Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Agreement on Institutional Cooperation in Business Education between the J. Mack Robinson College of Business at Georgia State University (Atlanta, USA) and Azerbaijan University (Baku, Azerbaijan)

Preamble
The partners concerned agree in their mutual interest to further develop and lend permanent support to the cooperation between their institutions. With this aim in mind they agree on the following points:

Article 1 - The Institutions

(1) The institutions concerned in the cooperation and the liaison partners:

At Georgia State University (GSU)

H. Fenwick Huss, Dean
Robinson College of Business (RCB)

Bijan Fazlollahi, Director
Center for Business Development in Transitional Economies

At Azerbaijan University (AU)

Akif Musayev, Rector
Azerbaijan University

(2) Should other institutions be involved in the cooperation, their participation is to be clarified in a separate agreement.

Article 2 - Extent and Aims of the Agreement

(A) The purpose of the cooperation is to design, develop and implement undergraduate, graduate, and non-degree programs of study in Business. The cooperation in the specialization areas will also include:

1. Program and curriculum development
2. Student exchanges (undergraduates, graduates, postgraduate doctoral research students, and scholars) for the purpose of study and;

3. Academic exchange between teaching staff (the exchange of university teaching staff or other academic staff/faculty) with a view to gaining further qualifications or for teaching and research;

4. Joint conferences, study groups, courses or meetings;

5. Business service center and training, such as joint non-degree program of study in process improvement and Six Sigma, and Entrepreneurship for women;

6. Mutual exchange of information resulting from the exchange of research results, academic material, publications and information about better teaching methods and techniques.

7. Facilitating the establishment and administration of GSU degree programs in Baku such as the RCB's Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA).

(B) The parties named in the agreement will confer and agree on suitable means of putting the goals set out above into practice. In particular, the funding of the activities will be the responsibility of Azerbaijan University. However, partners agree to seek external funding, such as USAID's Global Development Alliance (GDA), Multinationals operating in Azerbaijan, and other sources.

Article 3 - Student Exchange

(1) The parties who have signed the agreement commit themselves to organizing the exchange of students and other persons. The exchanges will include both for-academic-credit courses and not-for-credit study abroad opportunities.

(2) The exchange students shall be nominated by the home institution based on at least their past two years of academic performance. For courses offered for academic credit, the candidates must fulfill the matriculation requirements of the host institution, whereby the host institution commits itself to showing as much leniency as the rules applicable in the host country permit in solving questions that may arise.

(3) The home institution will declare the exchanges two months prior to the deadline of registration for approval by the Project Director at the host institution. During any academic year a maximum of 3 BBA Program junior/senior level students will enroll for one semester and one MBA student for two semesters at the host institution.
(4) For academic credit courses, the exchange students are fully enrolled as students with all the pertaining rights and obligations. Their command of the language of instruction should be sufficient for them to fulfill the aims of their exchange and to gain benefit from it.

(5) In-state tuition privileges will be granted for exchange students. Any additional charges, including any fees, are dependent on the regulations of the host institution.

(6) The exchange student is responsible for all living expenses incurred in the exchange period, including any university expenses other than fees. The student is also personally responsible for obtaining all necessary insurance. Azerbaijan University will facilitate local transportation and lodging for visiting GSU students (Study abroad and exchange).

(7) Insurance that is valid abroad is mandatory for all exchanged students. Students who already have insurance must provide the documentation for the host institution’s approval before they leave their home country. The home institution will pay for insurance for its students. The exchange students who do not already have appropriate insurance must obtain an insurance policy according to the requirements of the host institution.

(8) GSU will provide CU students with appropriate documentation to enable them to obtain exchange visitor (J-I) visas. The personal information needed for visa documentation must be received by GSU at least two months before the beginning of the semester the AU students wish to enroll. This documentation enables GSU to sponsor the students as part of the agreement but does not commit GSU to any financial sponsorship. GSU students must have a valid passport and visa to enter Azerbaijan. CU will provide GSU students with letter of invitation which enable them to obtain Georgian visa. The personal information needed for visa documentation should be provided at least one month before the beginning of the semester the GSU student wish to enroll.

(9) Any academic credit received during the course of the program of the program may be transferred to the home institution in accordance with the appropriate regulations of the home institution. The host institution will provide the home institution with an official transcript on each exchange student at the completion of the exchange.

(10) Participants in the exchange shall not have any preference or special status to register for a degree program at the Host institution during or subsequent to the exchange session. Undergraduate exchange students are expected to complete their degree at the home institution. The exchange students are subject to the rules and regulations of the host institution.

Article 4 -Staff and Faculty Exchange

(1) The partners regulate the exchange of staff and other academic personnel by agreeing on suitable applicants on an individually agreed basis.
(2) Unless otherwise agreed in writing, the staff does not become employees of the host institution.

(3) The partners commit themselves to providing appropriate working conditions to the exchange/visiting administrator or faculty member.

(4) The exchange staff/faculty member is responsible for all travel and living expenses incurred in the exchange period, including any university expenses. The visitor is also personally responsible for obtaining all necessary insurance.

Article 5-Information Exchange

The partners agree to exchange information regularly on academic courses and events, which may result in providing the information about courses, curriculums, training/outreach programs research results and publications.

Article 6 -Collaborative Research

The partners agree that research cooperation will be implemented on the basis of working programs signed by representatives of both institutions after coordination of conditions, topics and participants.

The GSU and AU also agree that research cooperation will be promoted by the encouraging the faculties to provide collaborative research which should result in joint publications and projects.

Article 7-Cooperation in the Development of BBA and MBA Programs

The partners agree to implement four year programs that would lead to the earning of BBA degree from Azerbaijan University and a certificate from Azerbaijan University in Cooperation with Georgia State University, Robinson College of Business.

These programs will be implemented in the fall of 2008 with the admission of first year students.

The partners agree to implement two year programs that would lead to the earning of MBA degree from Azerbaijan University and a certificate from Azerbaijan University in Cooperation with Georgia State University, Robinson College of Business.

Georgia State University/Robinson College of Business will exercise its control over the two specializations. This is to ensure quality in the admission of students, the selection of Azerbaijani teaching faculty, the study process, assessment, and teaching evaluations.

Article 8 -Administration of the Agreement
In all that pertains in the present agreement, the parties name the following official as institutional representatives:

For J. Mack Robinson College of Business  
Bijan Fazlollahi

For Azerbaijan University  
Akif Musayev

Article 9 - Effective Date/Duration

This agreement shall become effective after both parties sign it. It shall remain in effect for five years. After that period, it can become open ended upon agreement by all authorized parties for both schools.

At any time one institution wishes to terminate or suspend the agreement, it may do so by informing the other institution in writing at least three months prior the rumination or/and suspension date.

Article 10 - Alteration of the Agreement

Alteration of the provisions of this agreement by either school can become effective upon written consent of appropriate representatives of both parties.

Article 11 - Liability

GSU and AU students/personnel will be required to sign "covenants not to sue" that indemnify and hold harmless AU, RCB, GSU, the University System of Georgia (Board of Regents), and their respective agents and employees from all manner of liability, loss, or damage which they may suffer arising from this agreement or for any activities or actions related there to. These covenants must be signed before students/personnel leave their home country.

No other article has been agreed to by the two parties. The agreement is composed of five pages. Agreement is done in two equally authentic copies.

One behalf of AU:  
Dr. Akif Musayev  
Azerbaijan University  
Rector

One behalf of GSU/RCB:  
Dr. H. Fenwick Huss  
Dean

J. Mack Robinson College of Business