

**Memorandum of Understanding
for
SACSCOC Member Institutions
Partnering in the
Associate of Science in Financial Technology Cooperative Academic Arrangement**

Purpose.

The SACSCOC member institutions listed below agree to enter into this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for a collaborative curriculum development and enrollment opportunity exclusively for students enrolled in approved financial technology courses to be delivered through a cooperative academic arrangement to be known as the FinTech AS eMajor Cooperative Academic Arrangement. The USG Institutions that elect to accept this agreement shall be referred to herein as “Partner Institutions.” All Partner Institutions are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission of Colleges (SACSCOC) and adhere to the Principles of Accreditation Standard 10.9 on Cooperative Academic Arrangements and the Substantive Change Policy and Procedures pertaining to Cooperative Academic Arrangements.

The FinTech AS eMajor Cooperative Academic Arrangement involves academic collaboration among the following SACSCOC accredited Partner Institutions:

Middle Georgia State University (Lead Institution)
Georgia Highlands College

Responsibilities of the Partner Institution.

Matters involving the academic integrity of courses in this cooperative academic arrangement are under the review, approval, and control of the faculty governance processes of the Partner Institution and under the shared oversight of the arrangement through the FinTech AS Curriculum Leadership Committee (CLC). The Partner Institution assigns appropriate responsibility for coordinating the participation in this cooperative academic arrangement. The Chief Academic Officer of each Partner Institution appoints an academic administrator with faculty rank, who is involved in the operation of the Partner Institution’s business or information technology studies, as a representative to the membership of the FinTech AS CLC.

- I. **Review and Approval of the Course Content.** Each Partner Institution reviews and approves courses in this cooperative academic arrangement through the institution’s normal faculty governance processes for curriculum review and approval. This review and approval includes determination of how these courses are used to satisfy degree completion requirements at the institution. Under the academic direction of the CLC, the curriculum is collaboratively developed by qualified faculty from one or more of the Partner Institutions. Documentation of course content, objectives, and assessments is maintained in a portal accessible to all Partner Institutions for their use in institutional review and approval of the curriculum.

- II. **Review and Approval of Faculty Qualifications.** Each partner institution will collaborate with other participating institutions to identify and recommend qualified instructors to teach the FinTech courses. All instructors have a faculty position at a Partner Institution in the cooperative academic arrangement. It is the responsibility of the Partner Institution to ensure that faculty involved in curriculum development and teaching of courses in the cooperative academic arrangement meet the faculty credential standards

set forth by the institution. The Partner Institution includes faculty assigned to teach its students on the Faculty Roster of the institution. Faculty credentials are maintained in a password-protected web portal accessible to all Partner Institutions for their use in review and approval of faculty qualifications.

- III. **Regularly Scheduled Evaluation of the Quality and Integrity of the Content, and of Student Learning Outcomes.** Each Partner Institution is responsible for identifying, evaluating, and publishing goals and outcomes for student achievement appropriate to the institution's mission and the nature of the students it serves and for the programs it offers which use courses in this cooperative academic arrangement. To inform the Partner Institutions' program assessment, the courses in this cooperative academic arrangement use multiple measures to document student success. The Partner Institutions have identified expected course outcomes and the extent to which these outcomes are achieved is assessed. The CLC is responsible for reviewing student learning outcomes for each course based on key performance indicators and making recommendations for improvement based on the analysis. Documentation of assessments will be maintained in a portal accessible to all institutions for their use in such institutional evaluations. The partner institution will be responsible for using assessments for institutional improvement.
- IV. **Continuous Improvement.** The Partner Institution identifies areas for continuous improvement of the courses in this cooperative academic arrangement based on assessment results and observations of faculty, and other related data, and communicates those needs through its representative on the CLC. The CLC provides leadership for the collaborative oversight and revision of the curriculum as well as the operation of the cooperative academic arrangement.
- V. **Assurance of Academic Quality.** All course credit will be awarded by the student's identified home institution. The institution ensures the academic quality of all work, resulting in credit recorded on the student's transcript.
- VI. **Regular Review of the Agreement.** The Partner Institution annually evaluates this cooperative academic arrangement against the mission and standards of the institution and maintains records of such. The agreement may be brought under review for revision upon request by one or more of the Partner Institutions. The Partner Institution may terminate participation in this agreement under terms provided below.

Responsibilities for Cooperative Administrative Support Services.

