



THE
FORUM
ON EDUCATION
ABROAD

STATE OF THE FIELD
SURVEY REPORT



2013

THE FORUM STATE OF THE FIELD SURVEY 2013



April 2014

THE
FORUM
ON EDUCATION
ABROAD

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The Forum is grateful to its members for their participation in this project.



Introduction

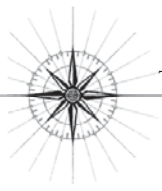
Since 2006, the Forum on Education Abroad has collected data through its State of the Field Surveys in 2006, 2008, 2009, 2011 and 2013. The goal of each of these surveys has been to take the pulse of the field on key issues and trends. The Forum uses the responses from the State of the Field Surveys to report out important data that is useful to the field at large; to shape the Forum's research and program agenda; and to inform the projects of its committees and working groups.

Historically, education abroad has lacked data and analyses on the trends, issues and concerns of the field. However, with a body of data built up over these five surveys, the Forum is beginning to report on trends and developments in education abroad that provide valuable information to help improve the quality of education abroad programming. This report presents data from the 2013 State of the Field survey, and, when possible, places this data in the context of previous surveys and discusses the implications for education abroad practices.

The Forum's State of the Field Survey serves as a resource for education abroad on several levels. First, institutions and organizations can assess their own education abroad practices by comparing them with those of others in the field, as evidenced by the survey responses. Second, the State of the Field Survey can assist in planning for future program development and expansion by analyzing the information and trends revealed in these Surveys. Finally, the State of the Field Survey helps set the agenda for the creation of Forum resources and the training of its members. For example, the data analyzed below shows that assessment has remained a challenge in education abroad. In response, the Forum has already begun to develop applied training in outcomes assessment to address this need.

The 2013 State of the Field Survey

From November 2013 through January 2014, the Forum on Education Abroad conducted its fifth State of the Field Survey of the trends and issues in the field of education abroad. Previous surveys had assisted Forum goals committees in collecting information for projects, and addressed responses to current events. For example, the 2011 survey collected information about responses to natural disasters and to political unrest in North Africa and the Middle East. For the 2013 Survey, however, the Data Committee sought to add to the longitudinal data set by including questions that had been asked in previous State of the Field Surveys. The Committee felt it important to examine how responses to questions asked in previous surveys may or may not have changed over time. A copy of the 2013 State of the Field Survey is available on the Forum's website.



2013 Survey Highlights

Funding for Students

Respondents across all institutional types agree that the most significant factor impacting the number of U.S. students participating in study abroad are the rising costs felt by the students. Although this is not a new finding, it appears to be more severe than in any of the previous State of the Field Surveys (2008, 2009, and 2013).

Program Funding

The top concerns of Forum member institutions relate to finances (i.e. program costs, rising costs, and the need for better funding). In aggregate, and for all four of the State of the Field surveys going back to the first one in 2006, these areas of concern were rated higher than any other area of concern.

Parent Involvement

In this most recent State of the Field Survey, concerns about 'parent involvement' have diminished. Parent involvement was the top concern of respondents in 2006, but each consecutive survey has shown this to be ranked considerably lower. This year it was ranked as the second-lowest concern out of the 11 categories.

Assessment

Assessing education abroad remains a challenge for Forum member institutions. More institutions report that they identify learning outcomes for their programs than report having an assessment plan to measure learning outcomes.

Survey Methodology

The 2013 survey was developed and implemented by the Forum Data Committee with input from the Forum Council. A survey invitation was sent by email on November 5, 2013 to each institutional member of the Forum. As in previous years, a survey invitation was sent exclusively to the institutional representatives to ensure that each institution would submit only one completed survey. The 639 members who received the email invitation were provided a link to the online survey and several email reminders were sent to those who had not yet completed the survey. By the time the survey was closed on January 15, 2014, a total of 286 members (45%) began the survey with 217 (34%) completing the entire survey.

Who Completed the Survey?

Survey respondents were asked to self-identify as one of these types:

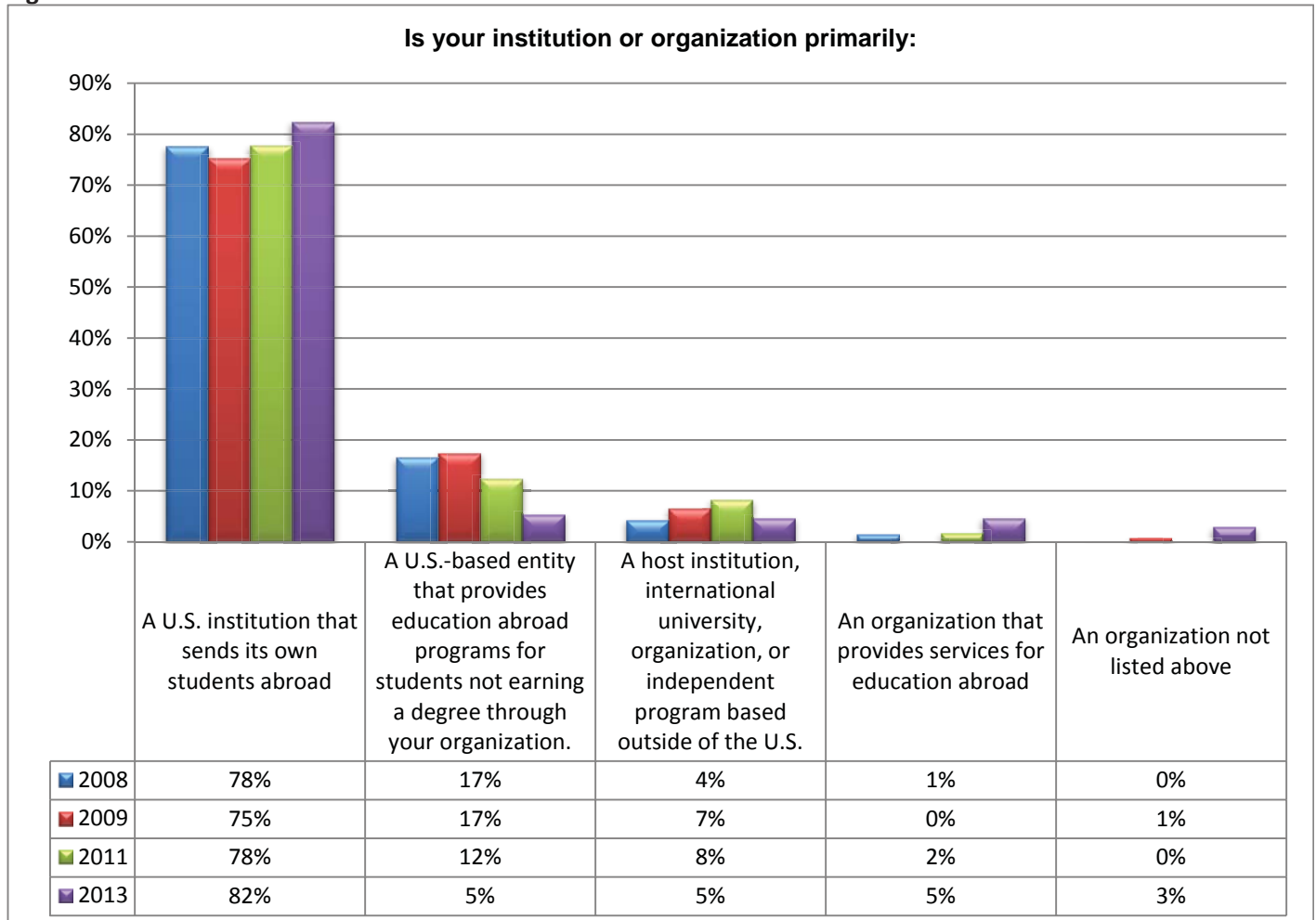
- A U.S. institution that sends its own students abroad,
- A U.S.-based entity that provides education abroad programs for students not earning a degree through your organization (For example: program provider consortium, independent program provider, institutional system office, degree-granting U.S. institution whose abroad programs mostly draw students from other institutions),
- A host institution, international university, organization, or independent program based outside of the U.S.,
- An organization that provides services for education abroad,
- An organization not listed above.

Figure 1 shows the types of institutions and organizations that completed the survey each year. In the survey, organizations that provide services for education abroad and respondents who selected 'other' answered the same set of questions as Program Provider Organizations; for analysis their responses are grouped together. Therefore, in the discussion that follows, respondents are divided into three groups: U.S. Institutions, Host Institutions, and Program Provider Organizations. The majority of 2013 survey respondents, (82%) represent



U.S. Institutions. The distribution of respondents is consistent with that of past surveys with the exception of Program Provider organizations, which account for just 5% of all responses. In previous years these organizations accounted for 17%.

Figure 1.



The Survey Responses

Again in 2013, the survey asked if international education is included in the mission statement of the respondent's institution/organization. The responses remain consistent, with no apparent trend after the relatively large increase from 2006 to 2008 for those who responded 'yes.' However, more Program Provider organizations include international education in their mission statements; this is consistent with the nature of their work. Future surveys may ask this question in more detail, to determine if international education may be included elsewhere, such as in the mission of specific schools and departments, or why international education is not included.

Figure 2 shows responses for 2013 as well as those of previous years. This question was not asked in 2011. There is no apparent trend here after the relatively large increase from 2006 to 2008 for those who responded 'yes'.

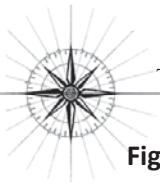
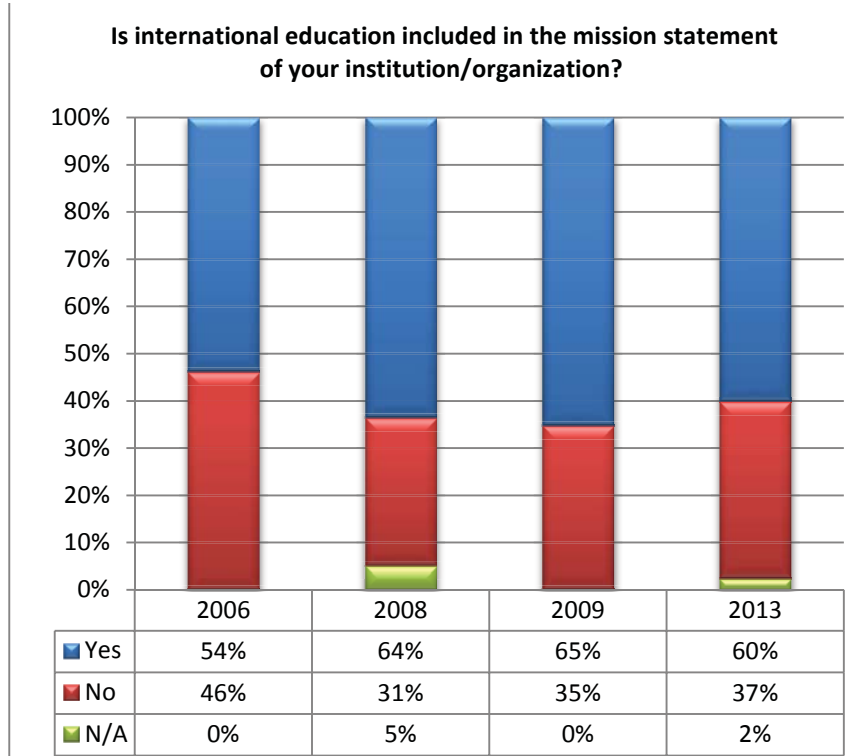
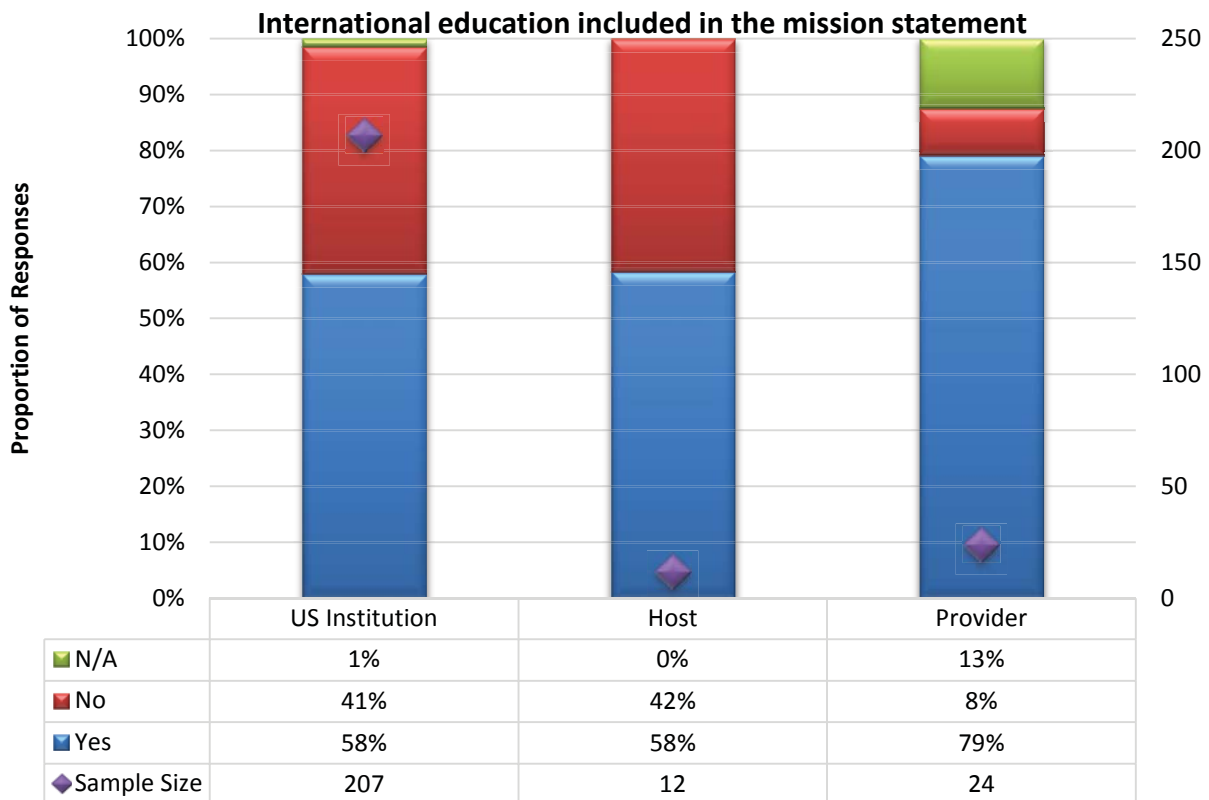


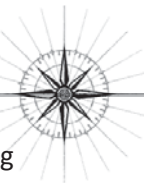
Figure 2.



