

GUIDELINES FOR GLOBAL AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT

(summary)

The ATS Board of Commissioners approved a “Petitioning for International Theological Education” document in June 2016, to guide member schools in their continued engagement with international theological education. As “global awareness and engagement” became central to the 2020 [ATS Standards of Accreditation](#), it was apparent that a revision of the guide was necessary. A Commission member school is to “attend to global awareness and engagement within the context of its mission, theological commitments, and resources” (Standard 1.4). As part of the structure, process, and criteria for accreditation, quality assurance, and improvement, member schools are expected to demonstrate how they define, embody, and cultivate global awareness and engagement.

These [revised guidelines](#) have a three-fold purpose: (1) to assist Commission member schools as they develop degree programs particularly—though not exclusively—at locations beyond the national borders of the US and Canada, (2) to advise the schools of the issues the Board considers important—even critical—in meeting the expectations of global awareness and engagement in *the Standards of Accreditation*, and (3) to provide a shared resource for the constituencies and publics of ATS member schools in their educational efforts to help them understand and appreciate more fully theirs and others local, regional, national, and global contexts.

Three value propositions shape the Board’s understanding of global awareness and engagement:

1. *Diversity and collaboration* recognize that theological education takes many forms and serves a variety of purposes in other (cultural) contexts.
2. *Language, culture, and instruction* represent challenges for international theological education—in the language used to describe the program, in the language of instruction used in the program, and in the culture-shaping consequences of the language.
3. *Adequate institutional resources* to support graduate theological education—including human, financial, physical, technological, and shared resources among member schools and their educational partners around the globe—are a necessary dimension of global awareness and engagement.

In light of the normative expectations of the *Standards* and the assumptions regarding global awareness and engagement for international education, the Board strongly urges careful attention to the following areas as schools attend to matters of global awareness and engagement: (1) *mission issues* examining how a school’s mission engages this work, (2) *cultural issues* including analysis of constituencies, identities, and their mutual connections, (3) *educational program issues* including rationales, teaching and learning, and integrity, (4) *global partnership issues* such as collaboration and multidimensional contexts, (5) *aligning international theological education issues* with the *Standards of Accreditation* and [Policies and Procedures](#), and (6) *other identified considerations*.