Standards of Good Practice
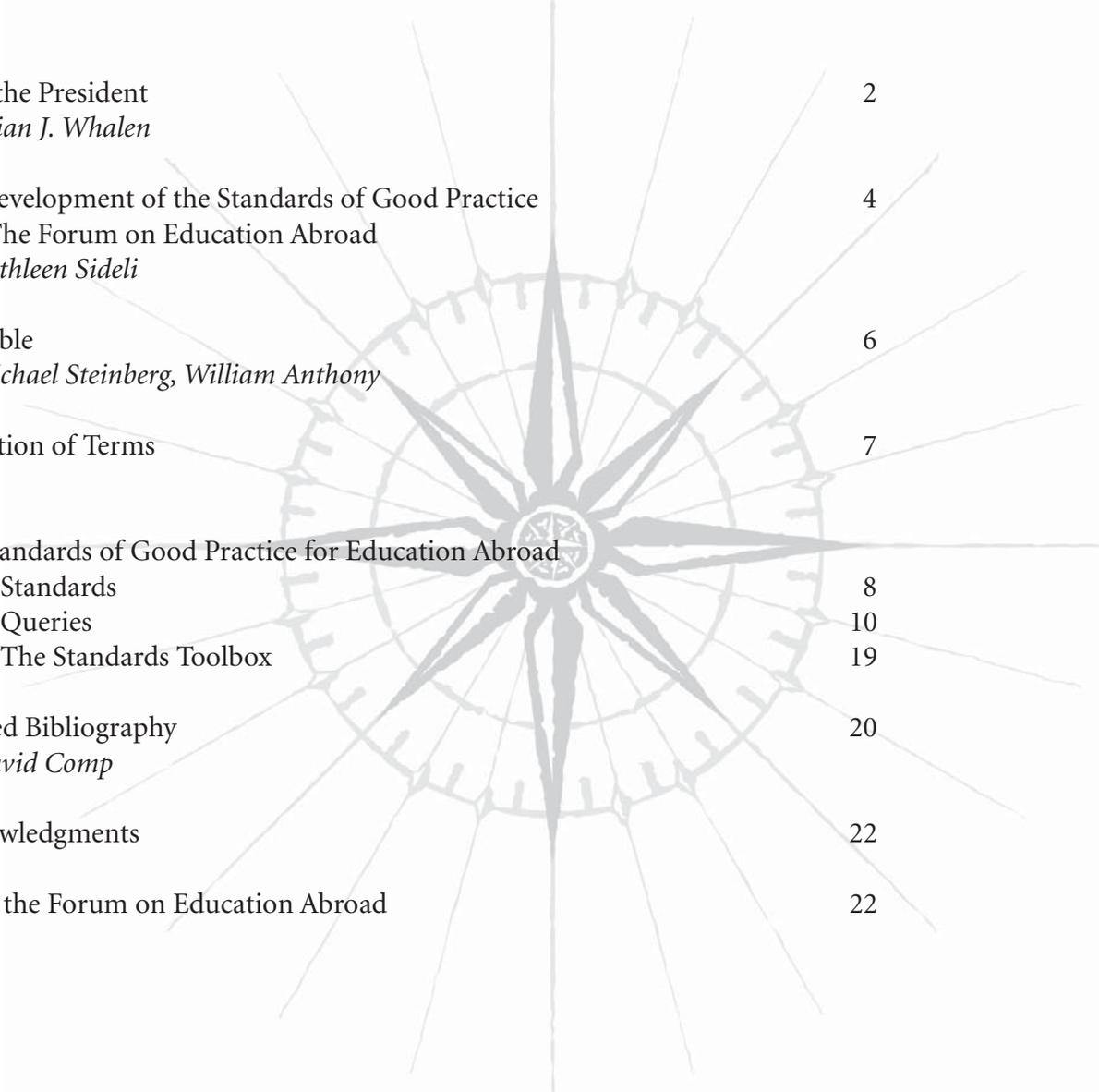
for Education Abroad

THE FORUM ON EDUCATION ABROAD

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STANDARDS OF GOOD PRACTICE FOR EDUCATION ABROAD

CONTENTS

FROM THE PRESIDENT

This third edition of the Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad incorporates the important feedback from institutions and organizations that have used the Standards to improve their programs since the Second Edition appeared two years ago. These collegial responses provide an indispensible, ongoing assessment of the relevance and value of the Standards, and help the Forum to fulfill its role as the recognized Standards Development Organization (SDO) for education abroad.

The Forum's responsibility in its role as the SDO for education abroad is to practice openness, transparency, balance, consensus, and due process. It therefore welcomes broad participation by both Forum members and non-members alike in providing advice about the Standards and their usefulness. Indeed, the strength of these Standards lies in their being used widely and assessed rigorously.

The Forum's Standards Committee, under the chairmanship of Michael Steinberg, has overseen the process of revising the Standards. This Committee's work has also been assisted by colleagues and consultants familiar with quality assurance models and standards development in a wide variety of higher education areas. The many colleagues who have contributed to this work number well into the hundreds, and they represent education abroad programs and universities located around the world. They include all of the colleagues who participated in the Standards Pilot Project, who contributed during sessions at the Forum Conference and at various Forum meetings, and those who provided comments to the Forum based on their experiences using the Standards.

The institutions and organizations that took part in the Forum's Standards of Good Practice Pilot Project, as well as the volunteer Peer Reviewers who analyzed self-study reports and conducted site visits, played an especially important role in the revision of these Standards. The 18 participating institutions and organizations represented the diversity of education abroad and included U.S. universities and colleges, community colleges, study abroad providers, and universities and independent organizations located outside the U.S. The 25 colleagues who served as Peer Reviewers for the Pilot Project were some of the most experienced colleagues in the field and represented a tremendous breadth and depth of experience.