However, there is a difference in the responses when this question is broken down by institutional type. The term 'international education' is present more frequently in the mission statement of Program Provider organizations compared to U.S. and Host Institutions. These details are shown in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3.





When asked in 2013 whether rising costs resulted in changes to education abroad programming for the coming year, almost twice as many respondents agreed that there was no effect as did those who reported a slight effect. Only a small percentage reported that rising costs led to changing their programs ‘quite a bit.’ (Figure 4)

Figure 4.

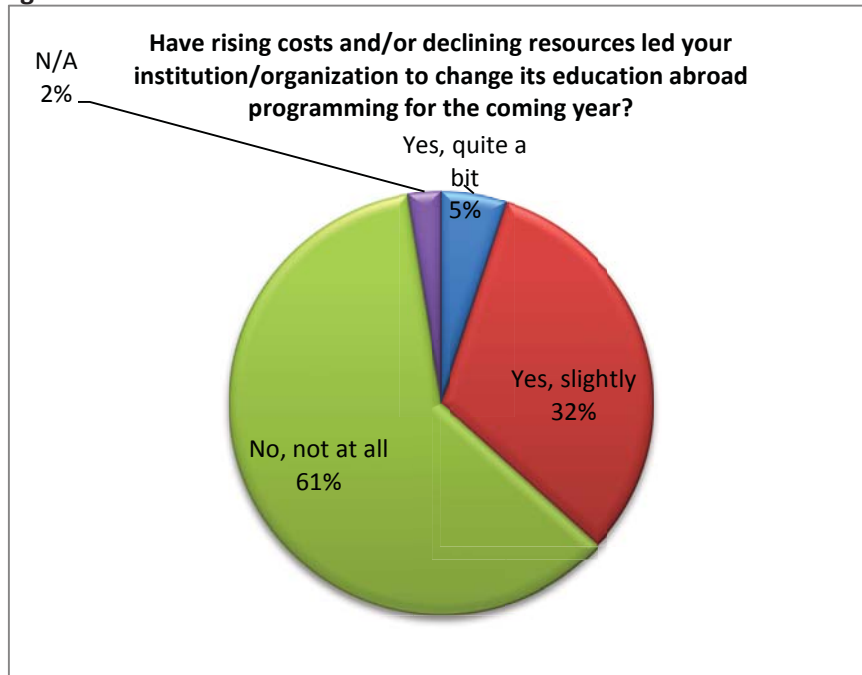
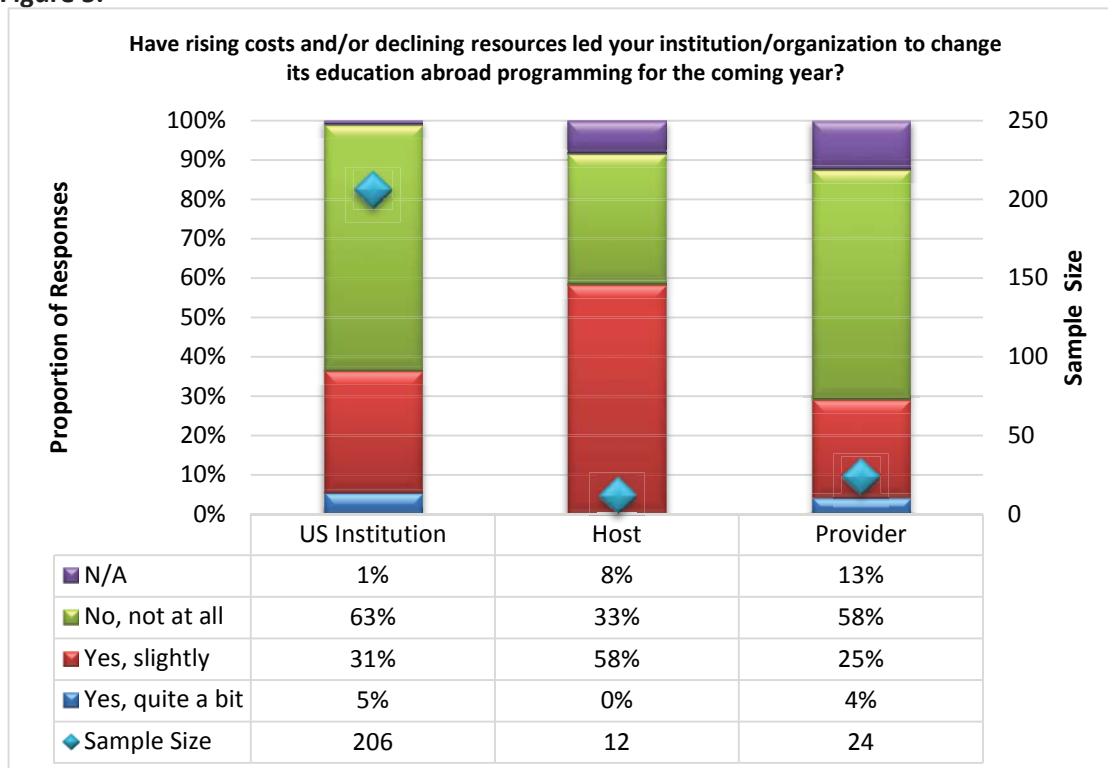


Figure 5 breaks down the responses above by respondent type, and shows that Host Institutions are reporting slightly more pressure from rising costs and/or declining resources than either the U.S. Institutions or the Program Provider organizations.

Figure 5.



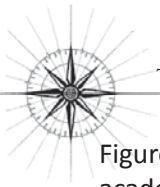
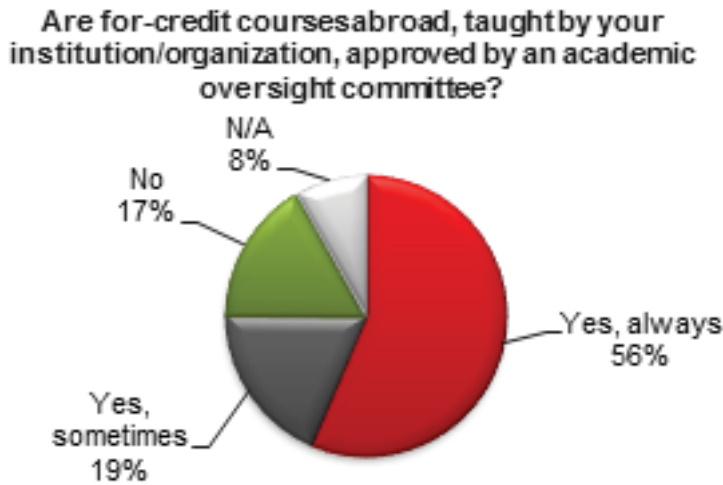


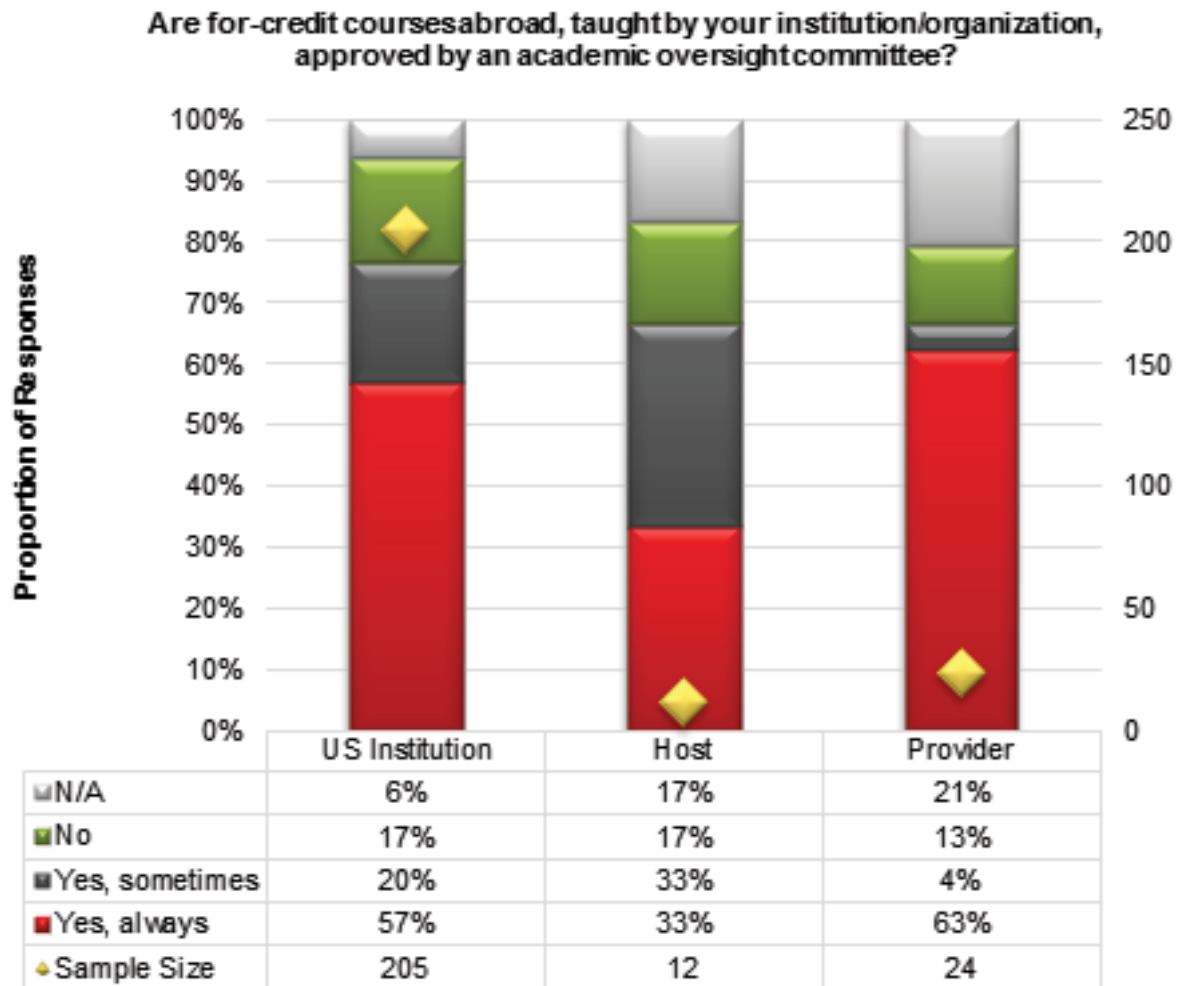
Figure 6 below shows that for the respondents in the 2013 survey, a majority obtain approval for courses from an academic oversight committee.

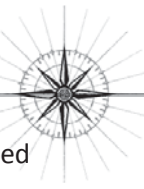
Figure 6.



However, there is a great deal of variation when this question is broken down by respondent type (Figure 7). It is more common for the U.S. Institutions and Program Providers to receive approval by an oversight committee than Host institutions. One reason behind this disparity may be that host institution courses are approved as part of a standing institutional curriculum, and are not approved separately as study abroad courses *per se*.

Figure 7.





The 2013 Survey asked two questions about assessment of student learning: if learning outcomes were identified and whether there was a plan to assess these outcomes.

Over half of the respondents (56%) indicated that they have learning outcomes identified, but just 39% of respondents have a plan to assess these outcomes. Host Institutions are just slightly more likely to have a plan than U.S. Institutions, and U.S. Institutions are just slightly more likely to have a plan than Program Providers, (64% vs. 57% vs. 50% respectively). There is similar variation in the response to the second question indicating they have a plan to assess these learning outcomes (45% for Hosts, 39% for U.S. Institutions and 32% for Providers). The following two figures display these results.

Figure 8.

