

THE
FORUM
ON EDUCATION
ABROAD

**Using the *Standards of Good Practice*
to Assess and Improve Programs**

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Workshop Outline

1. Introductions
2. Overview of Forum (slides 3-11)
3. Background
 - The Context for the Standards: Why are Standards Needed? (slides 13-16)
 - How Were the Standards Developed? (17-20)
 - What do the Standards of Good Practice Encompass?(21- 26)
4. The Structure and Content of the Standards: What do the Standards Look Like and How are They Best Used? (27-38)
5. Questions and Discussion
6. Applying the Standards
7. Summary, Questions, Discussion

The Forum on Education Abroad

- Not-for-profit association, founded 2001
- Recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission as the Standards Development Organization (SDO) for education abroad
- Members are committed to the Forum's Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad
- Located on the campus of Dickinson College

Goals:

- (1) Establish Standards of Good Practice
- (2) Conduct research to assess outcomes of education abroad and collect useful data
- (3) Promote excellence in curriculum design
- (4) Advocate for education abroad at all levels

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Membership

- Over 520 institutional members that collectively represent over 90% of U.S. students that study abroad
- Members are primarily U.S. colleges and universities, program provider organizations, overseas host institutions and programs, and affiliates that provide services to the field
- Members receive a wide range of benefits and services that help them to meet the Forum's Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad

The Forum's Resources

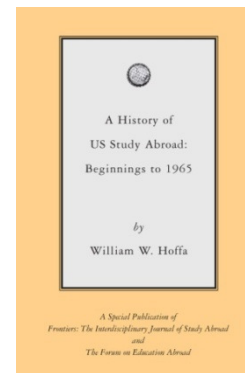
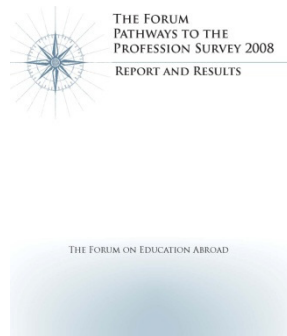
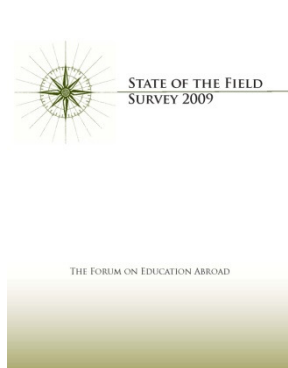
Print and Online

- *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad, 4th Edition*
- *Code of Ethics for Education Abroad, 2nd Edition*
- *Standards of Good Practice for Short-Term Programs*
- Online Toolbox of Best Practices
- *Education Abroad Glossary, 2nd Edition*
- *Guide to Outcomes Assessment in Education Abroad*



THE FORUM'S RESOURCES

- Annual *State of the Field* Survey
- Program Management Data
- Salary, Workload, and Job Description Data
- The Forum's Education Abroad Incident Database
- *The History of U.S. Study Abroad* project
- Talking Points on Critical Issues and Topics
- The *Ethics Corner* Online Discussion
- *ForumJobs*, job postings online



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The Forum's Events

Conference, Institutes and Workshops

- **Annual Forum Conference attracts 1,300+ attendees**
 - Honest, open dialogue to provide solutions to real world challenges
 - Complete focus on Education Abroad
 - Attracts the leaders in the education abroad field as well as faculty and colleagues from overseas
 - Outstanding networking opportunities
 - Distinctive roundtable discussion format for many sessions
 - Pre-Conference Workshops on a variety of education abroad issues and topics

The Forum's Events

Conference, Institutes and Workshops

• **Standards of Good Practice Institutes**

- Full-day gathering that provides advanced discussion and training in the Standards of Good Practice
- Experts from within and outside the field of education abroad lead sessions
- **Upcoming: “Beyond the Basics of Health, Safety and Security,” Northwestern University, June 24, 2011**

