

The Forum on Education Abroad - State of the Field Survey - 2006

In 2006, the Forum on Education Abroad conducted a State of the Field Survey of its membership. This survey is meant to be the first of an annual assessment of what is on the minds of Forum members and, by extension, the field of education abroad in general.

The 2006 survey was developed and designed by the Forum Data Committee with input from the Forum Council and it was implemented by the Forum Data Committee. A survey invitation was sent by email on Sept 20, 2006 to each voting member of the Forum. We decided to send the survey invitation to voting members only because we wanted each institution to have one voice in the survey, rather than giving large organizations with many members multiple voices. We did make some adjustments to this policy as seemed appropriate. For example, if an institution had both a home campus operation and a provider branch that catered to outside students, then we allowed both parts of the institution to answer separately. Their issues and answers would clearly represent a different perspective to some degree. We also sent the survey invitation to members at individual campuses of large institutional systems even if the system had only one voting member.

Members who received the email invitation were directed to the survey which was conducted online. The original deadline was Oct 6, but we extended the deadline to Oct 18 in order to try to get a better response rate. In the end 199 members received the invitation to participate and 93 members completed the survey – giving us a 47% response rate.

Here are some highlights of the preliminary survey results:

- 85% of the respondents are from educational institutions. All of the educational institutions are located in the U.S. except for one Australian institution. 15% of the respondents were program providers.
- 54% of the educational institutions include international education in the mission statements for their institutions. 46% do not.
- 90% of institutional respondents agree with the following statement: “The senior officers of my institution are very supportive of education abroad for our students.
- 48% of institutional respondents disagree with the following statement: One-to-one direct exchanges are an efficient way (in terms of time, energy, and cost) for us to offer study abroad programming on my campus. 29% strongly agree or agree and 20% were neutral.
- 68% of institutional respondents agree that the institutional cost of education abroad is of increasing concern at their institutions.
- 58% of respondents pay close attention to their position in the annual IIE Open Doors survey. 22% do not.
- At 91% of respondents’ institutions language study is increasing for some languages; most notably Chinese, Spanish, Arabic, Japanese, and Italian.
- At 67% of respondents’ institutions, language study is decreasing for some languages; most notably German, French and Russian.

- 43% of all respondents were neutral about whether the recommendations of the Lincoln Commission are likely to shape their organizational/institutional policy on education abroad.
- 63% of all respondents believe that the Forum's Standards of Good Practice will be used to shape their organizational/institutional policy on education abroad.
- 83% of all respondents agree that the existence of a State Department Warning regarding travel to a country is a critical factor that they would consider in deciding whether to run study abroad programs in that country.
- In the last five years, respondents reported having some successes in sending students from underrepresented groups abroad:
 - 40% of respondents enrolled more students of color in education abroad programs
 - 83% of respondents enrolled more students from a wider variety of majors in education abroad programs
 - 29% of respondents enrolled more male students in education abroad programs
 - Only 19% of respondents enrolled more students with disabilities in education abroad programs; 29% of respondents felt they did not have success in this area.
- Respondents identified the following as the top 10 health and safety concerns in education abroad:
 - #1: Student mental health (28 responses)
 - #2: Alcohol consumption and substance abuse (26 responses)
 - #3: Pandemics (20 responses)
 - #4: Terrorism (16 responses)
 - #5: Need for risk management and emergency protocols (15 responses)
 - #6: Crime (13 responses)
 - #7: Risky student behavior (12 responses)
 - #8: Traffic-related safety (10 responses)
 - #9: Lack of student awareness/concern about health and safety concerns (9 responses)
 - #10 (tie): Personal safety (8 responses)
 - #10 (tie): Access to appropriate medical care (8 responses)
 - #10 (tie): Political uncertainty (8 responses)
 - #10 (tie): Sexual harassment and sexual assault (8 responses)
- Respondents identified the following as the top 10 overall concerns in education abroad:
 - #1: Academic quality (23 responses)
 - #2: Curriculum integration (12 responses)
 - #3: Program costs and rising costs (11 responses)
 - #4: Adequate preparation of students (9 responses)
 - #5: Parent involvement (9 responses)
 - #6: Need for better funding (9 responses)
 - #7: Disparity between student expectations and the reality of the experience (7 responses)
 - #8: Increasing participation on short-term programs (7 responses)
 - #9: Helping students maximize their experience (7 responses)
 - #10: The commodification of study abroad (7 responses)