Evaluations from the institutions, organizations and colleagues involved in the Standards Pilot Project indicate that the Standards of Good Practice work extremely well as an assessment and quality improvement tool. At the Standards Summit meeting held at the Forum offices at the conclusion of the Pilot, and at the Forum Conference in Austin, Texas in March, 2007, it was apparent to all that the Standards work as they are intended to, and that relatively minor revisions were needed based on the lessons learned during the Pilot Project.

The Peer Reviewers and the institutions and organizations under review not only assisted with the revision of the Standards, but also helped the Forum to develop a systematic Quality Improvement Program (QUIP) through which the Standards may be used effectively to assess and improve programs. Indeed, it is significant that this Third Edition of the Standards coincides with the launch of the Forum's Quality Improvement Program (QUIP). As of this printing, nearly 25 institutions and organizations are either participating in the

first QUIP Reviews or are signed on to do so. These first QUIP participants are conducting self-studies of their education abroad programs by using the protocol that was developed through the rigorous testing and development in the Pilot Project. In the QUIP review process, trained Peer Reviewers assess the organizations' self-studies and make recommendations for improvement, and a panel of senior experts, the Forum Review Panel, makes a judgment about whether or not the organization under review is in conformity with the Standards.

QUIP, like all of the Forum initiatives, has as its goal to improve education abroad programs. And, as with all of the Forum's activities and initiatives, this work begins with the Standards of Good Practice. The Standards are a comprehensive tool that has proven to be very effective for conducting ongoing assessment of programs, either one's own or others, and for use as a guide for strategic planning for education abroad.

All of the other many and varied Forum initiatives –the Annual Conference, the workshops and Fireside Dialogues, the sponsored research projects, the development of curricular best practices, and the various data collection and advocacy efforts – also support the Forum's overall goal to improve education abroad for the benefit of the students that participate in programs. In this sense, each and every Forum activity is based in the Standards of Good Practice and thereby helps to advance the Forum's core mission.

This is a historic moment for U.S. education abroad. The field has received more attention over the past year than at any time in its history. The Simon Act promises to fuel a dramatic increase in study abroad participation unlike any seen before, raising issues about both study abroad capacity and quality assurance. At the same time, the increased scrutiny of program management practices and ethical issues has challenged the field to provide clear guidance and standards. The Forum has met this challenge by producing a Code of Ethics that will become an essential part of the Standards of Good Practice. The Standards are the foundation for both planning for and succeeding to build quality education abroad capacity, and for doing so in ethically responsible ways.

Brian Whalen
President and CEO

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STANDARDS OF GOOD PRACTICE BY THE FORUM ON EDUCATION ABROAD

Kathleen Sideli, Indiana University
Former Chair, Board of Directors of the Forum; Chair, Forum Standards Task Force

Standards of good practice emerged as a priority in January, 2001 at the first meeting of the education abroad professionals who became the Founding Board members of The Forum on Education Abroad. They quickly placed standards as the number one goal of the Forum. Compiling standards of good practice was the first project that the Board tackled, under the direction of Jon Booth, after soliciting input from Forum members in 2002 regarding the top issues in the field that needed standards of good practice. In fact, that survey found that the top ten issues in rank order were: development of standards for academics and program design, research in outcomes assessment/language acquisition, health and safety, finances and financial aid, ethical issues, advocacy, services/staff/faculty development/use of technology, access to/participation in education abroad, curriculum integration and pre-departure/re-entry issues.

Adherence to good standards was considered a necessary attribute of any member institution, organization or individual who joined the Forum. Although finalized standards did not exist at the time the Forum recruited its initial members, the Board added a statement to the membership form that indicated, "By completing this application, I affirm that the organization named below is committed to the highest standards of education-abroad good practices." The Board had agreed that bringing as many organizations into the Forum as possible was the best way to ensure that they would share the Forum's priorities and profit from its advancements in its five goal areas.

To provide continuity in terms of content projects, the Board soon added to its governance structure an Advisory Council (today known as The Forum Council). The first elections were held in July of 2002 and the Council's first task that fall was to charge five committees with carrying on the five goals of the Forum. The Standards Committee, chaired by Bill Anthony, continued the standards project that the Board had initiated. At the CIEE conference in Atlanta in November of 2002 there were roundtables on the Forum's goals, including standards. At the time the Standards Committee announced that they planned to benefit from work done by the field in the past thirty years, to identify areas where standards had not existed, to create products to assist professionals with implementing standards (toolbox, links, etc.) and to seek input from the field along the way. With input from the roundtables in Atlanta and through expert guidance from Dr. Larry Braskamp, the former executive director of the Commission for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and the consultant who produced IES's Model Assessment Practice, the Standards project advanced quickly.

In January, 2004, the Board of Directors voted to have a formal certification process utilizing the finalized Standards in three years. During this period the Board planned to seek counsel and advice from various accreditation and certification agencies regarding the pros and cons of various approaches to the application of standards of good practice. That same year the IFSA Foundation gave one of its inaugural grants to the Forum to further the goals of the Standards project, particularly to advance the planning for a systematic pilot project to test the application of the Standards. The first formal draft of the Standards was released as a publication at the Forum's first conference in Santa Fe in November, 2004, in conjunction with the CIEE conference, and was widely distributed in the field from that point on since it was made available on the Forum's website. Discussion boards on the website also stimulated input from the field regarding the draft document.