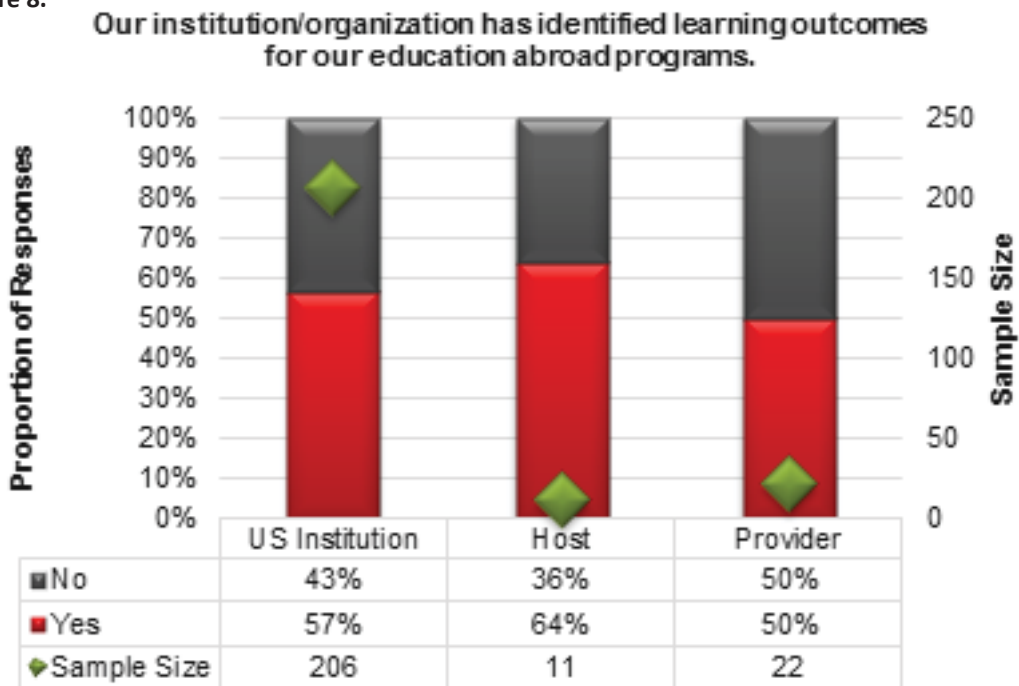
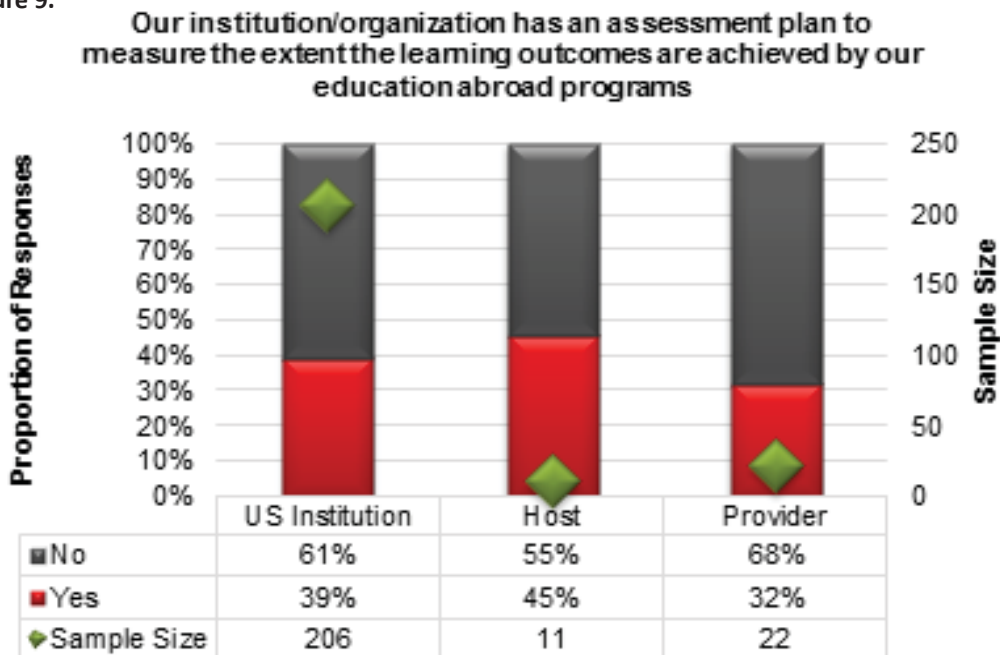


Figure 9.





After each question on learning outcomes the respondents were invited to provide open text comments. In open text comments 73 respondents provided open text notes regarding identifying learning outcomes. A LIWC (Language Inquiry and Word Count) analysis was conducted on responses for all of the open text questions. The LIWC software calculates the percentage of words that match up to 82 language categories.

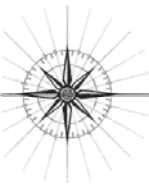
The LIWC analysis showed the most common word categories found in the text responses to be:

- Cognitive Mechanisms: words related to thought processes (e.g.: cause, know, ought)
- Work: words related to work (e.g.: work, working, job)
- Relativity: words related to motion, space, or time (e.g.: area, exit, stop)
- Social: words related to friends, family, or humans (e.g.: friend, community, adult)

Common themes found in the 73 text responses on identifying learning outcomes indicate that respondents are “working on it,” “thinking about it,” or “in process.” Many respondents distinguished between learning outcomes established at different levels, such as by the institution/organization as a whole, for a program, or in an individual course. In the related LIWC analysis categories, the three most common word categories were: Cognitive Mechanisms (25%); Work (15. %); Relativity (i.e.: motion, space, and time) (12%).

The following representative comments are taken from the open responses:

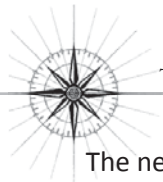
- We have begun this process but have not made much progress.
- This is identified on multiple levels, through the university general ed requirements (global perspective) as well as at the departmental and divisional level.
- Individual international courses have defined learning outcomes, but broader international programs do not have defined learning outcomes.
- We have for some individual programs, but not for the whole group.
- One set of outcomes for all programs and then specific outcomes for each individual program.
- Learning outcomes are determined at the academic unit level, not campus wide.
- We have standard learning outcomes for every international program to which the program can add program specific outcomes.
- It’s an ongoing challenge.
- The institution has not, but our office has taken the initiative to write up what we hope our students are learning.
- We have articulated goals, but not clearly defined learning outcomes that are assessable.
- We are in the process of identifying learning outcomes for study abroad through an assessment plan.
- This conversation is only now beginning.
- As a receiving institution, all courses we offer have learning outcomes attached; however the overall program does not.
- There have been discussions about whether or not to include these, but with the increase in demand for non-credit bearing programs or volunteer/service learning programs, the outcomes have shifted slightly.
- This is on our to-do list, based on an accreditation recommendation.
- Learning outcomes have been loosely identified at our institution and, we hope to launch a program approval process that will benchmark and reinforce these learning outcomes.
- One of the goals for the university addresses intercultural and global understanding. It is not specifically connected to education abroad programs but all courses taught on our education abroad programs are associated with this goal. In addition, some colleges have their own learning outcomes identified.



Respondents provided 74 open text responses to the next question, referring to plans to assess learning objectives. Common themes found in the responses indicate very similar responses to the previous question; some responses were simply “same as above.” Differing from responses to the preceding question, several responses to this question noted a lack of staff and financial resources or time to devote to assessment. In the same way as responses to the previous question indicated that different units were charged with establishing learning outcomes, responses to this question showed a range of units charged with responsibility for assessment. The responses show very similar categorical patterns in the LIWC analysis. The three categories with the highest percentage were: Cognitive Mechanisms (21.65%), Work (11.95%), Relativity (i.e.: motion, space, and time) (11.86%).

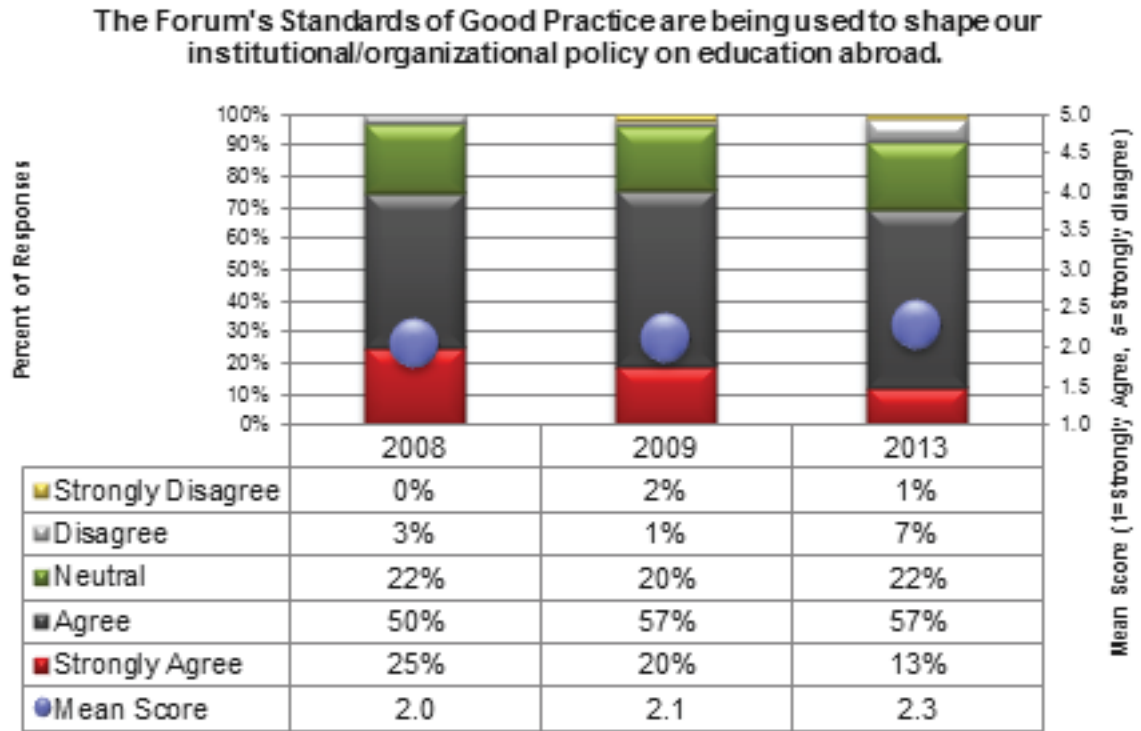
The following representative comments are taken from the open responses:

- We are just beginning to work on this.
- Only for the faculty-led programs, and even within those, only in terms of the academic component, not the intercultural component.
- It is hard to have an assessment plan when you have not identified learning outcomes.
- The plan is in process, this year is a pilot.
- Learning assessment takes place at the academic unit level, not campus wide.
- We do not have the staff necessary to do this at this time.
- It is not institutional but our office has designed and implements a learning outcomes assessment. We don't run our own programs so we're not assessing “our education abroad programs” as in programs we design but we are assessing whether or not our students are learning what we hope they are learning on our partner programs.
- As a provider, we are wary of replicating or diverging too significantly from what students are getting from their home campuses.
- We coordinate with institutional research and our own assessments.
- We do assess student satisfaction of their learning environment, but don't assess the existing university programs yet.
- As a provider, we feel that measurement of any significant learning outcomes should be done by the home university. They have more appropriate access to their students.
- There have been discussions about utilizing some forms of assessment to be able to measure learning outcomes; however, with so many programs (sponsored by us and provider programs), it's difficult to try to assess all the programs.
- Learning outcomes for faculty-led education abroad courses are measured the same way traditional on campus courses are measured.
- This is a major need; available instruments are expensive and not suitable to the full range of programs; no central body charged with assessing student learning/community impact; assessment of faculty-led programs takes place program by program.
- Completed by individual program directors for their own programs. No overarching assessment from a central location.
- At our institution, there is considerable concern about quality and academic integrity of programming-- but there has not been an overall set of goals, and overall assessment tools we can use in benchmarking.
- This is something we know we need to do but have not yet put the system in place for this.



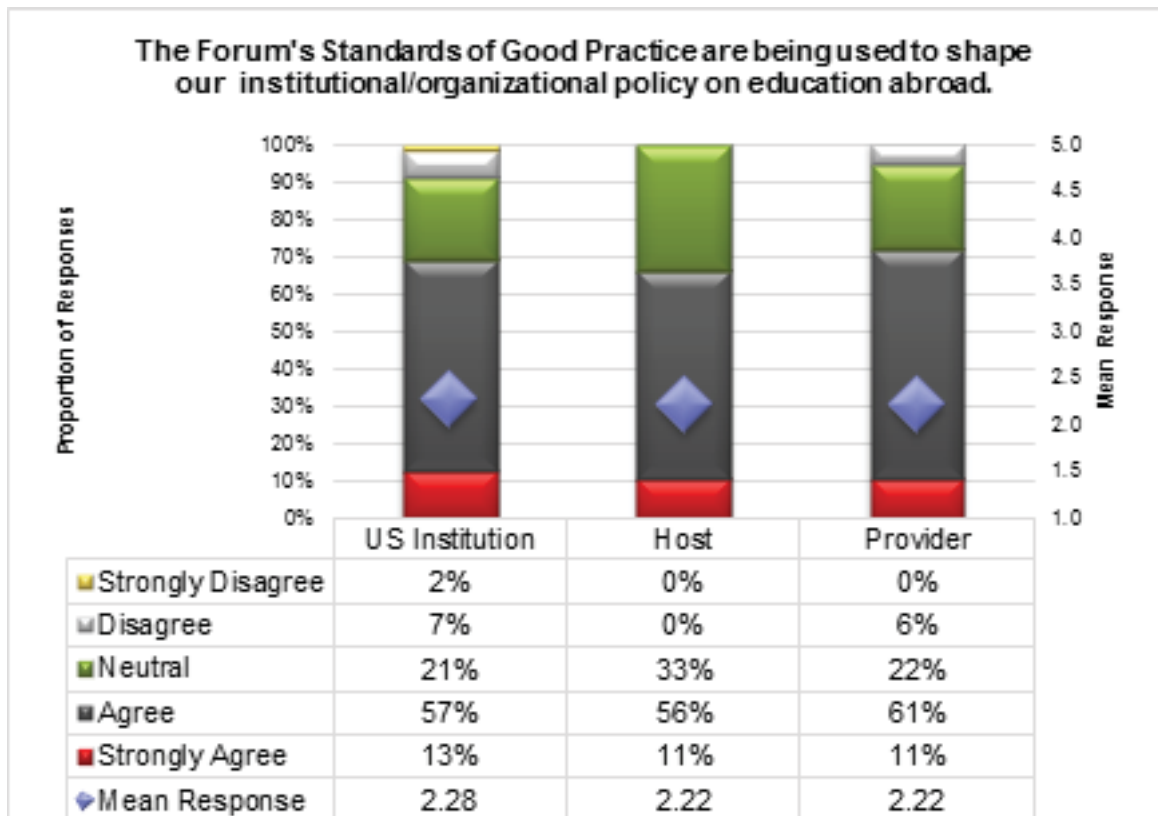
The next question was asked to determine the degree to which the Forum's *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad* are being used to shape institutional or organizational policy. It appears that there is smaller proportion who 'Strongly Agree,' that this is the case, and an increasing proportion who 'Disagree' when comparing the response trend from 2008 to 2013. All other response categories remain relatively unchanged. As a result, there is a slight shift in the mean response, which increased from 2.0 in 2008 to 2.3 in 2013.