The detailed responses:

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

1. I represent:

A community college in the U.S.	0	0%
An institution in the U.S. that offers baccalaureate degrees only	19	20%
An institution in the U.S. that offers master's degrees but not doctoral degrees	10	11%
An institution in the U.S. that offers doctoral degrees	48	52%
A university located outside of the U.S.	1	1%
A type of educational institution not listed here	1	1%
A non-profit program provider	10	11%
A for-profit program provider	4	4%
A type of organization not listed here	0	0%

2. The number of staff in my office who work in education abroad is:

92 Responses

Mean = 12.9; Range is 1 to 287; Median is 5

If we remove the response of '287,' then: **Mean = 9.9**; Range is 1 to 95; Median is 5

3. This year the ratio of advising staff to students going abroad in my office is

1 (one) advisor to ___ X ___ students. The value of X is:

86 Responses

Mean = 218; Range is 30 to 3700; Median is 150

If we remove the response of '3700,' then: **Mean = 175**; Range is 30 to 600; Median is 150

QUESTIONS FOR RESPONDENTS FROM COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

4. International Education is included in the mission statement for my college/university.

Yes	43	54%
No	37	46%
Total	80	100%

5. To whom does your office report?

An academic affairs officer such as an academic dean	43	54%
A student affairs officer such as dean of students	6	8%
A career services office	0	0%
A vice president for international programs	8	10%
Other, Please Specify	25	31%

Responses for 'Other'

Assoc Vice Provost For Enrichment Programs
 Assoc. Provost for all Undgrad & Intl. affairs
 Associate Provost and Dean of Int'l Programs
 Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education
 Dean for International Programs (reports to Prez)
 Dean of International Programs
 Dean of the Faculty

Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor
 Special Assistant to the Chancellor
 UC Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
 Vice Provost
 Vice Provost for International Affairs
 Vice Provost for International Relations
 Vice Provost for Outreach & Strategic Partnerships

Director of a Professional Programs Institute
 Dual report to VP Academic and the President
 Exec Dir of Int'l Programs
 Executive Vice President (he's also the acad dean)
 Provost
 Provost

Vice Provost for Undergrad Academic Affairs
 VP Academic Affairs/Provost
 VP for Cont. & Int'l. Ed. / Enrollment Mgmt.
 VP for Students and Enrollment
 VP Undergraduate Education

6. Please rate each of the following statements about your college or university:							
Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of total respondents selecting the option.	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know	
The senior officers of my institution are very supportive of education abroad for our students.	44 55%	28 35%	6 8%	2 3%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%
The senior officers of my institution are very supportive of volunteer and work abroad opportunities for our students.	18 23%	26 33%	25 32%	4 5%	2 3%	3 4%	0 0%
Our office works very closely and productively with our faculty.	27 34%	42 53%	6 8%	4 5%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%
Our students know that education abroad courses may be applied to general degree requirements and won't necessarily delay graduation.	33 42%	30 38%	10 13%	3 4%	0 0%	1 1%	2 3%
Our students know that education abroad courses may be applied to major or minor requirements and won't necessarily delay graduation.	33 41%	31 39%	10 13%	4 5%	0 0%	1 1%	1 1%
Our faculty and advisers know that education abroad courses can be applied to general degree requirements and won't necessarily delay graduation.	30 38%	33 41%	10 13%	3 4%	1 1%	1 1%	2 3%
Our faculty and advisers know that education abroad courses can be applied to major or minor requirements and won't necessarily delay graduation.	25 32%	34 44%	12 15%	4 5%	1 1%	1 1%	1 1%