A unique opportunity presented itself in 2005 when the US Department of the Justice and the Federal Trade Commission took applications from entities that sought to be the Standards Development Organization in their field. The concept for these SDOs emanated as a means to curb the excesses and misbehaviors of various organizations that had garnered infamous publicity in previous years. Through SDOs, the US government hoped to encourage self-regulation and compliance with standards in such

organizations. Geoffrey Bannister, the first executive director and president of the Forum, successfully achieved SDO status for the Forum. This important status carries responsibilities that have helped shape the direction of the organization's application of the Standards since SDOs must exhibit the following elements: *Openness*, defined as the opportunity for involvement by all parties known to be affected by the particular standards development activity; *Balance*, which requires balancing interests so that standards development activities are not dominated by any single group of interested parties; *Transparency*, which calls for readily available access to essential information regarding proposed and final standards; *Consensus*, defined as the requirement that substantial agreement be reached on all material points after the consideration of all views and objections, and *Due Process*, including the right to express a position, to have it considered, and to appeal an adverse decision.

In 2005 a second edition of The Forum's *Standards of Good Practice*, produced under the guidance of Michael Steinberg, chair of the Standards Committee beginning in 2004, was distributed at the second conference in Miami in November, again in conjunction with the CIEE conference. The new edition resulted from the important input of the field. The second edition was designed to be linked to electronic resources at a future date. Other important changes included: a new section on the topic of marketing, a new standard was added to Ethics and Integrity, 43 queries were modified, 17 queries were dropped, 37 queries were added and several US-centric phrases and suggestions were modified. The most important change was publishing the eight standards separately from the queries so that they would stand out more clearly. The query approach was retained since most individuals involved with the project felt this was the best way to guide the users of the standards.

The Pilot Project was initiated in 2005 and continued through 2006, involving over 20 institutions and organizations, although not all of them completed the project due to competing activities. Program reviewers were selected from volunteers from the membership, with two assigned to each institution or organization. Guidelines for self studies and for the on-site evaluations were created to assist everyone engaged in the process. Visits took place in the summer and fall of 2006, culminating in a Summit at Dickinson College, the current home of The Forum, in late November of 2006 where representatives from the Council's Standards Committee, Forum staff and other Forum leadership benefited from lessons learned through the Pilot Project.

In January of 2006 the Board of Directors created a Task Force on Standards to make a recommendation to the Board regarding the formal utilization of the Standards, in consonance with the Board's vote in January of 2004 to have a process created within three years. After much deliberation and consideration regarding a number of options, the Task Force recommended a process that is called The Forum's Qualify Improvement Program (QUIP). This is very much in keeping with the directions in the field of higher education today which focus more on quality improvement than strict accountability models. QUIP will be useful to the wide range of institutions and organizations in the field of education abroad, which vary immensely in terms of their own self evaluation systems. QUIP offers a standardized approach to program and system reviews. Today, offices and programs often invite peers to evaluate their operations without access to an agreed-upon process or template. QUIP should quickly become the standard in the field for evaluating offices and programs. There are a variety of types of QUIP, depending on the scope of the review. All reviewers undergo training so there is consistency with the evaluation processes. Institutions and organizations also receive guidance regarding the self-study component.

The Forum recognizes that many individuals, institutions and organizations may have different opinions about the best way to apply standards in the field of education abroad. The current process reflects the work of many, many individuals and experts and has been democratic in nature from the start. While the process may not be perfect, it is the most deliberate, most focused and most collaborative process of its kind that the field has known to date in the area of ensuring standards of good practice. We invite the Forum membership to support QUIP and to help make it the success it should be. Our students deserve no less.

Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad

Preamble

The Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad are the product of years of collaboration and reflect the input and shared vision of education abroad professionals from around the world.

It is the Forum's hope that the Standards will continue to serve education abroad as a touchstone by which they periodically review their programs. If there is one core precept for Forum on Education Abroad members, it is a commitment to the continuous evaluation and improvement of our work as international educators.

The United States Justice Department recognizes the Forum as the Standards Development Organization (SDO) for education abroad. The criteria for this SDO status are: openness, balance, transparency, consensus, and due process. The Forum Board of Directors and the Forum Council are charged with the responsibility of deciding how to implement the Forum's SDO prerogatives. The Standards Committee of the Forum Council ensures that the standards are open, balanced, transparent, and the product of consensus. These principles have guided the Standards Committee's work, and will continue to do so.

What the reader will not find in these Standards are simplistic solutions to the many complex challenges inherent in international education and intercultural understanding. We affirm that there are certain basic principles that ought to be accepted without question by education abroad practitioners and programs. These include: providing students with clear information about and goals for a program; non-discrimination; the need to have a plan for academic oversight; a commitment to accurate, empathetic, and developmentally appropriate advising; attention to safety in planning; observance of home and host country laws; commitment to professional, ethical behavior.

We also recognize that there are no "one-size-fits-all" answers for how organizations and programs should address education abroad standards. After all, our students come from all manner of backgrounds and have a variety of academic interests. It would make no more sense to impose monolithic standards on all education abroad programs than it would to assume that all programs ought to aspire to identical goals. The Standards are therefore designed to fit a wide range of academic program types including direct enrollment programs, hybrid programs, island programs, and field research programs. They are applicable to semester and year-long programs, summer programs, and short-term programs; and programs organized by domestic universities, international universities, and education abroad providers. The Standards Committee considered but decided against creating several standards documents designed to fit different kinds of organizations. It is not our vision to impose a long list of requirements of good practice that apply in equal measure or categorically to all educational programs and professionals. We expect, nevertheless, that practitioners, institutions, consortia, and associations will employ these standards for different reasons and at different times in their organizations' history, each with legitimately varying goals, according to their individual education abroad mission and philosophy.