Figure 10.



Examining the 2013 responses to this question by respondent type (Figure 11) reveals very little difference in the mean response, but it is evident that a small proportion of both U.S. Institutions and Program Providers 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' with the statement whereas none of the Host Institutions responded in either of those categories.

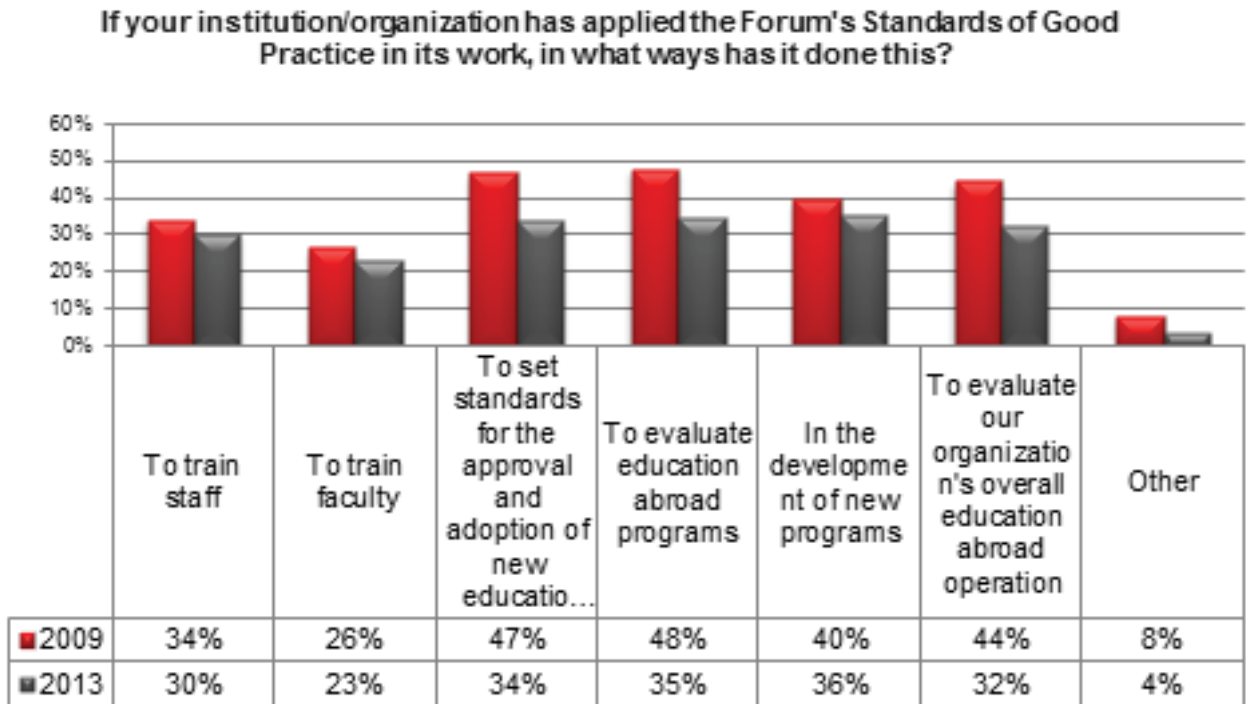
Figure 11.





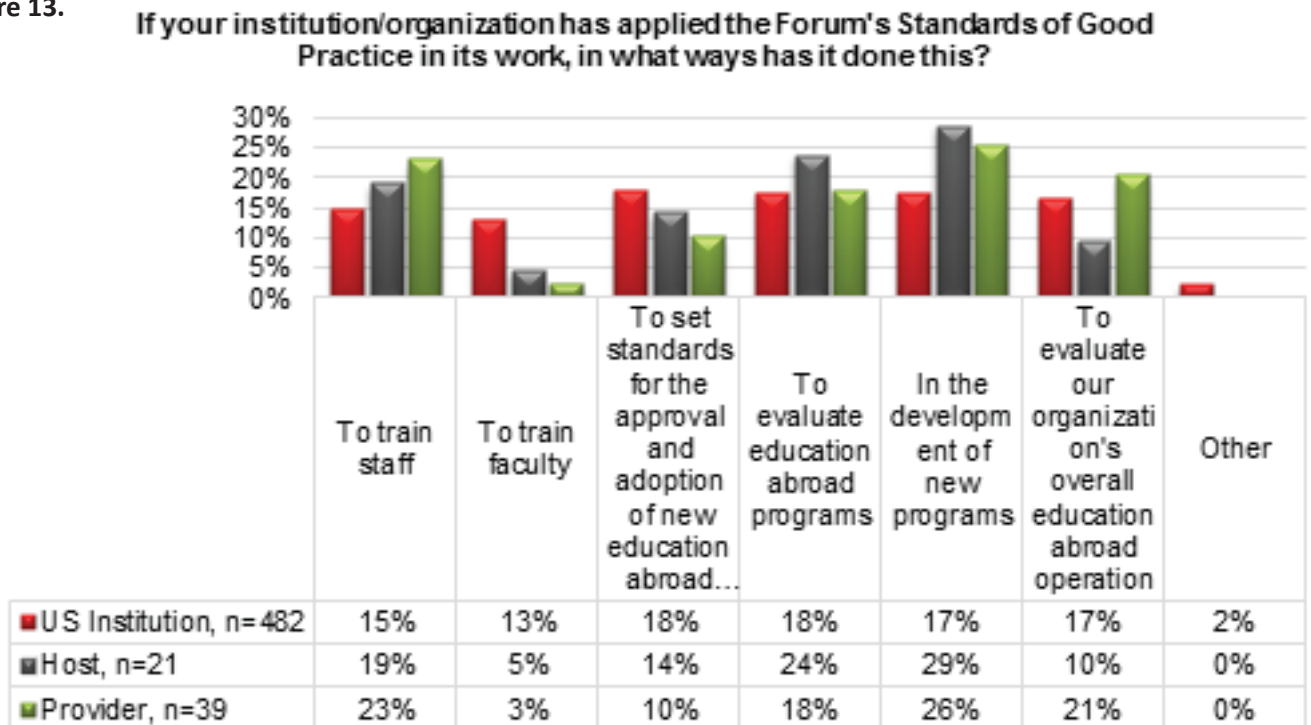
Institutions that indicated they have applied the Forum’s *Standards of Good Practice* to develop policy were asked to provide more detail as to how they are doing this. This question was included in the 2009 and 2013 surveys and the chart below summarizes the responses for both years. Respondents were allowed to “check all that apply” so the percentage figures in each row sum to greater than 100%. Across the board it appears that institutions in 2009 were more apt to apply the Forum’s *Standards of Good Practice* than they were in 2013. This does not necessarily mean the *Standards* are any less useful in 2013. It is reasonable to assume that the initial impact of the *Standards* would be greater than the impact in the years to follow, and that institutions and organizations may already have used the *Standards* to develop policies but are not doing so currently because they are confident about them.

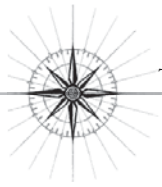
Figure 12.



For completeness, the same responses are shown in Figure 13 broken down by institutional type. Based on the unique characteristics of the different institutional types, it is not surprising to see a great deal of variation in the responses.

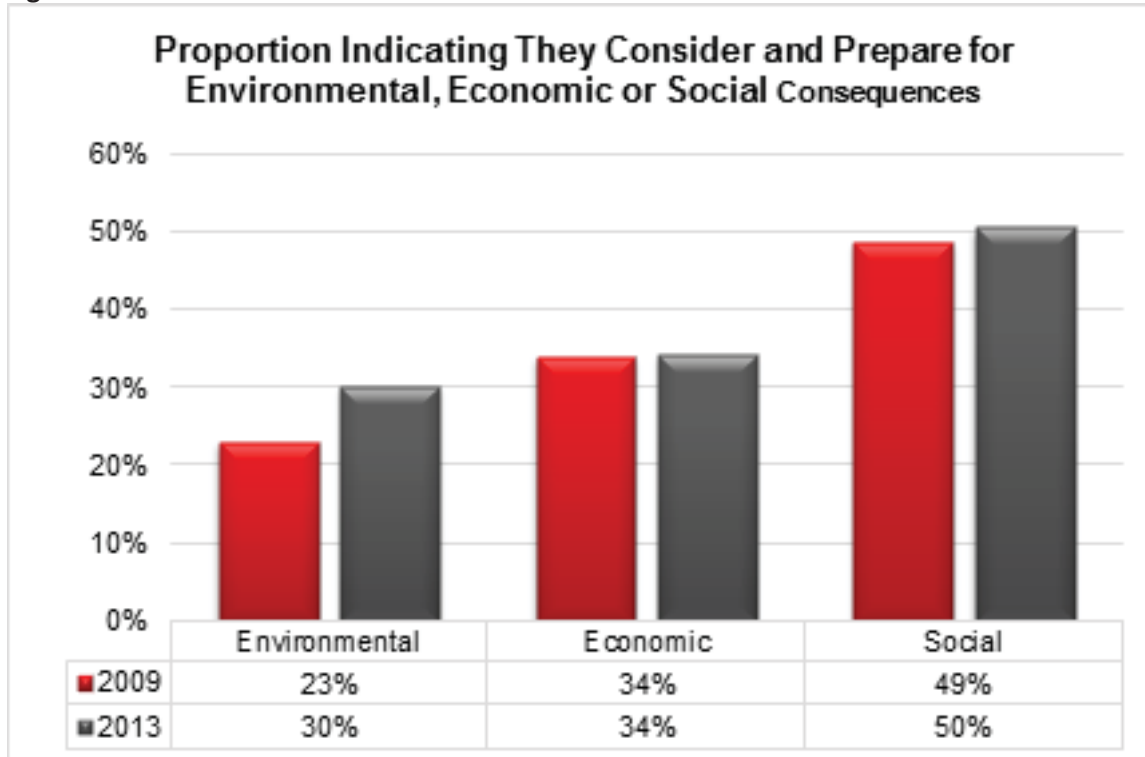
Figure 13.





In both 2009 and 2013 three questions addressed how institutions consider and prepare for the environmental, economic and social consequences of a program's presence in the host country during the approval, design and management phases. The results from the two years are quite consistent, with one exception. Environmental considerations are considered by more respondents in 2013 than in 2009 but are still considered less often than either economic or social consequences. The chart in Figure 14 summarizes the data for both years.

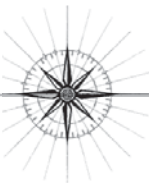
Figure 14.



After each of these three questions, respondents were provided the opportunity to comment on the ways in which they are considering and preparing for environmental, economic and social consequences.

Respondents consider environmental consequences in a number of ways; the most commonly noted were tracking, reducing and off-setting carbon emissions, reducing printing, and encouraging conservation of water and other resources. Several responses noted working with a campus sustainability office or institutional sustainability plan. Representative of the 43 responses, these include:

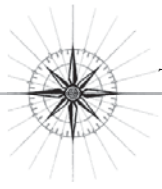
- We inform participants of the environmental consequences of their travel, consider ways to reduce carbon emissions, will have students work on carbon-offsetting projects with fellow participants, have purchased carbon offsets, use public transportation as much as possible, and consider other behavior changes as part of the program.
- Our student, faculty, and staff international travel is the major contributor to our carbon footprint. Our office of sustainability reminds us of this for consideration in program planning.
- Consult with colleagues and sister institutions.
- Faculty-led programs are encouraged to stay in an area for a minimum of three days. This policy helps us to minimize long road trips. Most of our documentation and related information is shared primarily using electronic formats. Orientation highlights the importance of reducing use of energy by turning off electronics before leaving for field trips, bed sheets are changed twice per week instead of daily. Option to reuse towels is also encouraged. Using vehicles that minimize pollution to the environment.
- New programs are designed to minimize the negative impacts on local resources.



- Somewhat, attention to resources, mostly.
- The College Office of Sustainability has created a Climate Action Plan that includes a section on study abroad.
- We are attentive to these issues. We also promote environmental issues to our students.
- Depends on the program and the sponsoring department, more so for those programs in Public Health and Engineering.
- University-wide sustainability program
- Primarily through carbon footprint mitigation in utilizing public transportation where feasible and safe.
- We work only with agencies evaluated by and approved by local environmental authorities.
- We use these considerations in the development of programs and the approval of providers' programs.
- All students required to offset round trip carbon emissions (using Terra Pass calculator); development of domestic (regional and national) global learning options; not over-concentrating foreigner activity and waste production within ecologically sensitive areas; pre-field training on environmentally conscious EA in numerous areas.