The Partner Institutions in this cooperative academic arrangement have agreed that certain administrative functions common to all the institutions will be coordinated through shared services in the system office of the University System of Georgia for cooperative administrative support services. These shared services facilitate the efficient and effective operation of the cooperative academic arrangement. The following administrative services are supported through the shared resources of the USG:

- I. **Maintain Documentation of the Partnership.** Assemble and maintain documentation of course content, curriculum, faculty credentials, student learning outcomes, and continuous improvement in web-based portals available to all Partner Institutions.
- II. **Coordinate Curriculum Development and Delivery.** Under the academic direction of the CLC, the curriculum is collaboratively developed by qualified faculty from one or more of the Partner Institutions. Provide technical assistance for course delivery. Assemble curriculum documentation necessary for each Partner Institution to exercise academic approval and oversight of the curriculum through regular faculty governance processes.
- III. **Administratively Coordinate Teaching Assignments.** Assemble faculty credentials for all faculty teaching in this cooperative academic arrangement and maintain records and approvals in an accreditation management system that is available to all Partner Institutions. Identify and recommend qualified faculty to teach in the cooperative academic arrangement. Provide administrative coordination of teaching assignments of approved faculty. The faculty credentials and teaching assignments are approved by each Partner Institution through normal institutional processes to ensure that the faculty meet institutional faculty credential guidelines. Provide the faculty roster for such assignments to the designated academic administrators at the Partner Institutions for review and continuing approval of those assignments and to the CLC.
- IV. **Coordinate Assessments.** The Partner Institutions approve an assessment process including data collection and distribution to each Partner Institution. In addition, overall assessment results are reviewed annually by the CLC to inform continuous improvement of the courses in this cooperative academic arrangement.
- V. **Support Services.** The CLC exercises oversight over shared services for general support for students and faculty, technical and logistical support, test proctoring, instructional design assistance, faculty preparation, and overall evaluation of shared resources that support this cooperative academic arrangement.

Governance: The FinTech AS Curriculum Leadership Committee

In addition to academic oversight provided through the governance of each Partner Institution, academic oversight of this cooperative academic arrangement is provided by the Chief Academic Officer at each Partner Institution, and by an academic oversight committee of partner institutions: The FinTech AS Curriculum Leadership Committee (CLC). The CLC is composed of the following representative(s) of the Partner Institutions: The Chief Academic Officer and/or their academically qualified designee who may also serve as the institutional Primary Point of Contact. This Curriculum Leadership Committee is chaired by a representative from the Lead Institution. The CLC will meet regularly to plan and/or evaluate the implementation of courses, curriculum, and vital related matters, such as accreditation compliance, enrollment, and financial aid policies. Any proposed changes to courses or delivery will be discussed by the CLC and then recommended in a timely manner to Partner Institutions for review and approval through appropriate institutional governance processes. All

approved changes will be implemented in such a way that will not interrupt completion by existing students or adversely impact the accreditation of the Partner Institutions.

This review and approval includes determination of how these courses are used to satisfy degree completion requirements at the institution. The Partner Institution is responsible for securing curriculum review and approval through normal processes, approval of the USG system office, notification of SACSCOC, and approval of accrediting bodies for impact of this cooperative academic arrangement on existing or proposed degree programs.

Term of MOU.

This agreement is effective May 14, 2021, through June 30, 2022, and may thereafter be renewed for one year terms by written acknowledgement.

Termination of Agreement.

A Partner Institution may terminate its involvement in this Memorandum of Understanding by providing notice of its intent to terminate in writing at least one academic year prior to the intended termination date. Such termination notice should be sent to the CLC Chair and the chief academic officer of the USG. Upon providing such written notice, and unless such notice is revoked in writing, the notifying Partner Institution's involvement in this Memorandum of Understanding and the cooperative academic arrangement will terminate without any further action on the date identified in the initial notice of termination.

The Partner Institutions through their Chief Academic Officers execute this Cooperative Academic Arrangement.

By signing, the Partner Institution affirms that participation in this cooperative academic arrangement is consistent with the mission and vision of the institution.

Accepted and Agreed to by Partner Institution, Middle Georgia State University:

Signature: Dr. Debra H. Matthews Date: _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Accepted and Agreed to by Partner Institution, Georgia Highlands College:

Signature: Dr. Dana Nichols Date: _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

APPENDIX

1. CURRICULUM

**Partner Institutions Memorandum of Understanding
FinTech AS Cooperative Academic Arrangement
Appendix 1**

The following courses, or their equivalent, may be offered by the Partner Institution. The Partner Institution designates the course offerings appropriate to its students and curriculum.

