



Memorandum of Agreement for Inter-Institutional Course Enrollment among the Faculties of Theology, Philosophy and Religious Studies of the Kircher Network

April 2021

The Kircher faculties and centres of Theology, Philosophy and Religious Studies, that are parties to this Memorandum of Agreement, recognize the benefits of providing interinstitutional course enrollment at their institutions to interested students or at partner institutions to their students —when either necessary or desirable—under the auspices of other institutions sharing the overarching educational mission of Jesuit higher learning in Europe and the Near East.

These institutions also share a commitment to the potential positive outcomes of curriculum and enrollment sharing: an enriched educational experience for students, curriculum enhancement and innovation, professional development opportunities for faculty, and the conservation of institutional resources.

The concept of *inter-institutional course enrollments* benefits both the students and institutions. Students would have the opportunity to study with a broader network of peers from sister Jesuit faculties of Theology, Philosophy and Religious Studies Europe and Lebanon. Due to a network of esteemed educators, the students would learn from a different cultural perspective, and it would increase the resources and knowledge available to them. By enrolling their students in inter-campus online courses, the participating institutions would be forgoing the development and teaching expenses of having to create their own versions of such courses. These institutions would forgo the problems associated with either canceling or offering courses with low enrollment. Conversely, their students and programs would benefit by promoting their enriched and more flexible course offerings. The parties of the MoU are not obliged to offer an online course in order to be part of the agreement. With this MoU the parties commit to offering online courses, when possible. Students are allowed to take part in an online course even if their home institutions do not offer online courses.

This initiative would be implemented as follows:

Institutions can offer their online courses regardless of the language. The Steering Committee of this project¹ sends a google form and all parties need to have filled it out by the following deadlines:

¹ The Steering Committee is currently composed of representatives of the following institutions: Hochschule für Philosophie München, Ignatianum Academy in Krakow, Deusto University and the Kircher Network Executive Secretary. The Committee is chaired by Hochschule für Philosophie München.

- For the spring semester: on the 1st of November;
- For the fall semester: on the 1st of May.

In the Google Form the information which will be published in the online course catalogue will be asked. The course catalogue of the online courses which are offered through this initiative will be published through the steering committee online by these dates: 15th of January for spring semester and 15th of July for the fall semester.

The home universities are also responsible for publishing or making the online course catalogue available to their students. Since the universities' academic semesters vary among our partners, it is the home institution's responsibility to inform and remind the students about possible delays or early course beginnings. In accordance with university or faculty policies, the students need the approval of their home institution before registering for online courses offered by participating institutions.

Students of partner institutions can participate in online courses and acquire academic credits by registering for the course via the Liaison International Officer (LIO)² of their home institution. The LIO at the home institution is responsible to check the students' language level (level B2 of the respective language of the course). The LIO will then request access to the learning platform and a guest status for the respective course before the beginning of the semester or rather the registration deadline.

The course usually ends with an examination by the lecturer according to the grading system of the host university. All activities required for this are usually handled via the learning platform of the host university. After the examination (or the term paper was handed in by the student), the LIO of the home institution will then request the grade and ECTS points from the lecturers via the Liaison International Officer of the host institution. The grades should be reported directly to the Liaison International Officers by the lecturers circumventing and reducing any bureaucratic problems with the examination offices and the computer systems at the host institutions. The certificate of achievement is issued exclusively by the home institution. The conversion of the grades needs to be carried out by the Liaison International Officers of the home universities. In addition, the LIO of the home institution is responsible for any learning agreement with the student regarding recognition of the course to their curricula³.

The term of this Memorandum of Agreement shall be for the pilot phase of two academic semesters. After the completion of the trial phase, the participating institutions will carry out an assessment and agree on the adjustments required to improve the initiative. Any clarification and future modifications of this MoU shall be made in the attachments.

Each party of this Memorandum of Agreement understands and accepts the objectives of this consortium, agrees to the active participation and support of each member of the

² Every institution names a Liaison International Officer, who will be responsible for the named tasks in this MoU. Institutions with no international office, will need to name a responsible person from their institution, who will carry out the tasks.

³ During this pilot, the students who study in the field of theology, philosophy or religious studies are granted access to take part in these online courses. Opening the online courses for students from different disciplines, is open for discussion once the pilot is successfully finished.

consortium, and agrees to collaborate and cooperate within the framework, definitions and procedures to be subsequently established for this Agreement.

The party hereto has executed this Memorandum of Agreement by the respective duly authorized officer.

By _____

Title _____

Date _____

One signed copy of this Agreement shall be retained by the Kircher Network, and one signed copy shall be forwarded upon execution to the participating institutions.

**Attachment A
Memorandum of Agreement**

April 2021

The following administrative, academic and technical processes are suggested for use by the participating Kircher institutions in the implementation of the Memorandum of Agreement for Sharing Online Courses.

1. Definitions

The following terms shall have the meanings indicated for purposes of this proposed Memorandum of Agreement:

"Home Institution" is that Kircher faculty or centre at which a student is matriculated prior to enrolling for an online course offered by a Host Institution.

"Host Institution" is that Kircher faculty or centre which offers the online course(s) that will be attended by Home Institution Students.

2. Liaison International Officer

Each participating institution shall designate a liaison officer (ideally from its offices of international relations, Erasmus program or academic department) who shall be responsible

to provide information about this Agreement within his/her institution and to act as the contact person for his/her counterparts at the other participating.

3. Student Enrollment

As determined by Home Institution policies, faculty or other designated advisors shall have the final say on approving student registration in Host Institution online courses. The Host Institution shall reserve the right to cancel low-enrolled courses, to set the upper limit of course enrollments, and to place any limits on Home Institution student enrollment.

The home institutions will nominate the students until a certain deadline which is named in the google form. The host university decides which nominated students will be accepted to the courses (e.g. first come first serve).

With their advisors' approval, the Home Institution student will enroll in the Host Institution online course(s) through the Home Institution, and pay the required Home Institution tuition and fees. The student will pay no tuition to the Host Institution.

Upon online course completion, the Host Institution forwards an official transcript of the student grades to the Home institution. The Home Institution accepts these courses toward fulfillment of degree requirements at the Home Institution, based on its own grading and academic policies.

4. Tuition Payments

During the pilot phase, students shall pay to their Home Institution the applicable flat-fee or per-credit tuition rates for registering in the Host Institution online courses⁴.

5. Student Records

Each institution shall take all measures necessary to ensure the confidentiality of any and all information in their possession according to the General Data Protection Regulation *GDPR* regarding the students participating in the programs and initiatives set forth in this Agreement. The students don't need to be but can be enrolled as guest students. No additional documents or certificates may be requested from the student for this purpose, the home universities' enrollment applies.

⁴ In special cases, the home institution shall decide whether the student has to pay for the online course, even though it is offered for free at the host institution.