Providing fair wages and compensation, hiring locally, using local sources, and developing sustainable programs were the main ways in which 47 respondents noted preparing and considering economic consequences of their programs. These include:

- We often provide local compensation for cancelled programs and make sure all local staff have full local benefits (insurance, etc).
- All program related vendors are paid fair prices for their products and services. We explicitly explain the importance of ensuring local people are able to benefit economically from our programs. We don't own or rent our own facilities but rather tap into facilities that are locally owned and or operated.
- We carefully consider the costs and benefits to local communities.
- Sustaining programs in same location for years; bringing supplies every year for local communities.
- We evaluate the local impact in the approval process.
- Mostly in determining appropriate wages for local hires, offering donations to NGOs who offer internships to our students.
- We always try and hire local as opposed to using/bringing our own resources so that the money goes towards the host country/area. Additionally, if there is training that needs to be conducted to teach the local population, which may improve the economic conditions, that is considered as well. When possible, organizations that impact the largest population are incorporated so that no single individual benefits.
- We are transparent about revenue and costs when creating partnerships with our host universities.
- We build reciprocity into our programs.
- Consideration of difference in fiduciary regulations on operating costs and provisions of programs, sensitivity to local salary scale vs. U.S. salary scale for local and international hires.
- Throughout the design and implementation phases, programming led by faculty propose program budgets weigh the pros and cons of contracting with third parties that are U.S.-based vs. local, select accommodation/meals in addition to other services based on the same domestic vs. local model, consider the size of the group enrollment in terms of financial as well as social impact given the particular region, etc.
- We examine what strain will be put on the host community resources from our presence there.
- We are a host institution, and so consider our economic consequences to be very positive for the community. We attempt to spread the "wealth" through employment of local people as well as support of local organizations.



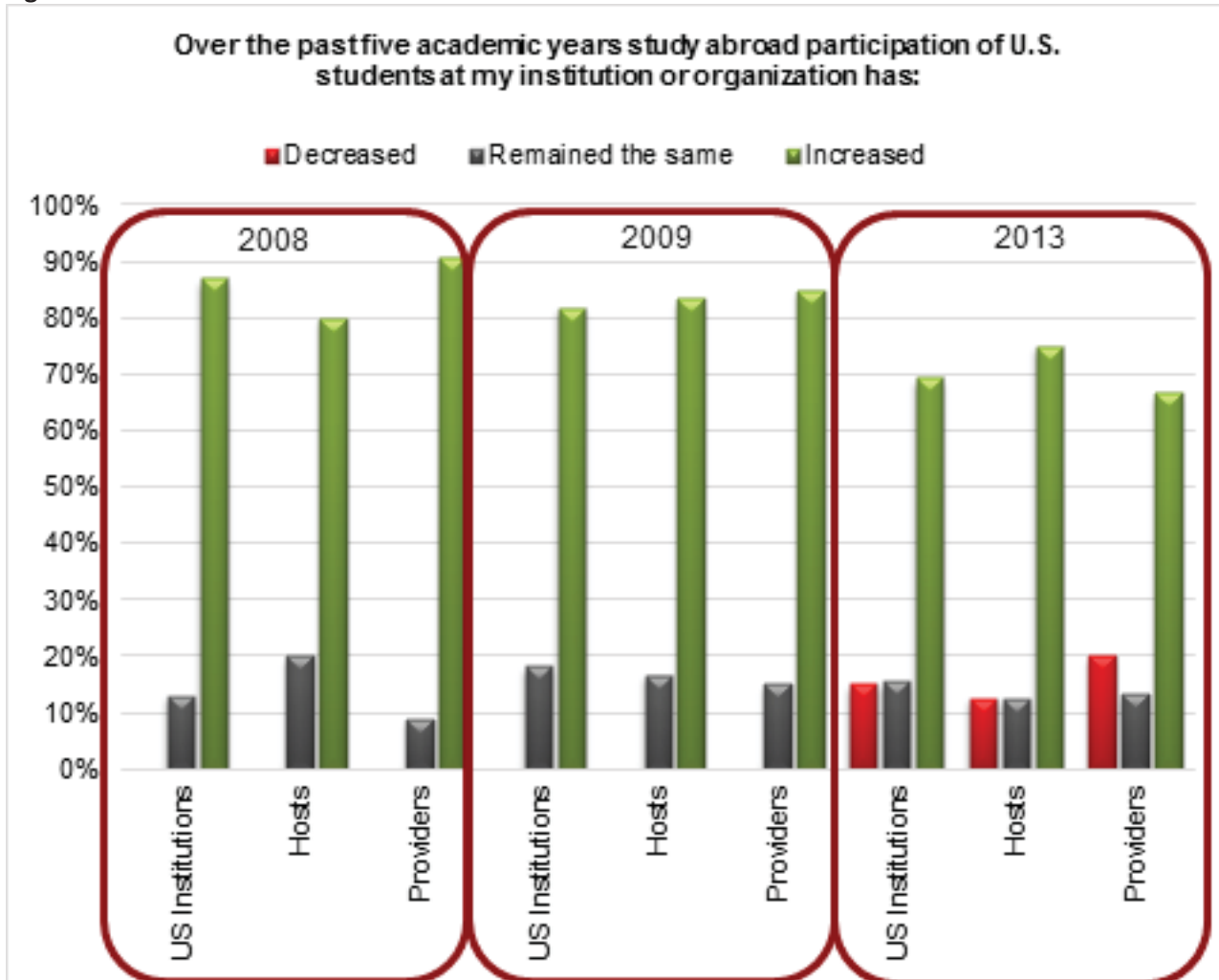
Finally, 68 survey respondents described how they consider and prepare for social consequences of their programs. The most common responses noted intentionality in planning and developing programs, educating faculty, staff and students to cultural norms and issues, and working closely with local partners. Respondents focused on pre-departure and in-country orientation, on site community engagement, service and volunteer programs. Specifically, respondents noted:

- Pre-departure orientations discuss interculturally-appropriate behaviors and respect for the host country culture.
- Pre-departure and in-country orientation highlights the social consequences of our programs. Emphasis is placed on the experience being reciprocal. Respect for local knowledge and the way of solving problems is fostered.
- Academic departments have to enumerate the ways that their program will impact the local area in their approval form.
- Making sure we are really engaging in a partnership and not just using our overseas contacts.
- Many of the semester programs we develop have a service or internship component that ensure the students give back and engage with the community in a meaningful way.
- Only in a limited way, however, and only to the degree that faculty members leading programs consider those issues (and some faculty clearly do).
- We look closely at our partner's engagement and ethics in their communities. We prepare students to engage in ethical, responsive, and culturally sensitive ways. We emphasize that our students are going to learn, not tell how to improve.
- We work only with agencies evaluated by and approved by local authorities.
- This is considered in the development of programs and approval of providers. It will also be a part of our assessment program.
- We work closely with local partners to design programs, so any service or other engagement meets community needs.
- Engage local staff and experts in all phases, consult faculty and regional experts, prepare appropriate student materials
- We have recently begun the process of focusing the design of our programs abroad to include opportunities for the local community so that we are able to contribute to the host community.
- The program protects against student behavior deemed offensive or injurious by local residents (e.g. stealth photography, bargaining below the fair price, substance abuse, master-servant relationships with service workers), or that exploits gender and economic inequality (e.g. commercial sex with local residents). The program places learners in living situations (like local families) where they can cultivate empathetic bonds with host nationals of the majority ethno-class, provide direct financial assistance to community residents (via room and board payments), and reduce water and power consumption.



In three versions of the survey (2008, 2009 and 2013) respondents were asked how the level of participation in their study abroad programs has changed. The responses for each of the three respondent types over the three surveys are shown in the next chart. The following trends are consistent across all three respondent types: there was little change from 2008 to 2009 and in 2013 a significantly larger proportion of respondents indicated that the level of study abroad participation had decreased over the past five years. However, it is important to note that the time between surveys is not the same. There was just one year between the responses the first two times this question was asked where there were four years between the 2009 and 2013 survey.

Figure 15.



In 2008, 2009 and 2013 a related, but different question was asked next. Respondents indicated whether or not they are currently attempting to increase the numbers of students in their study abroad programs. The chart in Figure 16 below shows that in all three years fewer U.S. Institutions were trying to increase the number of students than Host Institutions, who were less likely than Program Provider organizations. Program Providers increased all three years whereas the other two respondent types decreased from 2008 to 2009, and then rebounded again in 2013 to a level even higher than in 2008.

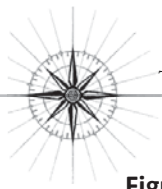
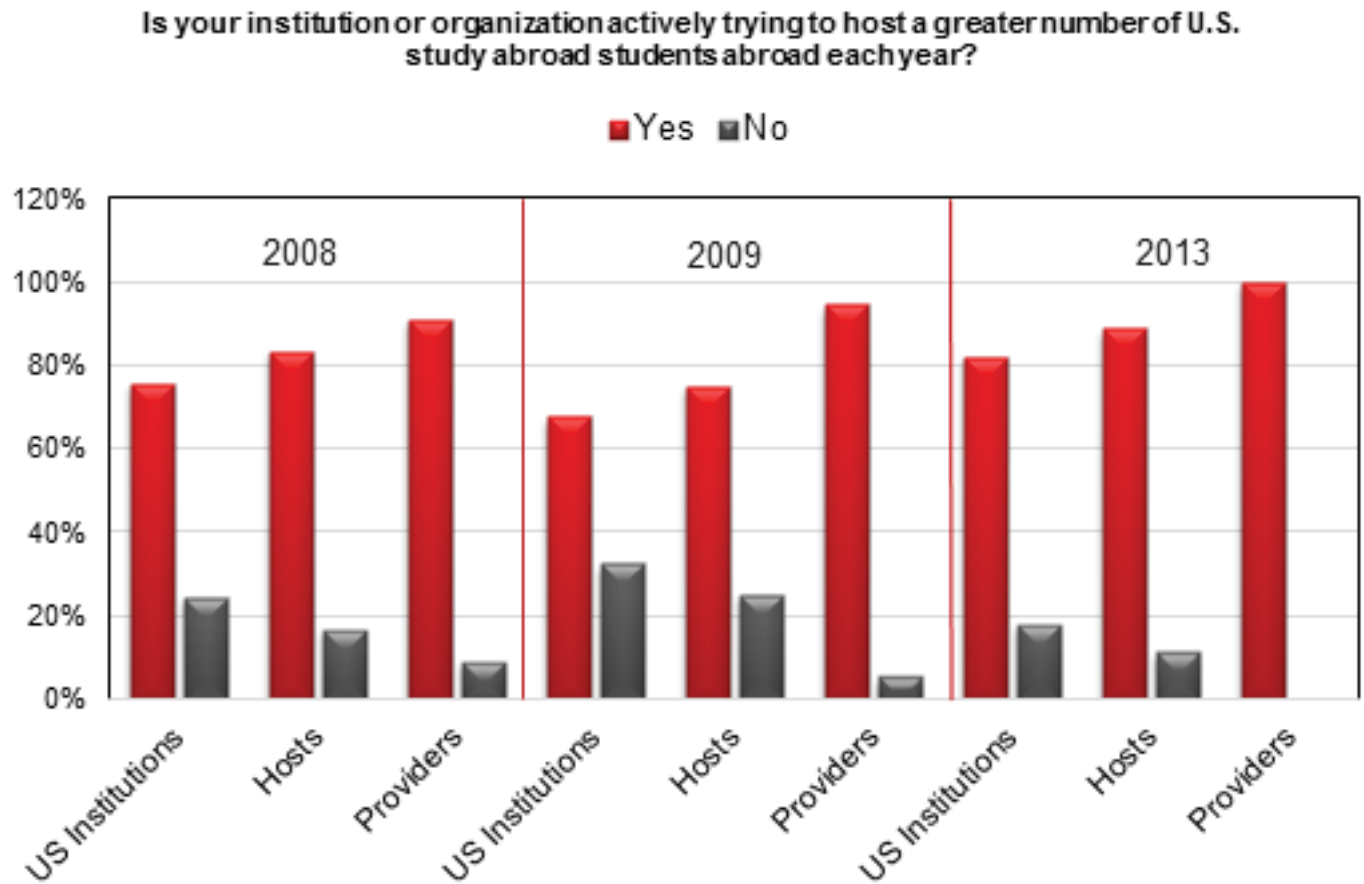
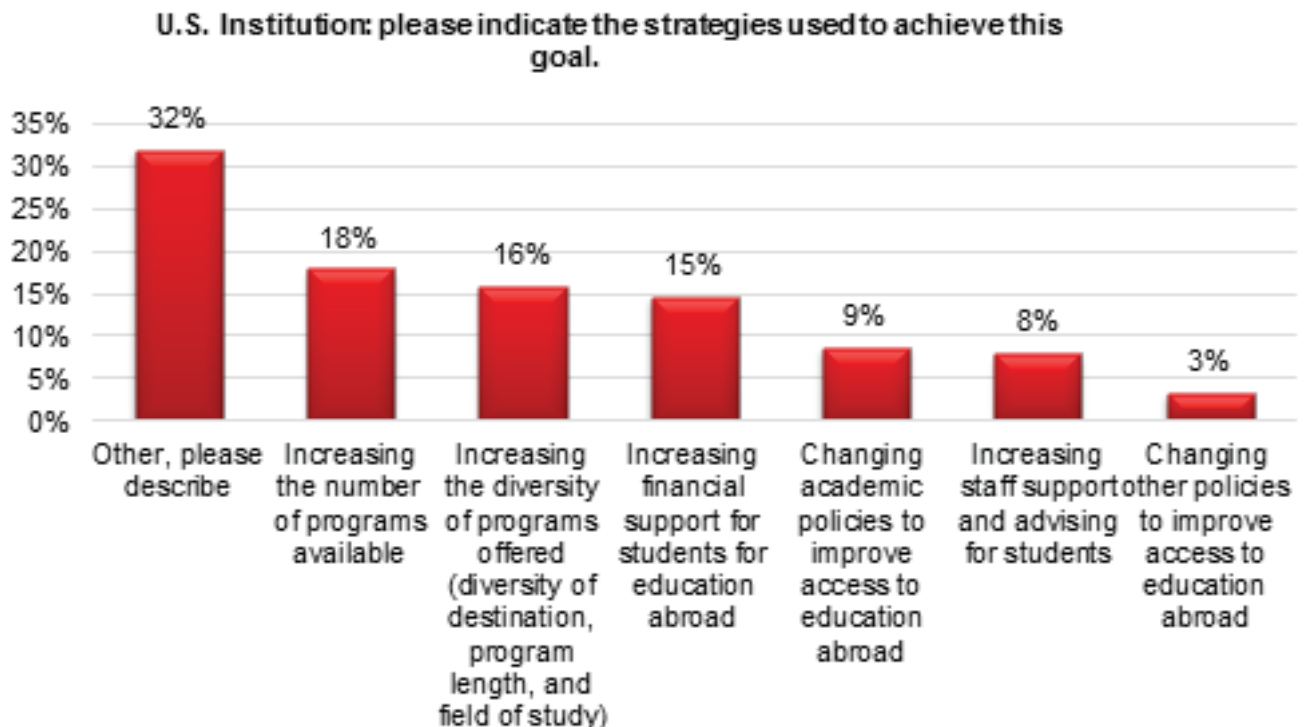


Figure 16.