It is essential that the Standards be applied in a manner that is appropriate to the environment and culture of individual institutions and that those who serve as program reviewers take into account the nature and complexity of individual programs. For example, the Standards Committee recognizes that education abroad often takes place at institutions abroad through reciprocal exchange arrangements or through direct enrollment programs. Local conventions regarding quality control in program delivery might take precedence in these scenarios. Exchanges and direct enrollment in institutions abroad involve a significant segment of education abroad students, and the education abroad profession recognizes and affirms their value for student learning.

Our solution to the challenge of how to set high standards, without promoting standardization of a particular model for education abroad, is to anchor the standards in a set of queries rather than to promulgate them through

prescriptive statements. These queries provide a structure for voluntary, periodic self-evaluation by individual professionals, their programs, and their institutions. The queries are designed to elicit thought, discussion, and documentation, rather than simple yes or no answers. By asking the right questions and by accessing the supporting model resources and documents of practice in the Standards Toolbox, we hope that the active professional will find the process of self-review both intellectually engaging and professionally enriching. Reviews should be seen primarily as an opportunity to look to the future rather than to serve as a focus on whether an institution meets a series of objective guidelines. Ultimately, our common goal is to establish standards that will improve practices, such that our students' international academic experiences are as rich and meaningful as possible.

Michael Steinberg, Institute for the International Education of Students
Chair, Forum Standards Committee
William Anthony, Northwestern University

Definition of Terms

Education Abroad Program
In-classroom and out-of-classroom related activities that comprise a credit-bearing education abroad experience.

Home Institution
The college or university at which the education abroad student is earning the primary degree.

Host Institution
The college, university or other education entity abroad that provides academic and program related support to the education abroad student.

Provider
An institution or a stand-alone non-profit or for-profit entity that administers one or more education abroad programs primarily for students who are not enrolled there to pursue the primary degree.

Organization
A college or university that sponsors study abroad programs or a provider.

Note: Each Standard may not be applicable to each type of education abroad activity engaged in by an organization; however, the Standards Committee 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 itself, or if they apply more directly to the activities of its partners in the field.

The Standards of Good Practice

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.

2. **Student Learning and Development: The organization has stated educational objectives that foster student learning and development, and has established, and regularly utilizes, internal and external review processes for assuring that its programs accomplish these objectives.**
    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.**
    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 home institution advising.
    e. Academic Integration: The organization fosters the integration of student learning abroad with requirements and learning at the home institution.
    f. Academic Planning: The home institution encourages students to make education abroad decisions with reference to degree progress, in consultation with their academic adviser.
    g. Career Planning: The home institution provides program selection advising that takes into account students' career goals and interests.

4. **Student Preparation for the Learning Environment Abroad: The organization provides advising and orientation support that is consistent with the program's mission and student needs.**
    a. Pre- and Post-Departure Advising and Orientation: The program provides appropriate orientation and advising support to meet student needs as they evolve throughout the term of education abroad.
    b. Returning Student Support: The organization and program staff provide support for students returning from abroad.

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.
    b. Code of Conduct: The organization makes explicit its student code of conduct and its 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 accepted 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 of its policies and procedures.

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.

8. **Health, Safety and Security: The organization has established and continuously maintains effective health, safety, security and risk management policies, procedures and faculty/staff training.**
    a. Safety and Security: The organization ensures continuous attention to safety and security issues.
    b. Health: The organization ensures continuous institutional attention to health issues for program students, faculty, and staff.
    c. Liability: The organization maintains adequate insurance coverage and conducts regular risk-management review involving appropriate training and personnel.
    d. Emergency Communications: The organization and program have adequate and clearly defined emergency communications protocols.

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 is considerate and respectful of the cultures and values of the countries in which it operates or sponsors programs and from which it draws students.

THE STANDARDS QUERIES

Queries are the means through which organizations and programs can test themselves against the standards. The query approach is designed to avoid prescriptive statements and to elicit a variety of responses. The Queries are linked to resources from a number of organizations and institutions and are contained in the online Standards Toolbox, which is accessible only to Forum members.

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.
       i. Does the organization have a mission statement for its programs? If so, what is it?
       ii. Does each program have clear objectives?
       iii. Does the organization define expected outcomes?

2. **Student Learning and Development: The organization has stated educational objectives that foster student learning and development, and has established, and regularly utilizes, internal and external review processes for assuring that its programs accomplish these objectives.**
    a. Inter-Cultural Understanding: The organization fosters inter-cultural understanding.
       i. Are students encouraged to reflect on their own value system in a structured manner, in the context of living in a different culture?
       ii. Do academic studies, support services, and integrative activities such as ethnographic observation or journaling exercises contribute to students' appreciation and respect for people with differing cultural values?
       iii. Are integrative activities designed to assist students in acquiring general adaptive skills that prepare them to live in a cultural milieu different from their own?
       iv. Do opportunities exist for students to interact with people of different backgrounds? For example, do programs have agreements with universities or other entities for access to sponsored activities and student clubs?
       v. Are assessments made of students' comparative knowledge of multiple cultures?
       vi. Are assessments made of students' ability to adapt to a different culture?
       vii. Is assessment of students' cultural learning used to enhance the program's orientation and training programs, curriculum, student services, and integrative activities?
    b. Language and Communication: The organization encourages the development of language and/or inter-cultural communication skills.
       i. Are students tested and placed in appropriate language courses?
       ii. Is language instruction, when appropriate, integrated into program courses and activities?
       iii. In language development courses, do students gain a perspective of the host country's values, history, culture, and current status?
       iv. Are students provided out-of-classroom opportunities to develop oral, listening, and writing skills in the language of the host country?
       v. Are students encouraged to use the host language as much as possible in the program, in class, and on excursions?
       vi. Do students engage in periodic self-evaluation of their communication skills in the language of the host culture?
       vii. Are students adequately prepared for language courses or direct enrollment in institutions where language ability is a prerequisite?
       viii. Do language programs provide adequate articulation between curricula at the home institution and abroad?
       ix. Are language students given adequate opportunity for continued study upon return to the home institution?

