

# STATEMENT OF ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

Approved by the Board of Directors, March 28, 2009

## The Role of Ethics in International Education

Our contemporary world is marked by increasing globalization, greater connectedness, and ease of movement. Knowledge and awareness of other peoples, countries, cultures and beliefs is of utmost importance. As international educators we recognize that such knowledge is fundamental to the formation of educated persons and informed citizens and, increasingly, a key to professional, business, and personal success. The acquisition of this knowledge depends, to a great extent, on high-quality programs of international education and exchange.

International educators are dedicated to providing such programs and services with the highest level of integrity and responsibility. To accomplish this, we must attend carefully and actively to the ethical obligations that emerge from our relationships with students, scholars, our institutions, international partners, and other legitimate stakeholders.

As professionals, international educators share clear and defined values. We are committed to the welfare of the students and scholars in our programs. As educators, our decisions and actions should be guided by the goal of ensuring that our programs serve identifiable and legitimate educational purposes. Working in a global and multicultural environment, we are committed to the internationalization of education, not merely as a set of experiences, but as a value-laden set of interactions that produces individuals who are more knowledgeable, reflective, broad-minded, and aware.

## The Role and Purpose of the Statement of Ethical Principles

We, international educators, declare our commitment to the following statement of ethical principles to:

- aid international educators in negotiating competing responsibilities, demands, and interests as they strive to make ethical decisions in complex and multicultural environments;
- inspire international educators to infuse all of their work with ethical principles and practices;
- advance the development of international education as a profession and strengthen the ethical dimensions of professional outreach, research, and training;
- aid professionals and their institutions in decision-making in the management, support, and provision of programs and services;
- highlight the ethical obligations embedded in the relationships surrounding international education;
- broaden and deepen conversations on ethical and professional practices in international education.

## NAFSA'S STATEMENT OF ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

**INTEGRITY** We will manifest the highest level of integrity in all our professional undertakings, dealing with others honestly and fairly, abiding by our commitments, and always acting in a manner that merits the trust and confidence others have placed in us.

**RESPECT FOR THE LAW** We will follow all applicable laws and regulations and carefully and reflectively advise students and scholars regarding those laws and regulations. We will seek out appropriate guidance and advice when regulations appear contradictory, ambiguous, or confusing or when a situation is beyond our role or competency.

**QUALITY** We will strive constantly to provide high quality and educationally valuable programs and services. We regularly will evaluate and review our work in order to improve those programs and services and will seek out and adopt exemplary practices.

**COMPETENCE** We will undertake our work with the highest levels of competence and professionalism, regularly seeking and

acquiring the training and knowledge necessary to do so. Our commitment to professional competence will extend to exercising thorough oversight of external programs and placements. Through careful planning and the development and implementation of appropriate policies, we will do our utmost to ensure the safety, security, and success of students, staff, faculty, and scholars.

**DIVERSITY** In both word and deed we will respect the dignity and worth of all people and be properly attentive and responsive to the beliefs and cultural commitments of others. In the planning, development, and implementation of programs and services we will engage respectfully with the diversity of peoples and perspectives. We will strive to ensure that our programs reflect the diversity of our institutions and their educational goals.

**TRANSPARENCY** We will demonstrate the appropriate level of transparency in dealings with individuals and organizations. In collaborations with other institutions and individuals we will proceed on the bases

of equality and mutuality. Transactions with external providers of programs and services will be conducted professionally, always keeping the welfare of students foremost, and disclosing any potential conflicts of interests. We will provide faculty, staff, students and scholars with the information they need to make good decisions about program participation and to facilitate their adjustment to the locales and cultures where they will study or work.

**ACCESS** In planning, developing, and implementing our programs we will strive to ensure that they are accessible to all qualified individuals, doing our utmost to guarantee that international education is available to all who desire it and can benefit from it.

**RESPONSIVENESS** We will maintain open and readily accessible communication with individuals in our programs and services and with our institutional partners. This includes providing students with the appropriate level of support based on age, experience, language ability, and placement.

Holding these principles constantly in mind, we will work to extend and improve international education in all its forms and at all levels, including advocating for programs, policies, regulations, and laws that reflect these principles. Additionally, we will work aggressively for the realization of these principles in our personal and professional conduct, throughout our institutions, and in organizations with which we affiliate.