



Standards of Good Practice for Customized Faculty-Led Programming

MODELED ON THE FORUM ON EDUCATION ABROAD'S STANDARDS OF GOOD PRACTICE

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Mission and Vision

AIFS has a formally-adopted mission statement for its overall operations and for its individual divisions that is known and accepted by its staff and board members.

AIFS Vision

We bring the world together.

AIFS Mission

To provide the highest quality educational and cultural exchange programs to enrich the lives of young people throughout the world.

AIFS Goals

- Promote students' curiosity and intellectual growth through high-quality academic programming which utilizes the host country and culture as context.
- Promote cross-curricular learning and increased understanding through both academic and extra-curricular events and activities focused on interaction with the host culture.
- Facilitate students' self-awareness of their own culture by providing opportunity to compare and contrast cultural differences.
- Enhance students' personal growth, including qualities such as independence, confidence, self-reliance, curiosity and willingness to be in new and different surroundings and environments.
- Contribute to students' career and professional development to different fields of study and work, encouraging the development of skills sought by employers, and helping them to identify and articulate the applicable knowledge and skills acquired by studying abroad.
- Increase opportunity and access to study abroad programs for students from diverse backgrounds.

AIFS Beliefs

AIFS denounces racism, white supremacy, xenophobia, sexism, transphobia, ableism, genderism and any actions, activities and systems that seek to oppress individuals of diverse backgrounds. We believe that international exchange allows participants to learn from and about cultures and experiences outside of oneself. This time of self-reflection, growth, and exchange of ideas makes the world a richer and more empathetic place. We are committed to doing everything in our power to dismantle any of our own policies and practices that are contrary to these ideals.

Values AIFS is committed to

- Excellence in programs, operations, people.
- Respect and understanding of different cultures.
- Exceptional caring support for our program participants to ensure their safety and well being.
- Honest, equitable and non-discriminatory treatment of program participants, partners and employees.
- Technological innovation.
- Teamwork and collaboration both within the organization and with partners.
- Encouragement of employee initiative and professional development.
- Responsible financial stewardship.

Student Learning and Development

AIFS supports institutions in their objectives to provide educational programs abroad and foster student learning and development. Assessment data is gathered and analyzed on a regular basis and utilizes the information to monitor, maintain support and improve student success.

Intercultural Understanding

- Information on cultural traits of the host culture is presented in the on-site orientation and staff demonstrate respect for differences in customs and values.
- Opportunities for students to integrate into the host culture may be offered through homestays and/or volunteer placements, internships or membership in student clubs and activities.
- Students are asked to report on the way in which program components helped them acquire adaptive skills.
- Program alumni report on the way in which the program helped them learn adaptive behaviors for diverse work settings.
- Results on the impact of the experience are utilized to modify and enhance program aspects such as curriculum, orientation, and student services.

Academic Growth

- AIFS can recommend and provide delivery of courses (taught by adjunct instructors) that utilize the relevant resources of the local/host culture to teach the subject matter.
- Adjuncts prepare and make syllabi available for their courses.

Student Development

- Opportunities such as volunteering, student clubs or internships to promote skill development (e.g. leadership, maturity, adaptation to diverse work environments) outside the classroom can be offered
- Students are asked to complete an Alumni Survey to reflect and report on their personal growth upon completion of the program.
- On-site staff both challenge and support students to become more independent and self-motivated through both their daily interaction and in various meetings and events.

Language and Communication

- AIFS encourages the development of language and/or intercultural communication skills.
- Students are given a placement test to help determine the appropriate language course(s).
- The language curriculum includes information on cultural norms, values and etiquette.
- Program activities may be provided in order for students to use the host language.

Academic Framework

The AIFS program development process supports U.S. institutions in meeting their students' learning goals and objectives.

- The U.S. home institution determines the criteria for and awards all academic credit.
- Students receive tips on managing cultural differences in teaching styles of adjunct instructors and academic expectations during on-site orientation.
- On-site staff monitor and confirm enrollment status in each course taught by adjunct(s).
- Students may consult with on-site staff to seek academic advice or express concerns throughout the program duration.

- Students have sufficient access to academic resources in the appropriate language at the program site and/or local libraries.
- Students have convenient access to online resources for academic purposes.