COMMON COURSE NAMES

FTA 2400- Introduction to Financial Technology

FTA 2410- Coding for FinTech

FTA 2420- Data Analytics for FinTech

FTA 2430- Cybersecurity for FinTech

FTA 2440- Financial Technologies and Services

FTA 3055- Innovative Solutions for FinTech

1. Curriculum Leadership Committee Membership

| Partner Institutions Memorandum of Understanding FinTech AS Cooperative Academic Arrangement | | |
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| Partner Institution | Chief Academic Officer | Curriculum Leadership Committee Member |
| Georgia Highlands College | Dr. Dana Nichols dnichols@highlands.edu | Melanie Largin mlargin@highlands.edu |
| Middle Georgia State University | Dr. Debra Matthews debra.matthews@mga.edu | Dr. Johnathan Yerby johnathan.yerby@mga.edu |

2. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES NOT SPECIFIED IN THE MOU.

Policies and Procedures. A student is subject to the academic rules, policies, and procedures at the Partner Institution at which they are enrolled, as well as any rule, policy, or procedure approved by the CLC. The student conduct code, rules, policies, and procedures at the Partner Institution will govern judicial procedures. The Partner Institution is responsible for Student Admission, Academic Advising, Registration, Financial Aid, Billing, Student Identification, Withdrawals, Library Services, and other student support services provided to students.

Dispute Resolution. In the event of a conflict, the parties agree to informally resolve any dispute arising out of or relating to this MOU through discussions between representatives who have authority to resolve the matter. These discussions are required unless a delay would impact a party's right to pursue other legal remedies.

Academic Advising. Students will be advised through the procedures established on their home campus. If the student is completing a credential awarded by the institution, progress toward the credential will be monitored by the advisor and confirmed by the Registrar. Communications sent to enrolled students regarding course offerings will be copied to the appropriate institutional designees to ensure that all parties have accurate information.

Academic Calendar. In order to allow for the completion and submission of grades at the end of each semester, the CLC agrees that course offerings will follow the USG Common Academic Calendar as agreed upon by partner institutions.

Access and Accommodations. Each Partner Institution has an office responsible for providing disability services. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the Disability Services Coordinator at their home institution to discuss the documentation and process required for special accommodations. The Partner Institutions determine through mutual agreement reasonable accommodations to be implemented in the FinTech Courses.

Accreditation Oversight & Policy Compliance. Each Partner Institution will be responsible for accreditation oversight. The Institution will ensure that all SACSCOC and USG policies, procedures, and requirements are followed in the development and implementation of courses.

Admission. Each Partner Institution determines admission qualifications for its students. Students will apply to the Partner Institution through which they enroll in the courses in this cooperative academic arrangement.

Assessment. The Partner Institutions are responsible for regularly scheduled evaluation of the quality and integrity of the content and of student learning outcomes. The course quality assessment process will include course evaluations completed by students and teaching evaluations of faculty members. Student learning outcomes and related assessment data will be compiled and appropriately de-identified per FERPA and distributed through cooperative administrative services to all Partner Institutions for use in institutional effectiveness and institutional research endeavors.

Learning Outcomes Assessment. In addition to institutional evaluations, the CLC provides collective oversight for learning outcomes assessment of the courses in this cooperative academic arrangement.

Communication. The Partner Institutions will support this partnership through regular and timely communication with coordinated administrative services regarding matters applicable to all parties as well as matters pertaining to individual institutions. Messages to students regarding consortial courses will be copied to the appropriate institutional and CLC designees to facilitate clear communication.

Course Approval. Each Partner Institution will conduct review and approval of courses by the faculty through the regular institutional governance processes for curriculum review and approval. Uniform course descriptions and student learning outcomes will be provided to each Partner Institution through cooperative administrative services.

Course Curriculum. The curriculum will be reviewed annually by the CLC to inform recommendations for continuous improvement.

Course Evaluation. The CLC approves a course evaluation instrument for use in the courses in this cooperative academic arrangement. All students will have an opportunity to evaluate their respective courses each term. Assessments are coordinated through cooperative administrative services. Assessment results are provided to the appropriate designee at each Partner Institution. The results of the assessment will be distributed to each faculty member for use in the improvement of instruction and/or of the course.

Course Scheduling. A tentative list of courses will be shared among Partner Institutions in February for Summer/Fall terms and in September for Spring.