• **Workshops and Webinars**

- Offered throughout the year and can be customized and offered on your campus or at your offices
- Training on the *Standards of Good Practice*
- Quality Improvement Training
- Training in Education Abroad Best Practices

Quality Improvement Program (QUIP)

A Program of Assessment, Improvement, and Recognition

- Uses the *Standards of Good Practice* to assess the quality of education abroad programs
- Akin to an accreditation process
- Final determination provides a judgment as to whether the programs are in substantial conformity with the Standards of Good Practice
- The organization receives valuable feedback about how to improve its programs
- Successful completion of the program provides recognition through use of the “Recognized for Meeting Standards” logo:



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Guided Standards Assessments

- ❖ Guided assessments of specific areas of education abroad operations
- ❖ Uses the queries contained in the Standards of Good Practice to assess how an institution or organization meets individual Standards
- ❖ Orientation webinar guides participants through the assessment process
- ❖ Capstone webinar brings institutions and organizations together to share challenges and best practice approaches
- ❖ These assessments may be utilized as components of a full QUIP Self-Study
- Current Assessments offered:
 - 1) *Assessing Short-Term and/or Faculty-Led Programs*
 - 2) *Assessing Organizational and Program Resources*
 - 3) *The Affiliated Programs Portfolio and the Home Institution*

Forum Member Benefits

Membership in the Forum provides these benefits to an institution or organization:

- Use of the Forum membership logo, signaling your institution's commitment to uphold the *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad*
- Networking opportunities with education abroad leaders
- Ability to apply for a Quality Improvement Review (QUIP)
- Opportunity to participate in Standards of Good Practice Assessments
- Participation in Forum-sponsored research and surveys
- Discounted attendance at the Forum's Annual Conference, Institutes, Workshops, and Webinars
- Opportunity to nominate students for Undergraduate Research Awards and for the Excellence in Research Award
- Complimentary subscription to *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, the official journal of the Forum
- Copies of all Forum publications
- Access to the comprehensive online Toolbox of Best Practices
- Ability to post on *ForumJobs*, the online job board
- Institution is listed and linked on the Forum website

Why are Standards Needed?

- Overall the field is unsupervised and unregulated
- Wide variety of players with varying motives, backgrounds and approaches
- College/university offices have limited resources needed to exercise quality control
- Growing numbers of student participants
- Risk and liability concerns
- Universities promising global learning outcomes; Accreditation commissions requiring assessment of promised outcomes
- Increasing price and cost of higher education and education abroad – raises the question of the value
- Scrutiny of the industry (ie., NY and CT Attorneys General)

The Education Abroad Field

- Program “Players”
 - U.S. Colleges and Universities
 - Academic departments and faculty members
 - U.S. providers: not-for-profit and for profit
 - Overseas providers and stand-alone programs
 - Overseas universities
 - Host cultures and societies
 - Host services
 - Affiliates that provide services

The Education Abroad Field

- Types of Programs
 - Exchange
 - Direct Enrollment
 - Hybrid (independent courses plus direct enrollment)
 - Courses offered by overseas universities for foreign students
 - Island programs
 - Field research programs

The Education Abroad Field

- Program Variables
 - Duration: one week to one year
 - Target Language: Beginning to Advanced
 - Objectives:
 - Advancement in disciplines
 - Global competence
 - Global citizenship
 - Intercultural competence
 - Interpersonal and intrapersonal growth
 - Language proficiency

Existing Quality Control Mechanisms

- Regional and disciplinary accreditation
- In-country accreditation and reviews (APUNE)
- Institutional guidelines and practices
- Internal or outside reviewers
- Student evaluations
- Faculty and departmental reviews
- Advisory boards
- Some institutions have approved lists of programs

Forum Standards of Good Practice

The Forum Standards are a tool for program assessment and improvement.

- Forum is recognized as the Standards Development Organization (SDO) for education abroad by the U.S. Department of Justice and Federal Trade Commission
- Obligates the Forum to develop and disseminate Standards through a process that is objective, transparent, open, balanced, and proceeds by consensus
- Hundreds of colleagues from within and outside of education abroad have been and are involved in developing the Standards

How were the Standards Developed?