c. Academic Growth: The program provides academic learning opportunities appropriate to the program's mission.
   i. Do courses available to students effectively support students' academic progress in their major fields or their general education?
   ii. Does the program make an effort to integrate its curriculum with curricula of the students' home institutions?
   iii. Are syllabi available prior to student enrollment?
   iv. Is the curriculum periodically assessed by faculty from sending institutions?
   v. Are students placed into appropriate levels within the disciplines of study?
   vi. Does the curriculum take advantage of local resources for discipline-specific learning?
   vii. Do the course content and pedagogy expose students to different perspectives on the discipline?
   viii. Does the program offer discipline-specific field or research opportunities and/or internships when appropriate?
d. Student Development: The program provides opportunities that encourage student development (e.g., leadership skills, service orientation, maturity, tolerance for ambiguity).
   i. Does the program provide opportunities for local engagement?
   ii. Does the program provide opportunities for host country integration in living arrangements?
   iii. Does the program provide mechanisms for fostering students' independence and self-direction?

3. **Academic Framework: The organization maintains clearly stated and publicly available policies on academic matters related to education abroad.**
   a. Academic Credit: The organization has clearly stated and publicly available policies on the awarding of academic credit.
      i. Does the organization have clearly articulated policies and procedures for awarding or recommending course grades and course credit?
      ii. Is the award of academic credit consistent with standards expected by the students' home institutions?
      iii. How does the program inform students in advance about policies with respect to course credit, registration changes, or course withdrawal?
   b. Academic Coursework: The organization provides an academically challenging program of study.
      i. Do courses meet the academic requirements of students' home institutions?
      ii. If courses are taken at a host institution abroad, does the program ensure that students will be appropriately evaluated in the courses?
      iii. If courses are taken at a host institution abroad, do the provider and/or organization ensure that the amount of credit and the grade conversion are based on clear and careful guidelines?
      iv. Are course requirements clear to students?
      v. Are students provided clear guidelines for what is expected of them, for how their performance in the course will be evaluated, and on the host country teaching styles and expectations?
      vi. Is the academic program organized to enhance student engagement in the intellectual, political, cultural, and social institutions of the host country, and consistent with the program mission?
      vii. If the program involves direct enrollment in host university courses, does the program effectively prepare students for course requirements, differences in classroom culture, and teaching styles?
      viii. If the program involves direct enrollment in host university courses, does the program advise students effectively on enrollment in courses that best suit their interests, needs, and preparation?
      ix. Does the program convey to its faculty the requirements of home institutions for course work abroad?
      x. Does the program make effective use of modes of instruction, assessment, and learning at the site that may differ from home institution models?
      xi. Does the program enrich the classroom experience through effective use of location and/or unique resources?
      xii. Does the program enhance instruction through effective use of field study and engagement of local cultural institutions?

xiii. Does the organization offer tutorial support for students having academic difficulties?

xiv. Are academic programs designed to encourage independent learning?

xv. Are out-of-classroom activities integrated with in-class course work?

xvi. Are students encouraged to compare and understand differences and similarities between home and host countries?

xvii. Are students guided toward appropriate learning strategies and methods for successful integration in the host academic culture?

xviii. Do students receive appropriate feedback about their class work and exams?

c. Internships and Field Research: When offered for credit, internships and field opportunities have appropriate academic and field supervision.

    i. Are internships or field research opportunities closely related to one or more other courses in the program or to the program's location, language, or theme(s)?

    ii. Are any preparatory or parallel courses (e.g. field research methods or contextual studies in relevant disciplines) required and/or provided in order to facilitate academic credit for an internship or a field research project?

    iii. Do qualified academics or other professionals regularly monitor internships or field research components, and regularly evaluate and grade student performance in them?

    iv. Is a research paper or other substantial final assignment required in order for students to synthesize learning in internships or field research projects so that they may obtain academic credit?

    v. Is the award of credit for internships or field research projects consistent with home institution standards for awarding such credit?

    vi. Does the organization adhere to appropriate ethics in its research and in its guidelines for student research projects, particularly involving human subjects?

d. On-Site Advising: The program advises students on academic matters in cooperation with their home institution adviser.

    i. Are students guided toward appropriate learning strategies and methods for successful integration in the host academic culture?

    ii. If the program advertises international university partnerships, does the program encourage qualified students to enroll in appropriate locally taught (or available) university courses?

    iii. Are the program and home institution advisers' roles and expertise defined and communicated to the student?

    iv. Is the student encouraged to be in contact with the home institution adviser when finalizing on-site course registration?

e. Academic Integration: The organization fosters the integration of student learning abroad with requirements and learning at the home institution.

    i. Do the program faculty and the home institution faculty play a role in ensuring that the education abroad experience is integrated into the student's overall academic program?

    ii. Does the organization provide sufficient information to the home institution for evaluation of courses for credit transfer?

    iii. Does the organization provide a framework to ensure that the education abroad experience is integrated into the academic program at the home institution?

    iv. Do home institution academic leaders meet with program faculty and staff to discuss ongoing and possible new academic opportunities?

    v. Does the organization have a process to address curriculum development, e.g., through a content-qualified curriculum committee or similar structure?

    vi. How does the organization support integration of programs in home institution curricula?

    f.   Academic Planning: The home institution encourages students to make education abroad decisions with reference to degree progress, in consultation with their academic adviser.
- i. Has the home institution put a mechanism in place that encourages or requires students to seek advising during their program selection and course registration process?
- ii. Are students encouraged or required to document an academic plan or adviser approval of course selection?

    g.   Career Planning: The home institution provides program selection advising that takes into account a student's career goals and interests.
- i. Do the home institution's materials, website, and advising model encourage students to define academic and career goals while selecting a program?
- ii. Are home institution academic and education abroad advisers trained to assist students to clarify goals and to find a program that meets those goals?
- iii. Does the home institution assess the degree to which programs have met student goals?