Course Withdrawal. Withdrawal dates for courses will follow the USG common calendar as agreed upon by partner institutions. The calendar will include dates for registration, schedule change, course withdrawal, and attendance verification.

Discrimination and Harassment. In accordance with applicable federal and state laws, each Partner Institution prohibits its faculty, staff, and students from engaging in any form of prohibited discrimination or protected status harassment (including sexual harassment). Inquiries or complaints regarding prohibited discrimination or protected status harassment involving an instructor, administrator, or staff member, as well as any participating student in this cooperative academic arrangement, should be submitted to the USG System Director for Equity & Investigations at usg-conduct@usg.edu. All such submissions will be reported to the necessary Partner Institutions to ensure appropriate resources are provided and that the involved parties understand the applicable investigation and resolution procedures. Links to the following entities should be provided on the institution's website:

- Disability Resources and Access
- Equal Opportunity Office (if any)
- Title IX Office
- University or Campus Police
- University or College Health Services
- University or College Counseling Centers
- Office of Civil Rights-Atlanta Office, US Department of Education

Evaluation of Instruction. Instructors for courses in this cooperative academic arrangement agree to a faculty MOU outlining their responsibilities in regard to course setup, course delivery and management, student engagement, proctored exam procedures and end of semester tasks. At each end of term, an evaluation of instruction will be conducted through cooperative administrative services, using an evaluation and rubric approved by the CLC. The result of the semester evaluations will be shared with the Partner Institutions. Evaluations will be based on:

- In order to comply with institutional policies regarding faculty evaluation, an institution representative may observe an instructor's class session by scheduling in advance through administrative support services. The evaluation documentation will be maintained through cooperative administrative services and shared with the Partner Institution, as appropriate.
- An instructor may also request an instructional review for professional development purposes. If the instructor requests an additional evaluation, the results will be provided only to the instructor.
- Student evaluation of instruction will be collected, collated, and shared with the appropriate designee at Partner Institutions via a password-protected web portal accessible to the Partner Institution.

Faculty Credentials. It is the responsibility of the Partner Institutions to ensure that faculty teaching in the collaborative meet the faculty credential standards set forth by the institution. Faculty records, including official transcripts, will be maintained in an accreditation management system. Each Partner Institution will have access through the accreditation management system to faculty credential documentation necessary for academic oversight and local accreditation.

Faculty Teaching Assignments. Prior to the start of the term, the Chief Academic Officers of each Partner Institution, or his/her designee, will approve faculty teaching assignments for all courses in this cooperative academic arrangement. It is the responsibility of the Partner Institutions to ensure that faculty teaching assignments in this cooperative academic arrangement meet the standards of the institution.

Financial Aid. Students will apply for financial aid through the policies and procedures at their home institutions.

Institutional Fees. The student's home institution is responsible for determining and collecting appropriate institutional fees. Institutional fees belong solely to the Partner Institution.

Library Services. A broad array of library resources are provided to support the needs of students enrolled in the courses in this cooperative academic arrangement. Access to assistance from professional librarians is also available through multiple modalities. Links to library resources will be provided within the collaborative learning management system. These library resources are available through the vast combined collections of the USG institutions. Hundreds of digital databases and full-text retrieval systems are available through Georgia's Virtual Library, GALILEO. Over 12 million works are cataloged in the Georgia Interconnected Libraries (GIL) and available to USG students who have borrowing privileges at partner libraries, including digital books and open resources.

Record Retention. Partner Institutions and the CLC will comply with the appropriate records retention policies and procedures to ensure compliance with federal and state laws as well as system policies.

Registration. Students enrolled in approved FinTech courses will register according to the common academic calendar through their institutional registration portals. In alignment with strategic goals for efficiency and effectiveness, the Partner Institutions agree to use the University System of Georgia's system-level assets for cooperative administrative services, including but not limited to INGRESS, GoVIEW, D2L Support Center, and GALILEO, where appropriate.

Student Complaints. Each Partner Institution is required to have a well-defined policy and procedure for handling student complaints. Investigation of complaints will be coordinated through the CLC. Links to the student complaint process will be provided on the institution's FinTech landing page.

Technology Services. Technology is necessary for delivery of the courses and for communication. The technology used in course delivery includes the use of the Internet, texting, email, and other instructionally appropriate technologies.

Tuition. Tuition will be assessed at the eMajor rate approved by the USG Board of Regents with tuition collected by the Partner Institution

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