Curriculum

- Courses taught by AIFS adjuncts or guest lectures are available which focus on the host country—its culture, politics, arts and society.
- Instructors hired by AIFS engage students in critical-thinking and intellectual growth.
- Academic site visits and related activities promote student learning and development.
- All AIFS courses are designed to be taught in person and on-line.
- Appropriate methodology is used to instruct in each discipline.

Internships and Field Research

- Attending meetings and relevant preparation by students is required for an internship or volunteer placement.
- Intern sites offer opportunity for students to participate as well as observe and analyze a host-country business or organization.
- Interns are monitored by the workplace supervisor and a faculty or staff member.
- Academic requirements for internships follow home university guidelines and practices.

Student Preparation

AIFS regularly assesses student needs, providing advising and orientation support.

Pre-Departure Info

- Information is provided to accepted students on academics, accommodation, travel arrangements, health precautions and care, safety considerations, and information on expenses and budgeting.
- Relevant information on passports and immigration visas is provided to students in a timely manner.
- Students may consult with AIFS staff with questions or concerns on an ongoing basis.
- Students receive information on the process of cultural adjustment.

On-Site Orientation

- AIFS and home institution staff deliver a comprehensive orientation program covering academic expectations, policies and procedures; living arrangements, behavior expectations and disciplinary policies, independent travel; and health/safety and emergency information.
- Students are given guided opportunity in the local area to use public transportation and identify daily living resources such as restaurants, grocery stores, etc).
- AIFS staff present information to students on the local culture's norms and practices regarding gender, ethnic and religious diversity.

Re-Entry Resources

- Suggestions on the re-adjustment period upon returning home is provided to students
- Suggestions are offered to students to expand upon their international experience once back home.
- Resources are provided to students to help them identify the personal, academic and professional skills gained from their experience abroad.

Student Selection and Code of Conduct

AIFS is committed to, maintains, and makes available, the information on fair and appropriate policy on behavioral code of conduct.

- AIFS supports the academic requirements of the sponsoring U.S. institution: students meet the stated home institution admissions requirements for GPA, disciplinary history and class standing.
- Where applicable, students meet the stated admissions requirements for target language study.
- AIFS does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability or socioeconomic status.

Policies and Procedures

AIFS has policies and procedures that govern its education abroad programs and practices and regularly reviews them to assure their effectiveness and appropriateness.

Policies and Procedures

- Information about the academic support AIFS Customized Faculty Led can provide is clear and accurate in print and web media.
- Information about the logistical program support AIFS Customized Faculty Led can provide is clear and accurate in print and web media.
- Staff consult with institutions' coordinators and faculty to prepare a feasible proposal that meets the criteria of the academic program requirements.
- Program cost information is complete and accurate, with explicit costs guaranteed in dollars.
- Any on-site program costs that will need to be covered in local currency by the institution (faculty) are identified in the proposal.
- Sound estimates are provided for out-of-pocket expenses (e.g., meals not covered by program fee).
- Cancellation policies and refund schedule are clear and accurate.
- AIFS may designate some scholarship funding to assist students at selected institutions.
- Marketing activities follow ethical guidelines and principles.
- Field staff demonstrate respect for institutional policy regarding campus visits and program promotion.
- On-site support is provided in the best interest of students' academic and personal development.
- Established published policies govern AIFS Customized Faculty Led programs.
- Established policies govern AIFS Customized Faculty Led personnel.

Program Assessment

- AIFS Customized Faculty Led Programs have established program standards.
- A program evaluation is administered to all student participants for each program.

- Alumni are requested to complete a survey to assess the personal and professional impact of their experience.
- Staff in the U.S. and abroad participate in short- and long-range planning and goal setting.
- AIFS shares assessment findings with all internal staff and faculty and externally with the Board of Academic Advisors and affiliate institutions.
- AIFS Customized Faculty Led Programs are regularly evaluated during on-site visits by home institution personnel.

Organizational and Program Resources

AIFS provides adequate financial and staffing resources to support its programs.

Faculty and adjunct Instructors

- U.S. faculty teach with the approval of their home institution.
- The hire of adjunct instructors by AIFS is approved by the home institution.
- Adjunct instructors have appropriate credentials in their host country.