7. Please rate the following statements about enrollment and the costs of study abroad at your college or university:							
Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of total respondents selecting the option.	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	
One-to-one direct exchanges are an efficient way (in terms of time, energy, and cost) for us to offer study abroad programming on my campus.	7 9%	16 20%	16 20%	18 23%	20 25%	0 0%	3 4%
The institutional cost of education abroad is of increasing concern at my institution.	31 39%	23 29%	10 13%	14 18%	2 3%	0 0%	0 0%
We find it easy to collect and report the annual data required for IIE's Open Doors.	16 20%	30 38%	17 21%	11 14%	5 6%	0 0%	1 1%

We pay close attention to our position in the tables published annually in IIE's Open Doors.	20	25	15	14	3	0	1
	26%	32%	19%	18%	4%	0%	1%

8. We have a cap on the number of students allowed to study abroad each term.		
Yes	9	12%
No	69	88%
Total	78	100%

Comments:

- We have an enrollment limit on individual programs, but not a cap on the overall number of students going off campus.
- This is a large public university and is not so much of an issue here.
- Although only theoretically, because we never exercise the right to cap numbers. Based on budget.
- But the number of students studying abroad each year does catch the interest of the VP Finance. He would like to impose a cap. However, all of the other members of the President's staff and the president have said no.
- No formal cap, but students may be required to study abroad in their second-choice semester.
- Though caps are coming up in more and more meetings with the budget office sadly these days. :(
- Program caps vary per country and option.
- The cap can be exceeded if it is a one for one exchange.
- Our budget is tightly controlled by the central budget office. All students who seek to study abroad (except a small no. of Leaves of Absences) must apply through my office.
- An enrollment cap was imposed on EAP for several years, but now has been partly lifted.
- 150 students
- Individual programs have space limits but we advise students to select other programs that have space available.
- We have caps on program enrollments.
- The OIE is given a set sum of money for study abroad and this sum defines the number that can actually go.

9. At my academic institution, internationalization of the curriculum manifests itself in the following ways:							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
	Yes, frequently	Yes, some times	Neutral	Infrequently	No	Don't know	
Courses taken abroad are evaluated to determine equivalency with on-campus courses.	46 58%	24 30%	1 1%	4 5%	3 4%	0 0%	1 1%
Education abroad grades appear on the home school transcript.	46 57%	13 16%	1 1%	4 5%	16 20%	0 0%	0 0%
Distribution requirements can be fulfilled through course work with an international focus.	47 59%	24 30%	2 3%	0 0%	2 3%	2 3%	3 4%
There are requirements to study abroad in certain disciplines.	16 20%	30 38%	1 1%	6 8%	26 33%	0 0%	1 1%
Courses taken abroad may be used to fulfill major and/or minor requirements.	62 78%	18 23%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%
10. Is language study increasing at your institution for some languages?							
Yes		73	91%				
No		7	9%				
Total		80	100%				

Which languages?	Number of schools reporting increases
Chinese	43
Spanish	40
Arabic	28
Japanese	21
Italian	17
Korean	7
Hindi	4
Portuguese	3
Farsi	2
Russian	2
French	1
Georgian	1
German	1
Indonesian	1
Irish	1
Swahili	1
Tagalog	1
Thai	1
Turkish	1
Vietnamese	1
Most	1

11. Is language study decreasing at your institution for some languages?		
Yes	51	67%
No	25	33%
Total	76	100%

Which languages?	Number of schools reporting decreases
German	38
French	22
Russian	20
Many languages	3
Italian	2
Korean	2
Arabic	1
Chinese	1
Japanese	1
Norwegian	1
Portuguese	1
Swedish	1