- Openness: meetings, presentations, web site, announcements, newsletters, publications
- Transparency: full explanation of processes to membership and to the public
- Balance: welcome all points of view and diverse perspectives, respect differences and various approaches
- Consensus: process of moving forward based on consensus
- Due Process: possibility for appeals

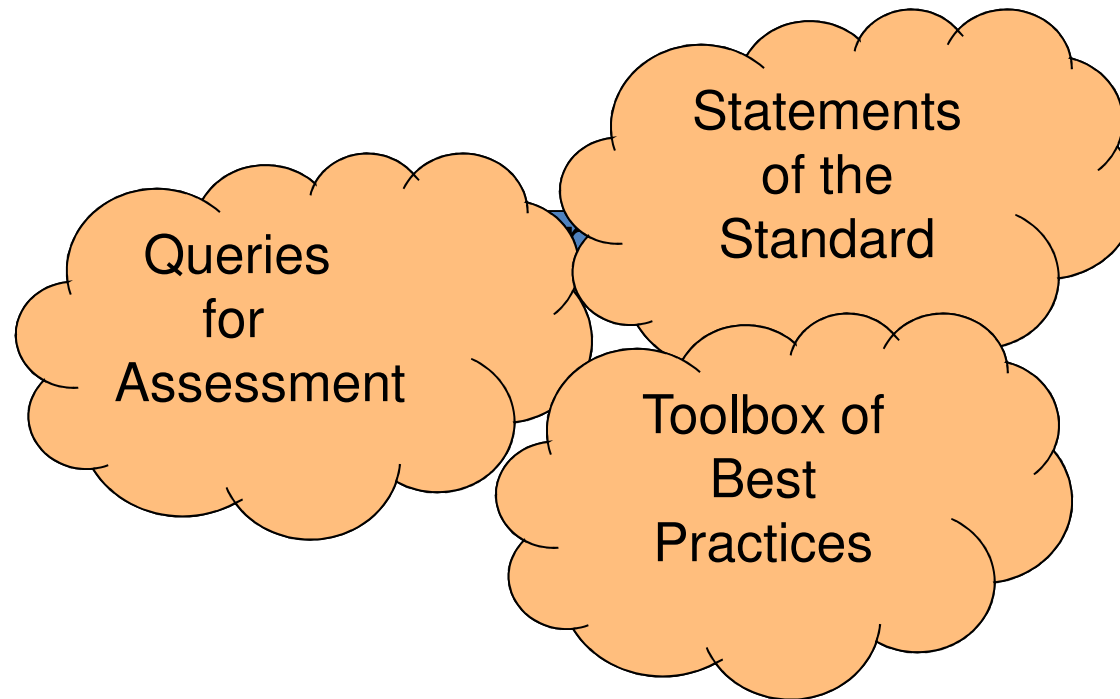
Forum Standards of Good Practice

- ✓ *The Standards of Good Practice represent the product of over eight years of collaboration and reflect the input and shared vision of education abroad professionals from around the world*
- ✓ *They have been pilot tested and are revised and updated based on the experience of their being applied*
- ✓ *They are endorsed by the Forum membership of over 500 organizations*

U.S. Standards in an International Context

- Development and testing has been international in scope
- Standards do not mean standardization, but are open to a wide variety of approaches
- Standards are relevant and effective globally in diverse cultural and national contexts
- The Standards are being adapted for use by Australian universities to guide outbound mobility
- They have been translated into Portuguese and are being used by Brazilian universities to provide guidance to their study abroad programs

Standards Content



Standards Content

- **Statements of good practice**—articulate the core Forum Standards that serve as guidelines;
- **Queries**—relate to each Standard; these are designed to foster analysis and assessment of how well an organization meets the Standards; and
- **Toolbox**—documents to which Forum members may refer as models of good practice and discuss or adapt them to their institutions or programs, as appropriate.