4. **Student Preparation for the Learning Environment Abroad: The organization provides advising and orientation support that is consistent with the program's mission and student needs.**

    a.   Pre- and Post-Departure Advising and Orientation: The program provides appropriate orientation and advising support to meet student needs as they evolve throughout the term of education abroad.
- i. Does the organization advise on appropriate program selection?
- ii. Does the organization provide appropriate advising and pre-departure support sufficient to meet student needs?
- iii. Is pre-departure information regarding academic credit, program requirements, living and travel arrangements, safety and health considerations, and expectations about expenses accurate and complete?
- iv. Does the home institution facilitate students' use of support services on campus (e.g., financial aid, student health) before they participate in education abroad?
- v. Do the home institution and program ensure that students have sufficient prerequisite knowledge of the language of the host country to satisfactorily meet the program's academic expectations before enrolling?
- vi. Do students have sufficient academic preparation and appropriate course prerequisites at the home institution before enrolling in the program?
- vii. Does the organization require or inform students about the need for health and repatriation insurance?
- viii. Does the program conduct an extensive initial orientation appropriate to the goals and nature of the program and needs of the students?
- ix. Does the orientation contain accurate advice on health, safety, and security issues, and inform students about the potential risks involved in education abroad and the specific risks at their education abroad venue?

    b.   Returning Student Support: The organization and program provide support for students returning from abroad.
- i. Does the organization offer a re-entry program for returning students?
- ii. Does the organization assist returning students to share their experiences with other students at the home institution?
- iii. Does the organization assist returning students to apply their education abroad experiences to academic, personal, and professional progress upon return to campus, as well as after graduation?

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.
      i. Has the organization defined its participant pool and set appropriate admissions standards?
      ii. Does the organization encourage students from traditionally underrepresented groups to participate in education abroad?
      iii. Do the organization and the home institution encourage students from a wide variety of majors and fields of study to participate in education abroad?
      iv. Does the organization identify and encourage students who have the necessary background for specific programs to apply fo them?
      v. Does the admissions process reflect a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, or national and ethnic origin?
      vi. What measures does the organization take to accommodate students with disabilities, and how does it manage instances where disabilities cannot be accommodated?
      vii. When students apply to multiple programs, does the organization recommend the program match that offers the most academic benefit to the student?
   b. Code of Conduct: The organization makes explicit its student code of conduct and disciplinary processes.
      i. Does the organization have a drug and alcohol abuse policy?
      ii. Does the organization have student disciplinary codes and processes, and are these made available to students?
      iii. Does the home institution take measures to assure that students meet the minimum behavior standards as specified by the organization's code of student responsibility?
      iv. Does the organization have an appeal process for decisions about admissions and code of conduct violations?
      v. Does the organization have a policy with respect to sexual harassment and assault?

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.
      i. Does the organization have criteria in place for establishing and terminating programs?
      ii. Does the organization have standards for accepting and reporting student credits from a program?
      iii. Does the organization have appropriate waivers and agreements with students participating in programs?
      iv. What are the organization's policies related to signing agreements and contracts?
      v. Does the organization adhere to these institutional policies?
      vi. Does the organization have agreements with international educational and/or cultural institutions when appropriate (e.g., bilateral exchange, direct enrolment, etc.)?
      vii. How are institutional agreements negotiated and implemented?
      viii. Does the organization have agreements among participating home and host institutions, providers, and programs when appropriate (e.g., consortia)?
      ix. Does the organization support, mentor and learn from others in the field of international education?
      x. Does the organization provide support for staff members to play an active role in professional organizations at the local, regional, or national level?
      xi. Does the organization integrate education abroad with the internationalization initiatives of its home campus?

b. Personnel: The organization has defined policies with respect to personnel.
   i. Does the organization have a policy of non-discrimination in hiring in the home location as well as abroad?
   ii. Do program faculty members make an effort to establish professional working relationships with counterparts, academic leadership, and staff at organization headquarters and at universities that participate in the program?
   iii. Does the organization provide feedback to provider and program staff and leadership?
   iv. Does the program or provider have procedures for evaluating faculty and staff?
   v. Does the organization offer opportunities for program staff and faculty development?
   vi. Do staff and faculty participate in professional development opportunities?
c. Advising: The organization is committed to and implements an advising model appropriate to students' curricular, intellectual, and personal development.
   i. Does the organization advise for program model and content according to students' curricular advancement and academic attainment?
   ii. Does the organization advise for program model according to students' stated or demonstrated tolerance for uncertainty or logistical challenge?
   iii. Does the organization advise for program model according to students' experience with or aptitude for independent academic work and/or independent living?
d. Communications: The organization is committed to and practices open, accurate, and honest communications.
   i. How does the organization inform faculty and staff about the goals of the programs?
   ii. How does the organization inform faculty and staff about the activities of the programs?
   iii. Does the organization have communication plans and articulation agreements with other organizations with which it works?
   iv. Is collegiality maintained among faculty and staff of the various entities involved with the programs?
   v. Does the education abroad office at the home institution cultivate and maintain regular and working relationships with key administrative units at the institution (e.g., Financial Aid, Health Services, Risk Management, Student Services, etc.)?
   vi. Does the organization accurately inform participating institutions of program requirements, costs, and opportunities?
   vii. Are program and provider staff and faculty networked with relevant counterparts at other organizations, and are there protocols that assure timely and open communication between program staff and faculty and relevant counterparts at students' home and host institutions?
e. Marketing: The organization follows ethical practices in marketing.
   i. Does the organization convey clear, honest, and consistent information about their programs through their print and electronic materials?
   ii. What systems are in place to ensure that the organization reflects the content of its programs completely and accurately in print and electronic materials?
   iii. Does the organization convey financial information, such as covered costs, anticipated out-of-pocket expenses, and refund information, fully and accurately through its print and electronic materials?
   iv. What are the organization's policies regarding price changes and the timing of increases, and does the organization avoid last-minute price changes?
   v. Does the organization inform students and other stakeholders that there may be price increases or material changes in a program as the result of circumstances beyond the organization's control, such as radical changes in currency exchange rates?
   vi. Does the organization provide comprehensive information for parents and guardians?
   vii. Does the organization properly acknowledge other information or data sources in its publications?