QUESTIONS FOR ALL RESPONDENTS

12. Please rate each of the following statements based on the plans of your organization or academic institution:

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of total respondents selecting the option.	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	
We plan to increase the number of faculty-led short-term programs we offer.	19 20%	33 35%	11 12%	11 12%	10 11%	2 2%	7 8%
The recommendations of the Lincoln Commission are likely to shape our organizational/institutional policy on education abroad.	2 2%	26 28%	40 43%	12 13%	5 5%	4 4%	3 3%
The Forum's Standards of Good Practice will be used to shape our organizational/institutional policy on education abroad.	15 16%	44 48%	20 22%	5 5%	2 2%	5 5%	1 1%
The existence of a State Department Warning regarding travel to a country is a critical factor that we would consider in deciding whether to run study abroad programs in that country.	47 51%	29 32%	8 9%	2 2%	2 2%	0 0%	4 4%

13. Our students are asking for more opportunities to:

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of total respondents selecting the option.	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	
study abroad on short-term programs rather than on semester or longer programs.	16 17%	23 25%	25 27%	23 25%	3 3%	0 0%	2 2%
do research abroad (either independent or directed research).	17 18%	35 38%	27 29%	12 13%	0 0%	0 0%	1 1%
do internships abroad.	31 33%	43 46%	15 16%	3 3%	0 0%	0 0%	1 1%
do service learning abroad.	12 13%	48 52%	24 26%	6 6%	2 2%	1 1%	0 0%

14. We plan to offer more programs that offer students the opportunity to:

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of total respondents selecting the option.	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	
Study abroad on short-term programs rather than on semester or longer programs.	10 11%	27 29%	22 24%	24 26%	9 10%	0 0%	1 1%
Do research abroad (either independent or directed research).	20 22%	39 42%	21 23%	10 11%	1 1%	0 0%	2 2%
Do internships abroad.	21 23%	42 45%	24 26%	4 4%	0 0%	1 1%	1 1%

Do service learning abroad.	13	42	27	8	1	1	0
	14%	46%	29%	9%	1%	1%	0%

15. India and China are constantly mentioned in the news as economic powers of the future.

Our organization or academic institution has plans to send more students to these countries in the next few years.

Yes	70	79%
No	19	21%
Total	89	100%

16. We are planning to send more students to India and/or China because of:

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of total respondents selecting the option.	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	
Institutional support (such as more classes in this area being offered on your campus).	12 17%	34 49%	10 14%	6 9%	2 3%	0 0%	5 7%
Existing student demand.	12 17%	34 49%	17 25%	4 6%	1 1%	0 0%	1 1%
Anticipated student demand.	14 21%	41 60%	9 13%	1 1%	2 3%	0 0%	1 1%
A desire to guide students towards these particular non-traditional destinations.	21 30%	32 46%	11 16%	2 3%	1 1%	0 0%	2 3%

17. We have had good success over the past five years in:

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of total respondents selecting the option.	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	
Enrolling more students of color in education abroad programs.	9 10%	28 30%	33 36%	17 18%	1 1%	3 3%	1 1%
Enrolling students from a wider variety of majors in education abroad programs.	21 23%	56 60%	10 11%	3 3%	0 0%	1 1%	2 2%
Sending students to more non-traditional destinations.	23 25%	46 50%	13 14%	8 9%	0 0%	0 0%	2 2%
Enrolling more male students in education abroad programs.	6 6%	21 23%	40 43%	14 15%	3 3%	3 3%	6 6%
Enrolling more students with disabilities in education abroad programs.	4 4%	14 15%	38 41%	21 23%	4 4%	8 9%	3 3%

18. Please rate each of the following statements:

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of total respondents selecting the option.	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	
Helping students understand the processes for obtaining host country visas has become extremely time consuming.	26 28%	43 46%	16 17%	8 9%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%

