which offers the program of study in which the student is enrolled and will confer the certificate or degree for that student) will give appropriate credit for courses taken at "provider" colleges on the same basis as if the degree-granting college had provided that portion of the instructional program itself. The assumption underlying this agreement is that the degree-granting college has found the instruction of the provider college to be equivalent to, and a completely acceptable substitute for, its own instruction.

The degree-granting college may decline to give credit for courses not completed satisfactorily by a student. Each degree-granting college may utilize its own criteria for determining successful course completion.

In order to effect this agreement, each member college will participate in a collaborative process to establish and maintain an on-line database of courses to be offered by provider colleges through the collaborative and the equivalent course at each MCO member college. The content of this database will be available on-line to prospective students, as well as to administrators, faculty, advisors and staff from all member colleges. It will be the responsibility of participating colleges to maintain current and accurate information in the on-line database regarding the transferability of courses offered by the provider colleges through the collaborative. Each member will identify an official contact at the college to be responsible for providing information on transferability.