The Major Content Headings of the Standards

1. Mission
2. Student Learning and Development
3. Academic Framework
4. Student Preparation and the Learning Environment
5. Student Selection and Code of Conduct
6. Policies and Procedures
7. Organizational and Program Resources
8. Health, Safety and Security
9. Ethics and Integrity

Sample Standard Toolbox Item

7. Organizational and Program Resources: The organization provides adequate financial and personnel resources to support its programs.

- a. **Academic Personnel: Program faculty members have the qualifications, knowledge, and appropriate level of engagement to support the curriculum and the learning environment of students inside and outside the classroom.**

[It's a Partnership: The Role of the Study Abroad Office, the Faculty Leader, and Third-Party Program Providers \(Kansas State University\)](#)

Faculty-led Program Resources

[A Nuts & Bolts Manual for Departmental Study Abroad Programs \(Purdue University\)](#)

[Faculty Handbook for Developing and Directing Study Abroad Programs \(University of Texas at Austin\)](#)

[For Academic Advisors \(University of Delaware\)](#)

[Information for Teaching Faculty-Led Group Study Abroad Programs \(Kansas State University\)](#)

[Risk Management Checklist \(Rochester Institute of Technology\)](#)

[Roles and Responsibilities of Faculty Directors \(University of Iowa\)](#)

[Study Abroad Program Directors' Field Manual \(Iowa State University\)](#)

Sample Standard Toolbox Item

4. Student Preparation for the Learning Environment Abroad and Returning Student Support: The organization has processes in place to assess student needs, provides advising and orientation support to address these needs that is consistent with the program’s mission, regularly assesses the quality of this support, and utilizes its findings to continuously monitor, maintain, support, and improve its advising, orientation, and re-entry processes.

[Pre-departure Briefings \(University of Melbourne\)](#)

[Study Abroad Handbook \(Northwestern University\)](#)

[Health Insurance for Study Abroad Students \(Northwestern University\)](#)

[Pre-departure Orientation Program \(Santa Clara University\)](#)

[Pre-departure Orientation \(Villanova University\)](#)

[Pre-departure Planning Handbook \(University of St. Thomas\)](#)

[Study Abroad Pre-departure Guide 2008 \(Emory University\)](#)

[Study Abroad Pre-departure Orientation \(Massachusetts Institute of Technology \(MIT\)\)](#)

[Study Abroad Student Handbook \(Center for Global Education, UCLA\)](#)

a. Pre- and Post-Departure Advising and Orientation: The program uses past experiences, student and staff evaluations, current research, and ongoing communication with students to assess students’ needs and provides appropriate orientation and advising support to meet these needs as they evolve throughout the term of education abroad and regularly evaluates the effectiveness of its orientation and advising support.

[Online Orientation \(University of Delaware\)](#)

[Online Orientation \(University of South Carolina\)](#)

[Step-By-Step Checklist \(Bryn Mawr College\)](#)

[Study Abroad 101 Video 1 of 3 \(Arizona State University\)](#)

[Study Abroad 101 Video 2 of 3 \(Arizona State University\)](#)

[Study Abroad 101 Video 3 of 3 \(Arizona State University\)](#)

[Study Abroad: The Four Year Plan \(Bryn Mawr College\)](#)

High Standards without Standardization

- Each Standard may not be applicable to each type of education abroad activity engaged in by an organization; however, the Forum regards it as important for all organizations in education abroad to be familiar with all of the Standards, whether they apply to the education abroad activity of the organization, or if they apply more directly to the activities of its partners in the field.

The Standards

1. **Mission:** The organization, with respect to education abroad, has a formally-adopted mission statement for its overall operations and for its individual programs, that is known to and accepted by its faculty and staff.
 - a. **Mission and Commitment:** The organization has mission statements appropriate for each program.
 - b. **Assessment of Mission Achievement:** The organization regularly collects and analyzes data to assess the degree to which it is achieving its overall mission and its mission statements for each program and utilizes these findings to assure continuous improvement.