Those who responded ‘yes’ were asked to provide further information about the strategies they were using to achieve the goal of increasing the number of students participating in their study abroad programs, choosing from a list of options. The following three charts (Figures 17, 18, 19) show their responses; each respondent type is represented in an individual chart.

Figure 17.



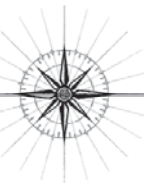


Figure 18.

Host Institution: If yes, please indicate the strategies used to achieve this goal.

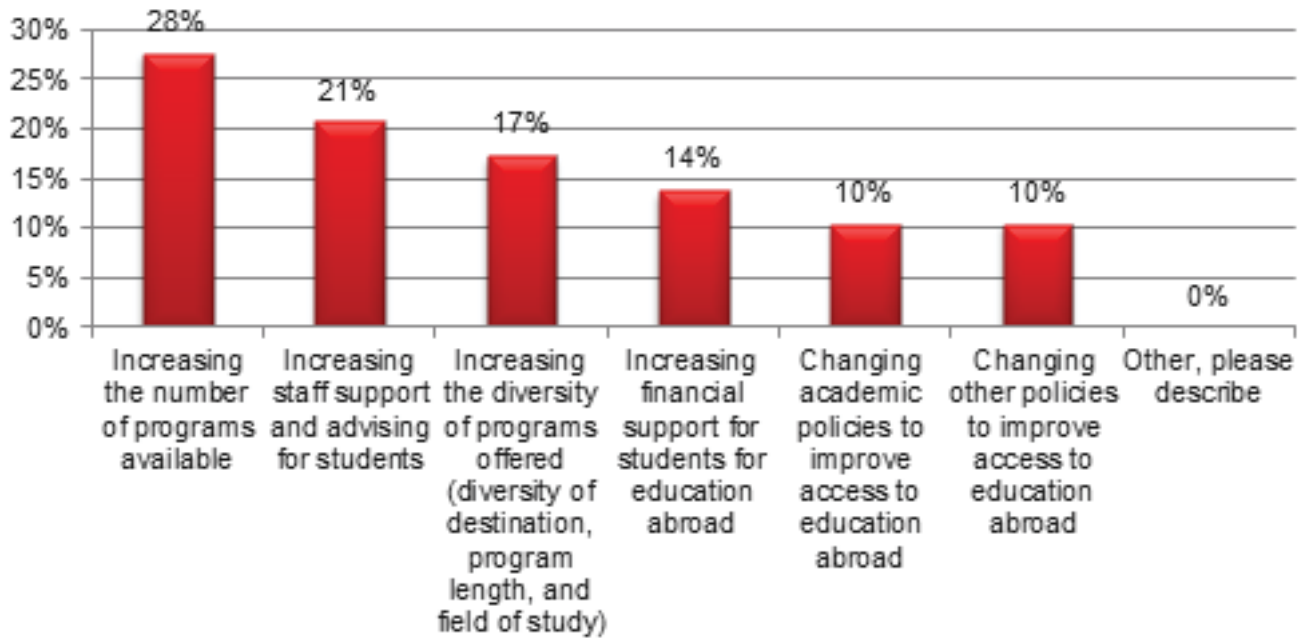
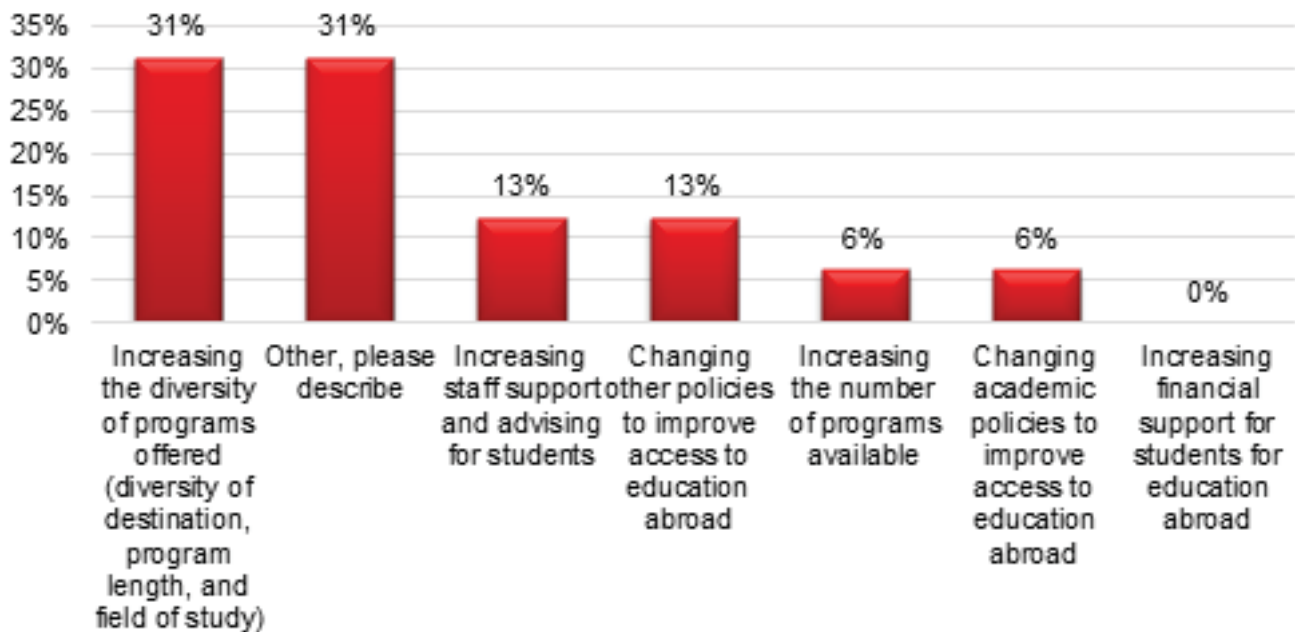
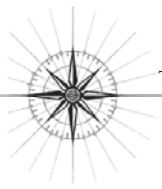


Figure 19.

Program Provider: please indicate the strategies used to achieve this goal.

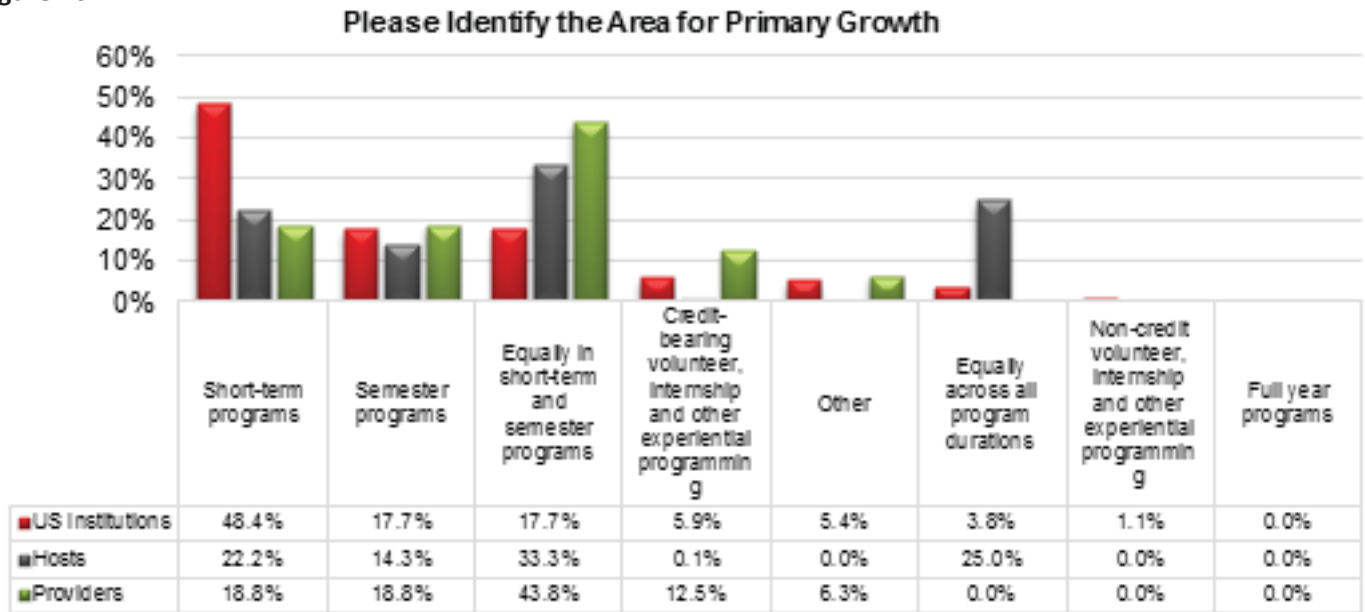




Increasing the number of programs available is the most popular strategy for both the U.S. Institutions and the Host Institutions. However, Program Providers place this option near the bottom in their list. Increasing the diversity of programs offered is in the top three for U.S. Institutions and Host Institutions and is the top strategy for the Program Providers. Host Institutions and Program Providers both list increasing staff support and advising for students as a relatively popular strategy; this is listed second and third, respectively.

When asked about the area in which they expect to see the primary growth for study abroad, there is wide range in responses answer from the three respondent types as is shown in Figure 20 below.

Figure 20.



Next, survey respondents were asked to identify the areas that pose a significant challenge for increasing the number of U.S. students studying abroad. There were 11 response options and respondents rated each item on a 5-point Likert scale, from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree.' Although there were some differences between the three institutional types in the 2013 survey, the same four items comprised the top choices for each, just in a slightly different order. Of note, each of these items are related to financial matters. In the following three charts, (Figures 21, 22, 23) the mean responses are shown for 2008, 2009 and 2013 for U.S. Institutions, Host Institutions and Program Providers.

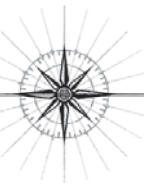
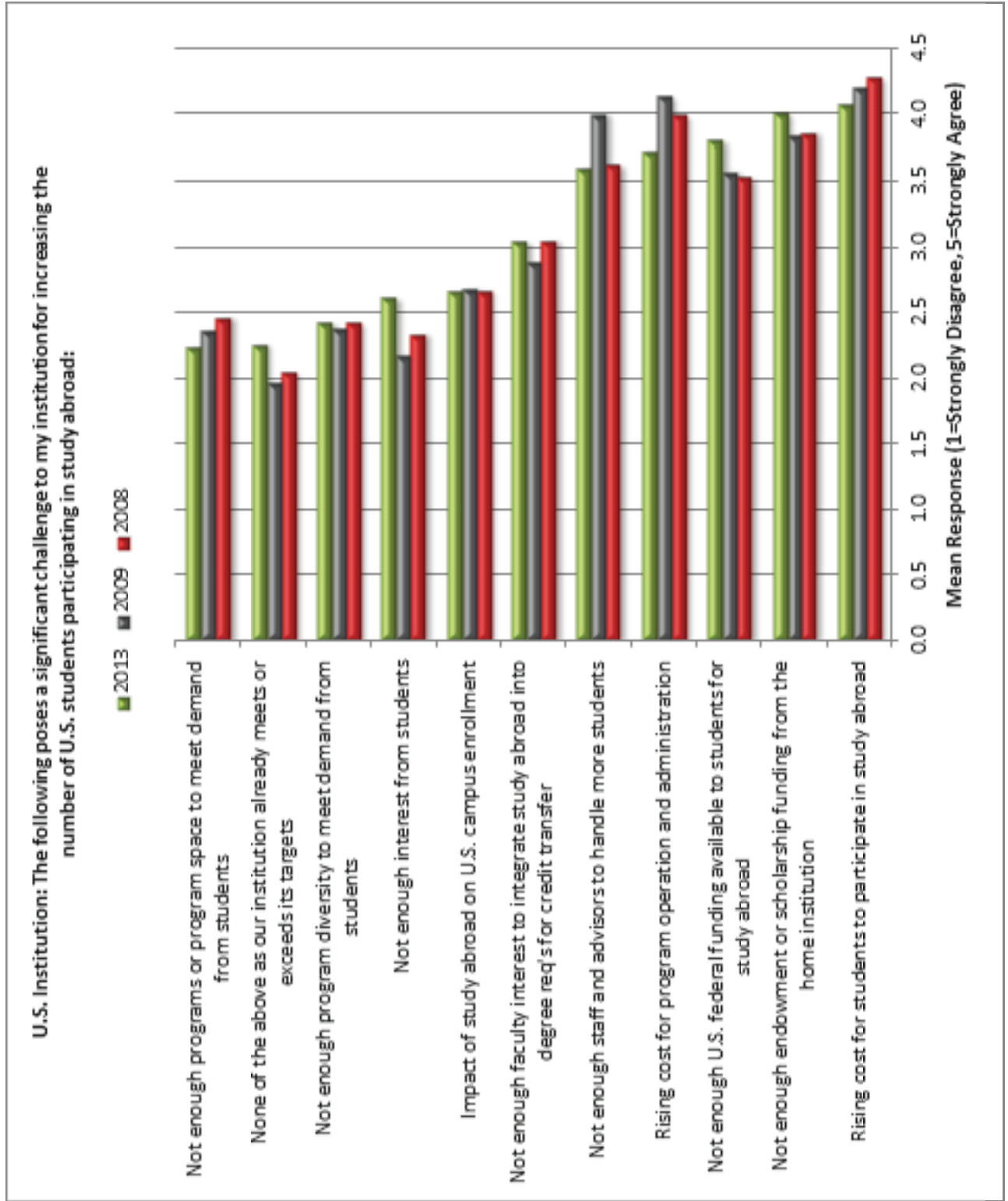


Figure 21.