We are concerned that our students are becoming more removed from the application and pre-departure processes because of the involvement of their parents in these processes.	15	30	28	19	1	0	0
	16%	32%	30%	20%	1%	0%	0%
Our office is concerned that the student development that results from students solving their own problems while overseas is being affected by parental involvement in the overseas process.	23	41	20	9	0	0	0
	25%	44%	22%	10%	0%	0%	0%
Compared to students of the past, students today tend to view education abroad as a commodity that they will purchase rather than as an experience requiring their active engagement.	22	36	21	10	1	2	0
	24%	39%	23%	11%	1%	2%	0%

19. Our institution or organization has an effective re-entry program for students returning from abroad.

Strongly Agree	6	7%
Agree	28	31%
Neutral	26	29%
Disagree	26	29%
Strongly Disagree	5	5%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	91	100%

20. Which components of reentry programming do you offer?

	1	2	Don't Know
	Yes	No	
A reentry handbook	41 49%	40 48%	3 4%
A reentry meeting (optional for students)	61 73%	22 26%	1 1%
A reentry meeting (required for students)	15 19%	62 81%	0 0%
A reentry course	17 21%	62 78%	1 1%
The services of a reentry counselor	37 46%	43 53%	1 1%

21. HEALTH & SAFETY. The next three questions refer to your top three current concerns regarding health and safety issues in education abroad. What is your top health and safety concern?

90 Responses (The responses to this open-ended question were categorized and then tallied.)
Top five concerns of respondents to question 21:
#1 (tie): student mental health (16 responses)
#1 (tie): alcohol consumption and substance abuse (16 responses)
#3 (tie): terrorism (7 responses)
#3 (tie): risky student behavior (7 responses)
#5: Need for risk management and emergency protocols (6 responses)

Combining all of the responses from questions 21-23, here are the top ten health and safety concerns:

#1: Student mental health (28 responses)
#2: Alcohol consumption and substance abuse (26 responses)
#3: Pandemics (20 responses)
#4: Terrorism (16 responses)
#5: Need for risk management and emergency protocols (15 responses)
#6: Crime (13 responses)
#7: Risky student behavior (12 responses)
#8: Traffic-related safety (10 responses)
#9: Lack of student awareness/concern about health and safety concerns (9 responses)
#10 (tie): Personal safety (8 responses)
#10 (tie): Access to appropriate medical care (8 responses)
#10 (tie): Political uncertainty (8 responses)
#10 (tie): Sexual harassment and sexual assault (8 responses)

22. HEALTH & SAFETY. What is your second-ranked health and safety concern in education abroad?

86 Responses (see Question 21)

23. HEALTH & SAFETY. What is your third-ranked health and safety concern in education abroad?

82 Responses (see Question 21)

24. OVERALL CONCERNS. The next three questions refer to your top three overall concerns regarding education abroad today. What is your top concern?

89 Responses. (The responses to this open-ended question were categorized and then tallied.)

Top five concerns of respondents to question 24:

#1: Academic quality (11 responses)
#2: Program costs and rising costs (6 responses)
#3 (tie): Need for better funding (5 responses)
#3 (tie): Providing quality programs (5 responses)
#5 (tie): Commodification of study abroad (4 responses)
#5 (tie): Safety issues (4 responses)
#5 (tie): Increasing participation on short-term programs (4 responses)

Combining all of the responses from questions 24-26, here are the top ten overall concerns:

#1: Academic quality (23 responses)
#2: Curriculum integration (12 responses)
#3: Program costs and rising costs (11 responses)
#4: Adequate preparation of students (9 responses)
#5: Parent involvement (9 responses)
#6: Need for better funding (9 responses)
#7: Disparity between student expectations and the reality of the experience (7 responses)
#8: Increasing participation on short-term programs (7 responses)
#9: Helping students maximize their experience (7 responses)
#10: The commodification of study abroad (7 responses)

25. OVERALL CONCERN #2. What is your second-ranked overall concern?

88 Responses (see Question 24)

26. OVERALL CONCERN #3. What is your third-ranked overall concern?

79 Responses (see Question 24)