

COBEC Principles for Ethical and Sustainable Study Abroad Programs

Study abroad programs offered by COBEC members should adhere to the organization's general mission and goals: http://www.cobec.org/cobec_site/mission.html. Furthermore, the principles below should not undermine or challenge institutional guidelines, policies and procedures for study abroad programs, in particular the imperative to provide safe, secure experiences for students and faculty, whether in Belize or in non-Belizean members' countries.

COBEC member institutions developing and offering study abroad programs related to Belize should incorporate the following principles:

- To respect and adhere to Belizean and U.S.A. government requirements such as those related to approval of student teachers and nursing/health students in clinical sites, environmental protection, etc;
- To seek collaboration with Belizean COBEC members when developing and operating study abroad programs;
- To develop programs that are mutually beneficial to students and faculty at Belizean and non-Belizean institutions and when possible allow Belizean students an opportunity to participate in study abroad programs in Belize or the U.S.A.;
- To enable, whenever possible, both Belizean and non-Belizean students to share country and cultural experiences directly through home stays, group projects, joint classes and other means that involve students from Belize and students from non-Belizean member institutions;
- To employ ecologically friendly practices that help preserve the unique ecologies and environments of Belize as well as non-Belizean COBEC members' countries;
- To educate COBEC members' students about their countries' histories, cultures and current affairs;
- To provide systematic and meaningful academic learning experiences that incorporate the host-culture setting;
- To build programmatic capacity and academic and practical skills among students, faculty and communities; and
- To formalize study abroad partnerships with an MOU whenever possible.