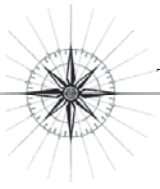
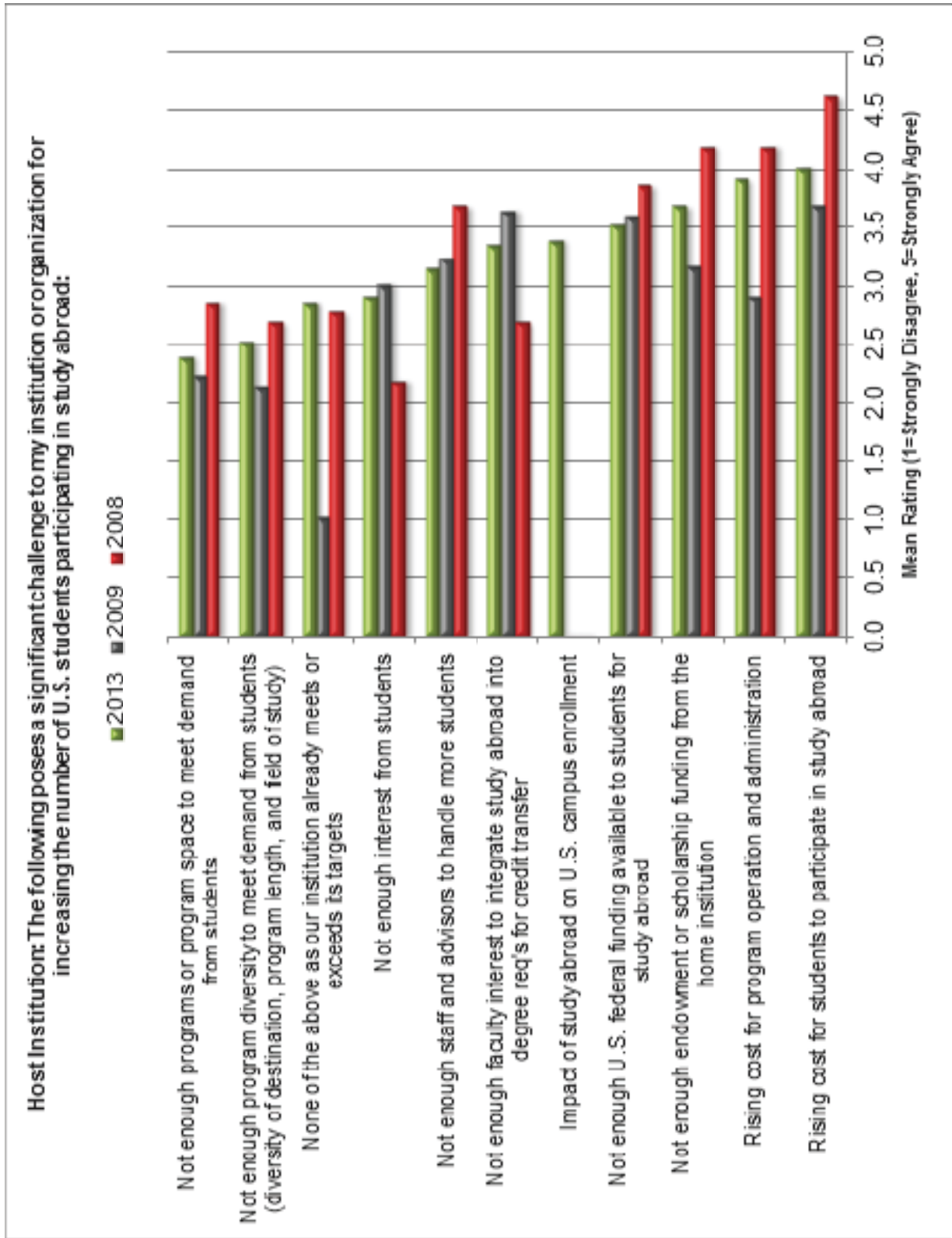


Figure 22.



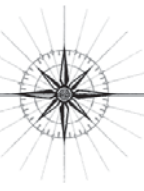
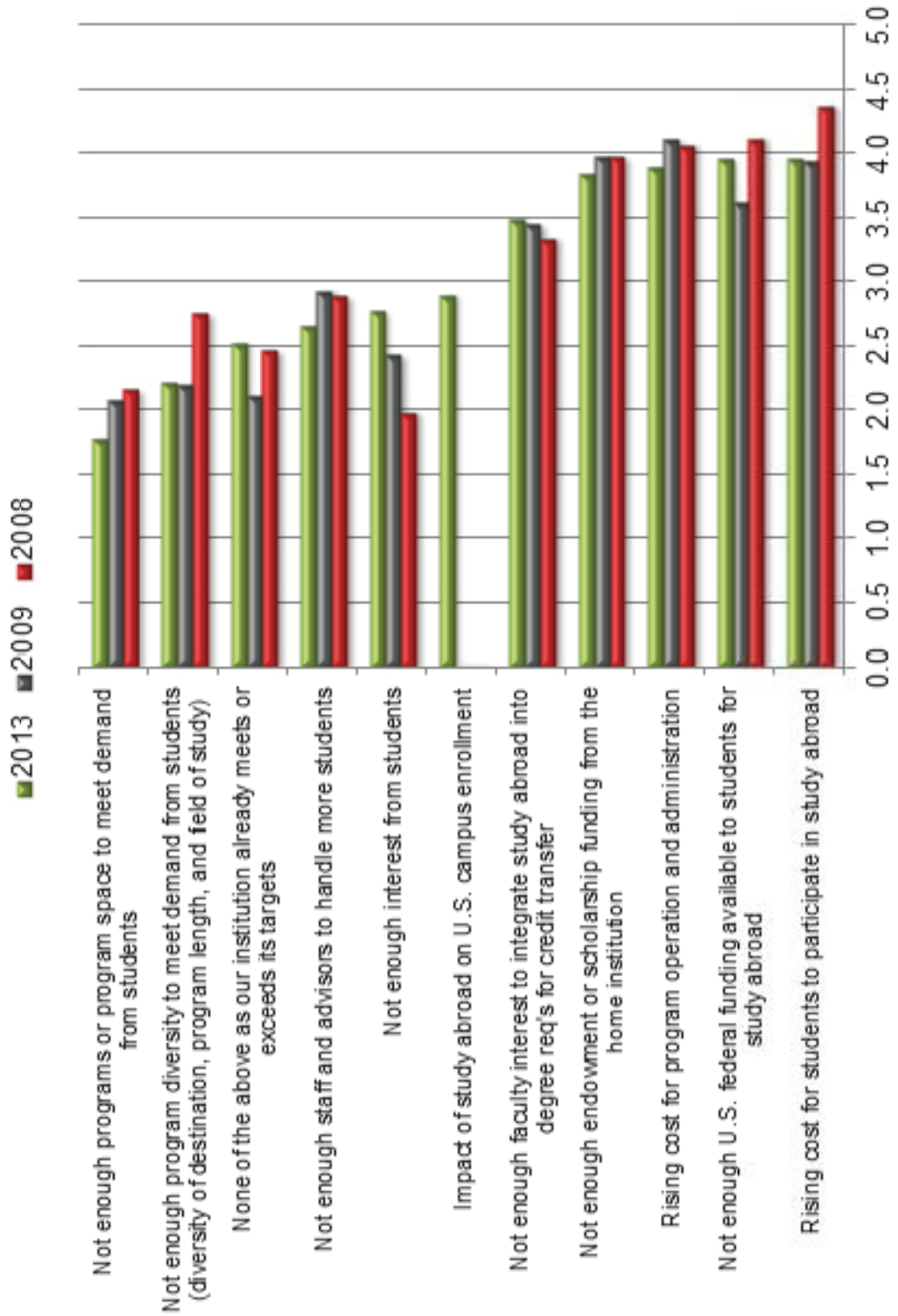
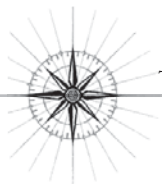


Figure 23.

Program Provider: The following poses a significant challenge to my organization for increasing the number of U.S. students participating in study abroad:





This was followed with another question asking the respondent to select the three most significant factors that would help to increase the number of U.S. study abroad students. U.S. Institutions showed less year-to-year variance in the responses collected from 2008, 2009 and most recently in 2013 whereas there was some significant shuffling of the items selected by Host Institutions and Program Providers. Some of this could be a result of a smaller sample size, but the difference is quite noticeable. As with the previous question, the results from all three years and each of the three respondent types are shown in three separate charts, shown below.

An interesting finding, in light of the top four challenges identified in the previous question, is that the most significant factor that would help institutions to increase student participation isn't an overwhelmingly response of 'more institutional funding for students.' For Host Institutions, the other money-related response, 'more institutional funding for our office,' is second from the bottom in both 2008 and 2013. Results are shown in Figures 24-26.

Figure 24.

U.S. Institutions: What are the 3 most significant factors that would help increase the number of study abroad students?

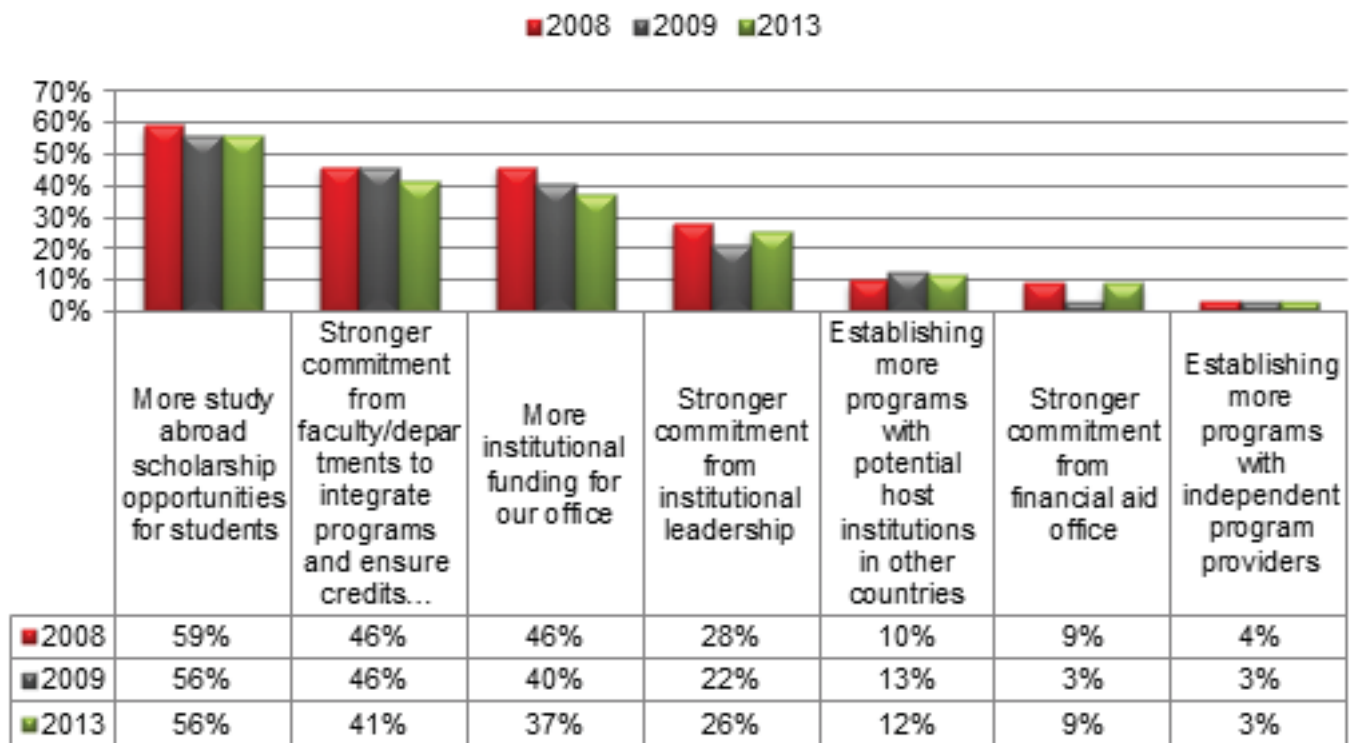




Figure 25.