viii. Does the organization take care not to denigrate or to interfere with the operations and programs of competitor organizations?

ix. Does the organization respect and abide by campus policies regarding visits and promotions?

f. Affordability and Financial Assistance: The organization provides proactive assistance to students and families concerning the provision of internal and/or external financial aid.

i. Does the organization have an established policy to make education abroad financially accessible to as many students as possible?

ii. Are the organization's financial aid policies consistent with implied and actual recruitment commitments made to students?

iii. Does the organization provide financial aid counseling for students?

g. Program Assessment: The organization has established, and regularly utilizes, formal review and evaluation processes for its policies and procedures.

i. Does the organization have a plan for evaluating programs?

ii. Does the organization consider cultural differences when evaluating programs?

iii. Are students provided an opportunity to evaluate each course as well as the overall program, and do program staff and faculty review these evaluations?

iv. Does the organization have academic standards approved and monitored by faculty or an equivalent qualified body?

v. Does the organization provide an opportunity for periodic independent peer review?

vi. Does the organization have a plan in place to assess students' academic, linguistic, cultural, and/or personal development in a program?

vii. How are these external and internal evaluations utilized for program improvement?

viii. Where appropriate, does the organization share evaluation findings with home and host institution, provider, and program staff and academic leaders?

ix. Does the organization have a protocol for data collection, analysis, and dissemination?

x. Does the organization have procedures for academic approval of courses, and credit arrangements?

xi. Does the organization encourage visits by external partners to the program sites?

xii. Are the organization and partners clear on the purpose, cost, and parameters of site visits?

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.

i. Do program faculty members have qualifications and in-depth experience appropriate to the mission of the program and the courses taught?

ii. Do instructors in university courses at the site have appropriate qualifications and in-depth experience?

iii. Are program instructors aware of, and trained to manage, cultural differences in order to work with international students in the host culture?

iv. Do program instructors have academic credibility and appropriate credentials in their host country?

v. Do the scholarly achievements of the program faculty meet local standards for university-level instruction?

vi. Do program instructors ensure that student academic experiences meet the academic expectations of the home institutions?

vii. Do program instructors accept their role as educators and fulfill their responsibilities to each student?

viii. Do program faculty and/or staff have appropriate information on learning styles and expectations of students from another culture, and do they employ appropriate teaching strategies to accommodate

culturally mediated differences in learning style, or to alert visiting students to key course benchmarks and expectations?

    ix. Do program faculty and staff have the necessary skills and background to prepare students for the educational system they will be entering?

    x. Are program faculty productive as scholars or practitioners in their field?

    xi. Are program instructors involved in developing new courses according to the organization's approved curriculum design?

    xii. Do program instructors assist students to make informed and independent academic choices?

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.

    i. Is the ratio of staff to students appropriate for the mission of the program?

    ii. Does the organization have standards of competencies in selecting staff, and a protocol for periodic staff evaluation?

    iii. Does the organization have a training program for new employees and does it foster professional development for continuing employees?

    iv. Does the organization have appropriate policies in areas such as harassment, diversity, hiring, and termination?

    v. Are the on-site senior administrators adequately trained and experienced for the duties they must perform?

    vi. Are guides qualified to lead field trips?

    vii. Are on-site staff knowledgeable about cross-cultural learning?

    viii. Are staff trained to manage cultural differences in order to work with international students in the host culture?

    ix. Are home institution staff knowledgeable about the destinations where they send students?

    x. Are program staff knowledgeable about issues of student development, advising, and support?

c. Financial Resources: The organization devotes adequate financial resources to each program.

    i. Does the organization have a financial management plan?

    ii. Does the organization have financial oversight processes appropriate to the size and complexity of the programs?

    iii. Does the organization provide adequate logistical and academic support for new programs?

    iv. Does the organization have sufficient financial resources to address crises and/or sudden and unanticipated financial changes?

    v. Does the organization have access to emergency funds?

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.

    i. Do programs follow a written plan for routine, preventative, and deferred maintenance of facilities, equipment, and grounds?

    ii. Is reasonable accommodation made to meet the needs of students with physical disabilities?

    iii. Does the organization have a policy regarding accommodation of students' physical and/or learning disabilities?

    iv. Do students have access to adequate library resources?

    v. Do students have adequate study space?

    vi. Do students have access to equipment and technologies appropriate to the program design?

    vii. Do students have access to Internet services appropriate to their academic needs?

    viii. Are classrooms equipped with instructional technology as appropriate?

    ix. Are faculty trained in the use of this technology?

    x. Are the program facilities adequate to the size and type of the program?

    e.   Student Housing: Students are provided with or assisted in securing appropriate housing.
- i. Does the organization have written protocols for managing student life issues?
- ii. Is the location of student housing accessible to appropriate transportation?
- iii. Are housing contracts consistent with host country law?
- iv. Does student housing promote student access to the local culture?
- v. Is the housing evaluated and inspected regularly?
- vi. Are adequate provisions made for changing a student's housing assignment when warranted, and can housing changes be made swiftly and discreetly in response to harassment of or threat to students?
- vii. Does the housing meet appropriate security measures?