- 2. Student Learning and Development:** The organization has stated educational objectives that foster student learning and development, has an established process for regularly collecting and analyzing data to assess the degree to which it is accomplishing each; and utilizes these findings to monitor, maintain, support, and continuously improve student success.
- a. **Inter-Cultural Understanding:** The organization fosters inter-cultural understanding.
 - b. **Language and Communication:** The organization encourages the development of language and/or inter-cultural communication skills.
 - c. **Academic Growth:** The program provides academic learning opportunities appropriate to the program's mission.
 - d. **Student Development:** The program provides opportunities that encourage student development (e.g., leadership skills, service orientation, maturity, tolerance for ambiguity).

- 3. Academic Framework:** The organization maintains clearly stated and publicly available policies on academic matters related to education abroad; regularly reviews them for relevance and effectiveness; and implements appropriate changes as needed.
- a. **Academic Credit:** The organization has clearly stated and publicly available policies on the awarding of academic credit.
 - b. **Academic Coursework:** The organization provides an academically challenging program of study.
 - c. **Internships and Field Research:** When offered for credit, internships and field opportunities have appropriate academic and field supervision.
 - d. **On-Site Advising:** The program advises students on academic matters in cooperation with their home institution adviser and regularly evaluates its success in doing so.
 - e. **Academic Integration:** The organization fosters the integration of student learning abroad with requirements and learning at the home institution and regularly evaluates its success in this area and identifies areas for improvement.
 - f. **Academic Planning:** The home institution encourages students to make education abroad decisions with reference to degree progress, in consultation with their academic adviser, and has an ongoing process in place to measure its success and continuously improve in this area.
 - g. **Career Planning:** The home institution has a process in place to stay abreast of academic and co-curricular offerings on its programs and provides program selection advising that takes into account a student's career goals and interests.

4. **Student Preparation for the Learning Environment Abroad and Returning Student**

Support: The organization has processes in place to assess student needs, provides advising and orientation support to address these needs that is consistent with the program's mission, regularly assesses the quality of this support, and utilizes its findings to continuously monitor, maintain, support, and improve its advising, orientation, and re-entry processes.

- a. **Pre- and Post-Departure Advising and Orientation:** The program uses past experiences, student and staff evaluations, current research, and ongoing communication with students to assess students' needs and provides appropriate orientation and advising support to meet these needs as they evolve throughout the term of education abroad and regularly evaluates the effectiveness of its orientation and advising support.
- b. **Returning Student Support:** The organization and program have processes in place to assess their students' re-entry needs, provide support for students returning from abroad that addresses these needs, and regularly evaluate the effectiveness of this support.

- 5. Student Selection and Code of Conduct:** The organization maintains, and makes publicly accessible, its commitment to fair and appropriate policies regarding student selection and code of conduct.
- a. Student Selection: The recruitment and selection processes are transparent and fair.
 - a. Code of Conduct: The organization makes explicit its student code of conduct and disciplinary processes.

6. Policies and Procedures: The organization has in place policies and procedures that govern its education abroad programs and practices.

- a. Policies: The organization has adequate and published policies that govern its education abroad programs.
- b. Personnel: The organization has defined policies with respect to personnel.
- c. Advising: The organization is committed to and implements an advising model appropriate to students' curricular, intellectual, and personal development.
- d. Communications: The organization is committed to and practices open, accurate, and honest communications.
- e. Marketing: The organization follows ethical practices in marketing.
- f. Affordability and Financial Assistance: The organization provides proactive assistance to students and families concerning the provision of internal and/or external financial aid.
- g. Program Assessment: The organization has established, and regularly utilizes, formal review and evaluation processes for its policies and procedures and applies the results to continuously improve them.

7. Organizational and Program Resources: The organization provides adequate financial and personnel resources to support its programs.