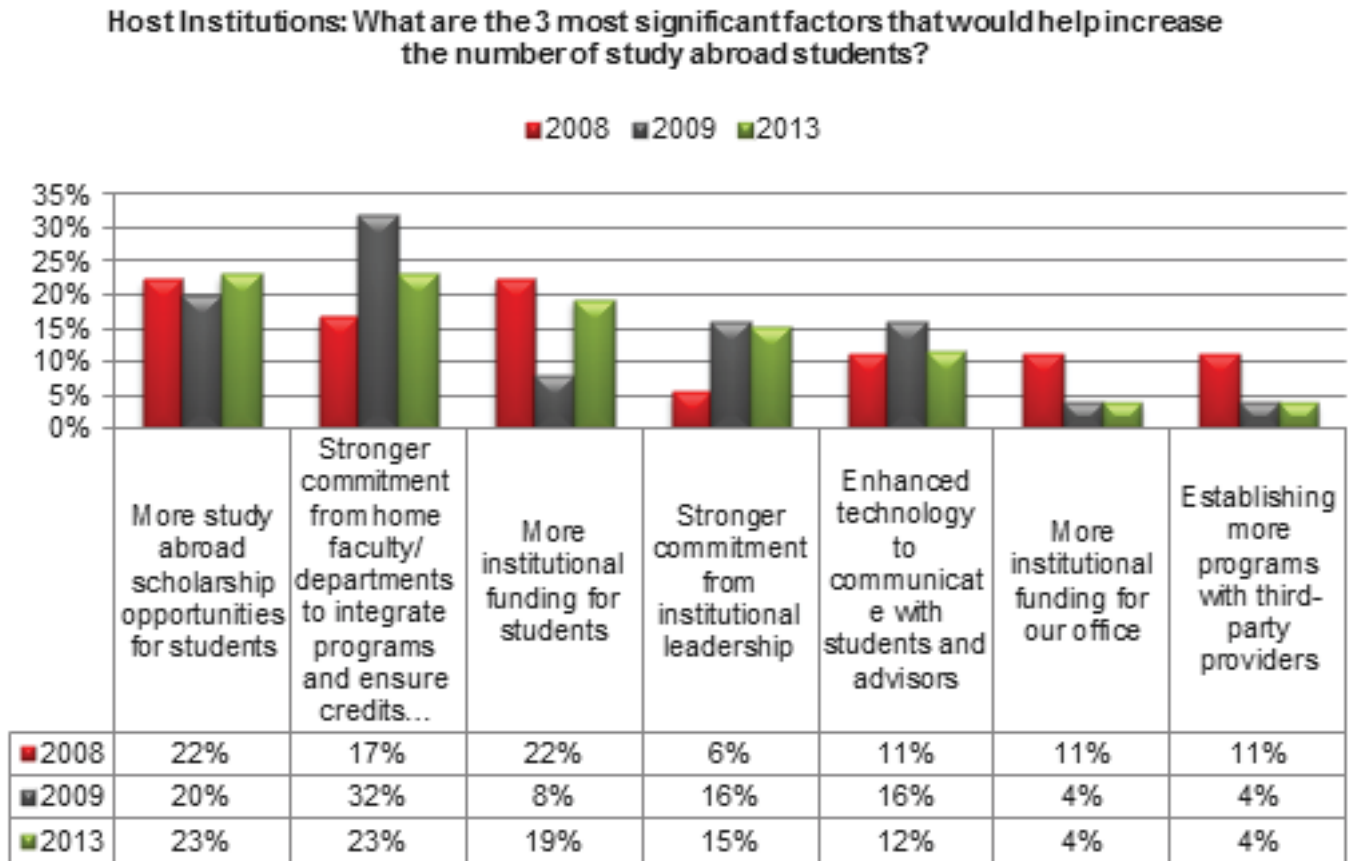
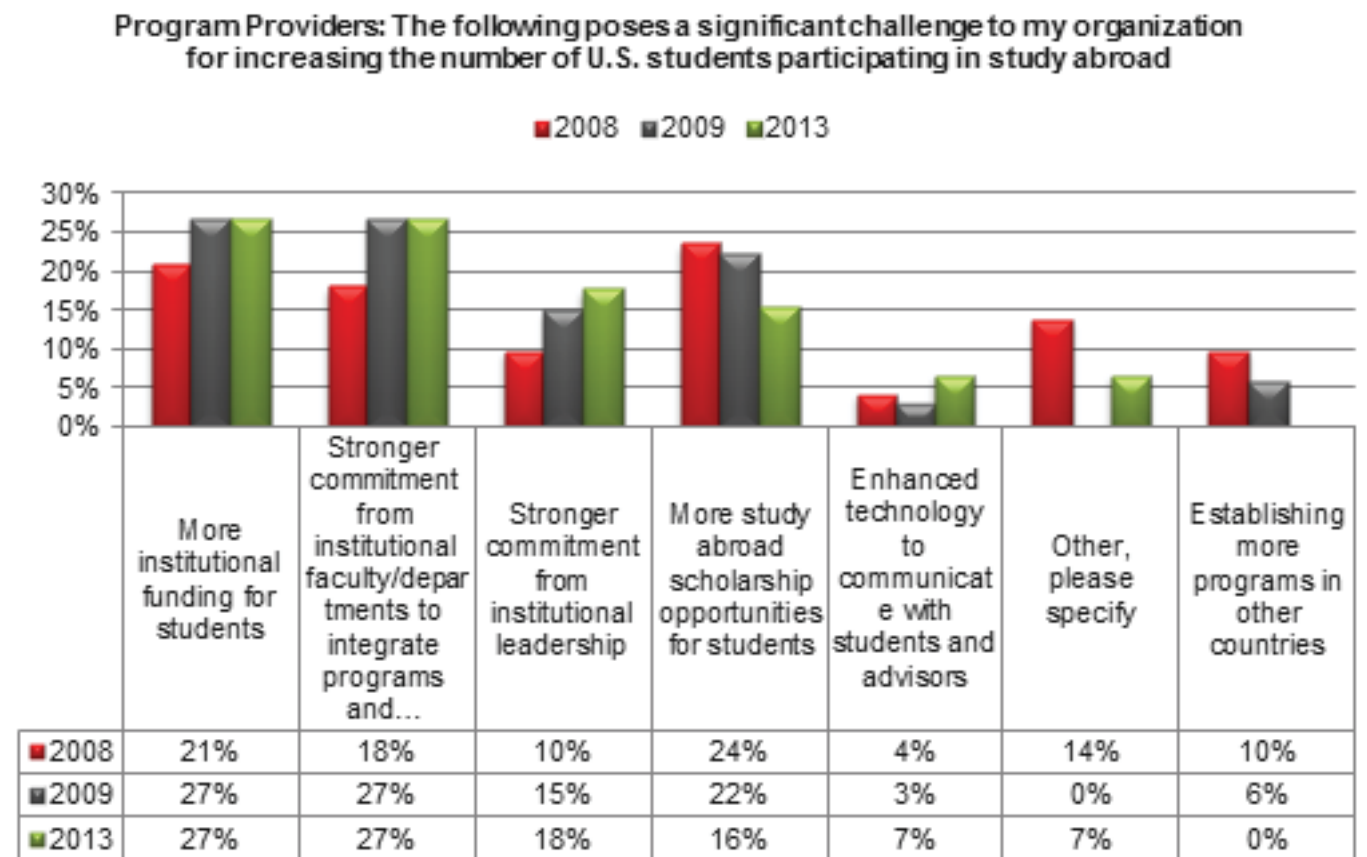
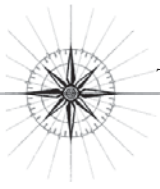


Figure 26.





The following is a list of items that were identified as the top overall concerns in education abroad

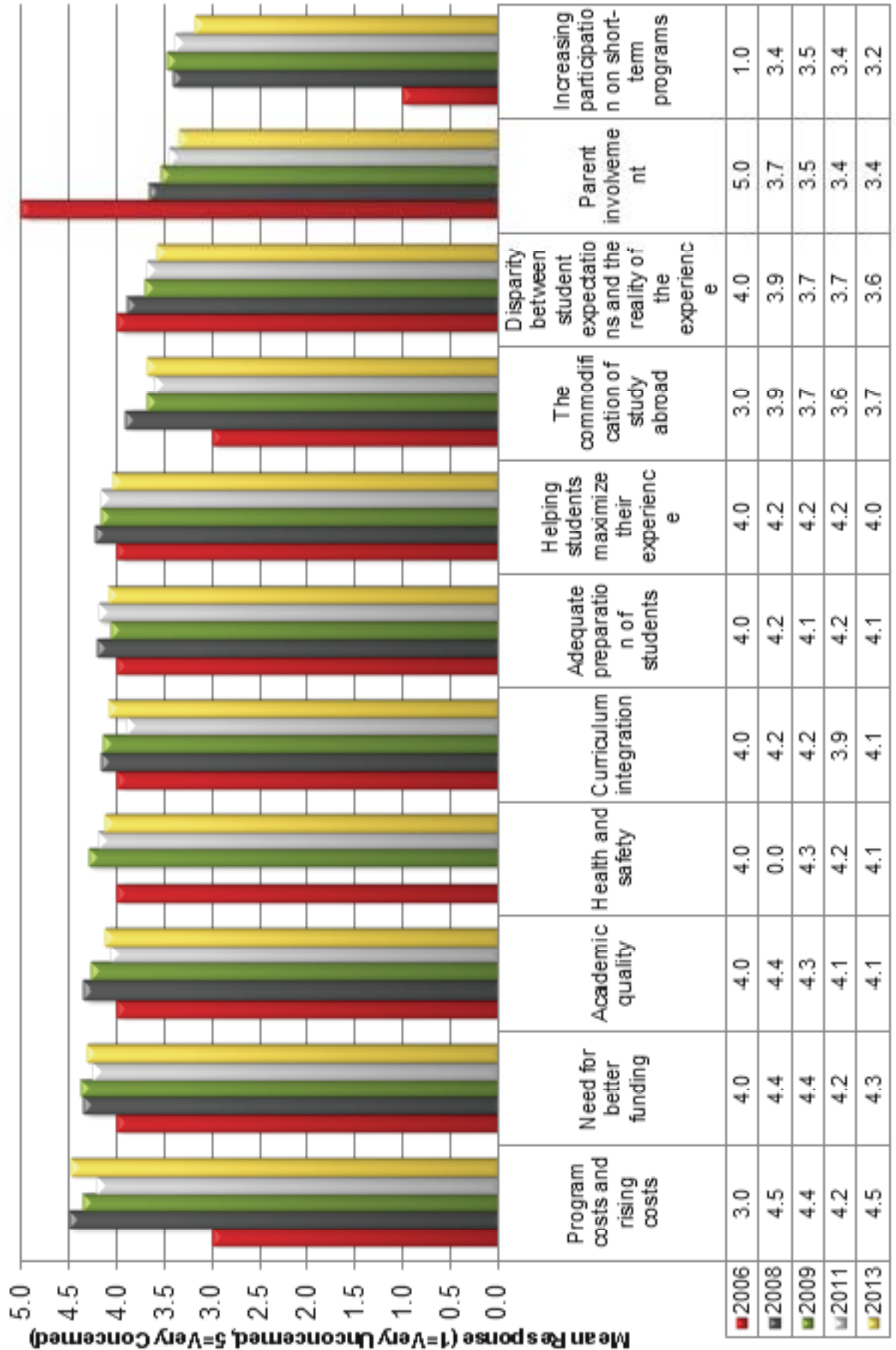


Figure 27.



Finally, respondents were provided a list of items that were identified in previous State of the Field Surveys as the top overall concerns in educations abroad (Figure 27). Respondents indicated their level of concern using a 5-point Likert scale (very unconcerned, somewhat unconcerned, neutral, somewhat concerned and very concerned). From the chart in Figure 27, which shows the mean response for each item, one notes that there are many top concerns. Seven of the ten items here received an average score of 4 or more, indicating they are between 'somewhat concerned' and 'very concerned.' After 2006, the responses are relatively consistent year-to-year.

The survey ended with two open-ended questions. The first question asked about future topics to be included in the State of the Field Survey. Among a range of topics, 40 respondents asked for future surveys to investigate the means by which institutions and organizations have successfully broadened access to education abroad opportunities for financially disadvantaged students. Responses show an interest in financial models for education abroad for different types of institutions, including institutions having low tuition, where study abroad represents a large price differential. Other areas of interest shown in the comments include the tension between quality of programming and a seeming commodification of education abroad, and how the student demographics influence programming.

The second asked for any additional feedback. It elicited responses across a range of topics. Out of 14 responses, eight expressed gratitude for the Forum's work. Respondents also suggested influencing the coverage of education abroad in the media to extend beyond stories of tragedies, and trying to find a way for surveys to delve into complex questions and issues.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Forum on Education Abroad develops and disseminates comprehensive Standards of Good Practice for the field of education abroad. It promotes best practices and excellence in curricular design, engages in data collection and research, conducts program assessment and quality improvement, and advocates on behalf of its members and the field of education abroad. The Forum serves institutions and organizations that sponsor and support education abroad programs for students enrolled at U.S. colleges and universities. The Forum also collaborates with international member institutions and organizations to identify and facilitate best practices and standards for education abroad.

ABOUT THE FORUM ON EDUCATION ABROAD

Located on the campus of Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, The Forum on Education Abroad is the higher education organization for 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.

Forum members include U.S. colleges and universities, overseas institutions, consortia, agencies, and provider organizations. The Forum focuses on developing and implementing standards of good practice, encouraging and supporting research initiatives, and offering educational programs and resources to its members. Its mission is to help to improve education abroad programs to benefit the students that participate in them. It is achieving this goal by establishing standards of good practice, improving education abroad curricula, and promoting data collection and outcomes assessment, all to advocate for high quality education abroad programs.