8. Health, Safety and Security: The organization has established and continuously maintains effective health, safety, security and risk management policies, procedures and faculty/staff training.

    a.   Safety and Security: The organization ensures continuous attention to safety and security issues.
- i. Does the organization have procedures for handling student emergencies?
- ii. Are staff trained to manage emergencies?
- iii. Does the organization have a written crisis management plan?
- iv. Does the organization have a safety and security plan?
- v. Are crisis management, emergency, and safety plans reviewed and evaluated regularly by appropriate administrative staff and local legal counsel?
- vi. Are program staff and faculty informed of all crisis and emergency procedures?
- vii. Are efforts made to ensure that program facilities, classrooms, offices, home stays, excursions, and field trips meet local standards and, to the extent possible, accepted international safety standards?
- viii. Does the organization undertake regular safety assessment of its facilities and services?

    b.   Health: The organization ensures continuous institutional attention to health issues for program students, faculty, and staff.
- i. Do program staff members inform students about local health and safety concerns?
- ii. Are staff sufficiently trained to determine when students should be referred for professional assistance for mental health and substance abuse issues?
- iii. Are students with individual health concerns provided pre-departure and on-site guidance and assistance?
- iv. Does the organization have contacts with appropriate health-related agencies on site?

    c.   Liability: The organization maintains adequate insurance coverage and conducts regular risk-management review involving appropriate training and personnel.
- i. Does the organization have appropriate insurance coverage to cover liability risks, and require insurance coverage for students and traveling faculty/administration?
- ii. Are the appropriate offices and external agencies involved in a regular risk management assessment program?

    d.   Emergency Communications: The organization and program have adequate and clearly defined emergency communications protocols.
- i. Does the organization have policies and procedures for contacting home institutions and/or parents/guardians/emergency-contacts in emergency situations, and with respect to student health and safety issues?
- ii. Are students informed about these policies and procedures and is this information available on the Internet?

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.

        i. How does the organization inform its faculty and staff about its own ethical standards and those of the education abroad field?

        ii. What is the organization's policy for reconciling its ethical principles with host institution ethical principles, and for reconciling home and host country laws?

        iii. What ethical and legal standards does the organization apply in the marketing and operations of its programs?

        iv. Do staff and faculty consistently abide by home and host country laws, regulations, and guidelines that may affect programs?

        v. Does the organization keep staff and faculty apprised of these laws, regulations, and guidelines?

        vi. Are the organization and its personnel trained to recognize and enjoined to avoid conflicts of interest, and is there a protocol for addressing such conflicts?

        vii. Is a conflict-of-interest policy documented and distributed to personnel?

        viii. Does the organization treat colleagues in the field in an ethical and civil manner?

        ix. Does the organization have a policy on the acceptance of gifts, gratuities and other compensation?

        x. Does the organization promote integrity?

    b.   Student Life: The organization conducts its activities and advises students in an ethically responsible manner.

        i. What ethical guidelines are in place for advising and interacting with students?

        ii. How does the organization protect student rights to privacy and confidentiality?

        iii. How does the organization assure long-term protection of students' records?

        iv. Does the organization value, welcome, and provide a supportive environment for all students, regardless of gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, and national or ethnic origin?

    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.

        i. Does the organization have sophisticated knowledge of the ethics, culture, society, values, and politics of the countries in which it operates?

        ii. Does the organization consult specialists who are knowledgeable about the countries in which it operate

THE STANDARDS TOOLBOX

The Standards Toolbox is an online resource for Forum members. The Toolbox is designed to help members implement the Standards of Good Practice at their organizations by offering examples of the Standards in practice. Colleges, universities, providers, associations, and other members have contributed these documents to serve as models for institutions engaged in self-study or organizational planning.

    Links to documents and webpages that demonstrate best practices in the field are found for each section of the Standards. Where possible, several documents are provided, because no single approach will serve the vast diversity of education abroad programs and organizations. The Forum Standards Committee encourages member institutions to submit examples of their own best practices.

    The Standards Toolbox is found at www.forumea.org/-toolbox.cfm.

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About the Forum on Education Abroad

The Forum on Education Abroad is the only organization whose exclusive purpose is to serve the field of education abroad. Recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission as the Standards Development Organization (SDO) for education abroad, the Forum's *Standards of Good Practice* are recognized as the definitive means by which the quality of education abroad programs may be judged. The Forum's Quality Improvement Program for Education Abroad (QUIP) uses the *Standards* as part of a rigorous self-study and peer review quality assurance program that is available to all Forum institutional members.

The mission of the Forum on Education Abroad is to promote high quality and effective education abroad programs on behalf of students at U.S. colleges and universities through providing a wide variety of services and benefits to its institutional members. Through its many education, research, and quality assurance initiatives,· the Forum promotes effective education abroad programming by

· advocating standards of good practice,
· promoting excellence in curricular development and academic design,
· encouraging outcomes assessment and other research,
· facilitating data collection, and
· advocating education abroad at all levels.

Forum members include U.S. colleges and universities, provider organizations, overseas institutions, consortia, and affiliates involved in education abroad. The Forum membership has grown to include more than 300 institutions around the world that collectively represent approximately 80 percent of the U.S. study abroad market.

The Forum's offices are located on the campus of Dickinson College, in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

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