Administrative and Support Personnel

- AIFS staff hold the proper and required qualifications for their positions.
- AIFS staff demonstrate courtesy and respect and are committed to the best interests of the student.
- AIFS staff participate in annual performance evaluations.
- Staff participate in professional organizations' activities related to their area of responsibilities.
- Staff have opportunity for professional development.
- Program Coordinators establish and maintain relationships with academic and local community members.

Financial Resources

- AIFS Customized Faculty Led Programs practice responsible financial stewardship.
- The organization is managed by a Board of Directors.
- Financial oversight is appropriate to the size and complexity of AIFS.
- AIFS retains sufficient resources to address crises or unanticipated financial changes.

Learning and Academic Support Facilities

- AIFS program center staffing and facilities are adequate to support their enrollments each term.
- Students have adequate study space.
- Students have access to adequate library resources.
- Classrooms are equipped with the necessary instructional equipment and technology
- Students have access to adequate equipment and technologies to support their academic requirements.
- Reasonable accommodation is sought to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities, dependent upon local resources.

- Reasonable accommodation is sought to meet the needs of students with physical disabilities, dependent upon local resources.
- AIFS facilities and grounds undergo routine maintenance and have established plans for preventative and deferred maintenance.

Student Housing

- Students are provided with appropriate and secure housing.
- Housing contracts abide by in-country laws.
- Housing is regularly inspected.
- Established procedures support a housing change when warranted.

Health, Safety, Security and Risk Management

AIFS Customized Faculty Led Programs assure the health, safety, and security of its students, faculty and staff at every step of the program process with established policies & procedures as well as at student orientation and faculty training.

Program development

- The overall safety, political and economic stability of a country is a consideration in selection for new program sites.
- Experts in local laws are consulted regarding risk management, employment law, and other relevant certifications of staff.
- AIFS Customized Faculty Led Programs comply with local laws and regulations.

Health and safety of students, faculty and staff

- General travel safety advice and country-specific health information are provided to students prior to departure.
- Comprehensive insurance (medical, evacuation, cancellation) is provided to every program participant.
- Students may request information prior to departure about managing a medical condition abroad.
- Resident staff refer students to English-speaking medical clinics and physicians for sickness, accidents or mental health care.
- Staff are trained to recognize and respond to suspected mental health problems and substance abuse.

Risk management

- AIFS maintains adequate insurance coverage for liability and indemnification.
- AIFS has established criteria for its contractual agreements with outside providers for services such as transportation, housing, facilities and technology.
- Regular risk assessments are conducted by administrative staff and legal counsel.

- Where AIFS maintains permanent facilities, ongoing contact is maintained with the local U.S. Embassy in regard to ongoing safety risks, etc.
- Students must abide by the AIFS conduct code.
- Response coverage by AIFS staff is available 24-hours, 365 days/year on every program site and with the U.S. and London-based offices.
- Students, faculty and staff are provided information on safety and emergency procedures.
- Students receive timely notification of local health and safety concerns.
- Health and safety incidents are properly reported following AIFS policy.
- Crisis management plans are reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Housing

- Student housing meets AIFS and in-country health and safety requirements.
- Student housing is located within proximity to public transportation access.
- Homestay hosts/families meet AIFS selection criteria.
- AIFS staff manage any conflicts that occur between student and homestay host or landlord.

Ethics and Integrity

AIFS educates its employees on ethical behavior and adheres to a code of ethics aligned with the Forum's Code of Ethics for Education Abroad.

- AIFS does not discriminate in hiring or admissions on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability or socioeconomic status.
- AIFS promotes respect of the cultures and values of the countries in which it operates programs and from which it draws its student participants.
- Students, faculty and staff abide by the home and host country laws and regulations.
- AIFS follows established guidelines on student rights to privacy and confidentiality.
- AIFS is committed to prioritizing sustainable environmental practices.
- AIFS staff are actively involved in the leadership and training activities of relevant professional organizations.
- AIFS sponsors the publication of various resources for international educators.
- AIFS regularly sponsors other organizations in the field which promote support for diverse student participation in education abroad and the re-entry process for students.
- AIFS staff inform themselves of current trends and issues in U.S. and international higher education.