- a. Academic Personnel: Program faculty members have the qualifications, knowledge, and appropriate level of engagement to support the curriculum and the learning environment of students inside and outside the classroom.
- b. Administrative and Support Personnel: Program staff members have the qualifications, knowledge, and appropriate level of engagement to administer the program effectively and to assure the well-being of students.
- c. Financial Resources: The organization devotes adequate financial resources to each program.
- d. Learning and Academic Support Facilities: Each program has facilities adequate to realize program mission, recognizing that amenities might vary according to the host environment and culture.
- e. Student Housing: Students are provided with or assisted in securing appropriate housing.
- f. Assessment results are linked to the institution's ongoing planning and resource allocation processes.

- 8. Health, Safety, Security and Risk Management:** The organization assures continuous attention to the health, safety, and security of its students, faculty, and staff, from program development stages through program implementation, by way of established policies, procedures, student orientation, and faculty and staff training.
- a. The organization considers health, safety, security and risk management in program development.
 - b. The organization focuses continuous attention on health issues for program students, faculty and staff.
 - c. The organization ensures continuous attention to the safety of students, faculty and staff at all locations, with particular attention to safety issues in more dangerous locations.
 - d. The organization maintains adequate insurance coverage and conducts regular risk-management review involving appropriate training and personnel.
 - e. The organization is knowledgeable about and complies with applicable laws and regulations.
 - f. Risk assessments are conducted as part of the development process for new programs to evaluate and mitigate potential risks prior to the commencement of the program.

9. Ethics and Integrity: The Organization educates its employees in and adheres to its own code of ethics and/or to the ethical principles of the Forum's Code of Ethics for Education Abroad.

- a. Operations: The organization operates its programs in accordance with ethical principles.
- b. Student Life: The organization conducts its activities and advises students in an ethically responsible manner.
- c. Intercultural Relations: The organization respects the cultures and values of the countries in which it operates or sponsors programs and from which it draws students.
- d. Environmental and Social Responsibility: The organization seeks to minimize a program's negative impact on the environment and host culture, and seeks to contribute positively to the welfare of the local society and economy.

The Code of Ethics for Education Abroad

Purpose: The purpose of the Code of Ethics is to provide a guide for making ethical decisions to ensure that those in the education abroad field provide services in accord with the highest ethical standards, with the ultimate goal of ensuring that students' international educational experiences are as rich and meaningful as possible.

- Format:**
- 1. Ethical Principles**
 - 2. Ethical Guidelines**
 - 3. The Forum Compass**
 - 4. Appendices of Best Practices**

Ethical Principles and Guidelines

- 1. Truthfulness and Transparency**
- 2. Responsibility to Students**
- 3. Relationships with Host Societies**
- 4. Best Practices**
- 5. Conflicts of Interest**

Appendices on Program Site Visits and Conflicts of Interest

Given their importance to the field, these two topics are covered in greater detail here.

Standards of Good Practice for Short-Term Education Abroad Programs

- More specific set of Standards that apply to short-term programs
- The Forum has a concern that short-term programs are the fastest growing programs, and are often organized as *ad hoc* ventures led by faculty and staff who may not have experience with how to develop and manage education abroad programs
- Are meant to be used together with the more general Standards to assess and improve programs

Applying the Standards

Using the Standards to Assess Programs: Analyzing Education Abroad Vignettes

- Small Group Work
 - Read each vignette
 - Identify the Standard(s) to which it relates
 - Discuss whether:
 - the Standard is being met
 - there needs to be improvement
 - if so, what recommendations would you make?
 - you need more information in order to make a judgment
 - if so, what information do you need?
 - Report back for discussion

Applying the Standards

Using the Standards to Assess and Improve: Analyzing Your Programs

► Small Group Work

- Choose a Standard
- Task: Make your way through the statements and queries and discuss how the Standard applies to your programs
- What documents, policies, activities and other evidence would help to show that you meet the Standard?
- Are there areas that you can identify that might be improved?
- Report back for general discussion

Summary, Questions, Answers

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